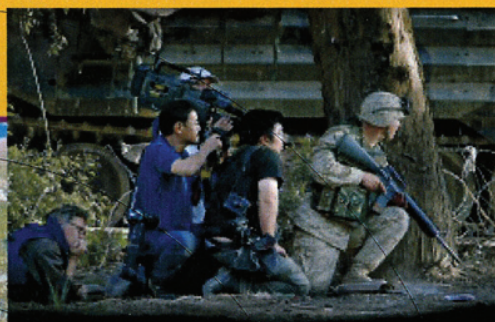


Global War – Local Views

Media Images of the Iraq War

Stig A. Nohrstedt & Rune Ottosen (eds.)



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Örebro and Oslo, October 2005

Stig A. Nohrstedt

Rune Ottosen

Introduction

Stig A. Nohrstedt & Rune Ottosen

The recent military conflicts, in particular the Kosovo conflict of 1999, the war in Afghanistan in 2001 and the 2003 Iraq War, seem to be remarkable because of the number of 'big lies' that have accompanied them *and* because these lies have been well exposed and criticised in public – at least in some places and by some media.

The most prominent example is the claim, as made by Colin Powell to the UN Security Council (Mral, 2004:44-48), that Iraq controlled weapons of mass destruction and represented an immediate global threat. Hence one can imagine the parallel appearance of strategic manipulation of perceptions (perception management) and reflexivity as crucial traits, in the public sphere, of the new world order and its 'new wars' (Kaldor, 1999). Popular culture has long noticed these trends. Science fiction novels such as Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, George Orwell's *1984* (with its notion of 'new speak'), and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* pointed at totalitarian tendencies in post-modern society – so, more recently, did movies such as *Wag the Dog*, *The Truman Show*, *Primary Colors* and *Matrix*. One might wonder whether science fiction is becoming breaking news in the new world order. And, if so, when fiction is fact. Has it – and world public discourse – perhaps reached a new and higher level of reflexivity, as forecast in some theories of late-modern society (Beck, 1994; Giddens, 1994)?

In the Kosovo conflict, the propaganda field was levelled by the ways in which the so-called Rambouille negotiations were staged. The substance of the proposed peace treaty that was rejected by the representatives of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and which was later revealed as Appendix B, was not made public until the NATO military intervention had started. In the meantime, American, French and other major players (in particular the American diplomat Richard Holbrooke), went public with the conclusion that the Serbs did not want peace and had therefore refused to sign the agreement (see for example Chomsky, 1999:107 pp). It was indeed a case of propaganda 'by deeds' to quote a classic work on propaganda techniques (Lasswell, 1927/1971:199). The white and black picture portraying the Kosovo

Albanians as the 'worthy victims' and the Serbs as the villains was effective in the media discourses for some time. In saying this we acknowledge, of course, the fact that Milosevic was responsible for crimes against humanity and had blood on his hands. But the issue to be discussed is whether one injustice (ethnic cleansing) can justify another (bombing without a UN mandate and causing civilian casualties). The propaganda images in the media before the bombing started were more obvious in some countries than in others (Nohrstedt, Höijer & Ottosen, 2002). Our comparative study of Norwegian and Swedish media indicates that media in the former country switched from a low-profile, pro-NATO view to a NATO-critical view during the later part of the war, whereas the Swedish media held a steadier NATO-critical perspective in their coverage all along. Research on this matter is hardly conclusive, so we can only hypothetically assume that in at least some NATO member states the media were critical to the official NATO propaganda of the bombing campaign as a clinical operation.

An even clearer instance of mobilisation for war based on lies is, of course, the 2003 Iraq War. 'Lies' might seem too strong a word, connoting conscious manipulation of facts and of general opinion. But, based on the available evidence, it is difficult to reach any other conclusion, particularly regarding the aftermath of the war, when Bush and Blair jump without regret from one argument to the next. When the occupying forces in Iraq failed to find weapons of mass destruction, the line of argument for justifying the war changed. Now, at the time of writing, in December 2004, after George W. Bush has declared the battle of Iraq 'won' by the 'alliance of the willing', the argument for the necessity of military intervention is that the world has become a safer place without the Saddam Hussein regime in Baghdad. But whatever will come out of the 2003 Iraq War, only the most devoted optimist could claim that the country – and the surrounding region – are safer now than previously.

To briefly summarise: in the autumn and winter of 2002-2003, the Bush and Blair administrations argued that Iraq must be forced, by military means if necessary, to disarm, because its weapon of mass destruction (WMD) were a threat to the entire world. Another accusation against the regime in Baghdad was that it had been involved in and supported the al-Qaeda terrorist attacks in New York and Washington on 9/11, 2001. But even then it was more than possible to reveal that these charges against Iraq lacked validity since the only thing that journalists and others needed to do was to go back to the files and check what representatives of the Bush administration themselves, and documents the administration had issued, had said about the military capacity of Iraq before 9/11. For example, in a press conference with the Egyptian Foreign Minister on February 24 2001 (six months before the terrorist attack), the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, had said – in response to a question from the audience about sanctions against Iraq – that "frankly, they have worked. Saddam Hussein has not developed any significant capability with respect to weapons of mass destruction. He is unable to project

conventional power against his neighbours.” (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2001/933.htm>; <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/09/28/iraq/main575469.shtml>; here from Mral, 2004:48, n. 69).

Other public disavowals of the American and British charges were also available for those who did not take such statements for granted but who realised that the propaganda war had started long before missiles were launched against Iraqi cities and military installations (Curtis, 2004; about war propaganda in peace time, see for example Luostarinen, 2002). More than a year after the war, leading US media regretted publicly that they had not been more critical towards the Bush administration’s war propaganda (the *New York Times* May 26, 30 2004; the *Washington Post* August 12 2004; see Nohrstedt’s chapter for details). Remarkable as it is for prestigious media openly to admit shortcomings, this self-criticism is overdue, and should have been raised before the war in order to affect the process of escalation – not after it. That, however, would have meant interference in the administration’s handling of what it described as a matter of national interest, and for that to happen – in contradistinction to ineffective lip-service afterwards – the media and journalists would have needed a great deal of civic dedication and courage (cf. Hallin, 1986 about legitimate media critique of the political establishment). That said, it is nevertheless of some historical relevance that leading US media after the 2003 Iraq War confess to have been neglecting their watchdog role in relation to the government in a very serious phase of the ‘War on terror’.

Whether this is an entirely new phenomenon is debatable. We will not take up that discussion here because of limited space but will, rather, point out that in many other analogous instances the media have retrospectively corrected their previous reports – without, however, bothering to express regret. So perhaps the only new thing about the confessions of the *New York Times* and other major media is the explicit mention of mistakes. What is more important is that outside the USA the accusations against Iraq *were* challenged in the media before the war. Suspensions were frequently raised that such accusations were based on false and fabricated facts and were part of a campaign of war propaganda, and not raised out of concern for the safety of the Middle East and the international community. This scepticism was often quite prominent in, for example, European media, not to mention media in the Arab and the Third World countries.

In this book we have, together with media scholars from a number of countries and cultures, made an attempt to provide a more global view of the Iraq War and the War on Terror than is usually present in the news media. It is also a test of whether media reflexivity is perhaps best encouraged by a journalism which draws on perspectives from many directions and viewpoints, national and transnational. Third, the book aims at grasping some basic traits of the current global discursive order with respect to international military conflicts.

A Global Discursive Order

The media discourses studied in the following chapters should be regarded as instances of a global discursive order. We have borrowed the concept 'discursive order' from Norman Fairclough (1995) and his critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach. Here, the general objective is to study media content contextually; this also includes an inter-discursive approach – media content in relation to other discourses such as public diplomacy, propaganda and humanitarian work. Hence the centre of attention here is the relationship between media discourses and other discourses on the Iraq War. By adding 'global' to the notion we want to emphasise the necessity of a transnational or even a world-wide perspective in trying to understand the context of today's media discourses.

In this book it is primarily the *discourses of media* in relation to *public diplomacy*, *war propaganda* and *compassion* that are relevant. For all practical analytical purposes the abstract concept 'discursive order' is applied to the complex of inter-textual relationships between four public discourses – public diplomacy, war propaganda, humanitarian appeals and the media. The notion 'public diplomacy' refers to the political debates around issues of legality and legitimacy – for example whether a new UN resolution was needed to make the military intervention in Iraq legal. By 'war propaganda' we basically refer to the discourse on possible Iraqi possession of weapons of mass destruction, but also to the respective parties' views as to the nature of the conflict, the warfare as such, military operations, and so on. The compassion discourse, finally, is the discussion around the humanitarian aspects of the war such as civilian casualties and human suffering. We are particularly interested in the ways in which the political conflicts connected to the Iraq War are discursively constructed by the media.

The theoretical perspective in this book aims, further, to demonstrate that the concept of a global discursive order helps us to grasp the implications of the War on Terror as declared by George W. Bush after 9/11. Apart from other aspects of this strategic step (not to treat the terrorist attacks as criminal acts but as a military onslaught on the USA), discursively, the implication was to set an agenda for how to discuss – and even how to think of – the situation, and the proper response. Social, political and ideological consequences were forceful: criticism of the administration's actions was immediately labelled unpatriotic for in war the first objective is to defeat the enemy, not to bring him to court, and as a citizen one is supposed to accept far-ranging restrictions on one's ordinary life if this is declared necessary by the authorities. In effect, the declaration of a War on Terror (WoT) was a performative discursive act intended to get the American people and allies around the world to rally around the flag, to come together as a united 'we', fighting back the evil-doers who had attacked 'us'. This was easier because the terrorists had indiscriminately murdered thousands of civilians. In the USA in particular, the calculated effects on the media of the declaration of war against terrorism were only as expected.

Of course this affected American media more than media in other countries but nonetheless there can be no doubt that national and local media generally constructed imaginary relationships between a national 'we' and the global situation in conjunction with 9/11 and the WoT. Indeed, this is probably one of the most relevant theoretical aspects of how media discourses have ritual meanings (cf. Carey, 1989). Not only do media tell you what to think about and how to think about it, but when it comes to international crises they even, by implication, tell you what to do. For instance it seems to be ever more common, in recent international conflicts, for popular newspapers to instruct readers to demonstrate their commitment and patriotism in public (cf. Hallin & Gitlin, 1994).

It is very important for us that the notion of a global discursive order does not subscribe to a deterministic and unchallenged discourse on the WoT. As Norman Fairclough has emphasised again and again, a discursive order is contested terrain. Although well adapted for the analysis of dominance and hegemony, the concept 'discursive order' implies that more often than not the discursive order is challenged by some opposing social forces. Nothing is predestined in the 'dialectics of discourse' (Fairclough, 2003:3). This is all the more essential considering some of the results reported in this book, as well as in other studies about media discourses on the Iraq war (e.g. contributions in Miller (ed.) *Tell me lies*, like Knightley, 2004: 104, Lewis & Brookes, 2004: 142; Kellner, 2004:151, 152; Solomon, 2004:160 and Snow, 2004:60). The discursive order does not exclude the possibility of critical reflections from opponents. On the contrary, *reflexivity* is explicitly mentioned by Fairclough as a dimension of the dialectics of discourse: "people do not only act and interact within networks of social practices, they also interpret and represent to themselves and each other what they do, and these interpretations and representations shape and reshape what they do" (Ibid:4). Hence, the concept of a global discursive order does not give the answers but, on the contrary, helps us raise the relevant questions when it comes to media content and its relationships to the surrounding setting of ideological, political and other forces. And not least there is the question of whether globalisation leads to global reflexivity, as stated by some media researchers (e.g. Hjarvard, 2001:24).

Answers should come from empirical studies, not from theoretical speculations. We hope the studies in this book will not only help us with answers concerning the level of reflexivity in the media coverage of the Iraq War but, furthermore, help journalists and media workers to reflect upon their own tradecraft and to change it when motivated. For media research it also seems that the cumulative experiences from the WoT makes it urgent to analyse some crucial aspects of media reflexivity. The conception management, or conscious lying to media and public opinion before the 2003 intervention in Iraq, is a huge challenge – not only for journalists but also for media researchers. We see at least four important themes to address in current research in relation to media reflexivity. Namely media coverage of:

- Conception management methods and their effects on news reports, debates and public opinion;
- relations between the defence industry, fiction industry and news media, especially with regard to instant news reports as well as to popular revisions of recent history in movies, television series and soap operas;
- the practical conditions for media war coverage, in particular correspondents' situations and embeddedness through ground rules, pool-systems, and dependence on military protection;
- self-criticism of pitfalls and shortcomings in supplying fair and accurate reports – with respect both to immediate corrections and to comprehensive evaluations retrospectively after major operations or wars.

Concerning the first point, this book will reveal some glimpses, at least, of the impact of the propaganda manipulation on media coverage as documented by media researchers and journalists. More of that should, in our view, be available in the actual media coverage of military conflicts, and not only in research reports. The second point is to a large degree a 'white spot' in news media. To what extent it is actually taken up by media is a blind spot for most media research as well – including this book. But below we indicate some of the experiences found in the literature with regard to the links between media and the defence industry. The third aspect of reflexivity seems to receive more media attention today than, say, two decades ago, although it is too early to tell whether this applies mainly to media in a few countries or whether it is a more general pattern. Some chapters in this volume provide empirical findings as a starting point for general conclusions about the future. The fourth aspect could be exemplified by the mentioned articles in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, but so far not studied much by media researchers.

The normative standpoint from where we want to emphasise the importance of media research on reflexivity is evident: we believe that a lot more is to be asked from media coverage on these points. We are concerned about media in general, and news media in particular, being a 'lame duck' when targeted from various directions, for example by conception management or by war propaganda. And furthermore we suspect that epistemological relativism is a general threat to news journalism that can only be cured by improved reflexivity on the part of the media. As an indication of this risk we will next raise some questions concerning the institutional blurring of the distinction between fact and fiction in the media industry.

News and Entertainment

– Breaking News from Hollywood?

Some of the contributions in this book discuss the relationship between fact and fiction in the media coverage of certain countries. This reflects an approach to war journalism that should be taken seriously by media researchers because it builds an interesting bridge between news and entertainment. When Michael Moore received the Academy Award for his film “Bowling for Columbine” he said in his acceptance speech that “we live in a fictitious world”, referring, *inter alia*, to the fact that George Bush was in the White House without having won the presidential election. As we have pointed out, the issues of truths and lies seem to be less important than winning over opinion in favour of military interventions. The importance of the entertainment industry should not be underestimated in the process of shaping public opinion. The relation between entertainment and news should be analysed at several levels.

As Edward Herman and Robert McChesney showed in their book *The Global Media. The New Missionaries of Global Capitalism* (1997), motion pictures and radio technology were among the first industries to compete in a global market. As early as 1914, 85% of the world’s film audience was watching American movies (Herman & McChesney, 1997: 13-14). One of the early players in this broadcasting market was CBS. They started their global career in radio and helped create *Voice of America* as a propaganda tool for the US government during the Second World War. The experience with film, broadcasting and propaganda in general elevated the importance of communication in the minds of policy-makers during the inter-war years and has continued to do so to this very day. As a result, US-based film companies still have commercial and political global hegemony. The global film industry was controlled by a few US companies like Columbia, Twentieth Century-Fox, United Artists, MCA (Universal), Warner Brothers, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Paramount (Ibid:19)(based on Ottosen 2004).

Historically, under US broadcasting regulations (subsequently partly eliminated and under constant pressure), the US networks NBC, CBS and ABC have been restricted in what they are allowed to produce for domestic broadcast. Thus, the major US programme producers, and therefore the major global TV production studios, were actually the film studios of Hollywood (Ibid:21). The present global market is dominated by the studios owned by Disney, Time Warner, Viacom, Universal, Sony Polygram and News Corporation.

The merging of the entertainment and film industry and the news industry was evident when Time Warner bought CNN and when Disney bought the television network ABC. Rupert Murdoch had his breakthrough in the British media market (primarily newspapers) in the 1960s. When he became big in the US market in the 1980s, his company News Corporation purchased Twentieth Century Fox, which led to the creation of the Fox Television Network. Fox Television is an interesting phenomenon in this borderline

between entertainment and news. Its news programme created history during the first phase of the war against terror when a so-called reporter sat on top of a US tank during the war in Afghanistan, shooting his pistol into the air to prove his patriotism.

Key news networks have to an increasing extent been bought by conglomerates whose primary interest is the entertainment business. One of the effects on the corporate level of the merging between the news industry and the entertainment industry is that in the US a growing share of the news is about entertainment and includes stories about celebrities and movie stars. In the total picture news loses ground to entertainment. International reporting is losing ground on the priority lists in television news. Fewer correspondents get time to inform about world events. The exception is during global wars like that in Iraq, for war is big business in international news. CNN made its international breakthrough during the 1991 Gulf War. At that time, CNN was the only actor on the 24/7 (24 hours 7 days a week) market (Thussu 2003), but nowadays there are several players competing in this market, including the Arab channels, with al-Jazeera as the most important, offering Arab perspectives as an alternative to the Western way of interpreting world events. One of the winners in the new global market is BBC World, which increased its number of viewers from ten million in 1996 to 244 million in 200 countries in 2003.

Another dimension in the relationship between entertainment and war coverage is the significance of strategic cooperation between the military industrial complex and the entertainment industry. As Jonathan Burston pointed out:

As far back as 1996, the US National Research Council (NRC) had already acknowledged the importance of cooperation between the Department of Defence (DOD) and the entertainment industry on issues such as modelling and simulation technology. This technology is central for video games and other entertainment products, and for the military industry the benefit is the low costs of simulation in comparison to real tests and training exercises (Burston, 2003:163).

The significance of this cooperation manifests itself in, for example, computer games on sale commercially. In 2002, the computer game *Desert Storm* was launched on the commercial market more than ten years after the Gulf War took place and a year before the war on Iraq. To be a winner in this game you have to act as the US soldiers in 1991. If you are on the Iraqi side you lose and get killed.

Another link between the Pentagon and the entertainment industry is the strategic cooperation between DOD and Hollywood (based on Ottosen, 2004). *The New York Times* revealed, in January 2002, that the US Minister of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld, had created the Office of Strategic Influence – authorised to manipulate media with lies if necessary to rally the media behind

the war against terrorism. It was apparently closed down after this public exposure, but the operation continued under the name Operation for Special Plans and was under the direct control of Central Command at the headquarters in Qatar during the war against Iraq (Arkin 2003). At the press centre in Qatar, the stage was designed by Hollywood consultants to make the 'performance' of the military spokesmen more convincing. This is, of course, not the first time Hollywood consultants were used to polish up the Pentagon's information strategy. After the terrible attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, the Pentagon consulted Hollywood in order to handle the new situation for US society (*Verdens Gang* 9.10. 2001). Among those called in to assist were screenwriter Steven E De Souza (responsible for the movie "Die Hard"), director Joseph Zito (creator of "Delta Force One: Missing in Action") and the TV writer David Engelbach (responsible for the MacGyver series). The irony of this is that makers of fiction were consulted to help the US administration face reality (Grossberg, 2001).

It is no news that the Pentagon has professionalised its information strategy since the Vietnam War when the military lost its grip on public opinion (Ottosen, 1994). The Pentagon-Hollywood relationship is one part of the new strategy. In his book *Operation Hollywood. How The Pentagon Shapes and censors the Movies*, David L. Robb revealed that the Pentagon has its own officers whose job it is to be consultants on media scripts and to decide whether or not the Pentagon will take part in a production. Once the decision on cooperation is made, their job is to be helpful in providing military personnel and technical assistance in the form of equipment, planes and ships (Robb, 2004).

The Pentagon receives about 100 movie scripts every year and decides to cooperate in about a third of the cases. Negotiations and compromises are often necessary in order to satisfy the Pentagon. There is also competition between the different branches of the military in this field. A liaison officer from the Air Force is working full-time to "sell" the Air Force to Hollywood; for the major movie "Air Force One", the US Air Force lent six F-158 planes free of charge (Gunn, 1999).

The most interesting cases are, of course, movies based on real wars. The most recent example is "Black Hawk Down", based on the failed "Operation Restore Hope" in Somalia in 1992, in which 18 American soldiers died (Ottosen, 1997). In this case, the Pentagon liked the script because the heroic images of the soldiers dying in battle helped to rewrite the image of a failed operation. And the film got their support, but at what price? "If you want to use the military's toys you've got to play by their rules," said military technical adviser John Lovett (AP 2001). The military historian Lawrence Suid explained in detail how this system works in the book *Guts & Glory*. Suid called it a "system for mutual exploitations" (Ibid.).

Commercial television is of course the main link between the entertainment and the news industries. The television series "The Agency" produced by CBS was sponsored by the CIA. This series, in which heroic CIA agents save the

world from Arabic terrorists and villains, is produced in close cooperation with the CIA. The CIA had consultants working on the manuscript and the agency put their locations and manpower at the disposal of the series. According to *The New York Times*, the CIA explained this by claiming that it was a part of the agency's strategy to get through to the public with 'the truth about the CIA' and persuaded the sceptics to increase the funding for a budget of 30 billion dollars. These are but fragments of the politico-economical context into which the market- and propaganda-driven forces embed the news media. Commercial factors will probably make media reluctant to give these trends – blurred lines between the entertainment and news industries – paramount positions on the media agenda. We suspect that, gradually, the merger between producers of fiction and of fact will undermine the epistemological claims and rationality of news production. If so, news media reflexivity is badly needed.

News Media and Reflexivity

According to well-known theories of late-modernity, globalisation and reflexivity are two connected trends of present day society – in the richer parts of the world, that is. In the works of Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck, to mention two of the most influential theorists, both these trends are related to the saturation of media's impact in all sectors of late-modern society (Beck, 1997; Giddens, 1999). It is doubtless reasonable to believe that increased inter-cultural and transnational exchange through the media or otherwise (for example through trade and tourism) will not only nurse deeper understanding of social and cultural conditions, worldviews and mentalities in other parts of the world, but will also contribute to relativisation and reflections concerning one's own societal conditions and cultural mores. This theoretical link between globalisation and reflexivity is sometimes taken almost as self-evident and as if the latter is an automatic and unavoidable effect of the former (Hjarvard, 2001:24-25). In our view this is to blur the theoretical content of the two concepts, almost into synonyms. We believe that the dimensions of ontological and epistemological self-reflection in the notion of reflexivity are essential in order to make it relevant for theories of post-modern society and globalisation processes.

Thus, to the extent that the book contributes to increased reflexivity it is because its analyses reveal, not only that global events are brought to the awareness of national media audiences and public spheres, but that the authors give insights into *how* the Iraq War is related to national policies and local conditions. As we see it, it is a crucial task for media research to find out if, to what degree and in what ways, reports about global events, in particular the WoT, are related to reflections about the links to, and consequences for, the political, ideological and social agenda at the national level, i.e. to what extent media facilitate understanding of mediated global con-

tinuances. But it is even more important, for the ways in which these global events affect the national-local level, to analyse the media discourses with reference to whether or not the media elaborate on their own role. This aspect of media reflexivity is, today, perhaps more crucial from a democratic point of view than ever before, considering the regime of lies on both sides that has surrounded the Iraq War from the start. Self-criticism on the part of media and journalists is a virtue the realisation of which should be another important topic for media research.

Content of the Book

Brigitte Mral offers a diachronical survey of the war rhetoric of President George W. Bush in the opinion-building stage before the hostilities started. Her analysis shows how big words, vague and ambiguous, were effectively used and how language was distorted. She raises an urgent issue: what approach should democratic societies take in relation to self-evidently deceptive influencing of public opinion and to overtly manipulative rhetoric?

Berit von der Lippe analyses the Norwegian television representation of George W. Bush's arrival in an aircraft on board the naval ship Abraham Lincoln on May 1 2003. Through an analysis of the rhetoric in President Bush's speech to the homecoming soldiers, von der Lippe uses a feminist perspective to reveal the masculine values hidden in the message. The Norwegian television coverage of the event is critical, given that the Norwegian government and the overwhelming majority of the public opposed the war. Even though the Norwegian television coverage represents, in a way, opposition to US hegemonic discourse on the war in Iraq, the gender issue in the event is a part of doxa (Bourdieu) in the television images; it remains behind closed doors.

Tine Ustad Figenschou studies the US Public Diplomacy Campaign to improve its image in the Middle East and to mobilise political and public support in preparation for the war in Iraq. The analysis includes the ambivalent policy towards al-Jazeera and other Arab networks. On one hand the US government wanted access to the Arab public through Arab media, while on the other hand they were reluctant to treat al-Jazeera and other Arab media on the same level as Western media since their news-reporting presented an alternative voice and a threat to the US effort 'to win hearts and minds' in the region. Ustad Figenschou suggests that the lack of support for the US in the Middle East is a disagreement on policy rather than a communication problem.

Transnational television channels have established a central role in the global media landscape since the Gulf War 1990-91, when CNN took the lead as the provider of instant and around-the-clock news to a world-wide market. Today, the competition has grown and besides CNN there are the BBC

World, and Arab channels like al-Jazeera which offer alternatives for television consumers. For the transnational news flow from the 2003 Iraq war this development obviously widened the spectrum of factual news, views and specialist comments. Lars Lundsten and Matteo Stochetti compare two of the major television channels, CNN and BBC World, with a special focus on two narrative metaphors: crusades and soccer games, which provide the template for the CNN and BBC World coverage respectively. Hence, their narrative analysis confirms the importance for global news reporting of the rhetorical devices used by the 'war alliance' leaders as also explored by Mral. Whether journalists are aware of the implications of the narrative models they are using is an urgent question raised by Lundsten and Stochetti, and one left open for further scrutiny.

In a German-Turkish cooperation, Seref Ates, Jörg Becker, Richard Brunhart, Hüseyin Cicek, Thomas Oberhofer, Arzu Onay-Ok and Gülsel Taskara have studied two daily newspapers from each country using quantitative and qualitative methods. As with several other European media, the team of researchers find that the American and British propaganda did not penetrate the media coverage. The authors explain this partly with reference to revitalisation of anti-American sentiments, owing to the moral debacle of the intervention in Iraq, and to changes in the foreign-policy context of the two NATO members after the Cold War, with the European Union emerging as a new platform for their security- and foreign-policy *modus operandi*.

Julius Mucunguzi focuses on the Ugandan press in a study of the privately owned newspaper *The Monitor* and the government owned *The New Vision*. The coverage of the Ugandan press is especially interesting since Uganda is one of the US's closest allies in Africa. While the editorials and commentaries in both newspaper expressed criticism from an African perspective, the sources in the news and photographs were mainly the US-dominated western agencies. Thus while the newspapers were dependent on Western sources they attempted to angle and frame the stories to reflect the brutality of the war.

Tawana Kupe and Nathalie Hyde-Clarke, in a study of the South-African media, reveal the ambiguity in media discourses torn between international news agencies with agendas dominated by the Western powers, and local commentators providing an anti-war perspective in analytical and editorial articles. The two authors express some hope that, with more voices such as the South African expressing disapproval of military conflict resolutions, and with new media available on the Internet, the global dominance by Western powers will be reduced to a certain degree.

Ahmed El-Gody widens the Arab media sample and analyses the television channels Al Arabeya, Abu Dhabi and Al Jazeera. He shows how the situation regarding satellite news broadcasts has dramatically changed since the 1991 Gulf War. At that time, Arab viewers were dependent on CNN in the running news whereas now several Arab channels offer an alternative Arab perspective on world events. Even though the Arab world lacks a demo-

cratic media tradition, the new situation in the Middle East, with its popular demand for opposition to US global dominance, has given the media more freedom to produce critical journalism opposing the perspectives usually presented by Western media. That freedom is more limited when it comes to dealing with Arab regimes.

Mohamed El-Bendary discusses the coverage of the Iraq War in the London-based pan-Arab daily *al-Hayat*. In using frame-analysis, El-Bendary shows how issues linked to regional issues in the Middle East dominated the coverage. Issues linked to the relationship between Europe and the US also played an important role in the coverage. The Arab perspective of US hegemony was an important feature in the overall coverage in *al-Hayat*, linked to issues like access to oil and US support for Israel. *Al-Hayat's* articles portrayed the Iraq War as a killing field and admonished the Bush administration as much as Saddam Hussein's regime.

Angelika Carfora, Christian Flatz, Martin Hartlieb and Armin Lanzinger, in their review of the Iraq War coverage in the Austrian press, document a divided picture. The tabloid newspaper, the *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, used a right-wing Austrian nationalist platform for its strong opposition to US policy in Iraq. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative analyses, the authors show how the tabloid paper combined sensationalism with being a spokesman for 'the man in the street', thus reflecting the strong opposition against the war in Austrian public opinion. The partly Springer-owned broadsheet *Der Standard*, with a liberal-left platform, took a more neutral approach, combining the role of neutral moderator with balanced news coverage.

In their analysis of Greek media, Sophia Kaitatzi-Whitlock and Christos Fragonikolopoulos show that severe conflicts and crises do not necessarily imply media manipulation and limitations on the public debate between politicians, journalists and citizens. Certainly their conclusion – that the Greek media discourses on the Iraq War were as near as one can come to the ideal of a public sphere – has to be related to the specific national (and regional) setting. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that in this national and international crisis situation pluralist ideals obtained in the Greek press, at the same time as these media, more than in previous conflicts, converged around an anti-war stance.

Spain was one of the members of the 'coalition of the willing' and a nation deeply divided over the Iraq War. The polls before the war showed that Spanish opinion was one of the most anti-war in the world with 80%-90 % opposed to the Aznar government's support for the Bush/Blair policy. Johan Gunnarsson studies *El Pais* and the *ABC* – two daily newspapers, the former siding with the opposition and the latter with the government – and his findings reveal the risks of a journalism that forsakes its professional virtues for its vested political interests; not only did it support the Aznar regime's involvement in a catastrophic political and military project, but it also attempted to cover up the consequences by accusing ETA of the tragic response in Madrid.

Sean Phelan shows how Irish media was divided in its war coverage. While the Public Service broadcaster RTE and *The Irish Times* reflected the anti-war sentiments of the majority of the Irish people, *The Sunday Independent* aligned itself with a closed pro-war and pro-American position. The Irish government's decision to allow the use of Shannon airport for US warplanes on the route to Iraq becomes a symbolic issue that reflects how the three media framed the coverage of the Iraq War along political lines.

Rune Ottosen analyses the two Newspapers *Aftenposten* and *Verdens Gang* and clarifies how the Norwegian media was divided in its attitudes towards the war. While the traditionally liberal-conservative morning paper *Aftenposten* reflected the resistance towards the war on the part of the Norwegian government and the majority of the population, the tabloid newspaper *Verdens Gang* chose a more pro-American line. Ottosen also studies how the mainstream media covered the Norwegian military presence in Iraq after July 2003, and the case of a law professor who claimed that the Norwegian military presence in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq was illegal and unconstitutional. The mainstream media avoided this debate, but it was reflected in the left wing newspaper *Klassekampen*. According to Ottosen, the mainstream media self-censored themselves on an issue that disturbed the image of Norway as a peace-maker in the international arena.

The Slovenian media studied by Karmen Erjavec were divided, as were many other media in Europe. One leading daily and two national television news programmes are compared. The results support the interpretation that ownership, together with institutional as well as professional practices, explain the differences in reporting the Iraq War. Whereas the state-owned media – without being the foreign ministry's voices – took an anti-war position, the commercial television channel owned by American capital was more ambivalent and eventually sided with the 'war alliance'. The latter also depended more on market conditions and had an 'embedded' reporter, with marked effects on its war coverage.

Stig A. Nohrstedt provides an analysis of how three Swedish dailies reported about the Security Council meetings in the pre-war period and the initial phase of the military intervention, with a special focus on forms and limits of media reflexivity in the context of the War on Terror. The good news is that the Swedish newspapers were quite sceptical in their framing of the US/UK accusations about Iraqi possession of WMD and involvement in the 9/11 terror attacks. The bad news is that in spite of their critical stance with respect to the official *causa bellum* in many other discursive ways they indirectly confirmed the fabricated excuses for invading Iraq, e.g. in graphical illustrations and taken-for-granted assumptions behind the reports.

In their analysis of New Zealand media, Margie Comrie and Susan Fountaine conclude that war coverage was 'balanced within strict limits'. She provides us with insights as to how the national political setting, with public opinion against the war and local media routinely relying on major Western media for their intakes and perspectives, makes an impact on the reporting.

As with the Swedish media on the other side of the world, a certain degree of reflexivity seems to have marked New Zealand media coverage since a 'war as spectacle' angle is noticeable. The discursive borderline for media critique is here drawn between opposition to the war as such, but not to the Western powers waging it.

In their contribution, Martin Hirst and Robert Schütze analyse how the Murdoch-owned company News Corporation through its newspaper *The Australian* is covering the Iraq War. The chapter sees the Australian coverage in the light of Australia's special relationship to the Iraq War through the bombs in Bali in October 2002, which killed several Australians. Through what the authors call a "common sense" approach, *The Australian* supported the Australian troops in a language that at some points was reduced to simplified enemy images framing the war on terror as a war between "us and them". The authors draw the conclusion that this also must be seen in the light of Robert Murdoch's campaign to support the warfare in Iraq through the media he controls on a global scale.

Toby Miller focuses on how entertainment has taken precedence over news in US television during the last decade. This is partly a result of the huge concentration of ownership in a few media conglomerates. Networks have cut down on foreign correspondents and foreign affairs to place more emphasis on emotion, entertainment and finance. Going through the US media coverage of the invasion of Iraq, he finds self-censorship on important issues like the legal basis for the war. The embedded journalists offer few critical reports on civilian casualties and injured American soldiers. Journalists who reflect critically on their own work are bullied into silence by right-wing actors such as Fox News.

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The Rhetorical State of Alert before the Iraq War 2003

Brigitte Mral

So great are the psychological resistances to war in modern nations that every war must appear to be a war of defence against a menacing, murderous aggressor. (Lasswell 1927:47)

The so-called war on terror constitutes a unique period, not least from a rhetorical point of view. Never before have so many speeches been given prior to, during and after war events as in the period following September 11. The Gulf War as well as NATO's military action in the Balkans, to mention just a few other recent war events, were also particularly speech intensive, but not to the same extent that we have now witnessed – and are still able to witness. The media's intensive and more or less critical monitoring of the events do not always benefit the war strategists and are always an unpredictable factor. One way of guiding public opinion in a certain direction is therefore to sidestep the media by giving direct addresses from platforms and *via* the Internet. New rhetorical IT strategies have gained in importance as a result of recent events, although the process has not really been noticed by the media. The objectives of such strategies are to let leaders 'speak' directly to the people at the first possible opportunity. The possibilities of the Internet also facilitate the publication of speeches in their entirety – to be read, heard or viewed by anyone, anywhere. The political and military leadership, primarily in the US, tries to keep the preferential right of interpretation by constantly defining and redefining the course of events. Naturally, the speeches are also aimed at journalists as a target group and are designed in such a way that particularly striking expressions can be inserted directly into headlines and articles. The White House home page collects public statements by George W. Bush and his staff. This open account of everything that has been said creates, in itself, a certain impression of credibility. However, the publication of the speeches is first and foremost a way of counteracting the news flow's depictions of reality by providing the administration's own definitions of the state of things.

Rhetoric scholar Murray Edelman claims that in times of uncertainty people need someone to give structure and meaning to a confusing reality: “People who are anxious and confused are eager to be supplied with an organised political order – including simple explanations of the threats they fear – and with reassurance that the threats are being countered” (Edelman, 1971:65). This is where propaganda comes in. Most simply, propaganda can be defined as active influencing of opinion, a unilateral form of rhetoric which tries to guide our thoughts and feelings towards a certain goal – and not necessarily without our conscious consent, for where war is concerned, reality is menacing and polarised to such an extent that unilateral messages are welcomed by many to provide reality with a sharper outline (Mral 2004: 12).

According to old rhetorical insight, the way in which things are perceived is dependent on the way in which they are denoted. Names and concepts create our perception of reality and govern our actions to a great degree. Since September 11, we find ourselves in a situation which has been defined as a state of war of new dimensions, a state of war which has at times evoked constant efforts to try, with the help of language, to convince the world of its justness. This became clear in connection with the preparations for, and realisation of, military action in Iraq in 2003. Initiating an attack on another country is always a questionable venture, whether one chooses to call it war or prefers to use euphemisms such as conflict, action or peace-creating measures. Whatever the term, military aggression is about sending sons and daughters on potentially fatal missions, allocating vast financial means from a budget often already strained, and risking vast damage in the form of civilian suffering and environmental disaster. In order to justify this, leaders have always made major rhetorical efforts to convince the public of the justness of war, and the Iraq War is no exception. This study will examine how the arguments were developed prior to the action. The study provides a diachronic survey of the chain of events from rhetorical perspectives, as well as a synchronic analysis of recurring rhetorical themes – especially of vague concepts and metaphors. The focus is on the rhetoric of the Bush administration.

Background: The Introduction of the Iraqi Theme

The Iraq War in 2003 was preceded by a succession of state-of-alert speeches. During the course of the autumn of 2002, President Bush painted a picture of Iraq as posing a great threat to the US, a menacing image as vague as it was frightening. The Iraqi theme was however integrated in the rhetoric on the so-called war on terror only days after September 11, when Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, among others, wondered whether any action should not have its starting-point in Iraq. In reality, the Pentagon seems to have worked on a plan for military action against Iraq long before the attacks on the World Trade Center. And while Bush was generally of the opin-

ion that the World Trade Center attacks provided an opportunity to strengthen the global influence of the US, Woodward, who attended many meetings in the Security Council, claims that Rumsfeld was more specific:

Before the attacks, the Pentagon had been working for months on developing a military option for Iraq...Any serious, full-scale war against terrorism would have to make Iraq a target – eventually. Rumsfeld was raising the possibility that they could take advantage of the opportunity offered by the terrorist attacks to go after Saddam immediately (Woodward, 2002:49).

Bush's advisors, headed by Karl Rove, were also clear on the fact that Saddam Hussein was a simple and obvious enemy. We will never know exactly what was being said behind the scenes, but tolerably reliable sources of background information are Bush's own speech-writers, as well as the various pro-Bush columnists who provide accounts of the rhetorical moves and strategies of the administration. Two of these more or less admiring commentators, James Moore and Wayne Slater, describe the construction of Iraq as the enemy as follows, taking Rove's reasoning as a starting-point:

We are good. Iraq is bad. We love freedom. They do not. A clear, accessible message for an electorate too busy to read deeper into the story. The language must not be bloody. It's regime change. Not war. Clean and antiseptic. More of a procedure than a battle (Moore & Slater, 2003:287).

Clear and simple antitheses, and an almost Orwellian double talk where war becomes peace and attack becomes defence, characterise much of the rhetoric produced by 'the White House Communications Shop' (Dubose, Reid & Cannon, 2003:204) and were reproduced time and time again in the speeches of President Bush.

State of the Union Address, January 29 2002

On January 29 2002, President Bush delivered his annual address to the nation, a speech which, in principle, was a victory speech following the military action in Afghanistan during the autumn of 2001.

In actual fact, this address is a key visionary speech for the continuation of the 'war on terror', because it establishes the path ahead with the central phrase 'axis of evil'. Bush characterised Iran, Iraq and North Korea as an

axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States.

In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html>)

The metaphor is obviously an implied reference to the Axis Powers of the Second World War, primarily Germany, Italy and Japan, a coalition against the so-called Allies, Great Britain, France, the USA and the Soviet Union. The 'axis of evil' is of course a misleading term, as it suggests the existence of a coalition between these states when, in reality, two of them (Iran and Iraq) have been bitter enemies for decades. Furthermore, there is no manifest coalition with the third state, North Korea.

However, propagandistic images function at an emotional rather than a logical level, and the aim here was to paint a menacing picture. What is interesting is how this picture came about. David Frum, one of Bush's junior speech writers, says that about a month before the speech was to be delivered he was more or less encouraged by Mike Gerson, one of the strategists in Bush's staff, to come up with a motive for war: "Can you sum up in a sentence or two our best case for going after Iraq?" Frum did not think it appropriate to enumerate the cruel acts committed by Saddam Hussein over the past ten years, because the next question would be why the US did not finish the job during its previous attack on Iraq in 1991. Neither could he refer to Saddam's alleged murder attempt on George Bush Senior, as that would seem too personal a motive for starting a war. He knew that there were no confirmed connections between Saddam Hussein and the September 11 attacks. Bush, however, needed an argument that linked the two together. The solution was to go back in time to identify a similar situation: Pearl Harbour. Japan had been ruthless and unpredictable, and so was Saddam Hussein. Furthermore, an even deadlier attack could be expected if Saddam Hussein were to join forces with others, as Germany did with Japan – only Frum wanted to link Saddam Hussein with the terrorists, not with another country. This was accomplished in subsequent revisions of the speech. Condoleezza Rice, among others, wanted to take it a step further and focus on the theme 'weapons of mass destruction'. Reflecting on which other states had access to such weapons, it was clear that, for instance, Iran did and, remarkably enough, North Korea:

It was attempting to develop Nuclear Weapons, it had a history of reckless aggression, and it too had been cosseted by the United States in the recent past and needed to feel a stronger hand (Frum, 2003:238).

Frum's use of language here is striking with respect to American self-perception: North Korea had been 'cosseted' and needed a firmer hand.

Frum called his creation the 'axis of hatred', thus connecting to Bush's previous 'hate' theme. However, Gerson wanted a link to Bush's use of religious terminology, and thus the end result in the address became the 'axis of evil':

North Korea is a regime arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction, while starving its citizens. Iran aggressively pursues these weapons and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom. Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax, and nerve gas, and nuclear weapons for over a decade.

This is an example of classic three-step argumentation, where the strongest card, Iraq, is played last. By including the other two threats and linking them, one of them certainly appears to be more menacing than if Iraq alone is the enemy. And all three are connected by that vague but alarming word 'evil'.

The 'Evil' Theme

In his book on propaganda after the First World War, Harold D Lasswell writes, under the heading, 'Satanism' that one has to make the enemy appear demoralised, presumptuous and cruel. The enemy nation should appear as arrogant and contemptuous; "Any nation who began the War and blocks the peace is incorrigible, wicked and perverse" (Lasswell, 1927:77). In the First World War, nations – France, Germany, Britain as well as the USA – tried to outdo each other in depicting the atrocities of the opposing side. In the propaganda of today, there has been a certain shift: from depicting an entire people as cruel and inferior to describing the leaders in satanic terms. Saddam Hussein had already been described as the new Hitler during the previous war. Bush Senior used to refer to him by the name Saddam only, putting the stress on the first syllable, which is not only a way of diminishing the person, but inevitably also brings another prince of darkness to mind (Karlberg & Mral, 1998:76). The Iraqi people are depicted as victims, even as friends. People are being liberated from tyrants – the enemy becomes clear and tangible. Whoever sides with the tyrant defines themselves as an enemy and may be fought. The difficulty of distinguishing between friend and foe in the heat of the battle is suddenly logical and reasonable. 'Collateral damage', i.e. unintentional damage to civilians and civilian targets, is regrettable but unavoidable.

In the current war on terror, the alleged main enemies, bin Laden and Saddam Hussein, were easy to identify as menacing and murderous. Based on previous experiences, it was reasonable to characterise them as evil. But what is meant by evil?

There are different views on how to define evil (Rediehs, 2002:65pp). One theory claims that evil is something that can be found within certain people – suffice it to think of detective novels such as those by Agatha Christie, where the plot is often built around the existence of an evil human being or force acting as the invisible hand behind the evil deed. This existential and indi-

vidual view regards evil as something constant, and which should be eradicated.

The other view, which might be called structural, claims that there is no irrational force called evil, but that the actions called evil are the result of complex social and psychological factors which can in principle be identified and corrected. The Swedish legal system is essentially based on this view. Another example is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, which embraced the idea that the perpetrator of wicked deeds should not be punished with violence but rehabilitated through reconciliation with the victims.

The Old Testament essentially adopts the first notion of evil, “eye for eye, tooth for tooth” (Exodus 21:24). The New Testament, however, upholds the second view, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke, 23:34).

The Bush administration seems to have based their views on the individual, existential perspective, originating from the Old Testament, even if Bush usually seems to prefer to quote the New Testament in his speeches. The individual strategy is much more useful in propaganda that aims at simplifying reality, allowing clear modes of action to be presented.

In the first sentences of the address on September 11, Bush had already used the word ‘evil’ to describe the terrorist attacks: “evil, despicable acts of terror”. A few sentences later he proceeded to use an explicit existential description: “Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature”. He firmly established the concept of evil, citing a passage from the Bible, and thus anchoring the war on terror, using Biblical undertones, as a just war: “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me” (Psalms 23:4). (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-16.html>).

The speech writer David Frum, who praises Bush’s rhetorical ability, comments on the use of the concept ‘evil’: “He described the murderers as ‘the evil ones’. In a country where almost two-third of the population believes in the existence of the devil, Bush was identifying Osama bin Laden and his gang as literally satanic” (Frum, 2003:140).

In later speeches the idea of evil human beings becomes increasingly explicit. Five days after 9/11, Bush elaborates on the thought that evil is linked to human nature: “We’ve been warned there are evil people in this world. We’ve been warned so vividly – and we’ll be alert. Your government is alert. The governors and mayors are alert that evil folks still lurk out there” (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010916-2.html>)

And at a press conference on October 11 he declares: “I think it’s essential that all moms and dads and citizens tell their children we love them and there is love in the world, but also remind them there are evil people.” These evil people, personified by Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, not only kill but enjoy it: “They kill thousands of innocent people and then rejoice about it”, he says at the same press conference. By depicting the main rep-

representatives of terrorism as well as those who protect them, whether bin Laden or Saddam Hussein, as existentially evil, it becomes fully legitimate to destroy the enemy using all available means. No room is given for reflection or deliberation. The picture of the enemy is clear and the response is obvious.

Rhetorical State of Alert, Autumn 2002

After Bush's State of the Union Address on January 29 2002, relatively little was said about Iraq. However, following a visit by British Prime Minister Tony Blair for the anniversary of September 11, the rhetorical state of alert (i.e. the almost six month long period of rhetorical efforts to make credible the necessity of the Iraq War), gained speed with increasingly threatening imagery.

In a radio address on October 5, Bush, using alliteration for emphasis, describes the threat from Saddam Hussein as "grave and growing". Two days later he delivers a speech in Cincinnati which has very clear connections with the address given by Bush Senior at the start of the Gulf War. The setting is interesting and has been carefully chosen. Bush is standing in front of a world map with the US at the centre. The Internet page for this speech bears the headline "Denial and deception", the Iraqi flag and a map of Iraq. The heading of the speech is "President Bush outlines Iraqi threat". He begins by speaking about "a great threat to peace, and America's determination to lead the world in confronting that threat".

The speech that follows is seemingly based on a dialogue with the American people, in the form of detailed answers to questions people ask themselves. Bush presents all his main themes in a quick disposition: "Many Americans have raised legitimate questions: about the nature of the threat; about the urgency of action – why be concerned now; about the link between Iraq developing weapons of terror, and the wider war on terror".

He goes on to assure the public that the questions have been discussed "broadly and fully" within his administration. "And tonight, I want to share those discussions with you". He obviously wants to give an impression of competence and reflection as well as of complete transparency. The first question, relating to the nature of the threat, is answered by describing Saddam Hussein as the ultimate dictator, and using terms such as murderous, brutal, merciless and homicidal.

The second question, why the urgency (which was surely the most relevant question), is first answered: since 'we know' that Hussein has dangerous weapons today, there is hardly any point in waiting until tomorrow when he might have even more. On what does Bush base this statement, which we now know was false? Apart from the repeated 'we know' based on intelligence activities without evidence, he bases his statement on the weapons inspectors. Another argument for military intervention is guilt by association

as well as alleged cooperation between Iraq and al Qaeda: “We know that Iraq and the al Qaeda terrorist network share a common enemy – the United States of America”.

The issue of urgency is then brought up again – twice – in the speech, which indicates the weight given to it. The second time, he uses the efficient metaphor of the ‘smoking gun’, a metaphor that is later to occur often. “Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof – the smoking gun – that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud...we have every reason to assume the worst, and we have an urgent duty to prevent the worst from occurring”.

The image of the mushroom cloud was already part of the official discourse concerning Saddam Hussein. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice had used it in an appearance on CNN on September 8 2002: “The problem here is that there will always be some uncertainty about how quickly he can acquire nuclear weapons. But we don’t want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud” (<http://www.spinsanity.org/>).

The ominous picture is essentially and exclusively based on the concept of weapons of mass destruction. This term is, with some variation, used 32 times in the speech and it formed, as we know, the basis of the argument. Let us take a closer look at what this expression, hereafter shortened to WMD, really means.

The ‘Weapons of Mass Destruction’ Theme

The most straightforward gateway to understanding the meaning of a vague concept is sometimes the definition provided by an encyclopaedia. According to the Swedish encyclopaedia *Nationalencyklopedin*, ‘weapons of mass destruction’ is

a generic term for nuclear weapons as well as biological, chemical and radiological weapons, defined in a UN resolution in 1948. Subsequently, some forms of environmental influence with the aim of inflicting harm on another nation have been added. The concept thus comprises a number of technically disparate, and in part hypothetical, types of weapons or methods, and the word is especially used in political contexts [transl.].

WMD is thus a frightening but vaguely defined concept. It is a powerful and threatening expression that is used to denote, not one’s own weapons’ production, but the enemy arsenal. According to the BBC News e-cyclopedia, the FBI’s definition of WMD also includes conventional explosives: “A weapon crosses the WMD threshold when the consequences of its release overwhelm local responders”. And: “WMD has had a mass impact of its own. Its recent ubiquity has earned it a place on Lake Superior State University’s famed list

of 'misused, overused and generally useless' words" (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/2744411.stm>).

The concept WMD already appears in the speeches following 9/11, before the Afghanistan War. At a press conference on October 11 2001 (a month after the disaster), Bush explains, apropos the high degree of emergency measures in place to prepare for any new attacks:

We received knowledge that perhaps an al Qaeda operative was prepared to use a crop duster to spray a biological weapon or a chemical weapon on American people. And so we responded...We knew full well that in order for a crop duster to become a weapon of mass destruction would require a retrofitting, and so we talked to machine shops around where crop dusters are located.

The use of the concept is especially frequent in connection with the anthrax episode in the autumn of 2001. A few mail items containing anthrax bacteria caused a world-wide fear of new terror attacks, this time with biological weapons. Five people died in the US and a large number of people were infected. The spread of the anthrax was without delay naturally linked to al Qaeda and intensified war preparations. When, after a couple of weeks, the bacteria proved to have originated from American laboratories, and when, a month later, a former employee at an American army military laboratory was arrested for the crime, the story quickly disappeared from the news headlines. However, the events made a lasting impression. According to the sociologist R. Danielle Egan, the anthrax scare, however legitimate it may have seemed, also drew attention away from the war in Afghanistan:

The use of the term 'weapon of mass destruction' in the discourse of anthrax is the ultimate illusion, the ultimate way of producing a cultural panic and blindness to the massive contradiction between Anthrax...and the repeated dropping of ten-ton bombs on Afghanistan. The contradiction in logic is so obvious, but so obscured. How can a bacterium that a simple sixty-day course of the antibiotic Cipro can cure be viewed as more threatening than the continual air raids in Afghanistan? (Egan, 2002:18).

Egan's comparison is of course misleading, not only because the threats are aimed in opposite directions (anthrax at the Western World, bombs at Afghanistan), but also because anthrax, if it were to be used on a large scale, could not be fought easily with antibiotics. However, with anthrax and what Egan calls 'discursively produced panic' the vague concept of WMD has been given a concrete and, to the rhetoric of war, welcome, meaning.

Colin Powell's Speech, February 5 2003

Just how welcome is evident, for instance, from the address given by Colin Powell on February 5 2003, in which he presented what are now highly disputed 'facts' about the Iraqi possession of WMD. The speech was given a little over a week before the two weapons inspectors Dr Blix and Dr El Baradei presented their preliminary findings – findings which were generally expected to be largely negative. Powell's speech should be seen as an attempt at refuting this expert knowledge in advance, in order to forestall any further protests against the war plans. It was, in this context, a very long speech, one hour and 15 minutes, packed with figures, quotations and visual evidence. Powell claimed to have two objectives. One was to support what he defined as the core assessments made by Dr Blix and Dr El Baradei, namely that Iraq had neither accepted disarmament nor provided any new information on WMD. The second point of the inspectors, however, the fact that they had not found any traces of WMD, was not mentioned. Powell's second objective was to do just that – provide new information, "to share with you what the United States knows about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction as well as Iraq's involvement in terrorism, which is also the subject of Resolution 1441 and other earlier resolutions".

This is of course a problematic statement since it raises the question of why the inspectors did not receive this information. If the US had had access to more far-reaching information, they should have shared it with the inspectors. He meets any potential objection by saying that the inspectors had been provided with all relevant information.

From an argumentation-technical point of view, the actual submission of evidence is interesting. What we can see is, in rhetorical terms, a clustering of examples, an abundance of facts, pictures, quotations and statements, which by its quantity alone gives a sense of credibility. The degree of truth in these statements will not be studied here; the object of the study is the actual rhetorical form. Powell based his entire argument and credibility on UN Security Council Resolution 1441, which he defined as follows: "The purpose of that resolution was to disarm Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction... Resolution 1441 gave Iraq one last chance, one last chance to come into compliance or to face serious consequences". In its entirety, the long speech was an attempt at proving that Iraq had not complied. The submission of evidence seemed to be only about the presence of WMD (afterwards many journalists pointed out that the evidence produced was weak). The basic thesis was that Iraq had been un-cooperative and, tacitly, that it would face 'serious consequences'. Powell mentioned Resolution 1441 no less than 19 times.

The speech could be, and still can be, found on the White House web page where the overall headline is "Iraq – Denial and Deception". The page presents all the evidence in the form of still pictures, video as well as audio clips (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>). Powell used 45 visual 'pieces of evidence' to support his argument. Accord-

ing to classical rhetoric, examples, concrete and easily comprehensible pictures, quotations and stories are the most efficient evidence (Johannesson, 1998:102pp). That which can be seen and heard with one's own eyes and ears always carries the heaviest weight. Added to this is the credibility of the speaker – the ethos that he brings with him as well as the ethos he creates as he speaks.

A speaker's ethos can be described as a combination of his credibility in terms of competence, virtues and status (primary ethos) and the credibility he manages to achieve in the actual speaking situation (secondary ethos) (Mral, 2003:37p). Powell's primary ethos as Secretary of State, a potential presidential candidate and experienced high-ranking officer in the armed forces, was naturally strong. But as the situation was so sensitive the planned actions were questioned in the UN assembly, and proof that Iraq constituted an imminent threat was almost non-existent. Powell had thus to use both his personal qualities and his performance to reclaim the credibility of the Bush Administration.

The speech on the White House home page includes the video recording, thereby providing an opportunity to study not only the text but also the presentation, and allowing the study of Powell's body language. Powell strongly emphasises his words with the help of gestures, pauses and voice variations that indicate indignation. He stresses his words with rhythmic hand movements and by knocking on the table. Thus, he not only reads a text but puts his own ethos into it, expresses with his whole body a deep commitment and conviction of the validity of the evidence. Giving one's own commitment credibility is a rhetorical necessity if one really wants to carry conviction. This is best done, as it is here, by body language that corresponds to the essence of the words.

The speech is full of rhetorical strategies: rhetorical questions, emphasis, irony, indignation, clustering of menacing pictures, illusory exactness and vague statements. Powell claims 32 times that 'we know', sometimes without giving any sources at all, sometimes by referring to 'human sources' which are at times characterised as 'human sources who are in a position to know facts'. Names are rarely mentioned.

The slides and their interpretations constitute the strongest evidence. In a war situation, rational, logical and truth-seeking arguments should not be expected. It is, however, useful to weigh up at least some of Powell's arguments against a logical ideal of reason. According to such an ideal one should not be guilty of what are known as fallacies, logical false conclusions and lack of objectivity. Without entering further into the complex field of logical argumentation analysis, it is still possible to benefit from its definition of lack of objectivity. The philosopher Arne Naess has listed a few deviations from the objectivity ideal in terms of tendentious accounts, ambiguities, descriptions and hasty conclusions (Naess, 1995:101-115). Powell offers some textbook examples of these and other fallacies. One of his first 'pieces of evidence' of Saddam Hussein's not making any efforts to disarm is a brief con-

versation between an alleged officer in the Iraqi Republican Guard Headquarters and an officer in the field. After playing the conversation (in English translation), he reads it out again with dramatic intonation. "Let me pause again and review the elements of this message":

'They're inspecting the ammunition you have, yes'

'Yes.'

'For the possibility there are forbidden ammo.'

'For the possibility there is by chance forbidden ammo?'

'Yes.'

'And we sent you a message yesterday to clean out all of the areas, the scrap areas, the abandoned areas. Make sure there is nothing there.'

Interesting here is that, using emphasis, Powell repeats the pretty thin message that everybody has already read. What is really remarkable, however, is that he misrepresents it. Because in the translation, the penultimate sentence reads: "And we sent you a message to inspect the scrap areas, the abandoned areas." The original thus mentions only inspecting the scrap areas and the abandoned areas, while Powell speaks of *all* areas, and not just about inspecting but cleaning out. The original could just as easily be interpreted to mean that the officer in the field is to check if there is really nothing left, even in the scrap areas – a fair request in the circumstances. Powell, however, claims that what is being said is about deliberately hiding ammunition. In terms of fallacy, this can be referred to as a tendentious account; it can also be called deliberate misquotation. From this and the concluding comment that the officer is to destroy the message so that no one will see it, Powell concludes that "they don't want that message seen, because they were trying to clean up the area to leave no evidence behind of the presence of weapons of mass destruction. And they can claim that nothing was there. And the inspectors can look all they want, and they will find nothing. This effort to hide things from the inspectors is not one or two isolated events, quite the contrary. This is part and parcel of a policy of evasion and deception that goes back 12 years, a policy set at the highest levels of the Iraqi regime".

The entire argument is based on *argumentum ex silentio*, i.e. the fact that the opposition is quiet is interpreted as an affirmation of their being in the wrong and that one's own arguments are valid. It can also be called *argumentum ad ignorantia*: "I am right since you cannot prove the opposite" (Sigrell, 2001:131).

A fallacy that recurs throughout the speech is *argumentum ad baculum*, the threat argument. The clearest, underlined by a remarkable example, comes in the middle of the speech when Powell introduces the anthrax theme. He displays a small tube containing some kind of powder and says:

Less than a teaspoon of dry anthrax, a little bit about this amount – this is just about the amount of a teaspoon – less than a teaspoonfull of dry anthrax in

an envelope shut down the United States Senate in the fall of 2001. This forced several hundred people to undergo emergency medical treatment and killed two postal workers just from an amount just about this quantity that was inside of an envelope. Iraq declared 8,500 litres of anthrax, but UNSCOM estimates that Saddam Hussein could have produced 25,000 litres. If concentrated into this dry form, this amount would be enough to fill tens upon tens upon tens of thousands of teaspoons. And Saddam Hussein has not verifiably accounted for even one teaspoonfull of this deadly material.

Let us hope that the tube did not actually contain anthrax. However, it takes careful studying of the wording to see that Mr Powell does not actually assert this either. The ambiguity is hardly a coincidence. We recognise the classic demand for *evidentia*, a presentation of exact and striking details. The figures appear to be most exact and at the same time vague; a teaspoon and “tens upon tens of thousands of teaspoons”. They seem reliable and become credible when Colin Powell invests his entire ethos in the demonstration of evidence. As mentioned above, Powell, as a former officer of the armed forces and a politician, enjoys a high degree of credibility and because he is the one who, with great emphasis, presents this ‘evidence’, there are few reasons to doubt it. War propaganda expects people to have short memories. And who can remember statements dating back several years? Powell himself should have been aware that even if he did not deliberately lie, his information was dubious, because already in February, 2001 in reference to the USA’s successful sanctions against Iraq and Saddam Hussein, he had already said:

He has not developed any significant capability with respect to weapons of mass destruction. He is unable to protect conventional power against his neighbours (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2001/933.htm>).

What we have here is thus a case where one propaganda statement jeopardises the other. In 2001 he assured the neighbours of Iraq that the US was in control of the situation, that the air patrols and the sanctions had worked and had prevented the production of WMD. Two years later he claims the opposite.

That WMD was a pretext is now relatively undisputed, but few have expressed this as clearly as Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. On May 28 2003, in an interview with the magazine *Vanity Fair*, Wolfowitz admits that WMD were never the primary reason for the US invasion of Iraq: “For bureaucratic reasons, we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on.”

The UN weapons inspectors’ work has always been problematic for the US Government. In his ‘victory speech’ of May 1 2003, Bush implies that it had been completely useless, and that the search for weapons of mass destruction would start now: “We’ve begun the search for hidden chemical and

biological weapons and already know of hundreds of sites that will be investigated.” It was as if the UN weapons inspectors’ work had never taken place.

Summit in the Azores, March 16 2003

A possible invasion of Iraq had been discussed for more than six months and time was beginning to run short, partly because of the summer heat. The protests against the approaching war were both extensive and global, and from a propaganda perspective the actions had, to the greatest degree possible, to be made to appear as non-war.

The statements given by the so-called Transatlantic Coalition, George W Bush, Tony Blair and Spain’s Jose Maria Aznar, during the summit in the Azores on March 16 2003, two days before the outbreak of war, are an almost classical example of double-talk. At the press conference, Aznar declared that they had not come to the Azores to declare war. Nor does the statement of the three statesmen refer to the war but, rather, to what is going to happen afterwards. Having again depicted Saddam Hussein as the root of all evil and as responsible for all adverse consequences, the Coalition presents its future actions as a major humanitarian operation.

We envisage a unified Iraq with its territorial integrity respected. All the Iraqi people – its rich mix of Sunni and Shiite Arabs, Kurds, Turkomen, Assyrians, Chaldeans, and all others – should enjoy freedom, prosperity, and equality in a united country. We will support the Iraqi people’s aspirations for a representative government that upholds human rights and the rule of law as cornerstones of democracy.

War always implies instability and uncertain consequences. The international community was not supportive of the action, which meant that a majority of public opinion considered it a highly risky venture. Therefore, one of the rhetorical aims at this point was to claim the opposite, to make the Coalition appear reliable. This was done by emphasising the security of the cooperation: “...we plan to work in close partnership with international institutions, including the United Nations; our Allies and partners; and bilateral donors”. Security is a key word, which is again contrasted to the WMD threat: “Any military presence, should it be necessary, will be temporary and intended to promote security and elimination of weapons of mass destruction...”

The propaganda technique used here can, in the words of rhetoric researcher Lennart Hellspong, be called disguise by lies, indefiniteness, embellishing and abstraction (Hellspong, 1992:220pp).

The WMD falsehood does not need further comment. The indefiniteness lies in the fact that the action is described in terms such as ‘if conflict occurs’, and ‘military presence, should it be necessary’. It is embellished by presenting

the future action as a humanitarian and charitable deed, providing a vision of a better world following a possible 'conflict'. The abstraction lies in calling the actions a 'commitment', in redefining the planned military aggression as an act of peace.

The 'Helpfulness' Theme

That the Coalition is coming to help is a recurring theme in the war rhetoric following the September 11 attacks. Being helpful and generous is part of American self-perception (Hart, 1997:238f) and thus a worthwhile theme for justifying the war as well as for balancing aggression. Before the war in Afghanistan, in the autumn of 2001, Bush had already emphasised the generosity of the US:

Even as we fight evil regimes we are generous to the people they oppress. Following World War II, America fed and rebuilt Japan and Germany, and their people became some of our closest friends in the world (Speech, October 6, 2001).

Although not all Germans or Japanese would agree with this statement, it is nevertheless interesting if one wants to understand the American self-image on which Bush bases his reasoning. The US does not want war, but peace; the American people do not want to wage war, but to help. The planned action is only violent by way of exception and force. In the address at the start of war on October 7 2001, Bush again underlines the friendly intentions behind the military action:

At the same time, the oppressed people of Afghanistan will know the generosity of America and our allies. As we strike military targets, we will also drop food, medicine and supplies to the starving and suffering men and women and children of Afghanistan.

On October 30 2001, at the height of the Afghanistan War, he says: "We are a generous people, a thoughtful people who hurt, and share the sadness when people lose their life or when people are hurt...We have shown in difficult times that we're not just a world power, that we're a good and kind and courageous people".

Among the photo essays on the White House web page, there are, under the headlines "Photos" and "Timelines" respectively, links called "Helping others", which are largely about aid action for Afghan children, as well as a link called "Helping those in need", providing speeches on relief initiatives. What is interesting here is that both these links deal almost exclusively with Afghanistan and with women and children. A corresponding collection of pictures of children receiving help from American soldiers can be found under

the Iraq links: the women and children are well-dressed, well-nourished, happy, beautiful and thankful. The American soldiers appear almost as Messianic saviours (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/photoessay/essay6/>). The same theme – that the main objective of the action is to provide help – is also brought up in the speech on the eve of the Iraq War.

War Address, March 19 2003

On March 19, the eve of the invasion of Iraq, Bush gives the war address, this time from the Oval Office, the same place from where Bush Senior had announced the Gulf War. On the windowsill behind him, two family photos can be seen – one of his daughters and one of his wife and dog.

In the introduction of the war address, Bush defines the action as “military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger”. Big words with many undertones and associations. The word ‘operations’ is reminiscent of the clinical warfare so cherished in the Gulf War. Disarming someone may involve the use of violence, but it is a peace-creating measure; here Iraq represents only military power, as its people are to be ‘set free’. The entire action is thus about defence – the whole world will be defended. The war becomes an aid action:

I want Americans and all the world to know that coalition forces will make every effort to spare innocent civilians from harm...And helping Iraqis achieve a united, stable and free country will require our sustained commitment. We come to Iraq with respect for its citizens, for their great civilisation and for the religious faiths they practise. We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people.

The word ‘war’ occurs twice, both times in connection with Saddam Hussein. Firstly, the aim is to prevent him from waging war, and secondly, he does not have any respect for conventions of war. In order to really emphasise the threat which is being fought, there is no longer talk of weapons of mass destruction but of ‘weapons of mass murder’. In this context, the satanic theme is brought up again:

In this conflict, America faces an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality. Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas, attempting to use innocent men, women and children as shields for his own military – a final atrocity against his people.

Since this speech is aimed largely at the fighting troops, this statement should be interpreted as a justification for civilian areas to potentially also become legitimate targets – should the enemy be suspected of hiding there. That the

enemy disguises itself again alludes to the cowardice theme. The American military, on the other hand, is described as possessing 'skill and bravery' as well as an 'honourable and decent spirit'. In addition to military operations, the actions of the Allies are described in terms of 'striking selected targets of military importance', 'broad and concerted campaign', 'common defence', 'remove a threat', 'decisive force'. They are pure, well-organised and just.

The war is described as inevitable ('Now that conflict has come'), as is the coming victory – a necessity in war propaganda. The conflict is a part of America's 'work for peace'. The 'work' metaphor, in particular, is interesting as part of the rhetorical efforts to make the war appear as normality: "And you can know that our forces will be coming home as soon as their work is done".

'Business', 'work' and 'job', as well as 'mission', are recurring concepts in Bush's rhetoric. American identity is, to a high degree, constituted by the image of its citizens as a hard-working people. Working hard is a matter of honour (Hart, 1997:238f).

The 'Work' Theme

From the very beginning, as the chain of events after September 11 unfolded, Bush defines the war on terror as a 'job'. In his speech on November 16 2001, he places military action on a par with civilian work: "I also have faith in our military. And we have got a job to do – just like the farmers and ranchers and business owners and factory workers have a job to do. My administration has a job to do, and we're going to do it. We will rid the world of the evil-doers".

What happens when a war is defined as a job? The metaphor gives the action a kind of everyday status, something familiar. Political leaders presume that individuals know their jobs should contribute to the nation's success. But in principal work is a civilian activity. Work is necessary. It has a certain traditional, masculine quality. Work is honourable and has little to do with feelings except, of course, pride.

A job is assigned to you, it is serious, secure and involving great responsibility – a metaphor which, in the current war rhetoric is, interestingly, complemented with factors that to all appearances do not have anything in common with war: games, sports and entertainment.

The 'Games' and 'Sports' Theme

In the first days after the September 11 attacks, Bush had already coined the hunting metaphor. "Make no mistake: The United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts". And thus the opponent was defined as cowardly, unmanly and fair game. Hunting is a traditionally

male sport and animals are the objective. Hunting can be a way of gathering food, but people are not normally the prey. In war, the hunting metaphor is a worthwhile one in order to degrade and dehumanise the opponent. But hunting is also an accepted pastime, perhaps even a necessity in order to limit damage to land and property.

Hunting is just one of the game and sports metaphors used to describe the war as something acceptable and familiar, even entertaining. Another sign of patriotic playfulness in connection with the Iraq War is an issue of collector's picture cards. The company Topps, which issues cards of, for example, sports stars, has issued a series of 90 cards entitled "Enduring Freedom". The writer Clay Risen explains in the independent *Flak Magazine*:

Enduring Freedom picture cards are only the latest in a long line of Sept 11 kitsch. And while the idea of making money off the tragedy is questionable, these cards go one step further by presenting the 'New War on Terrorism' as a fun, pleasant way for kids to learn about current events.

The cards thus target children. Printed on the back of the packets is:

An encyclopedic record of America's war against terrorism. Cards contain biographical information on civilian and military leaders entrusted to guide us through this fight, statistical data, and photos of military hardware.

Topps' own explanation for the issue of the cards is that the collection "presents the New War on Terrorism in a format that children understand. Not included are the disturbing images shown repeatedly on national newscasts. Instead, Topps has chosen to focus on America's strengths – its elected leaders, the security of its military, its worldwide support...and the courage and unity of its people".

The pictures are fairly dull, showing Bush on the phone, Condoleezza Rice in a speaking pose, soldiers in formation ("Marines Head Out For Overseas Duty"), but nothing 'disturbing', nothing from the fields of war, no advanced weapons and, as Clay Risen sarcastically remarks, nothing about the human side of the war, "of refugee camps, of wounded soldiers or of anti-war protests. That would be 'disturbing'. And anyway, this is the 'New War', in which the bad guys get incinerated, civilians go untouched and U.S. servicemen don't die. A kid-friendly war, and that means a profit-friendly war as well. With merchandise like this, who needs Fox News?" (<http://flakmag.com/misc/topps.html>).

Even the Swedish media used games metaphors during the Gulf War in 1991 to imply its inevitability. A game should not be interrupted until one of the sides has won (Johannesson, 1992:44pp). Trade cards had already been used during Operation Desert Storm, as analysed by Matthew Nadelhaft: "The prevalence of sports metaphors in discourse about the war illustrates both the utility of sports as a conceptual tool and as means of legitimization, and

the pervasiveness of sports in American cultural logic; its almost unconscious residence in the American mind" (Nadelhaft, 1993:26).

However, the sports and games metaphors are not only useful in an American context, but are part of a male conceptual world in which life appears as a fighting sport. Perhaps they represent a way of giving war more human proportions, even entertainment value. That the Iraq War was considered a game of positions is, from a rhetorical point of view, unequivocal. Mr Bush as well as Mr Blair readily uses the concept 'game' to describe the events. At the press conference in the Azores, Tony Blair, for example, states: "Saddam plays these games and we carry on allowing him to play them". And in reply to the question of how they were going to vote on a second UN resolution, Mr Bush says:

I was the guy that said they ought to vote. And one country voted – at least showed their cards, I believe. It's an old Texas expression, show your cards, when you're playing poker. France showed their cards. After I said what I said, they said they were going to veto anything that held Saddam to account. So cards have been played. And we'll just have to take an assessment after tomorrow to determine what that card meant.

This could be the statement that led to a PR gimmick particularly appreciated by the media: a pack of cards featuring Iraq's 52 'most-wanted' leaders, 54 men and one woman.

Brigadier General Vincent Brooks, the spokesperson of the US Alliance at the US Central Command outpost in Qatar explains on April 11 2003 (transcript from CBC News):

/.../Coalition governments have identified a list of key regime leaders who must be pursued and brought to justice. The key list has 55 individuals who may be pursued, killed or captured...This list has been provided to Coalition forces on the ground in several forms to ease identification when contact does occur. And this deck of cards is one example of what we provide to soldiers and marines out in the field, with the faces of the individuals and what their role is. In this case there are 55 cards in the deck.

It was of course a rhetorically brilliant move to turn the enemy into a parlour game. The effect is ridicule and minimising of the enemy. On their TV screens, Americans were able to watch as card after card was collected methodically by the military. The US was the winner. Journalists had a worthwhile main thread to follow. The enemy became tangible and comprehensible, even to the smallest child. The deck of cards was at first distributed only to the troops in Iraq, but subsequently also sold very well at home, as the distributor writes:

You've seen these cards on the nightly news. They've been featured in newspapers worldwide. Now you can own the one true collector's item from

Operation Iraqi Freedom. This is the same 55-card deck given to Coalition soldiers featuring Iraq's 52 'most-wanted' leaders.

The deck of cards can now also be purchased as a poster and, as the distributor writes: "This may be the last time anyone will ever see these faces again" (<http://www.greatusaflags.com>).

Defining Time

In his major address to Congress on September 20 2001, Bush said, "...this country will define our times, not be defined by them". Great events sometimes require big words. In times of crisis, it is expected, in Europe as well, that politicians become rhetoricians, explaining what is happening so that we can understand, as well as get instructions(?) for future action. In Sweden, however, there is suspicion against pathos-filled, emotional rhetoric and there is a sound scepticism towards big words. We are not used to having politicians speaking to the people at all times of the day. The prime minister very seldom takes on the role of the interpreter of Parliament's (not to mention the whole people's) views and opinions. It is therefore with astonishment that we view the American way of using public language, which we often find exaggerated, pathetic and packed with religious terms, and which is exactly why we tend to underestimate the significance of what is being said. We do not really take it seriously ('mere rhetoric') and often miss the real meaning and significance of the words. Our lack of practice with linguistic analyses easily results in an underestimation of the hidden meaning in pictures and concepts, especially when they are vague and ambiguous. If they are viewed purely as wordy desk products, it is easy to miss the power contained in continuously repeated statements and in indistinct but forcible terms and phrases.

In the current war on terror, such expressions are clustered together. There are plenty of 'God terms' and 'Devil terms', according to Richard M. Weaver's modern rhetorical theory (Weaver 1985), positively and negatively charged words, often arranged in pairs of opposites: freedom – fear; civilisation – barbarism; war – peace. The current war has generated a wealth of big words and emotionally loaded pictures. Events have been interpreted in vague and often distorted value terms and metaphors in which war becomes peace, attack becomes 'pre-emptive defence', military invasion becomes 'regime change', occupation becomes 'humanitarian intervention'. This distortion of language is of course not new. Manipulation and lies have always been a basic ingredient of warfare. The question which should be asked today is, however, what approach democratic societies should take in relation to self-evidently deceptive influencing of public opinion; to overtly manipulative rhetoric. One way would be to train one's sensitivity to verbal card-sharping.

It is not necessary to be an opponent in principle to military operations in order to demand fairly plain and above-board public language. The mainstay of a democratic society is rational dialogue. When democratic societies initiate war, one should therefore be able to demand an open account of the reasons for its legitimacy, instead of the current 'perception management' (Rampton & Stauber, 2003:5f), knowledge gearing or indoctrination, intended through deception to create and recreate our feelings, our motives and our reasoning.

Translation: *Charlotta Hamlon-Knight*

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Images of Victory – Images of Masculinity?

Berit von der Lippe

Mediated discourses of war, defeat and victory are constructed as stories and, as with any kind of story-telling, mediated war stories have clear-cut beginnings and endings. The Iraq war falls within American hegemonic discourse, with one small exception. The Bush administration knew that the US would easily win this war militarily; they also knew they would have to remain in Iraq afterwards to win the political victory, to win ‘hearts and minds’. This war was, to some extent, construed as a ‘different’ war. But for the Iraqi people, as for other peoples who experience violence and killings as everyday events, there are, as we all know, no such clear-cut beginnings and endings.

On December 14 2003, nine months after the war had been declared, the dictator Saddam Hussein was captured. We – or, rather, the US army – had got him! That celebration, however, was more about the humiliation of the dictator than the bravura displays of the US army, as had been the case on May 1, some months earlier, when Baghdad seemed to have been conquered and any further resistance was assumed to be minor. The focus of this article will be on the televised constructions, both in leading American mass media and in the two leading Norwegian television networks, of Bush’s announcement of victory on May 1 2003, on board the battleship *Abraham Lincoln*.

I will mainly consider how televisual news renders its preferred version of the truth as authoritative, factual and thus potentially hegemonic. The discussion opens with a consideration of hegemony in mass media, focusing on hegemonic discourse in general, and at times of war in particular. Like all mediated wars, this war is a story about how liberators and oppressors, heroes and villains, protagonists and antagonists are constructed. These are, with only a few exceptions, all male, and always represent masculine values, whether honourable or disastrous. Looking through my ‘gendered lenses’ will reveal how some kinds of hegemonic masculinity are embedded in this discourse and regarded as universal.

There is no unequivocal position of women – or men – in war. There are, however, constructs and manifestations of perceptions of masculinities – or,

rather, some specific kinds of hegemonic masculinities. The images of victory and of masculinities considered here will be verbal as well as iconic, though with specific focus on metaphors and the oft-hidden workings of metaphors, both overt and latent. This, I hope, may illuminate aspects of hegemonic discourse and the masculinities embedded therein though seldom discussed. It may, further, shed light on how non-hegemonic discourses (such as those in Norwegian media) are restrained, in subtle ways, from being counter-hegemonic – that is, a real threat to Western foreign policy in general and to the US-led war on terror in particular. My approach is strongly influenced by cultural analysis, critical discourse analysis and rhetoric.

Hegemonic Discourse – Hegemonic Masculinities

In contemporary Western societies, power relations between groups and institutions tend to emerge through processes of consent rather than coercion or force. As many readers will know, the concept of hegemony – etymologically a Greek term for leadership or supremacy – is closely linked to the Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci. During the fascist regime, mainly in the 1930s, Gramsci drew attention through this concept to the subtle pressures applied by the power elite or the dominant group in order to gain the consent of subordinated groups (Gramsci:1978).

The authority of the dominant group is not imposed on individuals, but offered to them in subtle ways. What is offered for consideration is not just an assertion of another value, or set of values. The twist is that hegemonic discourses are offered as something you already agree with, as a reflection, so to speak, of your own desires, needs and wants, and in which you can effortlessly recognise yourself. Hegemony thus seems to offer what you already want anyway. The subtlety is exactly this: whatever the values and interests of a dominant social, economic or political group, they are perceived as the values dear to everyone. Hegemony treats particular values as though they were universal, and as if consensus were simply a matter of following one's feelings or of agreeing to the obvious. "We all want the same way of life, we all feel about things in much the same way, don't we?" asks Stuart Allen ironically (107-113: 1998). To resist hegemony can sometimes seem like resisting one's own desires, particularly in times of war and especially for those more or less directly engaged in it.

The operation of a hegemonic frame should not, however, be viewed as a means of precluding the encoding of information (an aspect of journalistic discursive practices) which might explicitly politicise the seemingly impartial definitions of social reality on offer. Rather, as Stuart Allen writes, "the very authoritativeness of the hegemonic frame is contingent upon its implicit claim to objectivity, which means that it needs to regularly incorporate 'awkward facts' or even, under more exceptional circumstances, voices of dissent"

(1998:102). Only by absorbing and domesticating conflicting values, definitions of reality, and demands on it does it remain hegemonic. Roland Barthes calls it ‘inoculation’, an appropriate dose of medicine (potential counter-hegemonic positions) for the sake of balance, but restrained within domestic frames to avoid the risk of any counter-discourse potentially competitive to the hegemonic discourse and, in this case, challenging traditional Western stability. In claiming to be universal, what ideology is actually doing is universalising the discourses of dominant groups.

A national ideology might suggest that there is a single national set of values – and types of people – made up of certain values and sentiments dearly held as part of a national myth. Ethnicity and class or gender differences within the nation are transcended. Probably, the master-spinners of identity tales designed to make some of us feel part of an imagined community are not rival ethnic groups or nationalist movements, but exist on a larger scale: the American neo-conservative power elite. They are the dominant master-spinners of today’s tales of freedom, civilisation and democracy. These spinners all tend to fix, eternalise and essentialise the identities that serve as vehicles for their control.

So, too, do the ‘villains’.

“One side’s devil is the other side’s saving grace in these duelling discourses of good and evil. On both sides of the divide, the dialectic of rival religious visions transforms the act of killing civilians and/or destroying life-sustaining infrastructures into a necessary and legitimate consequence of exercising righteous force over a demonic antagonist.” These words of the American professor Robert L Ivie were spoken at the conference on War, Law and Rhetoric, which took place in Norway in 2003 (Ivie, 2003). The close collaboration, almost a symbiotic relationship, between the American leadership and the neo-conservative defence intellectuals – the Pentagon, Rand-cooperation, ie. intellectuals working in what is seen as the think-tank close to Bush and the Bush administration – may contribute to what many see as a total withdrawal from the real world. After September 11, this symbiosis was also established between government and media, to synergise shared assumptions and common messages. In the strongly patriarchal ideology of the US government, the Arab ‘villain’ is easily seen and condemned, whereas in the hegemonic discourse of today’s America he is mediated and seen as genderless – as indeed he is in Western news stories generally. The images of masculinity – singular or plural, iconic or verbal – are seldom discussed.

The stories told of history, war, defeat, victory and glory spring first and foremost from masculinised memory, masculinised ambitions, humiliation and masculinised hope told mainly by a males in power positions (Enloe, 1990, Bell, 1995, Elshtain, 1987).

R. W. Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity seems to fit into this mental *schema*. Connell considers the power relations between men, and his hegemonic masculinity concept is intended to show groups of men in

power positions at the cost of those in subordinated positions within a masculine hierarchical structure – a structure to which both men and women have to relate (Connell, 2002). He makes no reference, however, to women in power positions, or to the process of socialisation into a specific kind of masculinity, and he overlooks the fact that a certain kind of hegemonic masculinity is not perceived as hegemonic among males belonging to other groups in power – or even without it. His perspective thus ignores the complexity of human relationships and among human beings, be they male or female. Despite all these objections to his analysis, I find his understanding of hegemonic masculinity (I prefer the plural ‘masculinities’) useful in underscoring at least some important aspects of made-in-America masculinities as an integral part of the hegemonic discourse referred to above.

Embedded in stories of war and victory one might see, as I do, the kind of hegemonic masculinity Connell describes: “...it is essential to bring men and masculinity explicitly into the analysis of the state, especially in an organisation as large and complex as the state...it is important to recognise the distinction between hegemonic and subordinated masculinities. The masculinisation of the state, accurately identified in feminist theories, is principally a relationship between state institutions and hegemonic masculinity” (2002:105). The next step is to look at the mediated stories, and spectacles of victory, emanating from the Iraq war. The manifestation of masculinity on board the Abraham Lincoln will be seen partly as spectacle, not different from the construction of masculinities in film and popular culture which are in part the manifestation of a specific kind of masculinity partly hidden in the President’s victory speech.

George W. Bush – Icon of a Remasculinised USA

The declaration of victory was televised in every detail, mainly for the US public, but simultaneously for a global audience. They, and we, were shown aircraft bringing the ‘hero’, President George W. Bush, to the *Abraham Lincoln*. They, and we, watched his arrival on board, which represented military hegemonic masculinity. Bush’s ethos was already shared by many Americans and after 9/11 he had manifested the virtues so important in many cultures, not least in American; he had been firm, strong, willing to mobilise the army on the high seas, in the air, on land and even in the penetration of Afghan caves.

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, those Americans who worried about the impact on civil rights or civil liberties in general, or those who protested against hate crimes and round-ups on ethnic grounds, found themselves excluded from the discourse, marginalised as unpatriotic and unable to make an impact on public opinion (Schechter, 2003:140-141). The president had, for quite some time, been portrayed as a bold hero and an incarnation of

the brave patriotic father of the country. Before May 1 he had already become an icon of hegemonic masculinity.

The blurring of the factual and the mythical leads one to read the spectacle of the President's arrival by aircraft (not helicopter) as if it was an episode in a war film. In her book *The Remasculinization of America*, Susan Jeffords (1989) discusses the cultural shift from the ends to the means and technologies of war. The combination of man and machine is more perfect than either man or machine alone. The televised spectacle of Bush's arrival could be seen in the context of what Jeffords describes as a 'remasculation' of American culture, and as one dimension of hegemonic masculinities (the masculinities of a Rambo or a Terminator in American fiction, competing with other masculinities which express more intelligence, modesty and reflection, a masculinity we see in recent fiction such as in the film *The Matrix*). On that day and at that moment, Bush had nothing to fear – his strength and authority were at their highest point. His masculinity was not in question.

If there were any kind of erotic connotations perceptible in Bush's appearance and his performance on that day, they might rather have been the erotism of the advanced high-tech weaponry and aircraft the on board on *Abraham Lincoln*¹. The glorification of high-tech machinery and weapons may thus be seen as reproducing a kind of ideological masculinity. The rhetoric of the physical location is an integral part of the rhetorical spectacle (see Cohn, 1986).

The hyper-machismo of yesterday has been modernised. Bush may very well, on that day, have been seen as not quite the same as the anachronistic John Wayne/Rambo/Terminator-character. He arrived, he had delivered (a successful war) and he was welcomed as a civilised and compassionate Christian father – and yet there was some element of the old-fashioned Rambo/Terminator about him. The 'villains', on the other hand, serve as icons of a brutal and uncivilised masculinity – which may indeed be both a fact and a truth. The masculinity of presumed primitive vengeance belongs to the 'other' and needs to be constructed accordingly. Hiding or suppressing any similarities between 'our' Western masculinities and the enemy's, helps create a dichotomy: the categorisation of 'good-doers' and 'evil-doers'.

According to Barthes, myths do not deny things; on the contrary, the function of myths is to talk about them, thus purifying them and making them innocent. Myths give things natural, eternal justification and clarity – a clarity not of explanation, but of stating a fact. The compassionate and post-modern myths of masculinity are attempts to pass it off as natural and universal, free of problems. To many Americans this was probably how Bush appeared. He had shown muscle and strength, at least on a metaphorical level: moral muscle and moral strength.

The rhetoric of Bush's physical surroundings on May 1 is precisely the rhetoric one is used to seeing in Hollywood films (no wonder, since, as we know, movie-makers are among the master-spinners). Females are almost absent – literally and mentally. Literally, because the applauding audience

(officers, admirals and ordinary marine staff) were with few exceptions male, pale and not pale (white or African-American); mentally, because the gender or masculine connotations often seem to be taken for granted.

Roland Barthes' understanding of myth may also illuminate this taken-for-granted aspect of iconic images, dynamic or not, giving an impression of simply seeing the world and the surroundings as they really are and not as highly contingent and ideological (Barthes, 1959). Watching a dozen male ministers, admirals, soldiers or officers on a television screen, most people only see ministers, admirals, soldiers or officers. That these persons may be exclusively male is often overlooked. There were 5 000 persons on the Abraham Lincoln, and almost all were male. Had there been a group of 5 000 exclusively female ministers, admirals, soldiers or officers on a war ship, they would probably be perceived first as females. And would they have been seen or perceived as ministers, admirals, soldiers or officers at all? It is difficult to say what kind of connotations a group of 5 000 females would have evoked on that day and in that place. Would they have been seen as persons of military power? Or would some people have even laughed, seeing these females as a comedy and completely ridiculous?

One way the myth functions is to naturalise men in power positions to such an extent that some kinds of hegemonic masculinity still seem to be an integral part of what may be called hegemonic discourse. The spectacle on the *Abraham Lincoln* signified strength, potency and high-tech sovereignty, which, on the mythic level, made overt references to any kind of masculinity superfluous.

The best-known example given by Roland Barthes, in his analysis of the front page of the magazine *Paris Match* some fifty years ago (Barthes, 1959) to explain how myths function through naturalising ideology, underscores this. Barthes sees the following: a black soldier is saluting the tricolor, the French flag. Read at the mythological level, the naturalisation of what one sees (when not registering the colonised or imperial aspect of the photo) sustains the myth: formerly colonised people, represented by a black male, are naturally serving the French army. When a few women, nowadays, are seen in similar situations, I am inclined to see much of the same mythical disguise: we all, independent of gender and colour, race or ethnicity, naturally serve our country.

"Fighting the femininisation of a society means taking three steps to heaven", Steve Niva writes ironically (Niva, 1998). The sensation of being close to heaven might, on this occasion, have been evoked.

A Construction – and Perception – of Victory

Kairos, the rhetorical situation, is a moment at which it seems appropriate, or even urgent, to do – or say – a particular thing. As some readers will know,

saying is doing and doing is saying. Rhetoric is essentially situational. What matters, first and foremost, is not what rhetoric means, but what it does in and with the world. For mass media and for the USA media in particular there have been rhetorical situations almost every day since the tragic and dramatic terrorist attacks. The outside world, the *real* world, has been filled with action and drama on such an extraordinary scale that the American media have tended to downgrade serious news and global coverage. “With the emergence of ‘terror-tainment’”, writes Schechter, “came the blurring of the lines between jingoism and journalism, punditry and commentary laced with patriotism, while all other viewpoints moved out of sight. As a period of ‘patriotic correctness’ began, self-censorship and corporate censorship snapped into place” (2003:141). As the media marched in step with the government, dissenters were hard to find.

In a climate in which there is no marketplace of ideas, the rhetorical imperative may, however, have been such that the American leadership found it essential to construct the spectacle of victory that day. Having experienced more difficulties than envisaged on their journey to war and in reaching their goals, both in Afghanistan and in Iraq; having searched for bin Laden, Mullah Omar and Saddam Hussein without success; having found no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, it was of the utmost importance for the president to demonstrate success. The American liberation of Iraq was, to the neo-conservatives’ surprise, not seen as a liberation by all Iraqis. The blurring of fact and fiction occurs on different levels, and liberation easily becomes occupation and *vice versa*. Baghdad had fallen (the Iraqi resistance had been weak); the statue of Saddam Hussein had fallen and the victory now seemed to be within reach.

To better understand the rhetorical situation (*kairos*) on that day, I shall introduce some aspects of the ideological dimensions relevant for its analysis. The atmosphere on May 1 2003, and not the least the atmosphere among those serving in the navy and present on the Abraham Lincoln, had all the elements of victory and it was televised as if the Iraq war had been won. The victor had arrived. The goal had been attained. There was a mission. There was no course other than that of attaining the prescribed goal. Along the way, Americans are told that things are going well – so far so good – ‘we will stay the course all the way’. If questions about continuing the war are asked, the answer is, ‘the plan is in motion, we have started down this road, and we have to continue’. And they had continued – to the bitter end (Americans like to go on single tracks to visible goals – in one direction and without stopping – and they prefer to travel alone). The American concept of policy is, according to Johnsen and Lakoff (2000) and Chilton (1999) based on the ‘path metaphor’, a single goal from which one must not deviate or be sidetracked. The goal and endpoint is the solution to a problem. The *schema* does indeed carry its own logic within it. Slowing down, changing track, reversing or choosing an alternative way to go would be almost inexpressible and, perhaps, unconceivable – weak, soft, ‘sissy-ish’, ‘wimpish’ and feminine. This is the way the discourse goes, along this kind of path.

Such a perspective discourages looking beyond the end-point or seeking alternative routes for, in the hegemonic American war/victory discourse, simply pausing to think is seen as feminine. In this mental *schema* it is vital to *get there*, whatever the obstacles and whatever the consequences. On May 1 the goal had to be reached and celebrated on the Abraham Lincoln.

These are some of the characteristics under-pinning the rhetorical situation on that day. Bush, speaking or preaching to an applauding public, was televised, and the event was constructed as the culmination of a glorious journey now coming to an end. The speech as such, televised in full, will therefore be given detailed attention.

I am, of course, fully aware of the polysemic potential, or the multiple possible meanings, inherent in iconic signs and the different perspectives in relation to the above analysis, as well as to my analysis of the speech. By that time the USA had been at war for more than one and a half years. The American people had largely been told, visually and verbally, the story that the Pentagon and the power elite had decided it must hear and see. This does not, however, mean that the hegemonic discourse was accepted or read in the preferred way by all Americans, for hegemony, no matter how strong, always encounters some resistance. Furthermore, the speech televised live as a news and victory story, will be experienced in a specific atmosphere, and probably not very differently from the enthusiasm on the *Abraham Lincoln*. What often characterises the reception of such speeches – if the rhetoric is effective – is not any analytical reading and reasoning but, rather, an immediate feeling of belonging, of being part of some great collective identity, of travelling towards some pre-defined goal.

Bush's Speech

Exordium, or the opening of a political speech of this kind, has to establish a close and almost intimate relationship between the speaker and the listeners. The president in this situation chooses to put himself and his leadership in the background. From the very beginning he offers a tribute to the people, to those seen as 'ordinary folk', and to what is done in the name of freedom for ordinary folk – and by ordinary folk. Bush's exordium was, "Thank you all very much. Admiral Kelly, Captain Card, officers and sailors of the *USS Abraham Lincoln*, my fellow Americans..." What counts, is to give an impression of being there and having done something, not for oneself or for any specific group, but having fought for some great ideal on behalf of the people one is elected to serve. Not only admirals and captains are praised as heroes; so are the sailors – and all 'fellow Americans' as well. This is, as we know, the classical manner in which to uphold one's ethos (which, in this instance, was not at risk).

“In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed,” Bush continues. The reference to ‘allies’ provides a clear association with the glorious victory of the Second World War. This is an important image because analogies from this war may be brought forth more or less as one chooses, and can be used to gain support before entering into any war: are we willing to make the same mistake as Chamberlain who claimed ‘peace in our time’? Are we willing to risk the same threats as represented by Hitler and the Nazis? If this kind of analogy succeeds, and becomes an adequate reference-point, what follows will easily be accepted; the rhetoric will easily be perceived as non-rhetorical and (almost) literally true.

The introduction of the great and all-embracing ‘we’, is the next step on the rhetorical journey (within the greater journey to victory). Having established the optimal connectedness to his audience, Bush may now be sure that ‘we’ is taken for granted: “In this battle, *we* have fought for the cause of liberty and the peace of the world” (the italics are mine). The magic of abstraction starts working, even without using the magic words freedom and peace. The President himself, and his neo-conservative followers, are kept in the background: it is “...*you*, the members of the United States military, who achieved it. *Your* courage, *your* willingness to face the danger *for your* country and *for each other*, made this day possible. Because of *you*, our nation is more secure. Because of *you*, the tyrant has fallen, and Iraq is free.” This is the voice of a proud, compassionate and caring father, a father who gives credit to his family rather than praising himself and his leadership.

The *epeidictic* (a rhetoric of praise) is then explicitly linked to the Second World War (a reference frequently made): “...the daring of Normandy, the fierce courage of Iwo Jima, the decency and idealism that turned our enemies into allies...in defeating Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, Allied forces destroyed entire cities, while enemy leaders who started the conflict were safe until the final days. Military power was used to end a regime by breaking a nation.” For an analogy or a metaphor to be recognised and understood, these rhetorical perspectives must create some tension, and experienced as logically even if not literally true, and simultaneously not totally meaningless; we are invited, to look for some meaning, some similarities, between two different phenomena. The linked terms have to be understood by as many as possible as having certain common features, while at the same time they do not really ‘fit’ (this is what I mean by ‘tension’). Often, even most often, there are no such tensions, and probably no such tension was perceived by the target group in the actual rhetorical situation. If they were noticed, however, the metaphors may have been perceived as natural and suitable.

The metaphors – the Allies, Normandy, Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan – whether recognised or not, may become so vivid that they are perceived more or less as images of what has been and what has to be done: this is exactly and literally what it is all about – the here and now! As we fought the Nazis or the Japanese, we now fight the terrorists. Furthermore, just as

Germany and Japan were defeated and have since become democracies, the same will happen with Iraq. The concepts of war and peace are blurring; war becomes peace and vice versa. The President, who himself never served in the army, now shows some of the same virtues – and masculinities – as he did during his service as Governor of Texas – fighting crime by prescribing more death penalties than any governor before or after him. The morality of the strong pre-modern father grows more and more manifest. Margaret Thatcher acquired the nickname ‘iron lady’ because of her boldness and willingness to initiate the Falkland war whereas Bush is naturally a strong man showing muscle.

The hegemony seems complete, and the discourse (the analogy of the Second World War) goes without saying. Within such a discourse one finds a blurring, not only between fiction and fact, freedom and occupation, but also between dichotomies in general, which in rhetoric are labelled *oxymora*: figures of speech where two opposites are consciously juxtaposed (as in the expression ‘false truth’). When manipulated for ideological reasons, antonyms easily become synonyms and *vice versa* – and this occurs throughout the speech.

Analogy is not only appropriate to the framing of an important story. Rhetoric is an almost magical use of speech to evoke the desired mental imagery in the public, whether the audience on board the *Abraham Lincoln* or the American audience in front of the television screen. The visibility of verbal rhetoric should by no means be under-estimated, for images consist of much more than what we can literally see, and mental images may be even more influential because they may be seen, or perceived, as literally true – representing the real. Metaphors are images, not pictures (Lippe, 1999).

Although 9/11 is present as part of the ideology and the hegemonic discourse, Bush’s speech does not begin with such an explicit reading – *exordium* is seldom produced with reference to dramatic moments of history. The first words have to be cautious and mild and, as we have seen, address the heroes as ‘ordinary folk’. When ethos is established, the dramatic images are brought forth.

Bush then turns to the Iraqi people and the ‘images of the fallen statues’ as vivid proofs of ‘a new era’, the destruction of the Taliban and the ‘hunting down of al Qaeda killers ‘from Pakistan to the Philippines to the Horn of Africa’. Men have always hunted animals to survive, but here humans are being hunted down. Whether this metaphor is recognised, is impossible to say for certain. Probably, the rhetorical situation was such that hunting down, by protagonists of civilisation, might be perceived as civilised, connoting strength. In the story of the brave fight for freedom, the weapons of mass destruction are mentioned several times to emphasise that no terrorist network will acquire weapons of mass destruction from the Iraqi regime because that regime no longer exists. Bush thus makes explicit the links between the al Qaeda terrorists and the Iraqi dictator – links without any basis in reality. His speech evokes mental images more fictitious than many Hollywood war

films highlighting American masculine strength – a blatantly false mix of Nazis and terrorists, for if the Nazis and Hitler been mere terrorists they would not have represented any real threat to the world.

The time has come to look forward, to what still has to be done, because “...any outlaw regime that has ties to terrorist groups and seeks or possesses weapons of mass destruction is a grave danger to the civilised world.” To avoid emphasising the dangers to come, reminders from history are continuously brought up. When, in the end, he reminds the audience that “the war on terror is not over, yet it is not endless”, the potential dangers on the road ahead are minimised.

Conclusio is, like *exordium*, portrayed as the compassionate father taking care of his nation – his family metaphorically as well as literally: “After service in the Afghan and Iraqi theatres of war, after 100,000 miles on the longest carrier deployment in recent history, *you* are homeward bound. Some *of you* will see new family members for the first time – 150 babies were born while their fathers were on the Lincoln. *Your* families are proud of *you*, and *your* nation will welcome *you*.” The ‘you-ing’ has to be repeated to re-assure them that he and his government are of little importance and that the ‘you’ is what counts, and thus the ‘we’ is naturally re-created.

Bush pays tribute to the dead: “We are mindful, as well, that some good men and women are not making the journey home. One of those who fell, Corporal Jason Mileo, spoke to his parents five days before his death. Jason’s father said, ‘He called from the centre of Baghdad, not to brag, but to tell us he loved us. Our son was a soldier’... Yet we pray, in God’s time, their reunion will come.” The divine dimension of the ongoing mission and the Nation’s sacrifices to fulfil it are again made explicit: “Those we lost were last seen on duty. Their final act on this Earth was to fight a great evil and bring liberty to others... And whenever you go, you carry a message of hope – a message that is ancient and ever new. In the words of the prophet Isaiah to the captives, come out, and to those in darkness, be free. Thank you for serving our country and our cause. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless America.”

The American, and Bush’s, mission is to bestow its values on the benighted world. The religious rhetoric must be seen in the light of the invincible march to the East to vanquish the powers of darkness. The religious paternalism from the Old Testament – eye for eye – is to be taken literally.

Since these religious rhetorical aspects might be somewhat under-estimated in Europe (possibly to reduce similarities with Islamic fundamentalism) I must emphasise the relevance of deep-rooted Christian fundamentalism for the neo-conservatives both inside and outside the power elite.

In his book *Made in Texas* (2003) Michael Lind gives a brilliant – or frightening – illustration of the religious fundamentalism so strongly influencing, not only the Bush rhetoric, but the very ideological perspective of the Bush family, and some other families in Texas. Not only has Bush Jr criticised Darwinian evolution; he is also influenced by those Southern Protestant

fundamentalists who believe that the 'Kingdom of God on earth will be established by human beings, with divine inspiration but not divine power' (2003: 112). Lind gives a thorough analysis of how Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and other famous preachers explicitly linked, and continue to link, the acts of terror to religion, and in particular to the impact of the Old Testament concept of morality on Bush's *milieu* – and this includes the patriarchal family structure. Abortion amounts to killing, while killing by bombing, shooting and the death penalty are construed as ways of giving life. The allusion to the prophet Isaiah is more than mere rhetoric; it is also symptomatic of total adherence to the Old Testament. Lind, a moderate Democrat himself, illuminates the similarities between Orthodox Jews and Southern Protestants, combined with what he calls 'Herrenvolk visions' (152-160).

Similar aspects of religious fundamentalism are made manifest by Carol Cohn (1986, 1993) who, having interacted for several months with American defence intellectuals, also warns against under-estimating religious fervour as mere rhetoric. Cohn points to the first atomic bomb test, which was called Trinity – the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the male forces of Creation. The physicists who worked on the atomic bomb exclaimed, when they witnessed its success, "It was as though we stood at the first day of creation" and the defence intellectuals referred to themselves as 'the priesthood'. Thus this discourse, as is the Bush discourse, is permeated with references to their supernatural power and supernatural virtues (virtue etymologically meaning manliness).

To not to take Bush's religious rhetoric seriously is to under-estimate how it is linked to different cultures and sub-cultures as well as to Christian fundamentalism. Today's quasi-religious 'techno-euphoria' may, perhaps, be seen by some as a greater threat to the world than the threat of terrorists. That the whole speech can be analysed from a religious perspective in no way reduces the masculinities also embedded therein. In today's climate pure phantasy would be a woman as president arriving on the *Abraham Lincoln* as Bush did. Can one imagine Hillary Clinton, for instance, landing on the battleship in a Rambo-Terminator-like manner?

Although Bush made references in his speech to an ongoing war yet to come and to be fought, it is impossible to alter the effect of the whole choreography of the *Abraham Lincoln* scenario: mission accomplished. The rhetorical construction of the physical surroundings, so well planned, would some months later become a rhetorical disaster.

The very nature of the speech is hidden by the story's natural-seeming factuality – a story without class or gender distinctions. Bush's appeal to his audience as a collective, with a collective identity, may have been successful on that day, albeit probably not at the level of earlier days and certainly not as the kind of collectivity perceived on 9/11.

But what about this spectacle, or construct of victory, in the Norwegian televised news stories?

Norway – the Rhetorical Situation

For the first time in (post)modern history a Norwegian government opposed US foreign policy and the US occupation of Iraq, claiming – as did other ‘old-fashioned’ European countries – that Hans Blix and the weapons inspectors, should first finish their work. The opposition was, however, much stronger among the Norwegian population than among the political power elite. The strongest demonstrations since the Vietnam war had taken place, involving protestors belonging to different political parties. The climate in Norway, and in most European countries, was thus very different not only from that in America but also in comparison with that at the time of other, earlier war involving the US (the war in Vietnam is of course an exception).

In the Norwegian mass media there has not been any hegemonic discourse. Not only has the actual war been sharply criticised, but the alliance between Ariel Sharon and Bush is opposed by a majority of Norwegians and by the leading media. In contrast to American, the Norwegian media have exposed the public to alternative stories of the Iraq war. The rhetorical situation was very different from the American.

Needless to say, American popular culture is, in Norway as elsewhere, much admired – many say it is even more popular in Norway than in other Scandinavian countries. *Rambo*, *Terminator* and other violent films are seen and enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of Norwegians, without, it seems, their having much impact on how George W Bush is perceived although he has been ridiculed to some extent because of what many Norwegians see as ignorance and lack of political experience, particularly in foreign policy (among the European political power elites only Silvio Berlusconi of Italy could have acted the way Bush did as he arrived on the *Abraham Lincoln*). Norwegians in general mistrust the policies of the American administration. Neither does high-tech weaponry evoke the same passions among Norwegians as it seems to among Americans. If Bush is an icon in Norway, it is not as an icon of any hegemonic humanity. What seems to be common to both countries, however, is that masculinities are not seen – or at least not discussed.

Neither is it relevant to talk about any counter-hegemonic discourse prevailing in Norwegian mass media. There is some kind of negotiating discourse, supporting the US on some issues such as the Afghan war (on terror) and opposing it on others. Some media have invited a kind of counter-hegemonic discourse. However, the rhetoric of the spectacle on the *Abraham Lincoln* and the American hegemonic discourse was of a quite different kind.

I shall now take a closer look at how Norway’s two most important television networks, NRK (Norwegian Broadcasting) and TV 2, re-constructed the American construction of victory live from the *Abraham Lincoln*. What might the similarities and the differences be? To what extent was the hegemonic discourse either challenged or maintained? Which were the common taken-for-granted aspects – or facts – of these constructions in the two dominant television networks, the public broadcasting NRK and TV 2?

The Norwegian Televised Construction of the Spectacle on the *Abraham Lincoln*

NRK had it as its fourth news item. The Norwegian princess and her husband were honoured with first place, to talk about their new-born baby girl, and for six minutes Norwegians watched the happy young couple, the baby on her mother's arm, the proud father by their side. Two other news stories followed before the window opened on the spectacle aboard the *Abraham Lincoln*.

As viewers saw the aircraft and Bush's arrival, the anchor reported: "A well-rehearsed performance...as Bush arrives on the *Abraham Lincoln*. Bush does not use his ordinary transport vehicle, the helicopter, but a fighter [plane]...for a short time he even held the joystick..." All this was said in quite an ironic way. Bush's arrival was, in some respect, similar to the American version. What differed, however, was the message: 'a well-rehearsed performance', Bush's arrival 'by a fighter – not the helicopter' and so on.

This is an excellent example of the importance of verbal rhetoric in the mediated story. Images are said to dominate every news story nowadays. This is both true and untrue; true because we actually see what is happening, untrue because we may be led to underestimate the importance of the verbal. Roland Barthes' famous article, 'Rhétoric de l'image' (1963) may help to elucidate what is at stake here. According to Barthes, the verbal text, on the denotative level, functions as an anchor of the polysemic image, telling the reader who is photographed, what the location is and, implicitly, why the photograph has been taken. Thus the reader will know whether the soldiers are American or Spanish; if they are in Afghanistan, Sudan or Iraq. This is, of course, important. Spanish soldiers are more valued to Spaniards than are American soldiers, which is true for every nation at war. It was not necessary to identify the President by an anchor of this kind, but when it came to the nationality of the navy staff – in theory some might have been British, Polish or even Spanish – the location was of prime importance – this did not take place in the Gulf region; the *Abraham Lincoln* was located safely off the American coast. Even more important, perhaps, is the description of the spectacle as a 'well-rehearsed performance', and the reference to Bush's holding the joystick which might have emphasised the made-in-Hollywood aspect of the performance. On a connotative and ideological level, the verbal message functions not so much as anchor but more as a guide to a desired reading of an almost antagonistic nature. The iconic polysemy is thus limited in a subtle way – as is the verbal message introducing the story. Although machine-man Bush does not connote hegemonic masculinity to most Norwegians, the president was probably perceived by many Norwegians more like an actor in some sort of comedy than a hero or a political leader.

Only part of the *exordium* is included in the NRK construction: "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed. And now our coalition is engaged in securing

and reconstructing that country.” For a speech to be successful, the speaker has to be seen as a person with a strong ethos. Since in Norway this ethos is only strong for a minority, the meaning of the public applause for the president on that day would differ from its meaning in the US.

It is much the same for gender blindness. Barthesian mythic reading and seeing prevails here as well. Omitting to mention the masculinity of war seems to be universal. In Norway, as elsewhere, masculinities are seldom noticed because they are taken for granted, normal and therefore genderless. The male public was an applauding, and genderless, public (for further discussion, see my epilogue to this article.)

The anchor person underlines that in his speech Bush says the war is not over yet, thus perhaps giving the president some credit for understanding, at least, that there may be difficulties and dangers to come. “The transition from dictatorship to democracy will take time, but it is worth every effort. Our coalition will stay until our work is done. Then we will leave, and we will leave behind a free Iraq,” are the words Norwegians heard, and the interpretation, by most Norwegians, of the rehearsed, made-in-Hollywood performance could have been hostile. Bush’s last words, “...we will leave behind a free Iraq,” were, for many viewers, euphemisms – meaningless words.

Then viewers were informed that Colin Powell and other representatives of the Bush administration would be travelling in Europe to discuss the situation with their colleagues, and this is followed by a brief epilogue. A well-known academic and expert on such issues, Henrik Thune, is in the studio. He questions any suggestion of victory, and asks when the war had ended, since many Iraqis see this as an occupation, not a liberation. The Iraqis need to experience safety, reconstruction and better living conditions. They have to trust the government in transition...we the viewers are further informed about the difficulties the Americans envisage in winning hearts and minds, not least the hearts and minds of the Shiia Muslims, and we are also confronted with these Muslims’ ties to Iranian Shiias. Finally, Thune warns that a political victory ought to mean stability in the *whole* region. Experts such as Thune are frequently heard and seen on Norwegian screens, in contrast to what the Americans are watching.

Whether or not NRK’s construction of the event may be called counter-hegemonic could depend on one’s political persuasion, but I find it difficult to call it so. Perhaps, as will be discussed later, it might be more appropriate to call it a negotiating position, critical to some extent, but not unmasking any myth or American hegemonic discourse as such. It is clear that there are different discourses in international relations, and different perspectives among western political power elites in relation to the UN and to the problems of war and peace.

The Story on TV 2

TV 2, in contrast to NRK, highlighted the *Abraham Lincoln* spectacle as its main news story on May 2. Even the baby princess was over-shadowed. But Bush's arrival was not given the primary role. The spectacle was introduced by showing American soldiers fighting in Iraqi streets while the voice-over declared "...no public statement of victory because this would have obliged the Americans to free imprisoned Iraqi leaders and other Iraqis in prison" thus depicting the spectacle as one resulting more from chaotic circumstances, than from certainty or victory. "The Iraqis themselves do not believe that the war is finished." A male Iraqi then appears on screen in close-up. He talks about his lack of confidence, either in Americans or in peace; he had experienced nothing but insecurity, anxiety and death, and he feared for his family and for his own life.

In contrast to its coverage of the first Gulf War, Norwegian television coverage during this war gives voice to many people who are not just crying or screaming. Indeed, they are most often calm and serious, suggesting trustworthiness. They are not depicted as uncivilised (as was the case during the first war) or like hordes of animals.

After this introductory episode we enter, as it were, the very spectacle that the Americans wanted to sell to the world. The *Abraham Lincoln* spectacle as story thus becomes a chapter or a scene in another, broader, story, one told by the Iraqis themselves. Bush becomes not so much the protagonist, since in this framing he is to some extent depicted as someone far away from the arena of war and from the lives of those he has 'liberated'. By choosing to foreground Iraqi people and their difficult conditions, TV 2's '*exordium*' may be seen as more oppositional than that televised by the public network. We, as spectators, are invited to take the side of the Iraqis, before the entrance of the president himself.

Bush had, in a way, been construed before his appearance as someone living a life totally alien to the Iraqis – and without too much glory. As the president arrives on the aircraft carrier, the voice-over says, "Bush was celebrated on land today; tonight he is celebrated on sea. The 5 000 soldiers who have returned to their homeland, are the lucky few. The USA is prepared to stay in Iraq for nearly five more years". The celebration referred to may be read as ironic – celebrating the chaos, the anxiety and fears of the people one is claiming to liberate? We are then told that Bush's 'fight' (not 'war') against terrorism is far from over.

And, only now, has the time come to hear a few words of the speech, the very core of the US story. "Any outlaw regime that has ties to terrorist groups and seeks or possesses weapons of mass destruction is a grave danger to the civilised world and will be confronted." The outlaws, terrorists, and weapons of mass destruction are juxtaposed as integral to the world of the 'others'; the common dichotomies are chosen as metonymy for the whole speech. The adjective 'civilised', in this framing, might easily slip into its

opposite meaning (not-so-civilised world) in the eyes of some television watchers; the empathy already established towards the Iraqis makes such an assumption possible.

Although the framings and the stories in the two Norwegian broadcasts differ, they are both symptomatic of the disagreements and the different discourses in the contemporary war on terror. The Iraqi voices heard and the Iraqi people seen in the Norwegian depictions are, perhaps, among the most obvious differences between the American and the Norwegian discourses on this occasion.

Some concerns remain, however, such as why it is difficult, in the televised Norwegian constructions, to discuss counter hegemonic discourse. For how long will opposition to the US hegemonic discourse be made manifest in news stories? And, as a curiosity: Norwegian soldiers are present both in Afghanistan and in Iraq – not, we are told, as soldiers, but as part of humanitarian and stabilisation activities. This leads me to the last chapter of my story.

Epilogue – Opening the Door to *Doxa*

I will now open a door to *doxa*, the room one seldom enters because what one may find there is of little or no interest. It is a room containing the assumed, or what is understood merely as common sense. My metaphorical – and epistemological – gaze may reveal aspects of common traits in discourses on war, peace and victories, aspects seldom discussed (Tickner, 1992). My intention is to shed some light on what may be barriers to other perspectives on such difficult issues thus limiting the possibilities for alternative stories or counter discourses to be heard.

Metaphor is part of thought and of the way we understand society. It is a universal property of the mind and of languages: distant and ‘unknown’ things or abstract ideas are represented in terms of what is familiar – often in terms of bodies. Social, economic and political realities are among the abstract systems of thought that require metaphor in order that to be conceptualised and communicated (Chilton, 1996:39). The realities of war and terror are no exceptions. In mainstream theory of international relations, among the so-called realists, the metaphor is taken to be anything but realistic. Yet the current understanding of foreign policy is metaphorical through and through. ‘Stability of balance’, ‘pillars of stability’, ‘military strength’, ‘pre-emptive strike’, ‘deterrence’ and ‘containment’ are all metaphorical terms indicating a certain perspective from which the world is seen. How metaphors may both be constituted within given power structures and, at the same time, are constituting them, can be illuminated by the game-metaphor.

People play games which, to some extent, are gendered – embedded with masculinities and femininities. According to George Lakoff and Mark Johnsen (2000) the prototypical game people in the USA play is the zero-sum game

'winner takes all'. Mathematicians may invent endless elegant games of co-operation, but in the end, on the grounds of socialisation into the zero-sum prototype, the hegemonic discourse will win and fix the game people play.

Game theory and rational action have a profound effect on our lives and in ways we are not always aware of. They have been used since the early days of the cold war as ways of making foreign policy and war more 'rational'. Just as institutions are constructed according to the time-is-money metaphor, so are they constructed according to the rational-actor model or metaphor. Rational action in a market is often defined as nothing more than acting so as to increase wealth, to maximise profits and minimise costs and losses. In such examples, institutions are rational actors and this is of course true of media as commercial industries. 'Rational action' does not just describe so-called natural human behaviour, but is made prescriptive and thus normative. This perspective offers at best a particularistic view, omitting a lot of other human characteristics.

Lakoff and Johnsen believe that rational-actor models in themselves are morally blameless. They are just models – mathematics plus metaphors. The manner in which they are used is, however, another question. This is where moral judgment and morality enter into it. But such morality is not part of rationality as defined by models of rational actions in game theory.

Hegemonic security discourse and the discourse of victory are based upon suppositions about human nature and suppositions of war as, often, the only means to stability. War easily slides into peace, and victory comes to mean preparation for new wars. The assumptions the realists use when analysing states and explaining their behaviour in the international system are heavily dependent on characteristics that we in the West have come to associate with masculinities – hegemonic masculinities – such as autonomy, sovereignty, autonomy, independence, power, strength and honour.

The fear of the other, the fear of dependence (and, concomitantly, of lack of autonomy) is a male construct (Tickner, 1992). In the name of universality realists and neo-conservatives have constructed a world view based on the experiences of some (or even a few) men – thus a world view offering only a partial view of reality and from a specific perspective. By omitting this kind of particularism, theorists opposed to realism come short in their critique, not only of hegemonic discourse but also of similar international relations theories: making manifest the gendered fantasies of autonomy, one also makes manifest the limited perspective on which hegemonic realist thinking still seems to depend.

Ann Tickner provides an excellent analysis of this specific particularism (1992) underlining how reproductive activities (labour of various kinds) requires an environment that can provide for the survival of infants and behavior that is interactive and nurturing. As both males and females take part in such activities, and since we all know how integral these activities are to life, we need to re-conceptualise, or at least to include, the rationality

connected with nurture, empathy and dependence (is it possible to assess such activities only as numbers or profit? See also Di Stephano, 1983).

Although the particular referents for masculinities and femininities vary cross-culturally, they are interrelated within any particular culture. Gender infuses all our identities so that race, age, class, ethnicity, ability, and nationality are also gender-specific identities. Moreover, gender identity is so entangled with sexual preference, presentation and performance that issues of self-esteem surface when issues of gender come to the table. As men are not born aggressive or simply driven by the rationality described above, one has continuously to remind them of their maleness, boldness, strength and sexual identity. In times of war the polarisation of masculinities and femininities increases. The role of women as caretakers and men as defenders of honour and of property are emphasised. Females also become targets of a different sort from men; their bodies become targets and are commonly invaded – raped (Enloe, 1990 and Bell, 1992). In Iraq today we seldom see females on the streets. Why? Where are they? What do they do? Is this overlooked by journalists, and thus by media, because it is taken for granted? All of us, men and women, have the same interests and share the same values, do we not, and class, ethnicity or religion are irrelevant (Grönfors, 2002).

Doxa is of course not the only perspective from which to constitute a counter discourse; it is, however, necessary to include it in any discourse, and not only to challenge the particularism and political construction of rationality in strategic thinking about war since the dichotomies attributed to ‘us’ and ‘them’ may become much more problematic to construct when similarities between cross-cultural assumptions of masculinities and femininities are revealed. Evil-doers may more easily be identified on both sides. By highlighting the hegemonic masculinity embedded in contemporary political and military activities worldwide, I hope to have shed some light on alternative ways of telling stories about war and peace and celebrations of victories – whether among academics or non-academics, politicians or journalists.

Note

1. The USS Abraham Lincoln is represented on May 1as news on the main web-site as follows: “USS Abraham Lincoln set the record for the longest naval deployment by a nuclear powered aircraft carrier in history, deploying for almost 10 months, and steaming over 100,000 miles. For a Carrier Strike Group, this is the longest deployment in the last 30 years. The USS Lincoln Strike Group was involved in combat support of three major operations: Operation Southern Watch, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom.” Then follows detailed information of Air Wing equipment to be delivered, and of media organisations on board, including CNN, MSNBC and the BBC. We also learn that two nuclear reactors and four shafts were part of the equipment. Dozens of aircraft, missiles and weapons are photographed. Many photos show a woman embracing her returning man.

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Courting, Criticism, Censorship and Bombs

The Bush Administration's Troubled Relations with Al Jazeera Channel from September 11 to the War in Iraq

Tine Ustad Figenschou

As Jon B. Alterman wrote in 1998, in his book *New Media, New Politics?*:

For the US government, which often enjoys more support among Arab governments than among Arab populations, a more open [Arab] media environment is a mixed blessing. On the one hand the United States supports human rights in general and freedom of expression in particular, and the new technologies are likely to prove a boom to free expression. On the other hand, the public opinion in much of the Arab world has been turning against the United States in recent years, and the new technologies can facilitate stirring up anti-US sentiments.

During the War in Iraq, this dichotomy posed a major challenge for an American administration facing low public support in the Middle East while, at the same time, an increasing number of popular Arab networks portrayed the ugly face of the American-led war in Iraq. This chapter reviews American public diplomacy and communications strategies towards the Arab satellite networks, with particular emphasis on the Qatar-based Al Jazeera Channel, and considers the degree to which American strategies succeeded. The chapter is based on interviews with editorial staff at Al Jazeera Channel, Al Arabiya Channel and Abu Dhabi TV conducted in October 2003, and on my analysis of the debates on US public diplomacy towards the Arab and Muslim worlds.

The American Image Problem

The concept of public diplomacy involves efforts to inform and influence populations in other countries – to win their hearts and minds by means of informational activities, educational and cultural exchange, and international broadcasting. It is not a new concept in American foreign policy. Whereas

traditional diplomacy is a government-to-government exercise conducted between officials, public diplomacy is broadly aimed at the international public. Franklin D. Roosevelt was the first American president to identify a foreign target audience, creating the Office of War Information during the Second World War. In 1942, the office set up the Voice of America. In 1950, President Truman set up the Campaign of Truth, aimed at legitimising US involvement in the Korean War, and in 1951, he established the Psychological Strategy Board, responsible to the National Security Council, to advise international anti-Communist propaganda (Thussu, 2000:31). The United States Information Agency (USIA), established in 1953, was responsible for American public diplomacy campaigns.

During the four decades of the Cold War, the Soviet block and the US battled to influence each other's domestic populations, and those of third world countries, through international broadcasting. Owing to high rates of illiteracy, and weak national domestic media, radio became a crucial medium through which to reach the people of third world countries (ibid:36). Heil Jr (2004) argues that international broadcasters have employed three principal styles of international radio: propaganda, or policy-laden, radio (prevalent during World War II and the first two decades of the Cold War, examples being Radio Moscow and Radio Tirana); fact-based, news and information radio (examples being the BBC and VOA); and youth-oriented or entertainment radio (examples being Radio Sawa and Radio Farda) (Heil Jr 2004). The International Broadcasting Act of 1994 brought VOA and all the rest of the non-military international broadcasting under the nine-member Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) and established the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) as the administrative arm of the BBG (Honley, 2004). The Middle East was a particular target for Western broadcasters, owing to the region's geo-strategic importance as the source of the world's largest supply of oil (Thussu, 2000:36); US policymakers have focused on the Middle East for decades, carefully monitoring VOA programming to the region (Alexandre, 2001:80). VOA Arabic broadcasting to the area increased with the escalation of hostilities leading up to the Gulf War in 1991. Arabic programming was increased to 17 hours per day and culture and music were dropped for an all-news programming (ibid.:81). After the war, however, the VOA Arabic service was neglected, and according to the Independent Task Force on Public Diplomacy the popularity of the VOA Arabic programme has been remarkable low in recent years (compared to other US broadcasters) because of increased competition from Arab broadcasters (Independent Task Force Report 2002).

US public diplomacy activities have four main functions: exchange of persons to build mutual understanding; provision of general information about American society and American perceptions of world politics; the advocacy of policy on issues of immediate concern; and the provision of advice on public affairs. The first two functions perform a support role somewhat removed from day-to-day policy concerns, whereas the latter two are closely

related to the formulation and execution of foreign policy. Whereas the first two represent a long-term idealism – seeking to create mutual understanding – the second two demonstrate the realism in US foreign policy and the need to act immediately. In 1999, the USIA was abolished and its functions were transferred to the State Department. The funding of American public diplomacy dwindled from the mid-1990s, and by 2001 the US devoted only \$1,1 billion a year to public diplomacy – less than four percent of its annual international affairs budget (Council of Foreign Relations 2002).

For the US, September 11 called into question the old model of public diplomacy, as the terrorist attacks illustrated the extreme consequences of a widespread American image-problem in the Arab and Muslim worlds. After an initial outpouring of public sympathy, discontent with the United States has grown around the world. According to Leonard and Smewing (2003), recent polls¹ in countries in the Middle East and in the Muslim world revealed three important findings. *First*: there exists a fundamental distrust of American foreign policy and the accounts of the motivations behind it, which translates into antipathy. El-Nawawy and Iskandar consider feelings of a conspiracy to be so dominant in the region that they claim conspiracy theory is ‘a key to understanding the political culture of the Middle East’ (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2002:60). *Second*: there exists a perception that western policy aims at a ‘clash of civilisations’. This idea is frequently referred to in the Arab media, and there is evidence from polls to back up the idea that the Islamic world feels itself threatened as a civilisation. Western opinion polls and newspapers echo this cultural suspicion and fear of a clash. It must be emphasised that neither set of interviewees believes there has been a ‘clash’ so far: they fear one in the future. *Third*: opinions about the US are complex and contradictory, for in Middle Eastern attitudes to the US there is also a desire for a deeper relationship and further engagement with what many see as a highly successful and desirable society. Remarkably high numbers of young people in the region express a desire to move to other countries in order to seek economic success, clearly indicating their dissatisfaction with current conditions and future prospects in their home countries (Leonard and Smewing, 2003:35-45).

Context: A New Arab Communications Environment

The American image-problem reflects a general discontent with US policies in the Middle East – where US support of Israel is continuously criticised and the US-led war on terror is seen as an important part of the problem. Majorities in ten out of eleven Muslim countries surveyed opposed the war on terrorism (Kohut, 2003). These public perceptions, I will argue, exist within a regional communications environment that has several important new aspects.

First: the regional media environment is more open than it was previously. The growth of new and comparatively free transnational Arab media,

such as newspapers, satellite channels and the Internet, makes it possible for American officials to speak directly to large numbers of people in the Middle East. For years, a strongly censored state-monopoly media had dominated Arab media, which showed monotonous commentaries on images of state leaders smiling and shaking hands and avoided critical debate, live coverage and dissident voices for fear of provoking the authorities. Television had been the most heavily censored and controlled medium (Schleifer, 2001), but since the mid-1990s this picture has changed. An increasing number of Arab satellite networks have broken taboos, addressing sensitive issues, broadcasting controversial debates, giving a platform to oppositional voices, and providing 24-hour live coverage of news. The Arab satellite networks are by far the most popular media in the Middle East (Levy and Buggingo, 2002). As regards freedom of speech, Al Jazeera in particular has 'raised the bar in terms of what can be talked about' (Zayani, 2003, interview by author) and, to remain competitive, other satellite channels have had to address the same controversial issues as Al Jazeera (*ibid*).

Second: the regional communication arena is an arena of conflict. In the wake of the September 11 attacks, Osama bin Laden and the Al Qaeda network turned to Al Jazeera to reach their two target groups – the Western news media and the Arab masses (Hoffman, 2002). Through several speeches broadcast on the Arab network, bin Laden and his supporters repeatedly claimed that the world was divided into believers and infidels. Bin Laden claimed that the US, Israel and the US's allies among the Muslims were the enemy, and that he was fighting to liberate Jerusalem and the Arab Peninsula from these occupiers (Vogt and Heger, 2002:171). The message of bin Laden and his sympathisers was, to some degree, supported by some young Arabs opposed to terrorism as such, but who nonetheless experience humiliation, exclusion, suppression and suffering caused by what they see as American 'arrogance and power' (*ibid*: 183). Because of its potential appeal to Arab youth, bin Laden's propaganda has had to be countered by Western news management responses.

Third: an important long-term political effect of the new Arab media environment is the emergence of what has been labelled a new Arabism or a new Arab public sphere². There has been increased interest in international affairs, which often takes the form of an Arab-world-versus-the-rest-discourse rather than investigating conflicts between Arab states (Alterman, 1998:56). In recent years, Al Jazeera has played the most prominent role in mobilising and politicising the public in the region. In particular, its coverage of the second Palestinian intifada sparked pro-Palestinian demonstrations and increased awareness of international and regional affairs (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2002:56). Al Jazeera entered the international media scene at the time of the Afghanistan war. It was the only foreign news network permitted to broadcast from Taliban-controlled areas, and was thus able to challenge the western media's framing of the conflict, providing a critical Arab perspective on the War on Terrorism.

The American Response: American Public Diplomacy from September 11 to the War in Iraq

The American administration realised it needed a presence on Arab satellite television, not only to improve its image and sell 'America' to the Arab youth, but also to influence the political thinking of the Arab world in this new regional communications environment. Debates on public diplomacy in the US after the terrorist attacks revealed a simplistic understanding of the roots of anti-American sentiments. There seemed to be an assumption within the Bush administration that America was hated by enemies who know no better and because there is a 'misunderstanding' of what America is about (President George W Bush 2001 in Leonard and Smewing 2003). The American administration launched several public diplomacy campaigns shortly after September 11 to 'rebrand American foreign policy [and] rebrand diplomacy' (Colin Powell, Secretary of State, 2001 in Council of Foreign Relations 2002). These were led by the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, former advertising executive Charlotte Beers. Beers' strategy can be summed-up in marketing terminology: to build a brand (America), and sell this brand to a target audience (the Arab 11-year old), by using an emotionally appealing message (freedom). The target group was the sceptical majority of young people with strong reservations about aspects of American policy, whilst at the same time admiring and respecting aspects of American life and culture. US Congress allocated \$255 millions for public diplomacy in 2002-2004 under the framework of the War on Terrorism, and \$75 million from the budget for fighting natural disasters, to the Arabic and Central Asian service of the Voice of America (Power 2003). After September 11, public diplomacy again became an important part of American foreign policy.

The administration was soon to initiate several short-term information campaigns. They immediately established a 24-hour media centre, The Coalition Information Centre, and created a network to coordinate press briefings in Washington D C, London and Islamabad. This temporary information network later became a permanent, fully-staffed Office of Global Communications to coordinate the American foreign policy message and the American image abroad. The administration also initiated multimedia rooms to communicate American values, published an information booklet on Al Qaeda in 36 languages, and set up a series of websites on terrorism (in Arabic, Farsi, Urdu and Pashtu). The number of Arab exchange students to the US was increased, and networking with former exchange students was intensified. In addition, Under Secretary Beers' new exchange programs for Arab and Muslim journalists aimed to increase their knowledge of American society and to establish closer ties with news sources in-country.

Several long-term projects were initiated to support the production of programmes to be broadcast on the Arab media and on American-funded international media broadcasting to foreign audiences. Opinion polls revealing that many Americans and Muslims shared core values such as faith, family

and learning (see for instance the Arab American Institute 2002), led to a \$15 million 'Shared values' campaign aimed at convincing the moderate Muslim majority that the US is a multicultural and religiously tolerant society³. The campaign included five mini-documentaries on 'Muslim Life in America' in which American Muslims talked about their daily lives. The strategy was to use the credibility and third-party authenticity these pro-American Muslims could add to the initiative.

Another long-term project was the revival of Voice of America Arabic to attract younger audiences. The network had been neglected since the Gulf War of 1991, and its daily programmes were reduced to seven hours on a 'barely audible short-wave signal', heard only in a 'standard, classical Arabic that is rarely spoken on the streets of the Middle East' (Pattiz in Boehlert, 2001). In 2001, only two percent of the audience in the region listened to the channel (*ibid*). In March 2002, the Bush administration re-launched VOA in a new commercialised Arabic pop-music version: Radio Sawa (Radio Together). In order to attract Arab youngsters, who are often fond of American popular culture, Radio Sawa gave airtime to both Arab singers and western artists. In between the music were brief news bulletins in Arabic – using moderate westernised terminology and an American slant on events – as well as features and daily questions and opinions from the audience.

The US administration also wanted to improve their performance on the popular Arab media. American spokespersons and high-ranking politicians were interviewed on Al Jazeera and other major Arab networks. For the first time, the American administration spoke directly to an Arab mass audience. Senior American politicians such as President George W Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and former Ambassador to Syria Christopher Ross, were accessible to the major Arab networks. The US administration wanted to 'get out there...to exchange...to get in interviews' (Beers, 2002).

Very soon, however, a mixed message started to emerge. Within the first months of the terrorist attacks, the US in turn courted, criticised, tried to censor and (unintentionally or not) bombed the Kabul office of Al Jazeera (Hoffman 2002:87). From early October 2001, American authorities started trying to influence and control Al Jazeera's coverage of the war by pressuring the Qatari authorities to rein in the network, claiming that its version of the conflict was distorted. The US Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld, accused the network of being 'a mouthpiece of the terrorists', of 'fabricating footage of civilian sufferings' in Afghanistan, and of 'airing terrorist propaganda' (Levy and Bugingo, 2002). At the same time, Condoleezza Rice persuaded American networks to agree to be cautious when broadcasting the speeches of Osama bin Laden and other controversial material from Al Jazeera. All the major mainstream American networks and newspapers signed the agreement (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2002:178), this self-censorship raising broad criticism from international media and human rights groups. Many communica-

tions strategists regarded the manner in which the US authorities dealt with Al Jazeera at home and abroad as harmful to its public diplomacy campaigns: this was not the first time foreign regimes had tried to silence Al Jazeera, but the American attempts were strongly condemned as proof of American double standards towards the region and as proof that the USA defended freedom of speech only as 'long as it was not critical (Boehlert, 2001).

Did the American Strategists Win Arab 'Hearts and Minds' in Time for the War in Iraq?

The American campaign faced several challenges in its first year. One of the major problems was that none of the American politicians participating in Arab TV programmes spoke Arabic – indeed, very few American diplomats and spokespersons in the region were fluent in the language. Furthermore, America's supporters in the region lacked the credibility to risk speaking up for their Western ally, and largely kept silent. Al Jazeera offered translators, but in a war of words it turned out that not having efficient spokespersons with extensive knowledge of either the language and regional culture or of strategic communication, constituted a serious obstacle. Former American Ambassador to Syria Christopher Ross, who was fluent in Arabic, became the only successful American spokesperson on Al Jazeera in the first phase of the war on terror. Even though Ross made a generally good impression on Arab viewers when participating on debates and talk shows, he admitted to difficulties when he was 'thrown on panels where the other extreme [was] very extreme' (Ross 2002). Ross and other American officials claimed that Al Jazeera was biased and negative about American policies in the region. An example often quoted to explain the challenges American officials met on Al Jazeera was Condoleezza Rice's interview in October 2001. Although Dr Rice was invited to discuss the war in Afghanistan, the channel advertised the interview by repeatedly playing pro-Israel statements she had made earlier, so that she lost 'hearts and minds' before her interview was broadcast. When accused of bias, Al Jazeera, which claims to present 'the opinion and the other opinion', says the channel cannot control what their guests say, or intervene if their guests give each other a hard time (Ballout, 2003, interview by author). At the same time, the channel spokesmen say that by focusing on the Palestinian issue they were helping American officials to understand what is important for Arab viewers, '...so perhaps [they] want to concentrate on these points' (ibid.). Al Jazeera says they give everyone a chance to express their opinions. At the same time, they defend the channel's right to be critical towards American politicians on key issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in order to prove to their audience that they have not become 'a tool for American propaganda' (ibid.).

Another challenge for the American campaigns was that although the President himself gave an interview on Al Jazeera, most of the American

officials in Washington had made it their policy not to talk to the channel. As a result, Al Jazeera's Washington bureau complained that the Americans denied them access. Even though Arab and Muslim correspondents had been identified as an important group to influence by Under Secretary Beers' office, and Beers had held closed press briefings for them, a push-down mentality still dominated Washington's communication with the Arab press. Another problem emerged in the drive to recruit more Arab students to the USA and to intensify the networking with former exchange students. At the same time as the administration wanted to strengthen the ties between the US and the Arab world, several Arab students had their scholarships withdrawn after the terrorist attacks, others had problems obtaining visas, and yet others felt discriminated against in the passport controls when entering the US.

The results of the 'shared values' campaigns were also disappointing. The mini-documentaries, 'Muslim life in America', were never aired to a broad Arab audience, since most major Arab networks either demanded too high a price for them or rejected them as political propaganda. Consequently, the State Department cut back its distribution, and put the campaign on hold (Weisman, 2003). The most successful project in the public diplomacy campaign was Radio Sawa. This radio station quickly gained a broad audience among young people in the region who liked its music and fresh style. Even so, critics claim that its positive effects are limited, as most of the listeners only listen to the music, turning to the regional news media for news updates (Fandy, 2003).

The supporters of Under Secretary Beers' revitalisation of American public diplomacy labelled her strategies as innovative and fresh approaches to a difficult task. Beers was also credited for providing better training for diplomats, and for introducing sharper market research tools. Her critics, however, doubted that marketing was the right background for her job. They claimed that her inexperience in negotiating the bureaucratic corridors of Washington delayed the necessary campaigns, and that there was a cultural problem between Beers and the bureaucracy (Teinowitz, 2002). In one of her last public speeches as Under Secretary, Beers asked for patience and sustainable investment in the engagement of the target audience. She described her job as 'pretty big' and admitted it was 'a bit daunting' (Beers, 2003). Only weeks before the war in Iraq, Charlotte Beers had to resign from her position.

A New War – American Authorities and Al Jazeera During the War in Iraq

On the eve of the conflict in Iraq, the Bush administration tried to re-establish more friendly relations with the Arab media. Once again recognising the importance of speaking to the Arab public through the transnational Arab media, the US administration gave the networks access to interviews with high-ranking politicians; Secretary of State Colin Powell, Secretary of Defence Donald

Rumsfeld and Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice – among others – gave extensive exclusive interviews on Al Jazeera in February and March 2003.

The administration attempted to convince viewers of the need to invade Iraq. Since most of the mainstream American news networks had left the war zone, and because all major American networks had video-sharing agreements with Al Jazeera and other Arab networks, the US administration realised that the transnational Arab media would be an important source for international Baghdad war coverage. Improving American relations with the Arab networks was again a high priority in the last weeks preceding the war. Efforts to strengthen ties with Al Jazeera were helped by the decision to place the million-dollar American Central Command (CENTCOM) in the tiny country of Qatar; placing the prestigious press briefing centre in here gave Al Jazeera access to the events at the centre, and assisted Central Command media officials' access. Before the war, exchanges between the staff at the briefing centre and Al Jazeera headquarters were so friendly that several US media officials reportedly barbecued with Al Jazeera's news director (Perlez and Rutenberg, 2003), but as soon as the war started history repeated itself, and the US administration again sent mixed messages to Arab media and viewers. They courted, criticised, harassed, and eventually bombed Al Jazeera's Baghdad bureau.

Al Jazeera's Coverage

– Controversy and American Criticism

A major media development during the war in Iraq was the increasingly important role of transnational satellite networks in the Arab world. The Arab networks' narrative of the conflict was very different from those of its US counterparts⁴. Neither Arab nor American broadcasters provided a comprehensive, balanced and complete picture of the war. In my opinion, the main difference between the mainstream American networks and the major Arab networks was that while the former focused on the technologically advanced nature of the American military, the latter tended to focus on human suffering and the destruction inflicted on Iraqi civilians. This came about partly as a consequence of different degree of access. The American networks had good relations with, and access to, the American-led invasion forces (through embedded reporters and unilaterals), while the Arab networks had better contacts on the ground and with the Iraqi authorities. Their access to Iraqi civilians was better because most of them spoke Arabic and because of common cultural, religious and historical references. Furthermore, the networks attempted to communicate with different audiences: the American networks provided an American perspective of the war tailored to an American audience, while the Arab networks covered the war from an Arab perspective adapted to an Arab audience⁵.

For Al Jazeera, covering the war in Iraq represented a much-needed potential source of income. The station was funded for its first five years by the Emir of Qatar, but was afterwards required to be self-sufficient. Despite its huge audience, the channel suffered from what they consider an undeclared economic boycott by major advertisers in the Gulf region and was still dependent on the Emir. During the war in Afghanistan, sales of footage to other television networks were an important source of income, and the conflict in Iraq was seen as another chance to increase revenues (Whitaker, 2003). The network had around 40 people working inside the war zone during the war: seven correspondents in the Baghdad bureau, one unit in Basra, one in Mosul, several reporters in strategic locations around the country, and one reporter embedded with the American troops (Ballout, 2003, interview by author). Unlike the war in Afghanistan, where it had exclusive access to the Taliban-controlled areas, however, Al Jazeera was not the only Arab satellite network inside Iraq. Abu Dhabi TV and Al Arabiya Channel had both established offices inside the war zone to compete for exclusives and the best footage.⁶

Al Jazeera quickly positioned itself as an alternative source of information to Arab viewers and international media, correcting and challenging news reported by western media and American officials. On the very first day of the war, the channel corrected the Coalition forces' claims that US-led forces had captured Umm Qasr, the port city south of Basra. Al Jazeera's correspondent in Umm Qasr reported that the city had not fallen, and that he could still hear pockets of resistance. The channel's presence on the ground in the south of Iraq gave them many exclusives in the first days of the war. While American and British military spokespersons repeatedly declared that strategically important cities in the south had fallen and that the invasion was progressing as planned, Al Jazeera's reporters in Umm Qasr and Basra reported continued resistance. Similarly, when British military spokesmen in Basra reported a large Shiite there and that a whole Iraqi brigade had surrendered, Al Jazeera's reporter inside Basra reported that he saw no demonstrations, denied any such uprising, and interviewed the commander of the Division that the Coalition claimed had surrendered.

The turning point in the relations between Al Jazeera Channel and the American administration came on the fourth day of the war, March 23, when Al Jazeera broadcast a report by Iraqi television showing pictures of at least four dead US soldiers and interviews with five others captured in Nasiriya. The report provoked sharp condemnations from American authorities, and marked the beginning of very tense relations between the American administration and the news channel⁷. The US Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, claimed the video violated the Geneva Convention governing the treatment of prisoners of war – specifically the provisions banning the exposure of prisoners to public curiosity and humiliation. Lt Gen John Abizaid at the Central Command in Qatar declared that airing the video was 'absolutely unacceptable', and called the images 'disgusting' (Abizaid in Getlin and Jensen,

2003). Al Jazeera, on the other hand, argued then – and still maintains – that the Geneva Convention does not cover the media, but applies only to dealings between nations and international organisations. The channel claims that it was their professional duty to broadcast the pictures; that they had news value (the pictures made headlines in international media), that they had relevance (because their context was a war that American officials presented as a ‘clean war’), and that they came from a reliable source (Al Jazeera mirrored a report broadcast on Iraqi television, and claim they did not stage the events) (Ballout, 2003, interview by author). According to Al Jazeera, the story of the dead and captured Americans was one of its best from the war in Iraq (Shouli, 2003, interview by author). The ethics of showing pictures of frightened and humiliated POWs, were satisfied by withholding the footage, on request from American authorities, until the families of the POWs were informed. They maintain that ‘the fact that the soldier is afraid; that’s an offshoot of war, that’s not Al Jazeera’s making’ (Ballout, 2003, interview by author) and assert that American accusations represent double standards and hypocrisy. Al Jazeera had broadcast pictures of dead people and prisoners of war before (in Chechnya, Bosnia Herzegovina, Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq), but this was the first time they were criticised for doing so. What is more, Al Jazeera spokesmen pointed out, when western media showed pictures of Iraqi POWs ‘kneeling, being kicked, their sacred head gear being pulled off and stepped on by American soldiers’, nobody reacted (*ibid*). In Al Jazeera’s view, these double standards result from a feeling among Americans that their POWs were more deserving of dignity, or more important, than Iraqi POWs. They argue that pictures of Iraqi POWs were valuable to the US because they tallied with American propaganda, while pictures of American POWs challenged the official version of what had happened (*ibid*).

American critics also claimed that Al Jazeera was inciting Arab people by showing raw and graphic footage. Secretary of State Colin Powell accused the channel of portraying American efforts ‘in a negative light’ (Powell in Al Jazeera.net English 2003), to which Al Jazeera responded that its editorial priority was to focus on the aftermath of the attacks and to ‘put more concentration on the sufferings of the people after the attacks’, and ‘the human side of war...those people who were wounded, who became homeless or were seeking refuge anywhere’ (Shouli, 2003, interview by author). Critics claimed that the gruesome close-ups of Iraqi civilian casualties sent out a daily message to the Arab public that American soldiers were ruthless killers, that only resistance to USA could win back Arab pride, and that the Iraqis were fighting a pan-Arab battle for self-respect – but Al Jazeera maintains its policy was not to infuriate either Arab or western viewers but to reflect the realities on the ground. Al Jazeera emphasises that the realities of war are by definition ugly, and that if they had edited out these graphic pictures they would not have been faithful to their audience or to history – to Al Jazeera no wars are clean (Ballout, 2003, interview by author). By

contrast, American networks largely avoided showing civilian casualties, according to a study by the Project for Excellence in Journalism. Analysis by this study of coverage by ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN and Fox early in the conflict found that while about half the reports from embedded journalists showed combat action, not one depicted people hit by weapons (Sharkey, 2003).

American officials also claimed that Al Jazeera was too close to the Iraqi government and intelligence service were too close, and that the channel functioned as a propaganda tool for the Iraqi regime: for example, Defence Secretary Rumsfeld said that Al Jazeera 'obviously' was 'part of Iraqi propaganda and responding to Iraqi propaganda' (Rumsfeld in Getlin and Jensen, 2003) and Secretary of State Colin Powell accused the channel of presenting a 'distorted' version of the war by magnifying 'the minor successes of the [Iraqi] regime' (Powell in Al Jazeera.net English, 2003). Al Jazeera insists that it had to deal with the Iraqi regime as the legitimate internationally-recognised government of the time, and that their relations served Al Jazeera's own interests in getting better access to information. According to the Deputy Editor in Chief, Sayyed Shouli, the channel had to cooperate with Iraqi intelligence to be able to work inside Iraq, because 'in third world countries like Iraq the power lies within the intelligence' (Shouli, 2003, interview by author). Furthermore, the channel spokesmen say that their staff have to comply with government regulations wherever they work (be it in the US or Iraq), and that they therefore had to work under Iraqi Ministry of Information regulations.

To prove its independence, Al Jazeera emphasises that there was constant tension between its staff and the Iraqi authorities during the war, asserting that the authorities never trusted the channel, monitored it closely, criticised and harassed its staff, and threatened to close down its Baghdad office. At the start of the war, the Iraqi information minister, Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf, assaulted correspondent Diyar Al-Omari in the Al Jazeera office, angered by the live footage broadcast from Baghdad (Al-Omari, 2003, interview by author). As an Iraqi himself, Al-Omari felt that he was under particular pressure from Iraqi authorities and intelligence during the war, and he described working conditions as extremely hard (*ibid*). Later, the Iraqi authorities expelled Al Jazeera correspondent Tayseer Allouni from Baghdad and banned Al-Omari from filing reports because both had breached Ministry of Information regulations. In protest, the network stopped covering the war inside government-controlled Iraq until an official explanation from the authorities was obtained. Tallouni and Al-Omari were allowed to continue their work two days later, on April 4.

Allegations of close ties between Al Jazeera and the Iraqi intelligence increased after the war, when British media alleged that the former chief executive of Al Jazeera, Mohammed Jassem al-Ali, had been forced to resign for cooperating with the Iraqi secret service. Al Jazeera categorically denies these allegations. According to the channel, al-Ali resigned because his secondment from his former position in Qatar television had ended, and

it emphasises that al-Ali is still involved in Al Jazeera as a member of its Board of Directors (Ballout, 2003, interview by author).

Al Jazeera says they wanted people to see the realities of war as their reporters on the ground saw them, and that what happened on the ground did not reflect American accounts of the conflict. Through of their coverage of the war, Al Jazeera undermined American and British propaganda versions of the conflict and corrected reports that claimed American and British troops met no resistance, that they were greeted as liberators, and that there were few civilian casualties. But the channel has faced broad criticism – and from Arab voices too – for being as biased in their coverage as its American counterparts. Al Jazeera, and other Arab media, have been accused of sensationalism (by showing only the most grotesque Iraqi casualties), of only interviewing people tending to criticise the US, of debating with rather than interviewing American guests, of accepting Iraqi and other Arab government statements at face value with little probing into their accuracy, and of highlighting the failures of the US and British forces (Khouri, 2003).

Attacking the Messenger

According to several members of Al Jazeera staff, there was (and still is) an institutionalised culture of suspicion towards Al Jazeera within the US military (Welsh, 2003, interview by author). They experienced all types of pressure and criticism during the war – from public statements to harassment on the ground – because they were airing certain messages and reporting from places ‘where the Americans would not like [them] to be’ (ibid). They maintain that the pressure came from ‘all the way up, from President Bush himself, to the American soldier on the street’ (Ballout, 2003, interview by author). This negative view of Al Jazeera also prevailed in non-governmental American circles during the war. One day after the channel broadcast the video of the American POWs, the New York Stock exchange and NASDAQ revoked the press credentials of Ramsey Shiber and Ammar Sankari and banned them from covering live from the market floor (the reporters got back their accreditation in early May.) On March 25, the Al Jazeera English-language website covering the war was hacked and pushed off the web; the US-based host-company said it could no longer continue to host Al Jazeera’s sites, and visitors to them were redirected to another website displaying a pro-war message. All these incidents reinforced the channel’s feelings of being under attack.

The Al Jazeera member who experienced the heaviest personal pressure during the war was Amr El-Kahky. El-Kahky, the only embedded reporter from the network, travelled with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit from Kuwait into Iraq. He says that he was treated differently from his western colleagues; he had no access to the battlefield, because he (and other mem-

bers of the Arab media) was assigned to the support unit. He claims that he was kept in the back of the unit to focus on humanitarian aid rather than the fighting, that he was kept out of the informal press briefings given to his western colleagues every morning, and that when he discovered this the group briefings were cancelled and replaced by one-on-one briefings. El-Kahky believes the troops were suspicious of him and did not trust him. Relations improved as they got to know him, but he 'was never treated as an equal' by his western colleagues (El-Kahky, 2003, interview by author). Abu Dhabi TV's embedded reporters felt similar discrimination. They claim that they did not get the same access as their western colleagues in the field and that American military personnel mistrusted them (Bouran, 2003, interview by author).

On April 8, two US missiles struck Al Jazeera's Baghdad bureau killing correspondent Tarek Ayyub and wounding cameraman Zuheir Iraqi. Al Jazeera spokesmen claim that they had communicated their presence to the American authorities in February, providing their exact locations and coordinates (Ballout, 2003, interview by author). American military spokespersons denied having deliberately attacked journalists, and insisted that the American forces had responded to enemy fire. May-Ying Welsh, producer at Al Jazeera's Baghdad bureau, points out that the Al Jazeera office was not the only media hit by American forces. 'In less than 24 hours they hit all three of the locations [where foreign journalists remained in Baghdad]: Al Jazeera's office, Abu Dhabi's office and the Palestine Hotel' (Welsh, 2003, interview by author). The Committee to Protect Journalists is currently investigating the incidents and a large number of human rights groups and international media have condemned them. This was the second time American missiles had targeted Al Jazeera offices in the war zones. In November 2001 the Al Jazeera office in Kabul was hit only hours before the Northern Alliance took control of the city. Al Jazeera's base at the Sheraton Hotel in Basra received four direct hits from British forces on April 2 2003 (Ballout, 2003, interview by author). The American and British authorities have failed to offer any official explanation for these incidents but the Al Jazeera staff, their colleagues in the Arab media and most Arab viewers strongly believe that the targeting was deliberate and the result of hostility towards Arab media.

Have the American Information Strategies Succeeded?

American experiences with Al Jazeera during the war in Iraq were similar to their experiences during the war in Afghanistan. In both conflicts the US administration started by courting the network, giving exclusive interviews and participating in debates, but when war started friendly relations came to an end. When Al Jazeera focused on the ugly face of both wars, the American administration reacted with criticism, threats and attempts to si-

lence it. In both conflicts relations froze when American forces bombed the Al Jazeera offices in the field. It seems that the American administration still struggles with the mixed blessing of a more open Arab media environment as discussed at the beginning of this chapter. The US administration lacks a comprehensive communications strategy towards the Arab satellite networks and its contradictory policies have led to increased scepticism on the part of Arab media and have fuelled a widespread belief among the Arab public in American double standards. American politicians seem only to value freedom of speech as long as the new Arab media do not use it against them; American officials appear only to care about Arabs when they want their support for going to war; the American military's effort to protect journalists in the field excludes Al Jazeera, which has been targeted twice.

Opinions differ as to how American performance towards Arab satellite networks can be improved. El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2002) suggest that the best way is to increase American participation on Al Jazeera – to increase their presence on the channel, to participate in debates and talk shows rather than interviews, and to study modes of communication on Arab talk shows in order to be better prepared (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2002:110). Hoffman (2002) argues that the US should give more support to moderate Arab media in the region to increase freedom of speech as they did in Eastern Europe during the Cold War. He believes the best way to counter more extremist Arab voices is to support moderate Arab voices by giving them a platform to speak from. Hoffman says the US should support the moderate regional media by offering training in journalism, improving media laws and providing technical assistance (Hoffman, 2002:91). For Fandy (2003) on the other hand, the best way to communicate with the Arab public is through the private American networks: he sees Arab viewers as very critical of state-sponsored media, both Arab and American, while the private networks enjoy wide popularity among viewers (Fandy, 2003).

Nevertheless, the American administration's main strategy for the future seems to be to launch a new American-funded satellite network in Arabic, Al Hurra, created to counter Al Jazeera which, according to American officials, is anti-American and difficult to control and influence. Al Hurra, 'the Free One', started broadcasting on February 14 2004. The channel was granted a budget of \$62 million for its first year by US Congress, and has a staff of around 200 Arab and American journalists (Feuillerade, 2004). Its policy is to 'counter the negative images being broadcast right now, the incitement to violence, the hate-radio and the journalistic self-censorship' (Pattiz to Burkeman, 2003); it is aimed at a young audience, and sees its role as promoting democracy and winning over public opinion through independent journalism. Al Hurra was met by broad criticism in the Arab media from the outset, and dismissed as American propaganda TV. It is still too early to judge if Al Hurra will influence public opinion.

In my opinion, Al Hurra will not solve three of the basic problems inherent in the American public diplomacy campaigns. First: American strategists

seem to lack understanding of what is important to their target group. There seems to be a lack of political will to internalise the problems and worldview of those critical of the US; to admit that hate of the US cannot be explained by misunderstandings and ignorance alone and that anti-American feeling in the Middle East is rooted in the misery and suffering many people there experience daily. Second: American spokespersons, mostly unable to speak Arabic or understand Arab culture, lack the credibility to make their target groups believe their message and point of view. Although Under Secretary Beers tried to improve credibility by cooperating with Arab American organisations, the effort failed as Arab networks refused to broadcast her campaign. More non-governmental groups and networks such as diaspora groups, NGOs and political parties, could be included in the campaign to communicate more effectively (Leonard, 2002). Finally: American foreign policies towards the region suffer from duplicitous and contradictory communication, and the public diplomacy campaigns, which try to communicate American core values, are weakened by actual practice on the ground (the wars on Afghanistan and Iraq). Double standards in communication can be found on many levels. In the case of Al Jazeera, it may be understood as a symptom of internal struggles within the US administration in which the State Department's efforts to improve relations with the channel are undermined by the military's policies on the ground. According to Leonard and Smewing, American public diplomacy efforts seem to concentrate 'almost exclusively on broadcasting as loudly as possible its openness and love of dialogue, rather than actually engaging in it' (Leonard and Smewing, 2003:96). At the same time, regional opposition to American policies on Palestine and Iraq seems to be increasing.

Can Public Diplomacy Solve the Image Problem?

There are some historical examples of successful public diplomacy. Germany's and Japan's image-building after World War Two, whereby they changed from aggressive, destructive states to members of western society are often mentioned as examples of success. Other examples are the improved images of international corporations such as Shell and BP, and organisations such as the ANC and the PLO (ibid:4). Nevertheless, experts on public diplomacy and on Middle Eastern policy argue that improving America's image in the Arab and Muslim worlds will be a tough challenge unless the American administration can prove its critics wrong about its intentions and politics in the region (see Zogby, 2004). They claim that American public diplomacy campaigns can only be effective if American policy towards the region, often symbolised by the Palestinian issue, changes. These views are reflected in the Arab satellite channels.

When asked about their views of American public diplomacy campaigns, spokesmen from Al Jazeera Channel, Al Arabiya Channel and Abu Dhabi TV all emphasised that a public relations campaign is not enough – the policies on the ground need to change. According to Salah Nejm, News Director in Al Arabiya Channel, public diplomacy is not sufficient to convince people; he argues that American policy towards the peace process between Palestine and Israel will always be compared to the way the US dealt with Iraq and that, as a consequence, in any instance where American officials need to justify their actions, the comparison will re-appear to undermine their efforts (Nejm, 2003, interview by author). Jihad Ali Ballout, Al Jazeera's official spokesman, also emphasises the Palestinian issue, saying that the key task for the Americans is to understand how important it is to the Arab public. Ballout claims that no campaign will succeed until the Americans gain a better understanding of what is important for the Arab man-in-the-street because 'this goes beyond giving us packaged songs or canned news broadcasts or fast food or Mickey Mouse' (Ballout, 2003, interview by author). According to Nart Bouran, Director of the News Centre at Abu Dhabi TV, appearing on television is not enough: if the American public relations campaign has had any success thus far – and he questions whether it has – then what is happening between the Israelis and the Palestinians is ruining much of the work being done (Bouran, 2003, interview by author). Bouran thinks the whole campaign misses its target as most young Arabs already dream the American Dream and sums up one of the basic challenges facing the American campaigns in a simple but precise observation: The image problem is not that the Arab youth don't like America – it's that they feel that America doesn't like *them*.

Notes

1. The Gallup poll of nine Muslim countries, the Zogby International Poll of attitudes to the United States, the World Values Survey, the Pew Global Attitudes Project, the British Council's Connecting Futures research, as well as interviews conducted by Leonard and Smewing.
2. Arabism, or the Pan-Arab movement, refers to the nationalist notion of cultural and political unity among Arab countries. Pan-Arabism's most charismatic and effective proponent was Egypt's president Gamal Abdel Nasser (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, online version).
3. There are at least 3.5 million Arab Americans living in the US (Arab American Institute) and an estimated 7 million Muslims in the USA (USA Today).
4. For a more in-depth discussion on the Arab media coverage of the Iraq war see El Gody this volume.
5. It is a simplification and generalisation to talk about American and Arab media or perspectives because there are substantial variations and differences within each category, but to illustrate the main differences in the coverage it is still fruitful to use these categories.
6. Abu Dhabi TV is not a news channel, but extended its news coverage to give extensive coverage of the war; during the war they broadcast news 24-hours a day.

7. Two days later, on March 26, Al Jazeera aired pictures of two dead British soldiers and this report caused strong criticism from British authorities.

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The War Against Iraq in Transnational Broadcasting

Lars Lundsten & Matteo Stocchetti

The Western Perspective: Crusade and Soccer

In this article, we present some reflections on how to make sense of *CNN International* and *BBC World* reports on Iraq in the late winter and early spring of 2003. These reflections are supported by empirical evidence obtained by applying a conceptual framework originally devised for the analysis of the communicative potential of transcultural broadcasting and for the implementation of critical monitoring of transnational broadcasting as suggested by Nordenstreng.¹

Within the scope of this short article, we cannot conduct a deep analysis of the concept of transnational broadcasting. Therefore, our operational definition is as follows: any broadcasting – be it television or radio – is transnational if it is produced for a general, overseas audience and from a general point of view. According to this definition, *BBC World*, *Al Jazeera*, and *CNN International* are transnational broadcasters. Their reports are produced in a certain country and in a certain language, but they are not primarily aimed at natives, nor do they primarily deal with domestic topics. Neither the Swedish satellite channel *SVT Europe* nor the Finnish short wave transmissions *Radio Finland* are transnational, since they mainly serve audiences of expatriates or people that happen to have an interest in Sweden or Finland.

The Anglo-American war against Iraq was an uneasy challenge to the main transnational broadcasters. Unlike most news items, this one presumably divided the transnational news agencies into friends and foes from the point of view of the warring parties. There were three main transnational broadcasters covering the Iraq war from the beginning – *CNN International*, *BBC World* and *Al Jazeera*. In our study, we consider only the two Anglo-Saxon broadcasters, *CNN International* and *BBC World*. There are several reasons for this. A practical one is that our monitoring capacity during the war was very limited. However, there are more challenging reasons.

Both empirically and theoretically, a comparative study of *BBC World* and *CNN International* provides an interesting approach to conventionally de-

terminated aspects of news reporting. The British and the Americans were allies, both representing Western democratic values and sharing a common language and faith. *BBC* and *CNN* share relatively high public acceptance as reliable sources. Nevertheless, our study shows that there are considerable differences between *CNN* International and *BBC World* even though they were both attached to the same party in the conflict. While the Americans conceived the war as a crusade, the British looked upon it more as a game of soccer. We do not pretend that either of the broadcasters would explicitly have claimed that the war was a crusade or a soccer match. Our point is that we are able to identify conceptual patterns according to which scattered reports from the war were understood and presented by these agencies, and we chose to call these two patterns 'crusade' and 'soccer game'.

On a conceptual level, a crusade and a soccer match share several crucial features. Participants are divided into two competing factions. The reporter and the audience are supposed to sympathise with one or other of them. The possible scope of outcomes is limited, i.e. either 'we' win or 'they' win. The actions and tools available to the parties are limited in number and kind. Hence, the interesting point is how to use them, i.e. the strategic capability of the parties is highlighted. Psychological preparation is crucial. Nevertheless, unforeseen contingent circumstances can play a considerable part in the outcome.

Crusades and soccer games, however, also present some important conceptual differences. Although both can trigger excessively nationalistic behaviour, the crusade concept tends to offer a more profound reference to the superiority of 'our' culture as opposed to the inferiority of 'theirs'. In a soccer game between national teams, from the 'us' and 'them' perspective, one presupposes that 'we' and 'they' are morally on an equal footing, at least within the limited scope of this sport. A soccer game is about who wins, but winning a soccer game does not imply ideological or religious superiority.

In our study, we came to the conclusion that some of the most significant differences and similarities in *CNN* and *BBC* coverage systematically alluded to narrative models consistent with the crusade and soccer game metaphors respectively. More precisely, we have reason to believe that – although this was not explicitly uttered – crusade and soccer games played a role as 'systematic metaphorical concepts' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1981: 55) that structured news reports. This means, in practice, that *the communicative point of a significant part of the television news reports could be identified only within the logical framework of either of these metaphors*. The principal features of an action-logic ascribed to, or identified by, the crusade and soccer game metaphors can be summarised in terms of two sets of value judgments:

- *Moralisation*: the attribution of moral connotation to the quest for victory, to the stand of players and to the players themselves is a most significant element in crusade's narratives. A crusade is a cause with a sacred element, and success a sign of moral superiority, while victory

in a soccer match only proves better training and, to a certain extent, luck.

- *Polarisation*: in a crusade-type narrative model the representation of third parties forces them into the role of either friends or foes, while in soccer-game type narratives support for third teams is clearly a more accepted possibility.

As we shall see later, this seems to hold true for the reports at some key stages of the crisis – e.g. Powell's presentation, the breakdown of diplomacy and the beginning of war – and in relation to some key topics within the main story, e.g. the role of technology and the representation of the media.

In this article, we show that the discrepancies between *CNN* and *BBC* are not only relevant from a political point of view. We claim that these differences can be used in order to show in what ways broadcasting is nationally, culturally or ethnically founded even if it strives to be global and, thus, in some sense culturally neutral. Furthermore, we claim that an understanding of the role of such cultural foundations is necessary if one wants to grasp the distinction between an unavoidable cultural bias and deliberate manipulation. From an analytical point of view, it does not matter whether or not a broadcaster is committed explicitly to a certain set of values and beliefs. If the output makes sense only from a certain epistemological or ethical point of view, then the broadcaster is, at least implicitly, committed to that worldview.

News Reports: Narrative Communication

Western transnational broadcasters were seduced into acceptance of the Pentagon epistemic model of the conflict. Part of the reason why this happened, we suspect, might have to do with the incapacity of *BBC World* and *CNN International* to formulate alternative narrative patterns for the description of the war against Iraq as a war against 'evil' – a point irresistibly clear and simple. Before we turn to the analysis of the narrative effects of this 'seduction' it might be useful to spend a few moments describing four distinctive traits that are common to all narrative models.

Firstly, narratives presuppose a temporal closure of the reported chain of events. Soccer matches, royal weddings and other such occasions can be shown live on television with great success. This is, however, only because they are highly predictable processes. A soccer game cannot include helicopters flying in live elephants or sudden bombing of the goalkeeper. A narrative can be produced only when the author knows the total chain of events that should be covered, or at least the type of events that form this chain. During a soccer game, the producer of the television programme does not know which team will win. What he or she does know is that there are only three possible solutions. Furthermore, the types of events presented in

a televised game are fairly limited in number. One can prepare for almost any possible combination of them so that the overall story makes sense to a viewer not present at the match. War reporting is much more unpredictable. It is not known when and where the most significant events will take place. It is not even known which events should be considered significant, because one does not know whether this is the story about Saddam's Waterloo or about Bush's Vietnam.

Secondly, narratives are structured in terms of chains of events that provide the explanation to the question "how did it happen?" when something significant has occurred and we want to know the reasons, or the causal chain that leads to that situation. News reporting has been, and will probably remain, a problematic case of narration because news events rarely occur as tidy packages of temporally closed processes; instead, they are slices of long and not very well defined chains of events. Mostly, however, the news is told in a mode that presupposes a certain narrative model or structure – as a series of events belonging to a greater story.

Thirdly, narratives are construed according to models that are re-used over and over. The model most frequently used is probably that of David and Goliath. One of the involved parties is designated as the poorly equipped but morally superior David, while the other one is given the function of Goliath, the representative of the foreign, evil and brutal force. For instance, during the Gulf War of 1991, much effort was put into shaping the perception of the course of events in terms of a conflict between Kuwait (David) and Iraq (Goliath). In this somewhat non-canonical version of that biblical story, the US-led coalition was given the task of the celestial forces assisting David. The longer this conflict lasted, the more evident it became that the David and Goliath model did not suit, and in the 2003 conflict it was self-evident that a David and Goliath model would be disastrous for the US case. The United States could not be given the role of David because evidently Saddam had not made a convincing appearance as Goliath in that comparison. On the other hand, the US would clearly have been unhappy starring as Goliath in domestic and Western media.

Finally, the narrative model is an abstraction. It is not necessary for the broadcaster or for the viewer to recognise it explicitly or to name it. Rather, the narrative model is an unconscious epistemic device that serves as an unmarked reference for the correct understanding of similar stories. In Tom & Jerry cartoons even a small child understands who the bad guy is and who the good guy is, whereas in journalistic reporting, most significantly in television news, one has to pick the correct single events out of a complex crowd of events in order to construe an intelligible story. Hesitation as to what narrative model should be adopted undermines the possibility of picking out the right events. In the war against Iraq, the news organisations had two main options: either to stick with the Alliance, or to have no footage on any significant events.

Conceptual Framework

Our analysis of the narrative patterns affecting the news reports from the war against Iraq is conducted along four dimensions. These dimensions² are listed here in order of decreasing communicative prominence:

- *the contextual or social dimension* hosts the communicative point of the act, i.e. what epistemic conclusions are made either about things within the story or about things outside it;
- *the structural or textual dimension* consists of convention-governed, meaningful patterns of signs, e.g. to ascribe the function of 'bad guy' or 'good guy' to a specific person within the story, cf. *dramatis personae*;
- *the referential dimension* is ruled by semantic conventions of reference between a sign and the phenomenon to which it refers, e.g. images of red spots on a green surface denoting blood on grass;
- *the perceptual dimension* encompasses stimuli emitted by the television screen and loudspeakers, but also shifts in intensity and other physical features.

One main task, if not *the* main task, of any broadcaster with journalistic ambitions, is to bring sense and order to seemingly chaotic chains of events. The communicative point of war reporting is to establish a certain set of judgments about the social dimension of war to the viewers. Mainly, sense and order are mastered by means of meaningful patterns, such as the Crusade framework, i.e. the significance of singular events is established on the structural dimension. The semantics and the technical articulation of a report are less of a problem once the point and the epistemic structure have been established.

In practice, however, television reporting needs heavy preparations and detailed planning in order to achieve the aesthetic values that make the message acceptable (i.e. comprehensible and appealing) to the audience. The possibility of knowing what is going to happen, and the significance of certain types of events make producers much more comfortable in the planning and execution of their reports. This is why every news organisation is tempted to rely on a pre-conceived idea about the nature of a certain chain of events. In the war against Iraq, the most likely party to provide correct – in practical terms – predictions about the future unfolding of events was the Pentagon. Even if the transnational broadcasters were to disagree with the US government on the justification of the war, it was in their interest to be able to cover it at their best.

We do not claim knowledge of any deliberate conspiracy on behalf of the Pentagon and the *CNN* in order to mislead the public. There might have been one, but our analytical tools do not deal with such matters. However,

we claim that the nature of television reporting made it hard to avoid a seductive invitation by those who planned the war to accept their epistemic model and, thus, to make the communicative point for which they strived.

CNN International's adherence to the Crusade structure provided by the Pentagon raises the question of the transnational feasibility of its reports.

Either *CNN International* actually worked under the premise that nobody could ever doubt the American case, or it tried to manipulate its audience into accepting the crusade premise. In either case, shortcomings of this kind revealed some weakness in the allegedly transnational approach by *CNN International*.

On the structural dimension, *CNN* made yet another fatally false judgment. Understanding the concept of crusade is strongly dependent on one's cultural heritage. In America, it seems, crusades are seen as limited and justified violent actions that aim at restoring or installing a justified state of affairs on foreign territory. In Western Europe, it seems, crusades are seen as efforts to achieve an idealistic but, in practical terms, hollow cause. In the Arab world, crusades are seen as unpredictable, unjustified aggression and intrusion by evil forces on holy land.

Making Sense: Ascribing Meaning to Events

In order to see how news reports make sense we need to identify the tools we use on four levels. Normally, discussions concerning media coverage focus merely on the second level, i.e. on the dimension of literal reference. Along this line, one may think that a report has been objective and serious if and when a corpse is shown. More recently, however, there has been a move towards analysing features on the third level, i.e. on the structural dimension. One is supposed to pay attention to whether the Iraqis or the US marines are depicted as 'good guys' or as 'bad guys'. Being a good guy or a bad guy in a story depends on what kinds of actions are shown, since you identify the bad guys by the way they behave. And you identify the good guys by the fact that they oppose the bad ones. The reasons why certain *actant models* (cf. Genette, 1983) or *narrative patterns* are imposed on certain reported events have been less frequently discussed.

Following Lakoff and Johnson (1980), our claim is that certain narrative patterns reflect culture-specific understandings of the events narrated. In addition, our claim is that specific and identifiable narrative models restrict the range of understandings of reported events that uncritical viewers can sensibly achieve. On the fourth level, i.e. in the contextual dimension, the war reports rely on these socially construed schemata and in so doing enforce them. Reporting the war as a battle between good and evil not only establishes Iraq as evil and the Allies as good, but also establishes implicit criteria concerning what actions are appropriate or not, what are the tolerable costs, what goals should be sought and what outcomes are expected.

In fact, the narrative models selected to narrate events do affect the nature of the expected ending of the story reported. Depending on the circumstances, however, not all narrative models are suitable for every type of event. From our point of view, the presumed end of the story, the 'liberation' of Iraq, offered to both *BBC* and *CNN* journalists the general framework or a sort of discursive 'algorithm', according to which significant events during the conflict could be identified and reported in a meaningful way.

The Power of Transnational Broadcasting

Before we turn to a more direct analysis of the war coverage in *CNN International* and *BBC World*, we should clarify the ground for the peculiar social saliency we attribute to narrative patterns in transnational broadcasting.

If looked at in its social significance, the most distinctive feature of transnational broadcasting is its power: *CNN* and *BBC* (and *Al Jazeera*) can *do* things that other broadcasting agencies cannot. They can produce news stories whose quantity and quality have no rivals; they can pick and choose news stories from virtually every corner of the planet and show them worldwide. A subtler feature of transnational broadcasting power has to do with the relationship that, by virtue of its ubiquity and real-time broadcasting technology, transnational broadcasting can establish with the events it covers. In this respect, only transnational broadcasting can tell stories while they are happening and give them a meaning while their outcome is still uncertain. Only transnational broadcasting has the power to collapse events and their narratives at a global level. Technology provides those broadcasting organisations with the material conditions to impose specific interpretations of events or explanatory frames, whose social intelligibility depends however on non-material conditions. These frames are not more accurate, objective or 'true' than those provided, for example, by local broadcasting: they are just unchallenged because transnational broadcasting supremacy is based on technological and also financial and organisational factors unmatched by local competitors.

The special status and power of transnational broadcasting can be described in relation to at least three aspects (crucial in relation to the issues of power): 1) *Technological capacity*: access to satellite and to state-of-the-art information and communication technology that enable the production and distribution of unmatched quantitative and qualitative levels of information in support of socially influential narratives; 2) *Organisational capacity*: accountable for the extensive coverage from everywhere and distribution almost everywhere in the world; 3) *Transnational audience*: an audience not identified by national affiliation but rather by linguistic and socio-economic status.

At least three consequences follow from this. a) Transnational audiences create the illusion that transnational broadcasting is the 'voice' of the inter-

national community – itself a notion historically rooted in the liberal idea that international affairs are managed by elites which, despite differences, share some very basic values, interests and goals. b) Transnational media mistakenly appear as the vectors for transnational narratives: accounts transcending the particularities of local perspectives on behalf of a broader and apparently more reliable view of local events. c) The material possibilities of transnational broadcasting imply more extensive and high-quality visual accounts of events supporting the illusion of a more trustful account of them – a belief based on the two misleading ideas that ‘a picture is worth a thousand words’ and that ‘images talk for themselves’.

In the era of the ‘war on terror’, transnational broadcasting is a crucial asset because it represents the ‘natural’ voice of the world; the parameter of what is ‘good’ and what is ‘evil’, of what is true and what is false and of what is authoritative and what is preposterous. The relevance of the very special function these types of media perform in contemporary societies – coupled with an international situation which seems to promise more conflicts such as the last war against Iraq – provides indisputable ground in support of the calls for transnational media monitoring applied to war coverage broadcasting³ and also, we believe, for a more informed and effective training in critical broadcasting.

In the following sections, we apply this type of narrative analysis to four themes which we believe particularly interesting in the overall coverage: 1) the case for war as presented by the US Secretary of State Colin Powell at the UN Security Council on February 5th; 2) the failed effort by the US and UK to gain UN support for military action against – the so-called breakdown of diplomacy – on March 17th, three days before the actual start of hostilities; 3) the way in which technology enters the coverage of the war and, last but not least, 4) the way in which the role of the media was depicted in the conflict. In each of these cases, the main differences can be easily interpreted in relation to different narrative patterns adopted by *CNN International* and *BBC World* – ‘crusade’ and ‘soccer’ respectively. Finally, some reflections concerning the implications of this type of analysis for journalists are offered in the concluding section.

The Case for War:

Powell’s Presentation at the UN Security Council

Looked at from the contextual or social dimension – the fourth dimension described above – the attitude of *CNN International* and *BBC World* towards the case for war – as presented by US Secretary of State Colin Powell at the UN Security Council on February 5th – shows a rather interesting set of differences and similarities. The effects of polarisation and moralisation are evident in *CNN* coverage of the debate on the case for war and stand in

marked contrast with the *BBC*. On *CNN*, war is portrayed as the preferred, simplest and somehow more natural outcome of the crisis, while the alleged causes and potential consequences of war itself are left unquestioned. On *BBC* the rationale for war appears more problematic, and dissenting opinion and criticism receive far more attention. Despite this, however, in both accounts the issue is moralised in support of the US by associating Powell's presentation at the UN Security Council with the US stance against Soviet missiles in Cuba in the 1960s.

The narrative pattern followed by *CNN* seemed to imply that the political discussion and diplomatic negotiations were meaningful only as pre-war preparations: events were reported as parts of a story which had still to happen but whose overall unfolding was already known – and accepted – by the newsmakers. Although a negotiated solution was still technically possible, the reporting of the debate was framed in ways so to make the US and UK inclination to resort to war a more effective or 'simple' solution to the Iraqi problem, as opposed to the extension and deepening of inspections sought by France, Germany, Russia, and China among others. *CNN* did not simply cover the Powell presentation at the UN but actually promoted the US Secretary of State's overall point. From the perspective of *CNN* journalists such as Jim Clancy and Zain Verjee, the focus seemed to be on establishing who were the 'friends' and who were the 'foes' rather than on the persuasiveness of the case for war. The two main arguments – the Saddam regime support for al-Qaeda and the possession of operational weapons of mass destruction – were never really challenged, and dissenting comments were overtly opposed. This is how, for example, *CNN*'s Jim Clancy commented on the speech by the French Foreign Minister, broadcasted live from the UN Security Council, which followed Powell's presentation:

CNN: ...firmly on defence and not choosing side other than what France has already staked out...and that is calling for more inspections. They are complicating things if you will, calling for an enhanced regime of inspections that might require another UN Security Council resolution there and saying we shouldn't be in any rush to get to war... (*CNN* 05 Feb. 2003 at 17.43 GMT).

Right after that, *CNN* journalist Zain Verjee interviewed the Editor of *Al-quds Al Arabi*, Abdel Bari Atwan. The idea of inviting comments from an Arab journalist was presumably inspired by the requirement to give voice to an alternative view from a non-Western commentator. This plan, however, soured rapidly once the guest started to express his perplexity and outright disappointment with the overall quality of the 'evidence' provided by Powell.

CNN: The issue of al-Qaeda's link to Iraq: what did you make of that?

Atwan: I believe this is the Secretary of State's weakest point. (*CNN* 23 Feb. 2003 at 17:43:36 HT).

Verjee interrupts Atwan and, after having established that Powell's evidence was compelling, asks Atwan a question whose value cannot be other than rhetorical:

CNN: We have seen a lot of visual evidence that most people, some at least, would say was compelling...are you convinced by those intercepts that Iraq is hiding weapons, that Iraq is deliberately not cooperating? (*CNN* 05 Feb. 2003 at 17:46 GMT)

In his answer, Atwan states that more time should be given to UN inspectors to actually control the information provided by Powell which, as it is, does not seem convincing enough to justify a war – a point also made by British arms control expert Trevor Findlay contemporarily on air on *BBC World*. Visibly annoyed by Atwan's response, *CNN* journalist Zain Verjee cuts short the interview:

CNN: Unconvincing to you, Abdel Bari Atwan [turning away visibly annoyed]. We'll continue to check in with you as we dissect the body of what Colin Powell had to say this day at the UN Security Council. (*CNN* 05 Feb. 2003, 17:48 GMT).

While *CNN International* appeared to endorse militant journalism in support of Powell's case for war, *BBC World* openly criticised many of the premises on which war was considered necessary. This is how *BBC* security correspondent Frank Gardner answers *BBC* interviewer Stephen Cole's question "what does Western intelligence really think about Iraq?" a few hours before Powell's presentation at the Security Council:

BBC: What it [Western intelligence] thinks about Iraq is really divided in two issues: is Iraq hiding weapons of mass destruction? Probably 'yes' according to Western intelligence. Has Iraq or has Saddam Hussein's regime got institutional links with al-Qaeda? Almost certainly no. Now what we are seeing here, Steve, is a large degree of manipulation of this intelligence by politicians. It's clearly in President Bush's interest and in Prime Minister Tony Blair's interest to pump up the case against Saddam Hussein as much as possible (*BBC* 05 Feb. 2003 at 11:06 GMT).

At about the same time that *CNN* journalist Zain Verjee was reprimanding her Arab colleague, *BBC*'s Nik Gowing went as far as asking Trevor Findlay, arms control expert and executive director of Vertic, the following question:

Gowing: Should we have assumed, should we believe that this is genuine or in other words has not been put together in a lab by the CIA or the dirty tricks department somewhere in Washington? (...) The reason I've said that is that of course if we think back to the incubator story, of the babies, where the incubators were switched off in Kuwait, we now know that that was all fab-

ricated, put together by the dirty tricks department back in 1990 – 1991.

Findlay: Indeed...so that is possible... (BBC, 05 Feb. 2003 at 17:45 GMT).

Despite a generally more critical stand on the specificities of Powell's case for war, however, *BBC World* and *CNN International* both established an important historical link which framed the symbolic meaning of that presentation in more positive terms for the US. The case for war against Iraq was associated with one of the most delicate moments in the history of the Cold War, when the world seemed on the brink of a direct military confrontation between the US and USSR: the address of US Ambassador Adlai Stevenson in the same forum forty years earlier, facing the Soviet Ambassador with the 'photographic evidence' of missiles in Cuba in 1963.

First on *BBC*:

BBC: Another place, another time, but history is almost repeating itself. Just over four decades ago the US Ambassador to the UN, Adlai Stevenson, presented evidence to the Security Council that showed a nuclear missile build-up in Cuba. Now the Bush Administration is attempting to replicate that dramatic diplomatic feat (*BBC* 05 Feb. 2003 at 11:01 GMT).

And later on *CNN*:

CNN: You can't help drawing a comparison with a dramatic event at the United Nations four decades ago. That was when US Ambassador Adlai Stevenson confronted the Russian Ambassador with photographic evidence of Russian missiles in Cuba. Will Secretary Powell's turn before the Security Council have the same impact? (*CNN* 05 Feb. 2003 at 15:15 GMT)

Notwithstanding obvious inconsistencies, this analogy deserves attention for the link it establishes with the Cold War narrative. In this narrative, the US action was legitimised on the grounds that the enemy was merely someone's agent, as Western communist parties were in the USSR. By establishing a narrative link with the Cuban missile crises, *CNN International* and *BBC World* effectively recalled the political polarisation of international affairs in those years and the US supremacy as the leader of the free world – an idea that appears much less convincing today. At the same time the link implicitly depicts Saddam's regime as a threat of comparable magnitude to that of Cuba equipped with nuclear missiles, and both as agents of bigger and more threatening powers – Bin Laden and the Soviet Union respectively. Notwithstanding the British intelligence services report leaked to the *BBC* which explicitly denied effective links between the Saddam regime and al-Qaeda, the narrative of the war against Iraq was presented from the beginning as a legitimate initiative in the 'war on terror'. *CNN International* and, surprisingly given its more critical attitude on the issue, *BBC World*, did not hesitate to adopt a

narrative pattern that supported, rather than challenged, the analogy with the US-Soviet confrontation at the UN Security Council over the Cuban missiles.

The Breakdown of Diplomacy and the Start of the 'Real' Action

The analysis of the contextual or social dimension seems particularly useful in assessing the way in which *BBC World* and *CNN International* made sense of another topical moment in the evolution of the crisis, namely the diplomatic breakdown at the UN Security Council on March 17th. The focus in *BBC* and *CNN* reports is on the failure of the Allies' initiative and France's opposition to their efforts to gain the approval of the UN Security Council for their military action. In these accounts, polarisation and moralisation combine in conveying the idea that support for the Allies was the right choice and opposition to them a wrong cause. When war finally appeared inevitable, attention shifted to the battlefield. As in the minutes preceding important soccer events, *BBC* reports showed opposing teams getting ready for the match to come while *CNN* coverage focused mostly on US political and military preparations and comments.

With mounting opposition at home and the coalition-building efforts substantially frustrated, US and British diplomacy aimed at obtaining a second UN resolution in support of their military action in Iraq – in practice a legalisation of the war *de jure*. Among the most prominent international opponents – France, Germany, Russia, and China – French President Jacques Chirac announced that France would veto any initiatives that might lead to war. Allegedly because of this, on March 17th the UK Ambassador to the UN declared that he and his colleagues from the US and Spain had decided not to submit the draft for the second resolution to the UN Security Council. On technical grounds, the move simply signalled the end of US and British efforts to look for international blessing, and the end to further diplomatic initiatives by the UN or other countries to avert war. In the narrative of Anglo-Saxon transnational broadcasting, however, that act meant the end of the diplomatic confrontation and the beginning of the 'real' war. In sum, both the *BBC* and *CNN* adopted a narrative description of the event according to which war was going to happen because of, rather than despite, France.

The interesting aspect here is that both *CNN* and *BBC* journalists seemed to have interiorised an idea of diplomatic 'success' being closer to the plans of the Bush administration and Prime Minister Blair than to those who wanted to avoid war.

CNN's Ralitzia Vassileva introduced the issue as follows:

CNN: A critical day and British Prime Minister Tony Blair is holding an emergency cabinet meeting about an hour from now to discuss whether diplomatic

efforts to avert war have been exhausted...Three permanent members of the UN Security Council, Russia, France and China, remain opposed to military action (*CNN* 17 March 2003 at 15:01 GMT).

Why not say: two permanent members, the US and UK, remain committed to military action? A plausible explanation is that the *CNN* anchorwoman had implicitly assumed the Anglo-American perspective on the issue. The moralisation implicit in the crusade metaphor gave the Allies so much higher ground that blame was put, not on those who wanted war, but rather on those who did not support it.

The British interpretation was voiced shortly afterwards by the British Ambassador to the UN, Sir Jeremy Greenstock:

...As you know, we have worked very hard in the last few days in a final effort to seek consensus on Iraq, in an effort to reunite the Council. The UK proposed last week an ultimatum which would challenge Iraq to take a strategic decision to disarm...Having held further discussions with the Council members over the weekend and in the last few hours, we have to conclude that Council consensus will not be possible in line with resolution 1441. One country in particular has underlined its intentions to veto any ultimatum, "no matter what the circumstances". That country rejected our proposed compromise before even the Iraqi government itself, and just put forward suggestions that would row back on the unanimous agreement of the Council in resolution 1441, and those suggestions would amount to no ultimatum, no pressure, and no disarmament. Given this situation, the co-sponsors (US, UK and Spain) have agreed that we will not pursue a vote on the Draft UK, US, Spanish resolution in blue...The co-sponsors reserve their rights to take their own steps to secure the disarmament of Iraq (*CNN* and *BBC* 17 March 2003 at 15:02 GMT).

In *CNN* correspondent Michael Okwu's report, the theme of simplicity returned associated with the drift toward war, when his colleague from the studio asked him if something could be done to prevent a war from happening:

CNN: Well, I can tell you this much, Ralitza, as far as I can see right now...this is over. There is again a very eerie simplicity about this. After all the verbal jousting...it has essentially come down to this: the US, Spain and the UK had a resolution on the table that said March 17th was in fact the deadline, they are not waiting beyond the 17th to take action...those three diplomats are not at all happy with the way the French played this out (*CNN* 17 March 2003, 15:16 GMT).

In fact, in both the *CNN* and *BBC* accounts, it was the breakdown of diplomacy that made war inevitable, and France, rather than merely frustrating American and British efforts to legalise the war, was actually responsible for it.

CNN: US Secretary of State, once seen as a voice against war in Iraq, then as a voice for international consensus on a war in Iraq, confirms there has been no consensus at the UN Security Council and blames France. War now looks imminent (*CNN* 17 March 2003 16:08 GMT).

While virtually all those commenting the events of those hours shared this similar misperception, it was the *BBC* correspondent from the UN, Philippa Tomas, who eventually fell victim to a slip of the tongue, reflecting the dominant narrative pattern. Describing the breakdown of diplomacy as virtually the beginning of war, she misled the audience into believing that the second resolution was aimed at averting the conflict rather than, as it was, legalising it. Asked by her colleague in the studio about the practical relevance of Blix's report on the precipitating events, Philippa Tomas answered as follows:

Hans Blix has been carrying on with his work...in a sense, he has to continue even though a resolution to avert conflict has been withdrawn... (*BBC* 17 March 2003 at 19:05:34 GMT).

In that narrative pattern, the resolution to legalise war was confused with one to avert it. And since France was a prominent actor in opposing the legalisation of Bush and Blair's invasion of Iraq, France's behaviour could appear responsible for the collapse of diplomacy and the imminent war⁴. As the *BBC* correspondent from Paris, Stephen Sackur, answering the question "is this what France wanted?" from a colleague in the studio put it:

Well I wouldn't say the situation is what France wanted but in a set of bad options I think the French are at least pleased that they didn't in the end have to exercise their veto...Nobody, I think, in Paris would pretend that this is a good situation. What we will have, though, over the next few hours, quite clearly from the French, is a lot of justification for what they have done...but the British and the Americans are insisting that Chirac send a signal that there would not be a second resolution and that took the pressure off Saddam Hussein and that's why, according to Washington and London, we've now reached the point where war is inevitable and it's inevitable without the specific authorisation of the UN. This blame game, this recrimination atmosphere...it clearly does raise serious questions about the United Nations and certainly about the European Union and Nato as well where those three countries, Britain, United States and France are supposed to be allies and supposed to be working together (*BBC* 17 March 2003 at 18:06 – 18:08 GMT).

In addition, although diplomatic activity involving France, Germany, Russia and China was still going on, the narrative patterns at the *BBC* left no opportunities for coverage, hence endorsing in practice, if not in principle, the US and British line on the matter. Symptomatically, in making the case that

the time of diplomacy was over earlier on, Philippa Tomas seemed to endorse the US Ambassador's position on the issue:

...and we know that still here the Ambassadors from France, from Germany, from Russia believe that there could still be more talking to be done, there could be a possible way to avert war, somehow get a resolution together. However it's got to the point where the US, at least, isn't listening to that, it's moved on beyond that. We heard from the US Ambassador here, John Negroponte, that the time for diplomacy is literally exhausted. So whatever some of the Ambassadors here are saying, the majority feeling is it's over: the US is going to go ahead with military action (*BBC* 17 March 2003 at 21:04: HT).

And as the US was not listening, the *BBC* and *CNN* were not even reporting. One reason is presumably that attention had already turned to the field where the battle was going to start. *BBC World* followed the script of a soccer event, and the live broadcasting of the actual match was preceded by reports about the opposing teams. Rageh Omaar reported from Baghdad, albeit under some reporting restrictions:

The Iraqi government has long promised a bitter battle for Baghdad. [images of heavy artillery moving on trucks]. The movement of this military equipment to the city is at the very least a clear sign that they are preparing for this (*BBC* 17 March 2003 at 15:21 GMT).

Immediately afterwards, lights moved on to the Allied forces, with Hilary Anderson's emphatic report from North Kuwait:

[Image of British soldiers shooting with machine gun]. They're armed, primed and ready. This live ammunition exercise, close enough to Iraq to be heard across the border...while the world agonises about all this, the focus here is utterly clear [anti-tank missile launched by British vehicle] This Milan anti-tank rocket system operated by the paratroopers is designed to move fast and take out Iraqi positions (*BBC* 17 March 2003 at 15:22:43 HT).

At about the same time, *CNN* illustrated the preparation for war, spicing it up a bit, as Barbara Starr reported from the Pentagon:

CNN: Pentagon officials are saying that there is some evidence, new, fresh, recent evidence, that Iraq is making preparations to use chemical weapons possibly against US troops or their own citizens [images allegedly from Holloman Air Force Base in Texas: US soldier wearing special protection suits, practising in the use of equipment, and Stealth fighter plane flying] (*CNN* 17 March 2003 at 16:51 GMT).

As is now known, Iraq never used non-conventional weapons during the war and none of the chemical ammunitions mentioned in these reports has yet been found in its aftermath. Interestingly enough, however, these early reports anticipate a pattern that will be common during the war: the reliance on technology as a common feature of both the military and the media.

Media on Media

The global mobilisation for the 'war on terror' implies that neutrality is impossible and that, consequently, the media are supposed to contribute to the war effort – or else be considered as enemy. Having access to virtually every population of the world – including Iraqis – transnational broadcasting is a most useful tool for waging war, rather than merely the reporting of it. Its power is reflected in the fact that events can be commented on and given meaning while they unfold. It consists of producing self-fulfilling or self-defeating prophecies of unfolding events and, more generally, affecting the attitudes and emotions of public audiences of 'friendly' and 'hostile' governments alike. This role is particularly crucial in selected moments of hostilities, when uncertainty enhances the practical importance of information. While made possible by mere technological development in information and communication technologies, this new role is not without danger. As Nick Gowing puts it:

The new, insidious development is that because of the impact of our real-time capability, we are being actively targeted by warriors, warlords and forces of even the most highly developed governments who do not want us to see what they are doing (Gowing, 2003, 232).

In the two and half months of the Iraq War the media community has suffered more casualties than in any previous war. This is probably one of the reasons why the actual coverage was not only about the military and their vicissitudes. It was also, and in a certain sense, predominantly, about media coverage itself. And this is where the differences between *CNN International* and *BBC World* coverage are most discernible in relation to two different issues: relations with Arab media and the coverage of casualties among non-embedded media.

As for the former, *BBC* seemed to be aware of the complexity of intercultural communication and tried to tackle it as a diplomatic problem. This is how *BBC*'s Carol Walker presented the Arab media in a critical report of Allied propaganda efforts:

The Arab world is bombarded by news and images of the war [images from *Al Jazeera* TV] *Al Jazeera* is one of three Arab satellite channels broadcasting

24 hours a day. Tony Blair's assertions that Iraq will be administered by the Iraqis once Saddam has been removed made headlines news today. But often the message from London and Washington is lost amidst the pictures of death and destruction caused by their weapons. Many Arab people find it hard to believe this is supposed to be a war of liberation [images of wounded Iraqi children and women]. The British government is courting the Arab media as never before in its effort to counter hostility to the military action [insertion *Al Arabya* network and critical interview with Foreign Minister Jack Straw]...[insert: critical comments by Arab journalists ...But any media campaign can be blown off course by the reality on the ground [American shooting]...and ultimately the Arab world will be convinced of the motives of Great Britain and the United States only if they leave a genuinely free and independent Iraq after the war is over... (BBC 3 April 2003 at 09:51-54 GMT).

In this and other reports, the foreign media were depicted as potentially influential actors in the struggle for the control of national and international public opinion and treated accordingly: not enemy but, rather, competitors. *CNN* instead took a more antagonistic view. The role of media was portrayed through narrative patterns at least compatible with – if not inspired by – the militant attitude of the crusade metaphor. In this perspective, the foreign media were either allies or enemies depending on their stand towards the action of the US army in Iraq.

After Baghdad was being bombed for the second night in a row, Iraqi military officials asked *CNN* staff to leave the city. Although reporters and military analysts explicitly acknowledged the importance of *CNN World* coverage for the waging of the Allied information campaign and psychological warfare (see e.g. *CNN* 21 March 2003 at 07:14 and 07:08 GMT), *CNN*'s Jim Clancy showed genuine surprise and resentment. In his opinion *CNN* coverage was 'fair'. This is how he announced that piece of news:

You know that we have tried to cover all the sides of the story and bring it to you fairly, showing you all sides of the story...We have been told now: Iraqi officials are ordering *CNN* to leave the Iraqi capital Baghdad...We regret to be telling you this because after all the efforts have been made to bring you their side of the story as you've seen here in the last months, weeks, years...now we've been told that *CNN* has been ordered to leave Baghdad⁵ (*CNN* 21 March 2003 at 16:39 GMT).

CNN felt unjustly punished by Iraqi authorities but showed no sympathy when only a few hour later *CNN* correspondent at the Pentagon, Barbara Starr, reported live that the US was going to 'take over' Iraqi TV and radio. This is how she delivered this piece of news:

CNN: ...one official said...we would only strike what we would need to that would be supporting the Iraqi military, we don't want to do anything that is

going to cause a humanitarian crisis. He [unnamed military official] forewarned that we might, in the next day or so, see some of Iraqi state-run television and other media being taken over... by the United States, we would like very much to command the airwaves but also concerned that that type of activity might provoke some sort of humanitarian disturbance or unrest... (CNN 21 March 2003 at 20:34 GMT).

Under the polarisation effects of the crusade metaphors the media were given only two possibilities: ally or enemy. The institutional arrangement devised to achieve the control of the media by Allied military authorities was the so-called embedding system. Its effectiveness rested on the fact that to offer controlled access to the battlefield is organisationally easier and politically more fruitful than exercising censorship.⁶ This system allowed the military to use the press rather than fight it; to feed audiences with a flow of pre-recorded and carefully selected images rather than starve them, forcing them out in search of material.⁷ The effects of this organisational arrangement were presumably unclear to most at the onset of hostilities. As soon as the actual war began, however, it became quite obvious that the costs for critical broadcasting would have been higher than expected. In their own 'battle for control', as the *BBC* headlines put it, the *BBC* and, less evidently, *CNN*, conducted a struggle in which the enemy was not the Iraqi regime but rather the media control system put in place by Allied military to manage the media. This particular struggle had its own casualties – to large extent independent or non-embedded journalists – that, resulting from non-compliance with the organisational arrangement established by the military authorities, should be considered *the human costs of independent coverage*. Unsurprisingly, *BBC World* and *CNN International* had rather different opinions.

An interesting piece of broadcasting in this respect is the interview with Fabien Nerac, the wife of Fred Nerac, cameraman in the *ITN* team led by Terry Lloyd, who was killed when his convoy came under attack near Basra on March 22. *CNN*'s Richard Quest and the *BBC*'s Stephen Cole interviewed Mrs Nerac on April 3 at 11:23 and 12:42 HT respectively. The story to cover was that Mrs Nerac was appealing to Colin Powell for information on the fate of her husband (still missing to date). In practice, however, that interview touched an important aspect of war broadcasting – the meaning of a personal tragedy of public significance since it occurred partly as a result of professional commitment to the independent reporting of war. The greater respect for the personal tragedy shown by *BBC*'s Stephen Cole enhanced the value of the public dimension of that tragedy, while *CNN*'s Richard Quest overtly contrasted Mrs Nerac's need for information and her personal tragedy with the broader saliency of the ongoing battle for Basra.

The embedding system offered valuable protection to individual reporters in exchange for control. More subtly than traditional censorship – still applicable if necessary – it effectively performed as a socialisation process which led reporters, presumably with some exceptions, to more or less

unconsciously assume their mentors' point of view. As *BBC* reporter Clive Myrie confessed to *BBC* reporter John Kampfner:

As long as you are aware of that [that the military will try to look good in the eyes of the public] then you can begin to try and tell whatever story you're trying to tell in as objective a way as you can, bearing in mind that the unity you are with is feeding you, dressing you, protecting you, whatever...⁸

Embedded reporters experienced and interpreted the war with the eyes of the soldiers doing the fighting – albeit only American and British soldiers. But in so doing the focus changed from war as a *drama* to be socially managed through war narratives to war as the *framework* of isolated events as seen by one of the conflicting parties. In terms of our analysis, the opportunities for critical broadcasting reside in the nature of the narrative model adopted, rather than merely in the nature of the images *per se*. The belief that reports from embedded media allow 'seeing' more of the war and hence 'knowing' more about it is a false prejudice based on the false idea that TV broadcasting can perform as an extension of human capacity to see things happening in remote areas in the same way as cars allow humans to 'run' faster and aircrafts to 'fly'. TV does not 'show' as a telescope could do but, rather, 'represents' in a way closer to a piece of drama. What reporters could show were huge explosions blowing buildings to pieces, tanks rolling in a sandy desert, aircraft emitting streams of sparks and foot-soldiers crouching behind ruined walls. But the ideas that Baghdad was being bombed with 'undreamed' precision⁹ to undermine Saddam regime, that the rush in the desert was an 'extraordinary cavalry move'¹⁰ to speed up the liberation of Iraq, that a British armoured column was being hit by 'friendly fire' despite the alleged precision of Allied weaponry, and that Iraqi soldiers offered unexpected resistance in Umm Qasr could be obtained by the viewer only from information contained – and sometimes hidden – in the war narratives. These types of narratives are obviously not intrinsic to the events but rather the product of actors that, in a variety of roles, participate in the process of sense-making. While seductive in its promise of first-hand, real-time reporting and action footage, embedding also fostered the standpoint of the military fighting for their lives and for the victory of their governments' cause. It should be noted that institutional efforts along these lines were not left unchallenged. War coverage and the beyond-the-scene struggle between the media and the military pitted the organisational self-image of transnational broadcasting against the unpleasant reality of control in contemporary warfare; the ideal of independence and objectivity of individual journalists against the operational interests of the military authorities; the abstract possibility of critical broadcasting against the practical advantages and the safety of embedded coverage.

Ethics and Ignorance

The narrative approach proposed in this article aimed at assessing the overall point of transnational broadcasting or its significance to the social dimension. At important points, *BBC World* and *CNN International* war coverage was indeed affected by the cultural and communicative influence of the war on terror rhetoric, and the liberation of Iraq propaganda – presumably even beyond individual journalists' awareness. This influence supported a narrative pattern which we labelled 'soccer game' and 'crusade for the *BBC* and *CNN* respectively. Despite important differences between these models, both organisations appeared incapable of giving meaning to events beyond pre-established narrative patterns with strong cultural and political connotations.

In the light of all this, the fact that transnational broadcasting organisations such as *BBC World* and *CNN International* can address a world-wide audience only means that these organisations have the practical possibility of spreading their cultural, ideological and political biases world-wide. Overt pressures exerted by identifiable political actors are unnecessary for these biases to be in place. The share dependency of the military authorities for much-wanted action footage, the pressing rhythm imposed by extended live broadcasting, and the intrinsic tendency to simplify complex events and make them intelligible to an extremely wide and diverse audience, are just some of the aspects supporting the narrative model chosen by transnational broadcasting to cover the war against Iraq.

In a cultural atmosphere in which news reporting is more and more affected by security restrictions, commercial imperatives and time constraints, it should come as no surprise that opportunities for critical broadcasting and, more broadly, critical thinking, are increasingly rare and hence precious. In this situation one may wonder if ignorance about the origins, the nature and especially the consequences of the narrative models selected to report war and other dramatic events should not be considered as a capital sin – at least for those that make reporting their profession.

In terms of our approach, the possibility for news story critical broadcasting depends on at least two preliminary conditions. The first of these is the journalists' awareness of the social implications of a given narrative model. The second is the capacity to identify and choose a narrative model which is appropriate and unambiguous in relation to the point they want to make in covering a given event. Taken together, these two requirements seem to be the *conditio sine qua non* for the notions of professional ethics and accountability to be meaningfully applied to journalism. Awareness of the social implications associated with, and the intelligibility of, a particular way of making sense out of socially relevant events is a valuable asset. And it is even more so when opposite fundamentalisms foster more or less disguised propaganda while, at the same time, setting serious constraints on open and informative debates. Without this awareness, the claim to neutrality or impartiality appears as a reliable indicator of ignorance which puts the claim-

ant in a position, indeed, rather vulnerable on ethical grounds. Against this ignorance and for an ethic of critical broadcasting we hope this type of analysis might prove useful.

Notes

1. Kaarle Nordenstreng, 'Something to Be Done: Transnational Media Monitoring' in *Transnational Broadcasting Studies* No 6 (Spring/Summer 2001), available from World Wide Web: <<http://www.tbsjournal.com/Archives/Spring01/nordenstreng2/html>> [24 July 2003]. See also Nordenstreng K. and M. Griffin, Eds (1999). *International Media Monitoring*, Cresskill, Hampton Press.
2. Our four-dimensional approach relies on similar principles presented by the aesthetician Roman Ingarden (1972 [1931]), his teacher Adolf Reinach (1989 [1911&1913]), and later by speech act theorists J L Austin (1986 [1960]) and J R Searle (1969, 1975).
3. Nordenstreng, 2001 op. cit. Nordenstreng and Griffin, 1999, op. cit.
4. It should be noted that France had already displeased Bush and Blair by vetoing the activation of Nato in support of Turkey, with a move that opened up the most serious split in the history of the Northern Alliance.
5. The Iraqi decision came as no surprise given that *CNN* reporters in Baghdad had been commenting on the hits of US bombardment and on the direction of the anti-aircraft fire, more or less consciously providing Allied military authorities with precious information for damage assessment and counter-measures.
6. This principle was already applied in 1991 and earlier on with the 'pool system' based on the British experience with the control of the press during the war for the Falkland/Malvinas (cf. A. T. Thrall, *War in the Media Age*, Cresskill, Hampton Press, 2000, 110-115).
7. The media centre at camp Doha was the technical facility in support of international media but it was also the place where the actual control of war coverage was taking place, where the potential for the media to practise critical coverage was nullified and where the production of information *about* the war was effectively transformed into a practice *for* the war. Camp Doha and the embedding system were two elements of an organisational arrangement designed to hamper the practical possibility for the media to perform a critical role.
8. Cfr. Clive Myrie to reporter John Kampfner in 'War Spin', *BBC Correspondent*, broadcasted on BBC 2, Sunday, 18 May 2003 at 1915 GMT. Transcripts available from World Wide Web: <<http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/nol/shared/spl/hi/programmes/correspondent/transcripts/18.5.031.txt>> 00.15.59 [24 July 2003]
9. Cf. US Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld on *CNN International* and *BBC World*, 21 March 2003 at 18:50, GMT.
10. Cf. US Army General (Ret.) Dan Christman as military analyst for *CNN International*, 21 March 2003 at 06:16 GMT.

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"Europe Can Say 'No' to America"

*Reporting on the Iraq War
in Selected German and Turkish Newspapers*

Seref Ates, Jörg Becker, Richard Brunhart,
Hüseyin Cicek, Thomas Oberhofer, Arzu Onay-Ok
& Gülsel Taskara

This essay brings together two spheres, which for many years now have been researched at the KomTech-Institute in Solingen/Germany, but which as yet have scarcely been dealt with together. On the one hand, there is the sphere of 'The Mass Media and War' (Medien, 2002) and, on the other, the KomTech-Institute leads the way in Germany in the field of the relationship between German and Turkish media (Türkische, 2000/2003). This investigation considers whether, in a comparison of the reporting of the Iraq War in Turkish and German newspapers, there were more similarities or more differences. It employs quantitative and qualitative methods, and draws comparisons with media reporting during the second Gulf War and with the findings of other analyses. Given the anti-war stance of large sections of both German and Turkish populations, it also endeavors to ask which lines of argument, above and beyond direct discussion of the war, were used in the newspapers investigated, which were the two German daily newspapers *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) and *Bild-Zeitung*, and the two Turkish dailies *Hürriyet* and *Zaman*.¹

With a current daily circulation of 380 000, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* is the second largest national newspaper in Germany after the Munich *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. But from the point of view of history, reputation and importance in publishing, this liberal-conservative newspaper is without doubt the most important newspaper in Germany. Given its many correspondents, the FAZ is in a position to report from throughout the world on political, economic and cultural affairs, without being dependent on news agencies. For several years now, the FAZ has been immersed in structural crises: falling sales, a dramatic drop in the number of young readers, a slump of around 30% in advertising revenue and a more open approach to politics with new, liberal readers in mind.

The second paper investigated was *Bild-Zeitung*, published by the Axel Springer Group, and the leading German tabloid. At the moment more than four million people buy *Bild* on a daily basis. We selected *Bild-Zeitung* not just because of its huge circulation, but also because following September

11 2001 the Group's management made decisions which were remarkable in political terms and of interest to the following analysis. Having given *Bild-Zeitung* the headline "We're all Americans" on September 13 2001, as a direct result of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, all journalists employed by the Springer Group were instructed to support what was termed promotion of the transatlantic relationship and solidarity in a community of liberal values with the United States. The Turkish daily newspaper *Hürriyet* is part of Aydın Doan's Istanbul-based business and media group. The Doan Group comprises the *Kanal D* and *Euro D* TV stations; *Vatan*, a film production company; two radio stations, *Foreks* and *Radio Radikal D*; the daily newspapers *Hürriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Radikal*; and *Fanatik*, a sports newspaper. It is by far the most powerful media group in Turkey, with highly influential connections reaching as far as the highest echelons of Turkish politics. With worldwide circulation totaling around 800 000 copies daily, *Hürriyet* is not only the most widely bought newspaper in the country, but also the Turkish-language newspaper with the highest circulation in Europe. It is delivered to the United States and several European countries daily. One third of *Hürriyet* appears in tabloid form, the remaining two thirds being of a more serious nature in terms of both presentation and content. In Germany, the German edition of *Hürriyet*, with a daily circulation of around 40 000 copies, is the absolute market leader and most influential organ for the almost three million Turkish immigrants in the country. Since the beginning of 2002, *Hürriyet* has also been publishing a weekly eight-page German language supplement.

Along with the TV station *Samanyolu TV*, the monthly culture magazine *Sizinti*, the religious quarterly *Die Fontäne* (in German) (www.fontaene.de) and the *Cihan* news agency, the Turkish newspaper *Zaman* is part of the media group which belongs to the educational and religious network that has emerged around its religious leader Fethullah Gülen (www.fguelen.de) who has lived in the United States since 1997 (Agai, 2004). *Zaman* is aimed at an Islamic elite, champions an Islam that is modern and cosmopolitan, and emphasizes – as does its religious founder – the general importance of education and instruction. *Zaman* is no tabloid – in fact its presentation is very modern and in terms of layout it can be compared with the German weekly *Die Zeit*. *Zaman* appears in sixteen countries in various languages with a worldwide daily circulation of around 440 000 copies. The German edition of *Zaman* has a daily circulation of around 20 000 copies.

Well aware of, and more than critical of the weaknesses of the quantitative content analysis (Becker/Lissmann, 1973), we nonetheless decided to use this method (one of several) for our investigation. This was for the following reasons: for one it needed to be able to be compared with other analyses, and furthermore with this method the large amount of text used can be reduced. Ultimately, quantitative analysis of contents can help in structuring a qualitative analysis based on its findings. Our qualitative analysis

follows in the tradition of the critique of ideology in the context of critical theory, as applied by Jürgen Ritsert in 1972.

With regard to the analysis of content, our instructions were to examine all four newspapers (*FAZ*, *Bild*, *Hürriyet*, *Zaman*)² on the following days: 1st period (report by US Secretary of State Colin Powell to the UN Security Council) February 5, 6 and 7; 2nd period (disagreement at NATO meeting) February 10 and 11; 3rd period (report by Hans Blix, Chairman of the UN Weapons Inspection Commission, to the UN Security Council) February 14, 15 and 16; 4th period (report by Hans Blix, Chairman of the UN Weapons Inspection Commission to the UN Security Council) March 7 and 8; 5th period (summit on the Azores with an ultimatum to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein) March 16, 17 and 19; 6th period (attack on Iraq) March 20, 21 and 22; 7th period (the fall of Baghdad) April 8, 9 and 10; 8th period (US President George W. Bush declares the end of hostilities) May 2, 3 and 4.

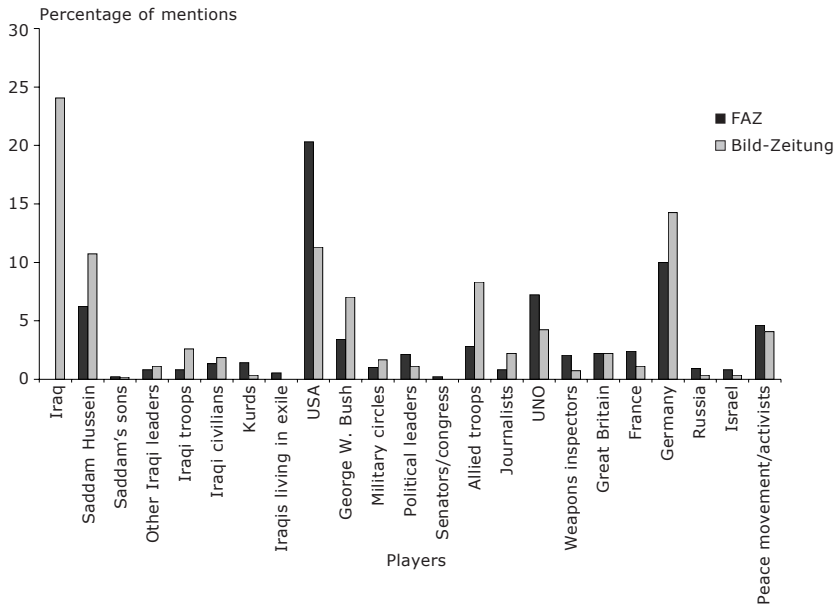
Our quantitative content analysis duplicates the methodology successfully applied in an analysis of players by a group of academics during the second Gulf War (InterKom, 1993). In the analysis, all those articles in which the Iraq War and conflict formed one of the main topics were counted. For news, reports, editorials, readers' letters and original texts (publications by third parties, e.g. UN declarations) the following contents were coded in terms of quantity: players (those taking part in the action); the allocation of responsibility for the war for both players, the US and Iraq (unclear/both/Iraq/US); the attitude towards the war (justified/not justified/undecided/no comment); and taking sides (no comment/ambivalent/Iraq/US). In the list of players, we have included as a maximum the three most important key players per article on an equal footing, i.e., as far as the analysis was concerned they not subject to any further weighting. This resulted in 575 articles in the *FAZ*, 228 in *Bild-Zeitung*, 305 in *Hürriyet* and 216 in *Zaman*. Our analysis is based on a total of 1,324 articles.

Quantitative Analysis of *FAZ* and *Bild-Zeitung*

A remarkable difference between *FAZ* and *Bild-Zeitung* is immediately obvious. Whereas in the *FAZ* the subject of almost 58% of the articles is the five periods before the beginning of the war, the opposite is the case in *Bild-Zeitung*. Here, more than 57% of the articles are concerned with the war phase. In other words, whereas the *FAZ*, representing the quality press, devotes its attention to the causes and conditions for war before the actual outbreak of fighting, *Bild*, representing the tabloid press, sets its sights on action – the war itself.

Iraq clearly dominates as the major player in both the *FAZ* (27.6% of all mentions of players) and *Bild-Zeitung* (24% of all mentions). In the *FAZ*, the US follows in second place with 20.3% and Germany in third place with

Illustration 1. The Main Players in *FAZ* and *Bild-Zeitung*



almost 10%. In *Bild*, Germany, with 14%, is in second place and the US in third place with 11%. This result reflects the anticipated (and thus not particularly surprising) dichotomous highlighting of the two countries at war, the US and Iraq. It is noticeable that in both newspapers the strongest US ally, Great Britain, is scarcely mentioned. The high incidence of Germany in the reporting can be explained by the presence of both publications in that country, as well as by the focus on the anti-war stance of the German government and the debate about the effects on German domestic policy and the German economy.

With regard to the main adversaries, Saddam Hussein and George W Bush, there is clear evidence of greater attention to the actual people in question in *Bild-Zeitung*, the tabloid medium. References in *Bild-Zeitung* to Bush as a player, at 7%, are twice as high as in the *FAZ*, at 3.42%. At 11%, the share of references to Saddam Hussein in *Bild-Zeitung* is markedly greater than in the *FAZ*, where they accounted for 6.24%. In *Bild-Zeitung* it is striking that, with a share of 8.3%, the allied troops are more frequently referred to than in the *FAZ*, with 2.82%. This selective form of perception can be attributed to the belligerent stance of *Bild-Zeitung* and to the fact that it published a daily war diary,³ thus acting as if it were reporting directly and genuinely from the front itself.

As opposed to Iraq and the US and to Saddam Hussein and George W Bush, the efforts of the United Nations, and its discussions in the Security Council, find very little echo both in the *FAZ* (a mere 7.2% of mentions) and

in *Bild-Zeitung* (just 4,3%). Similarly, the peace movement, with a share of just 4.6% in the *FAZ* and 4.1% in *Bild-Zeitung*, plays only a small part. As regards the peace movement, both newspapers present, first and foremost, reports and announcements of campaigns although in the *FAZ* there is also the occasional background report on the peace movement's arguments. As regards the *Bild-Zeitung*, it is striking that the peace movement, to the extent that it is even mentioned, is only presented in personalized form. In general it is also noticeable that in both the *FAZ* and *Bild-Zeitung*, little mention is made of other large, important international players such as Great Britain, France and Russia. It is true for both newspapers, and the way in which both countries are presented, that with regard to the people involved, Hussein and Bush are given such prominence that all others are almost eclipsed.

If one differentiates between the newspapers' perceptions of the power wielded by Iraqi, American and British players respectively, it is evident that the tabloid press is prone to much more personification (see Table 1), which shows that the abstract term 'Iraq' is mentioned more frequently than other concrete Iraqi players. In the *FAZ*, the abstract term 'Iraq' was used almost 2 ½ times as often as all other Iraqi players together, whereas in *Bild-Zeitung* only about 1 ½ times. With regard to the US players only, there are big differences in both newspapers: the *FAZ* lists the abstract major player, namely the United States, 1.7 times as frequently as all the other actual US players together, whereas *Bild-Zeitung* mentions all the other real US players together 1.8 as often as the United States as a collective player.

It is striking that *Bild-Zeitung*'s primary focus is on troops, who are mentioned more often than other US or British players. Outdoing even the reports by their vehemence, the choice of images in *Bild-Zeitung* is for war material and troops – even if they turn out in reality to be nothing more than heavily armed policemen. In both the *FAZ* and *Bild-Zeitung*, scant attention is paid to Iraqis in exile, Kurds⁴ and even Iraqi civilians, whereas the *FAZ* pays much more attention to the minor players (see table 1).

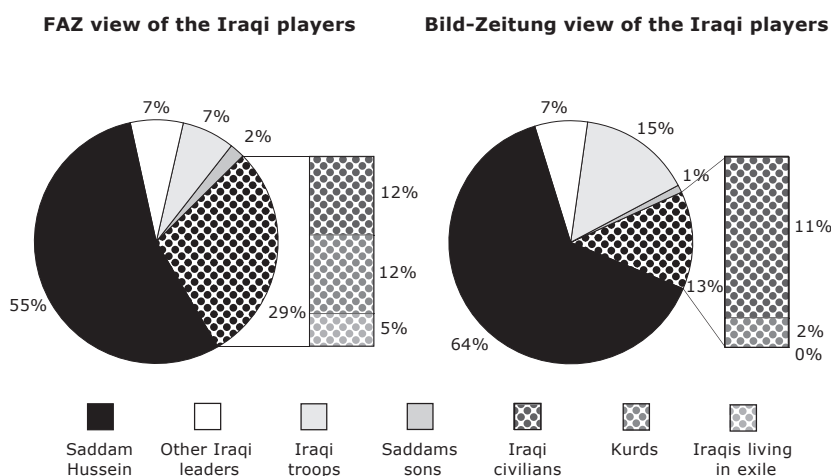
Both newspapers are cautious about evaluating the war. With regard to news and reports, this is highly appropriate. Despite sensational headlines and captions in *Bild-Zeitung*, the substance of the text in the tabloid is no less neutral than that in the quality newspaper *FAZ*. Possibly, the editorials' reluctance to evaluate is attributable to journalists' focus on, and condemnation of, German foreign and domestic policy. In other words the newspapers make the very same mistake of which they accuse the government. Both institutions, the press and the government, are occupied with domestic policy and hardly bother with the situation in Iraq. This is especially the case before the outbreak of war. Articles in favor of American and British war policy are balanced almost equally with articles condemning it.

Illustration 6 demonstrates the stances of both newspapers on the war. The figures in the columns show the absolute number of articles analyzed

Table 1. View of Iraqi and US and British Players in a Comparison of
FAZ and *Bild-Zeitung* (Per cent)

Iraqi players	<i>FAZ</i>	<i>Bild</i>	US and British players	<i>FAZ</i>	<i>Bild</i>
Saddam Hussein	55.0	63.7	George W. Bush	29.0	34.5
Saddam's sons	1.8	1.1	Military leaders	8.5	8.2
Other Iraqi leaders	7.1	6.6	Political leaders	18.2	5.5
Iraqi troops	7.1	1.4	Senators/Congress	1.7	0.0
Iraqi civilians	11.8	11.0	Allied troops	23.9	40.9
Kurds	12.4	2.2	Great Britain	18.8	10.9
Iraqis in exile	4.7	0.0			

Illustration 2. View of Iraqi Players in a Comparison of *FAZ* and *Bild-Zeitung*

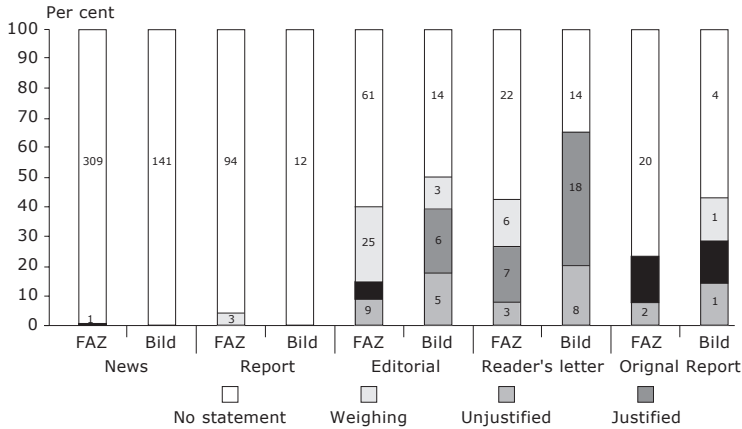


with the respective evaluation, whereas the left-hand side presents the cumulated percentages within a specific type.

With regard to a position for or against the war, in other words on the issue of the justification of the war, both newspapers are very clear in their opinions, in that for the most part they avoid passing comment. However – as already mentioned – there is a balance of differing opinions.

If one particular side is taken, it is almost always that of the US. In the *FAZ* just one editorial and a single reader's letter support the Iraqi position, while in *Bild* there is support for Iraq in one editorial and two readers' letters. These five examples are in contrast to over thirty in favor of the US. With regard to the question of taking sides, only the *FAZ* weighs up and considers the situation, with 11 articles as opposed to just one in *Bild*.

Illustration 3. *FAZ and Bild-Zeitung* Stance on the War



Qualitative Analysis of *FAZ* and *Bild-Zeitung*

For the *Bild-Zeitung* the Iraq War began on February 6 2003, with a seven centimeter headline on the front page: "Now it's War"" (and, in much smaller letters above it, "Terrorism – proof against Saddam"). Even before war broke out, the *Bild* headline on February 19 ran: "Iraq War – Chancellor backtracking?", a reference to whether he would be able to maintain his "no" to the war. The four-part series "Germany needs America" by the conservative journalist Arnulf Baring, which followed hot on its heels, set the political tone for *Bild*. On March 21, in war-like style and this time with nine centimeter high letters, the headline read "War" and on March 22, in six centimeter high letters, "Baghdad Burning"(at the time, *Express*, one of *Bild's* regional tabloid competitors in Cologne, featured the six centimeter headlines, "March into Baghdad", "Bombing Saddam", "Baghdad Burning" and "Saddam's Psychological War"). The tabloid is ostensibly reporting, whereas in reality this amounts to a celebration of violence, power, the military, manliness, blood, rapture and destruction. The message that *Bild* was really getting across in this phase was 'war is great!' And it should be pointed out here that *Bild-Zeitung* knew exactly what it was doing. As far back as 1966 it had published a scientific analysis of itself which stated – critical of ideology and subscribing to the tradition of the Frankfurt School – that "*Bild* complies with its readers' hidden desires and urges by presenting a certain measure of sensation and sex, and reports about misfortune and crime. In this way readers are given an alternative opportunity to satisfy some of their instinctive desires without endangering their own status and the social structure" (*Qualitative Analyse* 1966, 192).

For the first time in the history of *Bild-Zeitung*, however, something happened during the Iraq war that no-one had anticipated. Journalists and readers rejected this enthusiasm for war. What Hans Magnus Enzensberger (2002)

identified in a different context with regard to the Norwegian press also applied to the *Bild-Zeitung* during the Iraq War: its readers were far better than the paper itself. In a public declaration on March 31 2003, the entire Axel Springer AG Group staff council distanced itself from what they termed the predominantly one-sided reporting on the war in Iraq by newspapers belonging to their own publishing group – the unquestioned acceptance of US propaganda, the failure to report on peace demonstrations and the tolerance in newspapers of breaches of international law by the US. Given that, as early as January 2003, 81% of Germans were against a military strike on Iraq, that in the first days of the war there was no change in this anti-war stance, and that by the end of March the number of Germans opposed to the war had risen to 84%, *Bild-Zeitung* had to follow suit and change track completely. There was even an edition sporting the headline “The World’s Reaction to the Attack”, quoting only those opposed to the war, such as Vladimir Putin, Jacques Chirac, Kofi Annan, Romano Prodi, Pope John Paul II and a spokesman from the People’s Republic of China.

In a second phase of war reporting, *Bild-Zeitung* finally, on March 27 2003, did what the Swiss newspaper, *Blick*, had beaten it to: the front page was boldly headlined “Anger at Bush Grows” and, inside, the paper published about 60 anti-war readers’ letters. Not until this second phase did critical readers get a chance to voice their opinions in *Bild*. In the letters Bush is portrayed as the enemy, with one reader expressing ‘outrage’ at the White House and yet another professing to be ‘proud of our Chancellor’.

Although *Bild-Zeitung* proclaimed “Victory” with an 11cm headline on the front page of the April 10 2003 issue (two centimeters larger than the “War” headline on March 21), by April 8 it was exhibiting a chastened pacifism – on its last page the paper presented a reproduction of Pablo Picasso’s famous *Guernica* together with extensive homage to the great pacifist painter. The accompanying article does not fail to point out that on February 11 2003 a copy of this very painting was covered up in the United Nations headquarters in New York during a speech by US Secretary of State Colin Powell, so as not to highlight, in front of more than one billion TV viewers worldwide, the contradiction between Powell’s war-like speech and Picasso’s protest against war.

As opposed to *Bild*, the *FAZ* portrayed the start of the war in a low-key manner verging on condescension and played down all the dangers. Neither on February 5 nor on the following day did the *FAZ* devote its main front-page editorial to the Iraq War. The inside pages of the paper bore witness to efforts to achieve a balance, a line which the *FAZ* maintained until the end of the war. February 5 brought various political opinions for and against the war. On page five there was a full-page color advertisement for the United Arab Emirates airline with a large portrait of Sheik Ahmed Bin Saaed Al Maktoum and the German soccer idol Franz Beckenbauer, followed by two considered letters from readers on a possible war in Iraq, an article on the dangers of anti-Americanism by Janusz Reiter (previously Polish ambassa-

dor to Germany) and, in the arts section, an outstanding example of good journalism – an article by the English novelist Ian McEwan in favour of war and another by the Indian author Arundhati Roy opposing it.

The leading article on page one of the *FAZ* on February 10 2003, talked of the Iraq War for the first time but, as was typical of the German debate, from a domestic rather than foreign policy perspective. The article addressed the poor performance of the SPD government in Berlin under Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. And, to this end, the conservative *FAZ* reproached the Social Democratic Chancellor regarding his 'no' stance on an Iraq War stating: "At present the German Chancellor is not considered a partner in Washington. This has never been the case in post WWII history". The *FAZ* kept up this reproachful stance against those opposed to the war until its end. In the April 9 leader it claimed in a scornful, sarcastic way that pacifists like these lived in an aura they had made for themselves in which they believed they could solve conflicts by peaceful means. The following day, in an equally disparaging tone, it claimed that the Iraqi people and not "those who claim to know better", and believed they should speak for the Iraqis, would have to decide whether the war was justified.

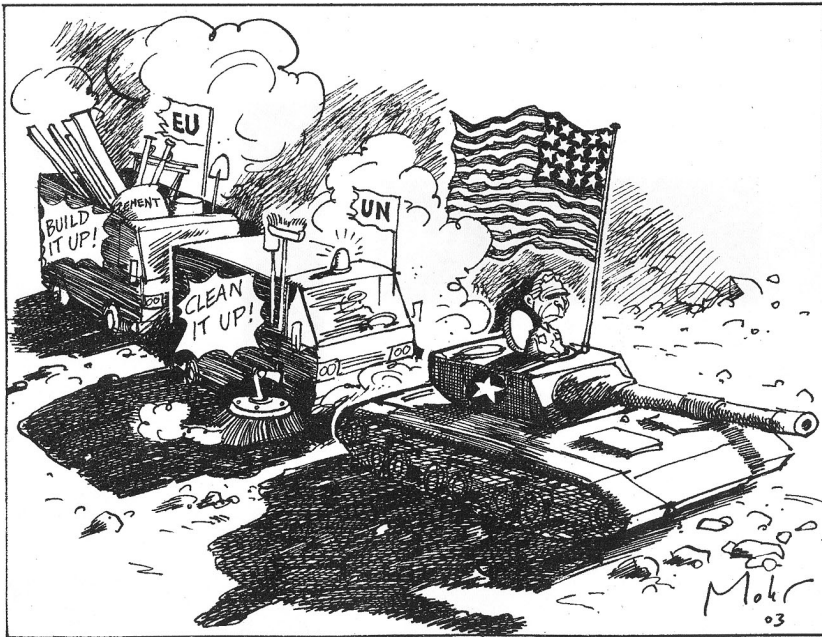
As early as February 10, 2003 maintaining the tradition of what has proved to be a successful division between conservatism in its political and liberalism in its cultural sections, the *FAZ* published in its arts section its first article on the Iraq War, an essay on 'embedded journalism' – a prime example of an observer observing itself. Articles followed about war reporting from the perspective of Iraqi television (March 28), media reporting during the second Gulf War in 1991 (April 1), the visual importance of the picture of Bush on the aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln (May 6) and finally, on April 14, a summary of a study of Iraq War reporting on German television which the *FAZ* arts section itself commissioned the Medien-Tenor research institute to conduct. (Kegel, 2003).

"We're all Americans". Following the attack on the World Trade Center in September 2001, this was the tone in political circles and the media in Germany, and of *Bild-Zeitung* in particular. In contrast, the *FAZ* arts section of March 21 2003 stated "We're all Gilgamesh" – a learned article pointing out the cultural and historical roots of modern-day Europe in the ancient Orient. And as was the case with the war in Afghanistan (Becker, 2003), the *FAZ* once again stood out, with well-known, cultured experts, specialist journalists and academics reporting from and about the Orient.

From the beginning to the end of the Iraq War the *FAZ* could not and would not commit itself either to the "We're all Americans" or the "We're all Gilgamesh" approach. Open anti-Americanism is not the stuff of the *FAZ*, and was certainly not to be found in the political section, let alone on the front page. On the inside pages, however, and once again in the arts section, there was harsh talk, in an article on April 8 2003, of "a half-hearted democracy like America, ruled by millionaires and industrial dynasties in which if necessary the Constitutional Court makes a dubious decision after

a national election” (Schümer, 2003). Whereas Dirk Schümer, the *FAZ* Venice and art correspondent thus clearly spawned open anti-Americanism, this was an exception in the *FAZ*, though a certain latent anti-Americanism was indeed evident in the newspaper. A fine example is the cartoon by Burkhard Mohr (see illustration 4), which can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand it is aimed reproachfully at the Europeans, who are content to put up with the US’s seeing as them as responsible only for clearing-up operations. On the other hand it attacks the US by accusing it of presiding over the decision to go to war alone and assuming sole control of the invaders’ campaign.

Illustration 4. The West, so Split on the Iraq War, through the Eyes of Cartoonist Burkhard Mohr

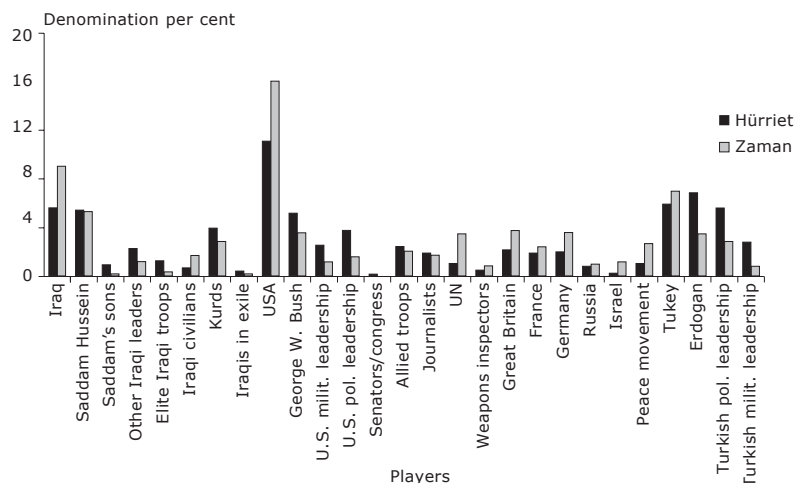


Source: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 20, p.8.

Quantitative Analysis of *Hürriyet* and *Zaman*

The most dominant player in both *Hürriyet*, with 11.04% of all mentions, and *Zaman*, with 15.90%, is quite clearly the US. In *Hürriyet* the Turkish Prime Minister, Tayip Erdogan, follows in second place with 6.78% and in third place Turkey with 5.90%. In the opinion of *Hürriyet*, Iraq and the Turkish military leadership are on level pegging, with 5.57% each.

Illustration 5. The Main Players in *Hürriyet* and *Zaman*



In *Zaman*, Iraq is in second place, with 8.95%, followed by Turkey, in third place, with 6.94%. Both daily newspapers give equal coverage to Saddam Hussein, 5.36% in *Hürriyet* and 5.25% in *Zaman*. With 5.14%, George W. Bush is given more attention in *Hürriyet* than in *Zaman*, where he receives just 3.55%.

This result reflects the concentration of reporting on the two adversaries in both newspapers, while these first figures, which are very low, demonstrate quite clearly the role of the two publications as Turkish newspapers. The particularly frequent mention of Turkish players can be attributed on one hand to the Kurdish 'problem', and on the other to the role of the Turks as a local power (also noticeable through the low number of mentions both of the Kurds and of Great Britain).

The differences between the newspapers become particularly apparent if one examines their diverging appraisal of domestic Iraqi and US and British players. In their observations of Iraqi players, both publications reveal the dominant position of Saddam Hussein (with 37% of mentions in *Hürriyet* and 47% in *Zaman*). Yet even Saddam Hussein's sons Uday and Qusay, who were responsible for their father's protection, are more prominent in *Hürriyet* (6% of mentions) than in *Zaman*, where they receive just 1%. The other Iraqi leaders also receive more attention in *Hürriyet* (15%) than in *Zaman*, where they receive 9%.

A similar picture emerges with regard to Iraqi troops, with 8% of mentions in *Hürriyet*, and just 3% in *Zaman*. And *Zaman* was proven right to be skeptical of the Iraqi forces' fighting strength. *Zaman* gave the Iraqis no chance whatsoever against as mighty a force as the US; Iraq's military was

not capable of defending itself for longer than a few weeks – which, according to *Zaman*, was no different from the second Gulf war.

The biggest difference between the two media becomes apparent through mentions of Iraqi civilians, the Kurd minority and the opposition. With 41%, these groups have far greater representation in *Zaman* than in *Hürriyet*, with just 34%. Of the three groups in *Hürriyet* the Kurds are allocated 27% of player mentions, and in *Zaman* 24%. In both newspapers, however, the Kurds are mentioned far more frequently than the other two player groups. In *Zaman* the Iraqi civilians, with 15% of all mentions, played a far more important role than in *Hürriyet*, where they were given 4%. Iraqis living in exile received little attention in both newspapers, with just 3% of mentions in *Hürriyet* and 1% in *Zaman*.

The Kurdish ‘problem’ is relevant in various figures. Whereas many intellectuals champion equal rights for Kurds and Turks in a single Turkish nation, all political parties represented in the Turkish parliament, as well as the media, try to play down the ‘problem’ by all possible means. Both *Hürriyet* and *Zaman* are decidedly against a more liberal attitude towards the Kurds.

Hürriyet and *Zaman* present a different picture in their representation of US and British players. In *Hürriyet*, Bush receives a 32.19% share of player mentions, and in *Zaman* 29.87%. Both dailies give equal attention to the allied troops. Allied troops as players are given a 15.07% share in *Hürriyet* and 16.88% in *Zaman*. This high figure could be attributed to the fact that both publications were trying to give a clear signal to their readers that Turkish interests in the region would be best protected by the Turkish army. In *Hürriyet* political leaders in the US are allocated 23.29% of player mentions, while in *Zaman* they receive just 12.99%.

Great Britain, the main ally of the US, receives enormous attention. In *Zaman*, the share of mentions of the United Kingdom as a player comes to 31.17%, while in *Hürriyet* 15.07% of mentions are to do with the British. *Hürriyet* devotes a 15.75% share to the military leaders, and *Zaman* 9.09%. Both newspapers include several reports about US and coalition-partner troop movements. In *Hürriyet* readers are reminded of attacks during the 1991 Gulf war, with these being depicted as a US ‘Blitzkrieg’.

In conclusion: *Hürriyet* is considerably more west-oriented than *Zaman* and thus focuses on, and trusts, the US more. *Zaman*, on the other hand interprets the Iraq War as a US conquest of the Islamic world.

It is noticeable that both Turkish dailies take a very firm stance; this is significantly different from German newspapers. Turkey was, after all, more affected than Germany.

Both *Hürriyet* and *Zaman* attempt to maintain as neutral a stance as possible in their news coverage (see Illustration 7). In 46.4% of all evaluations, *Hürriyet* makes no clear statement as to who is mainly responsible for the Iraq War and, with 50.5% of all evaluations, this figure is similarly high in *Zaman*. Both papers choose a cautious approach to whether Iraq and the US were equally responsible for the war: *Hürriyet* offers this solution in 3.3%

of its evaluations and *Zaman* in 0.9%. However, both papers pinpoint a clear culprit for the war, and both differentiate quite definitively between 'perpetrator' and 'victim'. In *Hürriyet* Iraq, with 22% of mentions, is mainly responsible for the war, while in this respect *Zaman* allocates 18.5%. However, the US is accused much more of being the aggressor and cause. *Hürriyet* allocates 28% of accusations to the US, and *Zaman* 30.1%. Osman Turhan's caricature (see Illustration 6) in *Zaman* hits the nail on the head as regards the double standards of the US and the lack of scruples of Saddam Hussein.

Illustration 6. American Double Standards from the Viewpoint of Cartoonist *Osman Turhan*



Source: *Zaman*, February 10, p. 19.

One interpretation of this enormous allocation of guilt to the US, and the negative depiction of the country in a normally pro-US culture, is that it serves as a reminder of the unfavorable outcome (from a Turkish point of view) of the Gulf War at the beginning of the 1990s and the current post-war problems. For one, the Kurds in northern Iraq were given autonomous status and since the war there has been a military agreement between the US and the Kurdish fighters, whom it supplies with weapons.

Hürriyet is liberal and nationalist. *Zaman*, on the other hand, is a moderate, Islamic conservative newspaper, and because of their ideological differences over Turkish politics they are in no way close to each other. But they do agree on one fundamental point: there must be no independent Kurdish state, let alone one recognized by the United States.

Illustration 7. Main Responsibility – Comparison of *Hürriyet* with *Zaman*



The reports and editorials also stress that the Kurds could be a source of worry to Turkey in the future. A Kurdish state could disturb the *status quo* in Turkey as well as that between the Kurdish people and the Turks, and provide impetus for new separatist movements. For this very reason the attitude of the Turkish press to the war is ambivalent. On the one hand, there is a desire to support the US position so as to retain it as an ally and to ensure American support for Turkey in its bid for EU membership, while on the other hand the US cooperates with the Kurds, who demand an independent state, at which point the ambivalence of the Turkish press comes to an abrupt end.

Accounting for 27.3% of opinions evaluated, *Zaman* is of the opinion that the war was unjustified. In its reports it outlines the problems that will arise post-Saddam Hussein. That this point of view only accounts for 23.3% in *Hürriyet*, could well be due to the fact that its reports indicate how Turkey's role could improve once Saddam Hussein has been deposed. In part, *Hürriyet* speculates that a new post-war scenario and new political leaders in Iraq could give Turkey a new dominating role in the region. The disadvantage is that any invasion of Iraq from Turkey would inevitably be accompanied by huge losses.

Zaman, with 30.1% of its evaluations, positions itself quite clearly on the side of Iraq. *Hürriyet*, with 25.2%, favours the Americans and their allies. Although Saddam Hussein was a tyrant who treated his people badly, the war was unjustified and without him the situation in the entire region would deteriorate. The post-war scenario could result in an increase in Shiite power in the region. *Zaman* also fears that Iran could develop into a strong regional power.

It is not particularly important to the Turkish press whether or not Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction. The demands of the Kurds and the US stance on Kurdish fighters after the war are what matters. Thus the atti-

tude of the Turkish press towards the US in the Iraq War remains highly ambivalent.

Qualitative Analysis of *Hürriyet* and *Zaman*

In the middle of the Iraq War, media buffs around the world learned about an astonishing phenomenon. Day in and day out, an African war reporter had been supplying his readers at home with detailed accounts from the front until, by chance, it emerged that he was not in the war region at all, but had fabricated the reports on his own, sitting at home in his apartment. And for days on end not a single reader noticed the deceit (Hoppe, 2003). What does this teach us? That neither in times of peace nor – especially – in times of war is reality the critical factor but, rather, reality as defined by the media.

In the case of Turkey, however, this social construct of reality (which is in fact well-known in academic fields) took on a particularly sensitive note in September 2003. The magazine, *Radikal*, which belongs to the Doan Group, published the 'Red Book' by the Secretary-General of the National Security Council. The publication is revolutionary in the current process of democratization in Turkey, because previously no public information about the National Security Council had been made available to the Turkish people. And *Radikal* made known that for two decades the Secretary-General of what is in fact the real centre of power in Turkey had been supplying public television and *Anadolu*, the semi-official news agency, with self-fabricated announcements, particularly those relating to 'internal and external dangers' and the 'territorial integrity of the state' (Hermann, 2003). This is particularly true of the Turkish media's coverage of the war.

First, one can safely say in this case that it is neither Iraqi nor American interests that determine war reporting in Turkish newspapers but, rather, Turkey's own economical and political apprehensions. The Turkish press and the Turkish elite do not question the morality of the attacks and do not see themselves as a party to this war.

The *second* conclusion is depicted in illustration 5, where one can see that the frequency with which the two main players, the US and Iraq, are mentioned, differs greatly. This discrepancy indicates that in Turkish perceptions the US is far more important than Iraq, for although Iraq is closer to Turkey in geographical, political and cultural terms the US features more frequently in the news. This selective perception indicates how Turkey relates to the US in terms of power and dependency and how the US status of dominance – Johan Galtung would use the term 'top dog' here – so strongly influences war reporting in Turkish daily papers. The much lower frequency with which Iraq is mentioned, and a largely undifferentiated perception of the players in Iraq itself, result in the country's being assigned the classic underdog position. These results correspond with many studies in the field of theories about the value of news, as well as with results from research into peace: the enemy is rigidly cast into

an indistinguishable homogenous unit and only friends have distinguishable internal structures. Needless to say, the enemy is governed by a dictator, while friends naturally enjoy a democratic set-up.

A 'friend or foe' type of thinking can also be seen in the Turkish press in that military aspects receive prominent coverage in war reporting. Even though the form and theme may vary, all articles about the war have one thing in common – a constant reference to its military aspects. In contrast, all other topics in Turkish newspapers – such as the breach of human rights, humanitarian problems and domestic politics in Iraq – play only a very peripheral role. They are simply not fodder for the press.

Third, it is also evident that reporting on the future of Iraq in the Turkish press is superficial and, quite simply, not comprehensive. That, for example, influential Iraqis and intellectuals were not given a say about the problems and concerns of their country will, in time, lead to a growing estrangement between Iraq and Turkey, and will boost anti-Turkish radicalism in Iraq. This inability of the Turkish press to engage in dialogue is a matter of concern. There must be dialogue with Kurdish as well as Shiite groups, as this is the only way to create a functioning civil society in the region in the future and achieve clearly-defined standards of human rights. The Turkish press – and Turkish politics on the whole – remain under pressure to initiate dialogue with difficult social groupings as well. Those who dismiss others as ignorant prove themselves incapable of entering into dialogue, which by its very nature must be conducted on equal terms.

To reiterate, the quantitative data clearly show that in the period under review Turkey had no explicit policy on Iraq. This, however, would be an excusable state of affairs for a regional power such as Turkey aspires to be. A neighboring country, which spent 376 years under Turkish rule until the British assumed power in World War I, cannot be, and ought not to be, of no interest to the Turkish press, Turkish intellectuals and the Turkish political scene. Turkey is apparently not (or, one might say, not yet) in a position to take a rational approach, free of any imperial megalomania, to its former heritage, while at the same time seeking to explore new avenues. Power, military strategy and economic expansion are important dimensions in international relations, which Turkey hardly confronts, if at all. Apart from wanting to prevent an autonomous Kurdish state at all costs, Turkey pursues no recognizable political strategy – which makes the country appear helpless and defensive when it comes to foreign policy.

Fourth, qualitative data illustrate very clearly that the Turkish elite have not decided conclusively whether they should defend or oppose the US invasion policy; nevertheless they feel compelled to point out that they share core common values with America. From a rational and practical point of view, these values are considered more important than human rights. On the one hand, *Zaman* goes considerably further in seeking, regardless of practicality, cultural consensus with the US in the dialogue on human rights and, on the other, the extremely influential *Zaman* columnist Sahin Alpay,

a leftist liberal professor of political science, advises against supporting US military policy. Otherwise, he fears a rise in Islamic radicalism.

As a result of the US's military superiority, nothing happens in the world against its will, and this dominance is borne in mind in almost every newspaper column, so readers often get the impression that columnists are holding back important information and are unable to articulate themselves freely. There is also a classic and widespread feeling of powerlessness among liberal intellectuals in Turkey; the middle class perceives the superpower status of the US as its own defeat, and evaluates this as a hopeless situation.

The attacks in Istanbul on December 19 2003 illustrate that the response of the weak in a situation of hopelessness can express itself in the form of suicide attacks. To sacrifice one's own life in order to take as many of the enemy's lives as possible indicates extreme psychological defeat, but must also be considered a reaction against that power which determines humanity's political thought and behavior. Turkish intelligence failed to get wind of these suicide attacks in time and prevent them, as it would appear those responsible enjoyed considerable support within the country. Not even in colonial times did Islamic groups put up such hateful resistance, one which uses religion and culture to justify its ideology.

Summary: Interpretation and Outlook

As opposed to the second Gulf war (1991), the wars in the former Yugoslavia (1991-1999) and in Afghanistan (2001), the US- and British-led war against Iraq (2003) was a clear-cut war of aggression, in defiance of international law and without any convincing legal or moral justification. Two members of George W. Bush's own cabinet have since issued public statements to this effect. In this context we should bear in mind the interview with Paul Wolfowitz, the US Deputy Secretary of State for Defense, in the May 2003 issue of *Vanity Fair* in which he said that possession of weapons of mass destruction was merely a pretext, to fool the world. And in January 2004, Paul O'Neill, former US Minister of Finance, surprised international observers with a similar remark in an interview with CBS. He stated that shortly after Bush became the new US President, in January 2001, the Iraq War was already a foregone conclusion.

Without at this point wanting to go into any further detail or to get involved in a study of the source of politicians' quotations, we should like to bring readers' attention to a total of ten lies about the Iraq War that were perpetrated by the US and British governments and listed in the German magazine *Stern* in Summer 2003 (Franz, 2003): 1) The al-Qaeda lie (alleged cooperation between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda); 2) The Niger lie (Iraq's alleged purchase of uranium from the Republic of Niger); 3) The '45 minute' lie (Iraqi weapons of mass destruction allegedly ready for use within 45

minutes); 4) The mass destruction lie (alleged weapons of mass destruction in Iraq); 5) The biological weapons lie (alleged biological weapons in Iraq); 6) The firing range lie (allegation that, despite scrapping its Samud rockets with a range of 200 kilometers, Iraq possessed further rockets of this type); 7) The splitter bomb-lie (the United States deployed these bombers in the war to a much greater extent than it had stated it would); 8) The Jessica Lynch lie (the staged freeing of a American female soldier from an Iraqi hospital by US military); 9) The bunker lie (disinformation about the successful bombing of a bunker in which Saddam Hussein was allegedly hiding); and 10) The statue lie (toppling of the statue of Hussein in Baghdad by US military, not the Iraqi population).

In addition to these war lies, one could recall three photographs of the US President which were of relevance to the war, and which went round the globe: first, George W Bush standing next to a firefighter on the wreck of a car after September 11 2001; second, the US President in May 2003 in fatigues on the aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln, a play on similar motifs from three films (David Prowse in *The Return of the Jedi*, Bill Pullman in *Independence Day* and Tom Cruise in *Top Gun*); and third, Bush in November serving turkey to the troops (it was actually a plastic turkey). All these pictures have one thing in common: they were staged by public relations experts for a global TV audience.

Given the intensive, expensive, strategic and systematic manner in which the war was deliberately staged for global media, involving a mixture of information, advertising, lies, public relations, public diplomacy, and 'militainment' (only an outline of which is possible here), and not forgetting the cooperation between CNN and the Pentagon, Ignacio Ramonet, editor-in-chief of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, commented: "Drunk with power, Bush and his entourage lead both the American population and the world in general up the garden path." As Professor Paul Krugman states, "...their lies are the most serious scandal in the history of the United States, even worse than Watergate, worse than Irangate". (Ramonet, 2003: 12)

Given this scenario, the *first conclusion* we reach is that with regard to the German and Turkish press, the American propaganda campaign in Germany and Turkey was a huge failure. Instead of going along with it, German and Turkish newspapers developed their own agendas, which concentrated on domestic policies. While the German press devoted itself to the Atlantic alliance, the Turkish press busied itself with the question of the Kurds.

One can also lend a sarcastic note to this first conclusion. The German press and German politicians imagined thousands of war dead so as to re-discover and nurture anti-Americanism. And anti-Americanism is the *second conclusion* to be drawn from this analysis of contents. Another German analysis of contents confirms this opinion. The Medien-Tenor Institute in Bonn came to the conclusion that Saddam Hussein's terror regime was not an item for German TV, whereas US military action was, for the most part, judged in a negative light (TV-Berichterstattung, 2003).

Historically the roots of anti-Americanism in Germany can be traced back to the 19th century. Then, as now, there were both left- and right-wing factions. Whereas the right-wing faction considered cultural matters (Americans were undisciplined and had neither deep-rooted values nor culture), the left-wing faction always took issue with the economic state of affairs (major capital, conveyor-belt work, Ford, weak trade union movement). Both variations of this German anti-Americanism can be found in press coverage of the Iraq War, and were eagerly used to cater to the masses. Long after the Iraq war, the *Kölner Express* used as its headline for the front page of the November 2, 2003 issue: "US investors set to take over Schlösser. Yank assault on our beer" – on the one hand the evil 'Yanks' and on the other 'our' wholesome German beer. The anti-Americanism that had been increasing worldwide since September 11 2001 (Knowlton, 2002)⁵ was further strengthened by the Iraq War, for a title like that which appeared in the *Kölner Express* would have been unheard of in the German press before it.

However, a phenomenon such as anti-Americanism cannot be considered solely in terms of historical aspects and motifs but should also be regarded in terms of social science; this also means that, given new and different conditions, one and the same argument can fulfill new functions in society. The Iraq War represents just such a *caesura*, provoking a fresh understanding of Europe, particularly Germany. Whereas Jürgen Habermas had justified the US invasion of Iraq in the second Gulf war in 1991, he commented on the Iraq War of 2003 as follows: "The normative authority of America lies in ruins" (Habermas, 2003). This change in approach comes about not merely as a result of different conditions for war with regard to international law, nor merely linear developments during the twelve years that have since passed, but also through the recognition that, following the end of the confrontation between East and West, the common interests the US and Europe once shared have decreased, whereas differing interests have increased. As such the pernicious anti-Americanism that emerged in the press during the Iraq War is not merely a continuation of an old cliché, but one that reflects a new stance on foreign policy interests. True to his reputation as an old hand when it comes to pragmatic left-wing German foreign policy, Egon Bahr summed up this new position, while the Iraq War was still being fought, as follows:

It would be a shame if [the Europeans] failed [to get their act together]. If that were the case, in terms of security measures they would continue to be an American protectorate, as Brzezinski put it. [...] Europe ought to develop a recognizable alternative for its society, its armaments and its politics, so that the Islamic world is aware not simply of a self-contained Western world, but also of the fact that there are dual models in the West both for the political arena and for society. [...] We Europeans could attempt to establish the strength of what is right and leave to America the right to be the strongest, just as it assumes it for itself anyway. (Bahr 2003).

It is hardly surprising that it was Mohssen Massarrat, a political scientist of Iranian descent at the University of Osnabrück, who devised a peace program for a new relationship between Europe and the Near and Middle East while the Iraq War was still in full swing (Massarrat, 2003). And in the opposition of the German government to the US and British-lead Iraq War, Gregor Schoellgen (2003), a historian at the University of Erlangen and an advisor to the German Foreign Office, even detected signs that the country was about to re-enter the global arena. Schoellgen fervently supported the German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder who, in a government statement on March 14 2003 "...had attached importance to stressing German interests in an appropriate manner" and stated that "...in tomorrow's world Germany must be able to make its own decisions".

And there is a *third* conclusion. We all know that in the course of time the way we picture foreign countries and, consequently, our attitudes to foreign policy, can change. For several generations the cinema in particular depicted Iraq in a sweetened, exotic manner. Examples of this are films such as Charles Lamont's *Baghdad*, (1949) (starring among others Maureen O'Hara, Paul Christian and Vincent Price) the German comedy *Die Diebin von Bagdad* by Carl Lamac, (1952) (starring among others Theo Lingen, Sonja Ziemann and Rudolf Prack) and the French film *Shéhérazade* by Pierre Gaspard-Huit, (1963) (starring among others Anna Karina, Gérard Barray and Antonio Vilar). Given different political circumstances however, this exotic, erotic view of the Orient, which was dangerous in times of lust for war, (Said 1978) was reversed, crowned by Saddam Hussein as the enemy and a typical 'oriental despot' – a phrase coined by Karl Marx and which proved to be so fateful and laden with consequences.

In the second Gulf war of 1991 *Bild* and *FAZ* agreed on this concept of the enemy. Whereas at the time *Bild* called the Iraqi head of state a war criminal, a madman and 'the devil', the *FAZ* also made use of the image of the irrational Arab by referring to Saddam Hussein as thirsty for war, brutal and a psychopath (InterKom, 1993: 118) – terms which appear only rarely in quality papers such as the *FAZ*. However, even in more upmarket tabloids they survive all eras. *Stern*, for example, once a left-wing liberal magazine, did not consider itself above printing that the Iraqis were indeed pleased "...that Saddam had gone, but were now longing for a new dictator..." (Reuter, 2004: 26).

What is exciting about the coverage of the Iraq War in 2003 is not that the enemy, in the form of Iraq/Saddam Hussein is still around, but that its aura and influence have waned because, owing to open (or indeed latent) anti-Americanism, it no longer represents the necessary opposite, i.e., the concept of a friend. Friends can also hinder learning about political matters. If it is true in terms of social psychology that in times of increasing phenomena such as the dismantling of borders, narcissism and hedonism, it is the enemy that assumes functions in society that promote demarcation and satisfy a generally shattered need for security (Brauchen wir Feinde? 2003), then this can also be applied to friends. They would also assume the function of

strengthening the individual who has become weakened in society. As Heikki Luostarinen was recently able to reveal (2003), both the media and the Finnish population displayed a positive attitude towards the USSR; in other words the relationship between Finland and the USSR was friendly for as long as this was in Finland's own interest. When the Soviet Union became Russia, Finland's friendly attitude changed. It simply got lost along the way. Could the Iraq War serve a similar function for the concept of the US as an enemy?

Such philosophizing about concepts of friends could result in questioning theories about enemies that have become academically ritualized and in taking a much more serious attitude than has been the case until now to a statement by Theodor W Adorno. Back in 1947, in his major treatise on anti-Semitism, Adorno wrote: "The ticket mentality as such is as anti-Semitic as the anti-Semitic ticket" (Adorno/Horkheimer, 1992: 207).

A *fourth* conclusion becomes particularly evident when one examines papers other than those included in our sample. On March 20 2003, the leader in *Bild* read as follows: "US President's Dramatic War Command: Kill Saddam!" and on the same day the small regional newspaper *Solinger Tageblatt* ran the headline: "US War Machinery On The Move". Two other German newspapers, however, ran very different leaders that day. The *Tageszeitung* (an alternative, green publication) wrote "Fleeing from the war. When the war against Saddam Hussein begins, millions of Iraqis will flee" and *Neues Deutschland* (a progressive communist paper) had "Stop the War! Resistance From All Sides – Not Before Time!" In other words: whereas the middle-of-the-road established press highlight the word 'war', the two papers on the sidelines of the political establishment in Germany centre their journalistic argumentation around words such as 'fleeing' and 'resistance'. It is quite clear from these comparative examples, that there are various possibilities for agenda-setting. Admittedly, our quantitative analysis also demonstrated that there was only limited coverage of demonstrations for peace, anti-war marches and social protest movements, a development that in the meantime has acquired an inglorious tradition (Liegl/Kempf, 1994; Hocke, 1995). As an exception to this structural repression of opportunities for promoting journalism that champions peace, it is worth mentioning an article about the political activities of the German politician Eva Quistorp, a defender of peace, in the *FAZ* on April 8 2003.

In various EU countries there took place, indeed, not only peaceful anti-war demonstrations staged by members of the worried middle classes, but also militant forms of protest by incensed workers that lasted for several days. At this point, two of these militant social protests should be briefly mentioned. In Italy between 24th and 27th February 2003, the *disobbedienti* staged protests against a train transporting US military weapons, and on 11 March violent protests were held by Italian stevedores against the loading of US containers full of military weapons. Furthermore Shannon Airport in Ireland was the center of militant action from January right through to March 2003; these protests, staged by the Irish anti-war movement, were against the handling

of US troops and material as part of the build-up to war, as they were considered an infringement of Ireland's neutral status. Whereas there was no coverage whatsoever of such protests against the Iraq War in any of the German press, they were given mention in media such as telephone chains and chat rooms, as well as alternative Websites such as www.indymedia.org, www.disinfopedia.org and www.yellowtimes.org.

It would be a fatal analytical mistake to believe that the vehemently anti-war reporting in the German press was at all pacifistic in nature. Following the German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's "No" to the Iraq War on October 20 2002, the government's pacifist attitude, which had been decreed by the powers that be, proved to be successful agenda-setting. The Austrian author and film-maker Hito Steyerl made very pointed remarks about exactly this relationship:

The media criticism that has suddenly emerged follows similar nationalist motives, something which it also accuses the allied aggressors of as regards the obfuscating image policy they pursue. The re-discovery of journalistic standards clashes here with a subservient adherence to the government line. TV adheres to this line in every war, whereas journalistic standards do not necessarily do so. Therefore in addition to an opaque zone, this war also creates its own national, pacifist media criticism. (Steyerl, 2003).

And thus, as if Gerhard Schroeder had actually read this criticism by Hito Steyerl (though approvingly, not critically, and from a distance), on January 15 2004 the *FAZ* was able to proclaim in its headline: "Berlin no longer rules out deployment in Iraq".

The *fifth* conclusion is that in their coverage of the Iraq War two countries as different as Turkey and Germany, and with two very different press systems, produce more in common than they do differences. As long ago as 1963, in his classic study of the relationship between the press and foreign policy, Bernard C. Cohen made it more than clear that press coverage and the way the political elite perceive politics exist in a symbiotic relationship. This ought to apply to all countries, but especially to Turkey, since the National Security Council has been manipulating the country's media in favor of the political elite. For these reasons one would be by no means mistaken in detecting, in the way the Turkish press views the Iraq War, a reflection of the way Turkish leaders see it. And there are several blind spots in this reflection since both the press and politicians reacted to the entire Iraq War in a reactive-defensive manner.

Considering the political circumstances in Turkey, this defensive attitude is hardly surprising. The elite in the Turkish state, including the military, is dominated by the United States, and the adoption of influences from outside often goes far enough for members of the Turkish elite to feel at ease at their country's being dependent on the US and, therefore, at ease with the prospect of foregoing their own foreign policy. However, since in the

Iraq War the two countries' political and strategic interests were quite clearly no longer the same but, rather, at variance, problems, rejections and ruptures emerged.

Although, as in Germany, there was no clearly recognizable direct criticism of the US in either of the Turkish newspapers under examination, there were nonetheless efforts to find a solution to this muddled situation. There was a mixed attitude towards America. US dominance, which was noticeably increasing, and which often took no account of Turkish interests, was more than disconcerting for many intellectuals in Turkey. For this reason the anti-US stance demonstrated by the European press was very welcome. Despite the many differences in the press reports, Europe provided the lead for Turkish criticism of US policy on Iraq. Although, in Turkey, the US had previously been considered to be a democratic country that respected human rights, the Iraq War caused it to lose an enormous amount of credibility in the eyes of many Turks.

"Europe can say 'No' to America" is the overall, and yet highly ambivalent, characteristic of coverage of the Iraq War in both the Turkish newspapers examined here and in the German newspapers. The well-known Turkish author Orhan Pamuk explained this in more detail in the February 15 2003 issue of the *FAZ*: "With the help of Germany and France Europe is trying to define its own identity. I welcome their efforts to challenge American demands." Pamuk is realistic enough to conclude his article with the following words:

Europeans and Americans are aware of the fact that they embody the idea and the strength of what the rest of the world refers to with aversion as 'the West'. [...] If they think it necessary they will agree to bomb and kill hundreds of thousands yet again. (Pamuk, 2003)

Notes

1. We should like to express our thanks to both Turkish newspapers for providing us free of charge with copies of all the publications required for this analysis.
2. In the case of *Zaman* the editions of February 5, 6 and 7 (1st period) and February 14, 15 and 16 2003 (3rd period) could not be included in the analysis as they were no longer available to the publisher.
3. The wave of publication of diaries, as they are known, in the wars of the last ten years would seem to be one of the responses to state-controlled censoring of war reporting. Diaries appear to reproduce the real thing and personal experiences, where the principles of 'pool-reporting' and 'embedded journalism' no longer permit independent, critical journalism. Admittedly, on closer observation such diaries turn out to be nothing more than propaganda. Zlata Filipović's *Le Journal de Zlata* on the 1993 war in Bosnia makes sense only in the context of the ideological environs of the anti-Serbian French photographer Alexandra Boulat. The Internet correspondence during the Kosovo war, published in January 1999 in the US, between the Albanian girl Adona (Kujtesa Bejtullahu) and the Californian student Finnegan Hamill was a joint stunt by National Public Radio (NPR)

and CNN, and there is no doubt that former Defence Minister Rudolf Scharping's war diary entitled *Wir dürfen nicht hinwegsehen* (We must not look away), which appeared in 1999 shortly after the end of the Kosovo war, makes sense only in the context of the German public relations agency Hunzinger on behalf of the German Defence Minister during the Kosovo war. Naturally enough, all these propaganda diaries favour the war activities of NATO and/or the US. In the Iraq War too, the authenticity of war diaries degenerates into ideology. In *Embedded – The media at war in Iraq. An oral history* (2003), by Bill Katovksy and Timothy Carlson, journalists admit to being totally incapable of objective reporting. Their war diaries, written in the trenches, were heavily influenced by their coexistence with 'their' marines.

4. The fact that very little attention is paid to Kurds as players in the Iraq War, is all the more remarkable in that they feature prominently in the media in Germany, albeit mostly in terms of domestic politics and for the most part in a criminal light and from a discriminatory point of view (Brosius/Scheufele, 2001).
5. In this worldwide poll conducted by the renowned Pew Research Center and published in the International Herald Tribune, the positive image of the US in Germany fell by 17%, from 78% to 61%, within one year, and in Turkey by as much as 22%, from 52% down to 30%. Great care is called for in the interpretation of these demoscopic data. 1) Even if two thirds of the German population had a positive image of the US in autumn 2002, by March 2003 around 80% spoke out against a US war against Iraq. However, the two sets of data need not necessarily contradict each other. 2) Attitudes are traditionally defined and can scarcely be altered; what is most interesting about the Pew Research Center findings is to be found not in any percentage points to do with some or other image, but rather in the enormous swing factor, 17% or 22% within just one year, in a country's image.

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Images of the Iraq War in Ugandan Newspapers

Julius Mucunguzi

Although relations between the US and Uganda were strained during the rule of the dictator Idi Amin in the 1970s, leading to the closure of the American embassy in the country in 1973, they improved after his fall in 1979 and, in the middle of that year, the United States re-opened its embassy in Kampala. Bilateral relations continued to improve thereafter, during successive regimes, but have been at their best since President Yoweri Museveni assumed power in 1986. The United States has welcomed his efforts to end human rights abuses, pursue economic reform and act as a partner in the war against terror.

After the terrorist bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, President Museveni welcomed, and strongly supported, US retaliatory attacks on a chemical plant in Sudan which America suspected of being an Al Qaeda cell. These were linked by then US president Bill Clinton to the embassy bombings, while Museveni said that Uganda had all along been a target of terrorism orchestrated by agents from Sudan.¹ When Osama Bin Laden lived in Sudan in the early 1990s as a guest of the Islamic Speaker of the Sudan Parliament, Hassan Tourabi, Uganda came under direct threat of terrorism. According to Ugandan government documents, the two men trained and armed Ugandan rebel groups, including the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Allied Democratic Force (ADF). In the wake of September 11, the US declared these two to be terrorist groups. Uganda has since become an important partner of the US in the fight against terrorism, supporting the worldwide hunt for terrorists and backing the US-led operations in Afghanistan.

It was therefore not surprising that President Yoweri Museveni came out on March 5 2003 to rally support behind the US-led war on Iraq. In the Ugandan media, Museveni's support of the war on Iraq was framed as a reflection of the idea of national interest in the face of terrorism.

On March 6 2003, *The Monitor* newspaper published an article saying that President Museveni had backed the US-led war and stating that he had, the previous day, thrown his weight behind America's George W Bush against Iraq, reasoning that America has a right to defend itself against terrorists: "If the Americans are convinced that [Iraq's President] Saddam [Hussein] is linked

to the Al Qaeda network [of Osama bin Laden], then it is within their rights to defend themselves.” The article added that Museveni had said he respected the United Nations Security Council decisions, “...but also reminded Ugandans about the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the US, in which more than 3 000 people were killed.” (*The Monitor*, March 6 2003).

While this was not surprising, the difference now that the Ugandan public, like others in the world, was starkly opposed to the war, especially since it lacked a UN mandate. In fact, the state owned newspaper, *The New Vision*, ran a story about a public opinion poll demonstrating that over 70% of Ugandans were against the war at any cost (*The New Vision*, February 9 2003).

This chapter provides an empirical study of the images of the Iraq war in two Ugandan daily newspapers. It analyses how the two major newspapers in Uganda, the government owned *The New Vision*² and the privately owned *The Monitor*³ represented it, and summarises the findings of a study I conducted on the two newspapers’ coverage of the conflict between February 4 and March 31 2003.

US Strategic Interests in Uganda

The relationship between Uganda and the US has been warm since president Yoweri Museveni came to power in 1986. During this period, Uganda hosted two American presidents; Bill Clinton in 1998 and George W Bush in July 2003, the latter a couple of months after the war in Iraq. To an African country like Uganda, such visits are seen a vote of confidence in its leadership and can be used to make political and economic capital – as the Ugandan government confesses on its website.⁴

A 1995 report from the Institute for National Strategy studies at the National Defence University in Washington DC said that since the end of the Cold War US strategic interests in Africa have shifted from fending off a real or imagined Soviet plan to capture Africa’s strategic minerals, prying Cuban surrogates off the continent and preventing the establishment of Soviet bases and listening posts, to looking for partners in the war against terror.⁵

The report says that Islam has been a major force in sub-Saharan Africa for a full millennium, spreading century by century, especially down the coast of East Africa: “Substantial Islamic minorities can be found as far south as Mozambique, and smaller populations exist even in South Africa. Recent years have witnessed the spread of Islamic revivalism into sub-Saharan Africa, both from the North and the East. The Islamic revival may spread into the Sahel, West Africa to some extent (especially Nigeria), and East Africa in particular (Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Eritrea). The challenge for the U.S. and its allies is to develop policy guidelines that seek peaceful accommodation with Islam, but also consider how to respond to Islamic regimes that reject peaceful accommodation with their opponents and with the West.”

Methodology and Theoretical Perspectives

This study used the arguments advanced by Stig Arne Nohrstedt (2002) claiming that the theory of cultural imperialism in recent decades constitutes the theoretical backdrop of studies looking at foreign media coverage of conflicts. He notes that whereas this theory of Western dominance over the rest of the world had considerable currency within international communication research in the 1970s, it has come under harsh criticism in recent years.

This development, i.e. a reduction in the currency of the notion of Western dominance of media, is pertinent to this chapter, especially when seen in light of the works of Gurevitch (1991), with his emphasis on the issue of domestication of international news, and Riegert (1998) and their postulation of the nationalisation of news concepts, together with Thompson's (1995) local appropriation proposition. (All quoted in Wilhelm Kempf & Heikki Loustarinen, 2002). This North-South approach to the general news flow will be used in this article, combined with propaganda analyses. The rationale for these theoretical assumptions in this chapter is to prepare the ground for understanding the extent to which American propaganda was sold to the rest of the world media. For the purposes of this paper, propaganda is defined as "a conscious and systematic symbolic activity aimed at creating and reproducing emotional and cognitive support from the target groups for a certain goal. It is the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions and direct behaviours to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist." (Jowet & O'Donnell 1992, quoted in Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2000).

Methodology

The content analyses presented in this chapter is based on all items appearing in *The New Vision* and *The Monitor* between February 4 and March 31 2003 containing the words 'Iraq War'. A total of 1311 news items, spread across the genres of hard news stories, editorials, commentaries, photographs, cartoons, graphics, news briefs and others, was included in the study. After all the items were identified, the articles were coded and arranged according to the different news genres. Quantitative and qualitative content analyses were applied to a selected sample of the material in order to dig deeper into the text. Themes, framing and sources in editorials, commentaries, hard news and photographs were analysed. The findings are first given as an empirical quantitative representation; after presenting some statistical material, I proceed to more qualitative data.

The Findings

The table below, Table 1, shows the distribution of the news items referred to above according to their genre.

Table 1. Distribution of Items About the War in Iraq Between February 4, and March 31 According to Their Genre

NEWSPAPER	Editorials		Letters		Briefs		Others		Total Percentage
	Hard News	Commentaries		Photos					
<i>The New Vision</i>	332	7	50	15	242	133	9	788	60.1
<i>The Monitor</i>	205	6	64	9	178	57	4	523	39.9
Total	537	13	114	24	420	190	13	1 311	
Percentage	41	1	8.6	1.8	32	14.4	1		100

Note: Percentages in the last row do not add up to 100 because of rounding off. 'Others' consisted of cartoons and graphics, while 'Briefs' consisted of news items of less than two paragraphs.

The majority of the items were hard news (41%), followed by photographs (32%), briefs (14.4%), commentaries (8.6%), letters to the editor (1.8%), and others and editorials (each 1%). *The New Vision* contributed more news items about the Iraq conflict (788 or 60.1%) than *The Monitor*, which provided 523 items, or 39.9%, during the period. This large contribution by *The New Vision* was spread among various news genres excluding commentaries, where *The Monitor* had more (64) than *The New Vision's* 50. The percentage contribution according to genre by *The New Vision* continued to be greater than that of *The Monitor*, even when calculated as a ratio of the items contributed by each paper individually within the same period – so the explanation that *The New Vision* has more pages (42) than *The Monitor's* 32 is not justifiable. Some aspects, however, were similar: Both *The New Vision* and *The Monitor* published more hard news accompanied by photographs than other news genres.

To present my findings systematically, I offer, below, a quantitative analysis of the empirical data according to the different news genres.

Editorials

Generally speaking, an editorial will make a key point that expresses the stand of the newspaper on a particular issue; in the current context this will be the war in Iraq. The purpose of an editorial is also to express approval, or disapproval, of a decision or an action. Editorials also call attention to problems, seeking their resolution or making recommendations. This study of editorials was concerned, not only with all the above purposes, but also with their framing: whether they were for or against the war, for or against the United States, for or against Saddam and his Iraqi regime – or merely

neutral. An additional purpose is to ascertain whether the rest of the content carried by the two newspapers about the Iraq War were in line with the perspectives of the editorials.

Editorials in The New Vision

Table 2. Distribution of Editorials According to Date, Headline and Framing in *The New Vision*

Date	Headline	Framing
February 8	UN BECOMING INEFFECTIVE	Anti-war
February 15	WHY HAVE ALLIES SHIFTED?	Critical, anti-war, anti-US
March 13	SIN OF FALSE PRIDE	Critical of war, US
March 17	AT YOUR PERIL MR BLAIR	Critical of war, US, UK
March 20	WAR!	Critical, anti-US
March 22	WORLD STABILITY UNCERTAIN	Critical , anti-US
March 26	US UNDERMINED THE LAW	Critical, anti-US
Total	7	

The New Vision published four editorials from February 4 to March 19 2003, before the war started. All were critical of the move by the US to wage a war on Iraq, calling for respect of international law and the UN in resolving the Iraq conflict. It is noticeable that the frequency and tone of the editorials changed once the war started, since hopes of a peaceful resolution of conflict had been dashed; what remained was a critique of the course of the war, still underlining the fact that it was illegal.

Editorials in The Monitor

Table 3. Distribution of Editorials According to Date, Headline and Framing in *The Monitor*

Date	Headline	Framing
February 17	DON'T BLOW UP IRAQI CHILDREN	Critical of the war, US
March 20	DOUBLE STANDARDS ON IRAQ WRONG	Critical, anti-US
March 24	WORLD IS LESS SAFE	Critical, anti-US
March 25	SO THE UN DOESN'T MATTER AFTER ALL	Critical, anti-US
March 26	UGANDA'S US POLICY UNHELPFUL	Critical, anti-US, anti-Ugandan government decision
March 28	US SHOULDN'T BOMB MEDIA	Critical, anti-US
Total	6	

Both *The New Vision* and *The Monitor* were opposed to, and critical of, the US and the war in all their editorials before and during our period of study. There were, however, some differences. *The New Vision* ran seven editorials while *The Monitor* ran six. *The Monitor* published an editorial openly critical of Uganda's backing of the US-led war, whereas *The New Vision* was rather ambivalent. Furthermore, *The Monitor* ran more editorials (five) between March 20 to March 31, after the start of the war, than *The New Vision* (three), while *The New Vision* on the other hand ran more editorials before the war (four) than *The Monitor's* one.

Qualitative Analysis of the Editorials

The framing these editorials tended to criticise the use of force as a means of resolving the crisis in Iraq.

Questioning the war effort, *The New Vision* asked, "WHY HAVE ALLIES SHIFTED?" and editorialised thus: "The whole world including all Arab states supported the Gulf war to punish Saddam Hussein for the invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The whole world supported the removal of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2002. The very countries the US is now castigating for lack of resolve. Did they lack resolve in 1991 and 2002? President Bush should be seriously considering why formerly staunch allies are so reluctant to support his new war on Iraq." (*The New Vision*, February 15 2003).

The paper's editorials generally argued that war would be disastrous, not only for the Iraqi people, but also for the rest of the world. For example, its March 20 editorial headlined: "WAR!" stated: "Today could mark a turning point in world history. The US ultimatum for Iraqi president Saddam Hussein and his two sons to go into exile or face war has expired. US and UK will invade Iraq unless a last-minute change of mind occurs, which is unlikely. The US ultimatum for Saddam to quit is misdirected and unfortunate. Saddam has rightly defied it because he is a president of a sovereign state, accountable to his people, and can't take directives from a president of another country to relinquish power. The war will have dire consequences for the whole world. But, most significantly, it will be that in the quest of disarming Iraq, the US will have disabled the UN, rendering it ineffective and irrelevant."

The editorial further pointed out that "...it will go down in history that the US, a country led by strong democratic values and the sanctuary of freedoms and justice and liberty contradicted its own values. It attacked a sovereign state without a popular UN mandate. Worse still, it did so without respect to the millions who demonstrated against the war around the world. Today, the world witnesses the birth of global dictatorship" (*The New Vision*, March 20 2003).

The Monitor also hinted that, by going to war, the United States was signing a death warrant for the lives of innocent civilians in Iraq. Titled "DOU-

BLE STANDARDS ON IRAQ WRONG”, *The Monitor* editorial argued that “...in a few hours from now the bombs will begin coming down on the Iraqi people. The objective: To overthrow President Saddam Hussein. The price: Thousands of lives are to be lost in what the ‘coalition of the willing’ will call ‘collateral damage’. World opinion is heavily stacked against the war that is going ahead without the mandate of the UN. No matter what arguments are presented by the said coalition, it has always been clear that Resolution 1441 of the UN Security Council under which Iraq was compelled to disarm never allowed the use of force. Reason dictates that the US and British governments should have resisted the temptation of taking unilateral action and shown respect for the UN, but clearly their mind are made up with the same firmness that informs their reluctance to call, Israel to order.” (*The Monitor*, March 20 2003).

Both newspapers, throughout the period studied, continued to drive the theme that the US was wrong in going to war. The framing was such that such a course of action would destabilise the world. In “WORLD STABILITY UNCERTAIN”, *The New Vision* stated, “...when the US first missiles hit Iraq, the stability and future of world peace and international relations were cast in doubt,” (*The New Vision*, March 22). The reasoning behind this was that by turning its back on the UN, and by virtue of its now being the sole super-power, the US had returned us to the days of unregulated power in which muscle rules supreme.

The March 26, *The Monitor* editorial was critical of the Ugandan President’s support of the war. Under the heading “UGANDA’S US POLICY IS UNHELPPFUL”, the editorial argued that “The move to justify the shift by drawing a parallel between international terrorism and the insurgency in northern Uganda is not sustainable. Uganda has now joined Rwanda, Eritrea and Ethiopia as part of the so-called America’s Coalition of the Willing from which we have nothing to gain. It is just as well that civil society has condemned the cabinet’s irresponsible line. The fact that the leaders of these four are either unpatriotic dictators or benevolent despots suggests that they have jumped onto the US bandwagon for their individual health.”

This was the only editorial published by *The New Vision* during this period to directly express disapproval of President Yoweri Museveni’s decision to support the war, and it could be said to demonstrate the independent stance of *The Monitor*, as opposed to that of the government-owned *New Vision*. *The New Vision*, it is true, also ran critical editorials, but it kept its criticism generalised, vague and broad, without direct focus on the country’s own government.

The Monitor was also critical of the way the US forces were dealing with the media, especially the Arab media, and to push its point home it published an editorial to that effect on May 28. In “US SHOULDN’T BOMB THE MEDIA”, the paper said that by bombing the Iraqi media, America was contradicting its claims of freedom and democracy. “The US claims it wants to liberate Iraqi people and establish a democratic regime, yet its actions don’t

support this claim. Freedom of the media is a key element of democracy. So why are they bombing Iraq media outlets out of existence? We can't accept the excuses that the Iraqis are using their media for propaganda because many American and British news outlets have shed all pretence of objectivity and are feeding their publics on unbelievable pro-war propaganda." (*The Monitor*, March 28 2003).

Commentaries

Commentaries included longer essays written in a subdued style, usually explaining the war or providing points of view. They carried by-lines, unlike editorials, and included opinion pieces, insights, comments, perspectives, reviews and columns. My findings identified 50 commentaries in *The New Vision* during the period of our study, and 64 in *The Monitor*. Over 80% adopted a theme similar to that of editorials – opposed to the war, illustrating the double standards employed by the US in dealing with Iraq, and arguing that the US was not driven by the need to bring democracy in the Middle East but to exploit the riches of Iraq, especially oil, and that there was no need for war in the first place.

For example, on February 4 2003 *The New Vision* ran a strongly-worded commentary by its London-based columnist Gwynne Dyer in which he called for an extension of time to permit weapons inspectors to complete their work. In the piece, titled "WAR ON IRAQ NOW FUTILE", the columnist argued, "Why not give UN arms inspectors a little more time? Waiting six months or even a year for [them] to find the weapons of mass destruction that Mr Bush boasts are hidden in Iraq, or to confirm they are not there, seems a good deal." (*The New Vision*, February 15 2003).

The Monitor also published a commentary questioning the credibility of the presentation by US Secretary of State Colin Powell at the UN. The commentary, "POWELL'S SPEECH FAILS TO PIN SADDAM ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS", stated that "Colin Powell's presentation failed to budge world opinion on Iraq, with most countries re-affirming their earlier positions that there were no justifiable grounds to a case for a war with Iraq." (*The Monitor*, February 9 2003).

This stance was reinforced by another commentary in *The New Vision*. In the piece "RIGHT ANSWERS TO THE WRONG QUESTION", Gwynne Dyer said, "US Secretary of State Colin Powell did a good job at the UN on Wednesday of laying out the evidence that Saddam Hussein has kept some chemical and biological weapons that he had before the Gulf War (1990-1991), and maybe even made more since. But it was the right answer to the wrong question. The right questions are: Is Saddam likely to give chemical or biological weapons to the Islamist terrorists he loathes this month or next? When he has not done so in the past 20 years? Why do we need a war with Iraq now that will kill a great many people?" (*The New Vision*, February 11 2003).

Dr A Tajudeen's, *Thursday Post Card*, a regular column in *The New Vision*, again took a line similar to that above, writing, "The US and Britain are using weapons of mass deception to call for a war with Iraq. One always

thought that the principal basis of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence is the presumption of innocence until proven guilty. Suspicion is not enough. In Iraq's case, the opposite has been applied by two countries that like to make a grand claim on civilization and democracy. One claims to be the mother of all parliaments, while the other proclaims itself as the freest country in the universe and the end of all imagination on human freedom. If this be freedom and democracy, may the devil itself save us from dictatorship." (February 13 2003).

In "WHO HAS WON THE IRAQ WAR SO FAR?", Opiyo Oloya, another columnist with *The New Vision*, called for the continued need to search for a peaceful resolution of the standoff with Iraq. He stated, "What is the rush for George Bush?...Yes, Saddam Hussein is a very bad leader with a shoddy reputation, but that doesn't justify blowing up Baghdad and killing hundreds of innocent civilians," and added, "...that Bush will go to war with Iraq has not changed. What has changed is that he will do so without the blessing of many people around the world." (*The New Vision*, February 19 2003).

Commenting on the anti war protests that took place in February, Dr A Tajudeen had this to say in his *Thursday Post Card* on February 20: "There is no doubt that the majority of Africans oppose the impending attack. It is even that most, if not all, governments are opposed too, but are too scared to let either their own views and much less those of their citizens be too loud for fear of getting on the wrong side of the Americans. Also, many of them are so insecure that a demonstration against the attack on Iraq could easily turn into popular protests against their own unjust wars and unjust rule. The marchers were not condoning Saddam Hussein's atrocities against his own people, but articulating a different approach that is less costly in human and material terms."

Under the headline "BALANCE OF TERROR GOOD FOR THE WORLD", Robert Sebalu, a Ugandan Member of Parliament, reasoned that "...the collapse of the bipolar world left the globe with a security vacuum. Today, there is a strange doctrine that champions use of violence to snuff out violence (read terror). Now a handful of individuals can assert themselves as the almighty controllers of the world order." (*The Monitor*, March 28, 2003). Sebalu's view was taken up by other commentators, who argued that the fact that America was the only remaining super-power was putting the world in a dangerous situation where the mighty were always right. (See Christine Howlett, 'America's uncontrollable power is worrying', *The Monitor*, March 23 2003).

But for Charles Onyango Obbo, a former managing editor of *The Monitor* now working at the Nation Media Group in Nairobi, Kenya, the world was changing, and America's dominance in the management of media space and propaganda machinery was being challenged by the Internet. He wrote in *The Monitor* that "...with most of the world using the Internet to get some of their news or to counterbalance what they hear from the mainstream, the agenda- setting role of the big media who are pro-US/UK in the war is far

less than in 1991. In 1991, CNN was everything in the Gulf War.” (*The Monitor*, March 26, 2003). Onyango Obbo’s assertion is, however, undermined by the fact that the mainstream newspapers in Uganda, *The Monitor* and *The New Vision* did not take full advantage of the material freely available on the Internet to inform their coverage, especially that of hard news, continuing to rely heavily on Western news agencies which were largely dominated by the American and British versions of the course of events.

Similar themes occur throughout the period in most of the commentaries, for example ‘Whatever Saddam Hussein’s intentions, oil becomes the prime target’, (*The New Vision*, February 6 2003); ‘Bush unwittingly exposed himself’ (*The New Vision*, February 8 2003); ‘Today it is Iraq, tomorrow it is you’ (*The New Vision*, March 20 2003); ‘Powell’s speech fails to pin Saddam on nuclear weapons’ (*The Monitor*, February 7 2003); ‘If war comes to Iraq, what price will East Africa pay?’ (*The Monitor*, March 16 2003); and ‘Why Iraq War is our business’ (*The Monitor*, March 17 2003). The critical framing and discourse of commentaries presented in this section can be partly explained by the country’s experience with colonialism, which left behind a legacy that makes the public suspicious of any moves by the US and Britain. Many Africans believe that the West wants to re-colonise the continent.

Hard News Articles

As noted above, there were a total of 537 hard news articles during the whole period of study, representing 41% of the total number analysed. *The New Vision* contributed 332 (62%), while *The Monitor* contributed 205 (38%). Table 4 below shows this empirically.

Table 4. Distribution of Hard News Articles in *The New Vision* and *The Monitor*

Newspaper	Number of hard news articles	Percentage
<i>The New Vision</i>	332	62
<i>The Monitor</i>	205	38
Total	537	100

Front Page Hard News Articles

Owing to the immense volume of hard news material, and with the aim of doing justice to the analysis of this content, I chose to narrow down the categorisation of hard news articles to a manageable size by breaking it down further to the hard news articles appearing on the front pages of the two newspapers.

Table 5. Front Page Distribution of Hard News Articles in *The New Vision* and *The Monitor* (February 4 to March 31 2003)

Newspaper	Number of page one articles	Total of hard news articles
<i>The New Vision</i>	18	332
<i>The Monitor</i>	24	205
Total	42	537

There were a total of 42 front-page hard news articles, representing 17% of the total number of hard news articles published during this period by both *The New Vision* and *The Monitor*. *The Monitor* ran more (24 or 11.7% of the total) than *The New Vision* (18 articles, or 5.4% of the total). *The New Vision* ran more front-page stories using Ugandan main sources (3) than *The Monitor* (1). Eight stories in *The New Vision* were framed in a pro-US manner, while five were framed in a pro-Iraq fashion, and three were critical of the war. *The Monitor*'s framing, on the other hand, was: pro-US 7, pro-Iraq 6, critical 11. *The New Vision* carried two front-page hard news stories on the topic before the start of the war on March 20, while *The Monitor* carried six.

Some similarities were noted in the way the two newspapers handled front-page hard news articles. Both ran front-page articles that were largely culled from international news agencies, and both papers tried to frame the headings of their front-page articles in a manner that was critical to the course of the war, emphasising its human cost. The following headlines are illustrative: "Ugandans say no to Iraq war", *The New Vision*, February 9; "1 000 bombs fall on Baghdad", *The New Vision*, March 23; "US bombs kill 15 civilians", *The New Vision*, March 27; "16 die in chopper crash", *The Monitor*, March 22; "207 hurt in deadly Baghdad bombing", *The Monitor*, March 23; "American troops kill 700 Iraqis", *The Monitor*, March 27.

According to Allan Bell (1991), hard news – accidents, conflicts, crimes, announcements, discoveries and other such events as have occurred or come to light – is the staple product of a newspaper. In the context of this study, 'news' can be defined as a class of journalistic story based on information about some recent and/or remarkable issue. The most vital function of news is to transfer information in an objective manner. Bignell (1997) suggests that news consists not merely of facts but also of representations produced through language and other signs such as photographs. Newspaper readers usually read the front page first, then some domestic stories followed by international news, so the location of news articles is also important, especially whether or not they are located on the front page. And, for that matter, the sources cited in front-page articles are a key aspect, especially when one is studying propaganda and bias in the news media.

Sources in Page One Hard News Articles

I studied the sources for the hard news articles published on the front pages of the two newspapers. This was done at two levels. One was the main source, i.e. whether the source was of local or of foreign origin. The second level required a much deeper study of the texts, to find out which personalities, or groups of persons, were actually cited as producing the stories in question. The table below shows the distribution of sources according to this second category.

Table 6. Distribution of Sources for Front-page Stories in *The New Vision* and *The Monitor* Between February 4 and March 31 2003

Newspaper	Coalition	Iraq	Anonymous		Uganda	Other		Total	
		Other	Media	UN	Civilians				
<i>The New Vision</i>	67	18	31	23	2	1	4	7	153
<i>The Monitor</i>	52	16	13	9	0	2	0	4	96
Total	119	34	44	32	2	3	4	11	249
Percentage out of total (249)	47.8	13.7	17.7	12.8	0.8	1.2	1.6	4.4	100

'Coalition sources' included US and UK government and military officials; 'Iraqi sources' included Iraqi government and military officials; 'other media' included sources quoting news agencies and/or newspapers or media institutions; 'anonymous' included sources not mentioned by name; 'others' were sources not falling into the above categories.

That there were more citations from coalition sources (119, or 47.8% of the total of 249 sources cited), in the front-page hard news articles of both papers during the period under discussion is especially evident when compared to the 13.7 % citation from Iraqi sources. This is important because these two were the main players in the conflict. *The Monitor* used more coalition sources – 52, or 54.2% of the 96 such articles run by the paper – than *The New Vision* with 67 coalition sources or 43.8% of its 153. Further, *The Monitor* used more Iraqi source (16.7%) than *The New Vision* (11.7%), while *The New Vision* used more anonymous sources (15%) than *The Monitor* with 5.9%. *The New Vision* also cited more sources from other media (20.3%) than *The Monitor* (13.5%). Both papers cited more coalition than Iraqi sources.

Coalition sources were largely 'anonymous'; their identities were non-specific and they were referred to only as 'reliable sources in the US (or UK) forces'. Citations quoting other media were also heavily dependent on British and American media, and there was only one reference to Iraqi television as a source of information. The remainder was distributed between Reuters, USA Today, Washington Post, BBC and CNN. In some cases stories as long as 32 paragraphs contained no quotations from Iraqi – or any other – source than US or Coalition authorities and un-named US officials. Ordinary people, Iraqis, were quoted only four times, while Kofi Annan was quoted only

twice. Only one article emanated from Uganda, on March 27, and even then the source was the US ambassador to Uganda. Iraqi information minister Muhammad A Sahaf, Tareq Aziz and Saddam Hussein dominated Iraqi sources although in the case of Saddam there were always disclaimers as to what he would have said. US sources were more diverse, and included Bush, Powell, Rumsfeld and military generals. Their words were never doubted and their statements, in most cases, would be integrated into the news articles as if 'gospel truths'.

Photographs

Photographs in news articles are believed to play a substantial role in generating an emotional response and attracting readers. Sharp contrast is revealed in the number of photographs of the Iraq war used in *The New Vision* and *The Monitor*.

While considering that photographs provide better enhancement of the image of war in newspapers than words, I also looked at the distribution of photographs published by the two newspapers during the period in question by counting the number of appearances of key personalities involved in the war. Photographs used in the press will have also undergone a process of selection, and one image will be chosen over another because it conveys a message that the selectors want to communicate. Barthes (cited in Bagnell, 1997) suggests that the newspaper photograph is "an object that has been worked on, chosen, composed, constructed, treated according to professional, aesthetic or ideological norms which are so many factors of connotation". Writing on the *Media Day* website,⁶ Anni Palosaari notes that the definition of a news photograph naturally corresponds to the definition of news. News photographs should be taken in an objective manner, but it is obvious that photographs cannot achieve objectivity either, even though, to a great extent, we seem to believe they can. Quoting Hamilton (1997), Palosaari writes that historically, photographs play a role in presenting evidence and proof on a level which is more believable than earlier technologies or writing could offer. He calls photographs' nature interpretative instead of descriptive, saying that, "the representations that the photographer produces are related to his or her personal interpretations" – and these personal interpretations are naturally bound to cultural values and interpretations. Palosaari further notes that a news photograph is always a result of several choices made by the photographer, by editors in news agencies and by newspapers editors. Thus what we see in a newspaper can be called interpretations of issues and situations, and can no longer, by any means, be seen as objective or neutral.

Table 1 shows the overall distribution of all items about the Iraq war. These included 420 photographs published by the two newspapers during the

period, *The New Vision* contributing 242 (57.6%), and *The Monitor* 178 (42.3%).

Because photographs constituted such a substantial portion of the material under discussion (420 items out of 1311, or 32%), I studied them more deeply by first sorting them according to the main players before and during the war in Iraq, to assess the kind of images they carried.

My quantitative analysis found that *The New Vision* ran more photographs showing Coalition authorities – 48% compared to *The Monitor's* 41.6%, and it also ran more photographs of coalition weapons (8.3%) than *The Monitor* with 5.1%. *The New Vision* ran fewer photographs of Iraqi authorities (10%) and weapons (8%) compared to *The Monitor's* 15.8% and 1.1% respectively. *The New Vision* published fewer photographs of the UN (2%) compared to *The Monitor* (4.5%), more photographs of civilians and civilian casualties (7%) compared to only 3.8% *The Monitor*. Both, however, ran more photographs of coalition officials than of any other player, and more photographs of coalition weapons than Iraqi weapons – and both published more photographs in March than in February. What emerges in general from the study of photographs is that images of the US and its allies during the war were given favourable treatment, with friendlier captions. The contrast between the critical editorials and commentaries on one side and the photographs, heavily dominated by representatives from countries behind the war, on the other, is one of the paradoxes coming out of this study. It typifies the dependency on news agencies from the North, for African media rely on the pictures available in the news flow and which in no way represent the critical voices in the local media.

Conclusion

What has emerged from this empirical study of the images of the Iraq war in Ugandan newspapers leads to mixed conclusions. On the one hand, we have noted that the newspapers were opposed to the war and criticised it from start to finish. This was especially so in the editorials and the commentaries both newspapers published. It is clear that the editorial policies of both papers sought views that reinforced their standpoints. Although this portion of the news genres constituted less than 20% of the total material published about the war in Iraq during our period of study, the importance attached to the views expressed in editorials and commentaries means that the percentage of representation is less of an issue than the content and its framing. This is why it can be argued that the two Ugandan newspapers were opposed to the war in Iraq.

However, as pointed out, the majority of the items about the war, notably hard news articles and photographs, were lifted from the US-dominated western news agencies, quoting and citing American and coalition sources in over 80% percent of cases. This high percentage was framed by the

American public machinery through the Pentagon's strategy of embedding journalists with the military during the war, and by the endless stories emanating from press conferences in Washington and London. The conclusion is therefore two-fold. Left with no alternative, the two newspapers settled for using their only weapon against falling into the trap of US propaganda by running editorials and commentaries critical of the war. They also attempted to angle stories to reflect the dangers and the brutality of war, focussing on civilian casualties – even when the content was provided largely by the coalition forces. But even so, while editorial and commentary opinion was highly critical of the war, the power and reach of western sources was so great that much of the news reaching the public in Uganda, and used by *The New Vision* and *The Monitor*, was pro-US in accordance with the news choices and the framing of the western media (Hammond & Herman, 2000).

Notes

1. See: Ugandan President backs US attack on Sudan, available on : <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/africa/9808/21/bombing.01/> (accessed March 20 2004).
2. Details of the newspaper are available on: www.newsvision.co.ug
3. *The Monitor* newspaper is also available on: www.monitor.co.ug
4. The official government of Uganda website is: www.statehouse.go.ug/us_uganda_history.php
5. <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Strategic%20Assessments/sa95/sach0702.html>
6. Available on: <http://www.jmk.su.se/global03/project/mediaday/photo/objectivity.html>

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The South African Media and the War in Iraq

Tawana Kupe & Nathalie Hyde-Clarke

The Iraq War is the third invasion/war by the United States of America and its willing allies in the Middle East since the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the 'New World Order'. The first was the Gulf War against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991, which received global support and was thus deemed a legitimate action by the international community. The second was in Afghanistan against the Taliban Afghan government owing to its alleged harbouring of terrorist factions and leaders, specifically Al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden, after the attacks in New York and Washington, September 11 2001.

In all three, the role of the media has come into sharp focus. This is mostly due to the involvement of American owned or based large media conglomerates covering the military engagements. This, in turn, has raised questions about freedom of the press and control of the editorial process.

Historical Context

All parties are aware of the need for a cohesive and continuous media strategy. The Vietnam War proved that it is essential to have public support at home in order to wage war abroad. Pictures of body bags and soldiers burning civilian homesteads do not win wars in the public mind. Opinion polls showed that public support decreased as much as 15% every time casualties reported increased by a factor of ten¹. This was illustrated again during the Crisis in Somalia when the image of a dead US soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu created a negative response to continued American involvement, pressurising the Clinton Administration to withdraw. Hence, modern Western governments realise that in order to maintain support for military engagements abroad, it is necessary to maintain positive media coverage of the event.

Since 1990, Western governments have made a concerted effort to maintain public support by manipulating the media. This is to eliminate any nega-

tive coverage their involvement may receive. The use of press pools, briefings and, recently, embedded journalists are all techniques chosen to provide the most positive and effective media coverage for the parties involved.

Gulf War 1990/1991

During the Gulf War, the Administration kept media access to the combat arena and to troops to a minimum, by introducing a pool system and by employing press escort officers to accompany media teams at all times.² In this manner, investigative journalism was kept to a minimum. Reporters were wholly reliant on military and official press releases and press briefings for their material. This system decreased dissent and questioning of decisions and actions.

Reporters were handed a list of guidelines that informed them of what could and could not be reported back to the public. These guidelines included items of concern to national security, such as movement of troops, as well as casualty numbers.³ Although such guidelines were deemed necessary to ensure the success of the campaign, complete denial of independent access to information and personnel made the media little more than an extension of official communication.

This manipulation of the media did have negative implications for political accountability and the process of a democratic political system. Open political debate was stifled. The option to continue with negotiations, or to seek an alternative means of ending the crisis, was never fully explored. 73% of the public felt that television reporters had portrayed the Gulf War in a better manner than print, and 57% supported censorship⁴ – of the 3 000 minutes devoted to the War, only 29 minutes dealt with dissent.

This illustrated a success in media strategy, and the continued need for further news management in future military engagements.

War on Terrorism

Aware of the danger of upsetting Muslims around the world, the US has tried to be careful to establish that they are not anti-Muslim, and that the war is to stop those who 'prey on the weak and innocent', as well as to free Afghanistan from the 'oppressive' Taliban.⁵ Many of the visuals provided to, and taken by, the media emphasised this theme. America was portrayed as the 'liberator'. Much was written, and there were many photographs, of women emerging from behind the *burqua* as well as women and female children being allowed to attend work and school. Thus, one was left with the impression that the US had not only liberated Afghanistan politically, but also culturally

and educationally. In this manner, the media was used as an extension of the official public relations campaign.

Whilst a moral self-image was created, there was concerted effort to demonise the enemy: in this case Osama bin Laden, Al Qaeda (his military wing) and the Taliban. The US openly accused the Taliban of harbouring terrorists and implied that they were guilty by association. In addition to this, in January 2002, George W Bush referred to an 'axis of evil', in which he included North Korea, Iraq and Afghanistan. Although the international community met this statement with outrage, the dualism of 'good' and 'evil' had been established. This is an excellent example of a complex issue being simplified for public consumption.

The narrative of the liberator and the oppressed people awaiting liberation continues in 2003 in Iraq, although this may have become stronger owing to the initial rationale behind military engagement, namely the threat of weapons of mass destruction becoming less acceptable to the international community.

Media Strategies in War Contexts

In modern warfare, controlling channels of information and winning the information war has become an integral, if not central, component. It is now recognised that it is important to win both the war in the media and the military confrontation. Furthermore, if at all possible, the war must be won in the media in advance of the military confrontation, or even used to 'frighten' the enemy into succumbing without a fight.

In the months leading up to the war, the US, through its State Department and White House officials, started to make public demands on Iraq to reveal, and allow international inspection and dismantling of, its weapons of mass destruction (WMD). These demands became more strident over time and became part of the news agenda. In part, the strategy was to psych the people for the eventuality of war. In tandem with the media war was the international diplomacy policy to convince the world and the United Nations to pass a resolution, or resolutions, authorising war.

Months before the war, orchestrated leaks in the western media hinted at the firepower and strategies that would be used to defeat Saddam Hussein's forces. Out of these leaks and information war emerged the phrase 'shock and awe', a phrase that was coined with an eye on television sound bites and newspaper headlines as well as its direct simplicity and memorability. The media quickly adopted the sound bite and by doing so bought into the notion of a short sharp war in which the Iraqis would be overwhelmed and defeated or 'would not know what hit them'. Weeks before the war began, the movement of fighter carriers provided the media with opportunities to report on preparations for war and the weaponry that Saddam Hussein and his forces would face. Such coverage implied that they could not survive it.

This strategy appears not to have succeeded because internationally the decision to proceed to war was rejected, not only at the United Nations but in streets across the world, including in the United States where the media began to illustrate something of a global anti-war movement or peace movement, portrayed through public marches and demonstrations. In the US itself, figures from popular culture including film and music stars began to speak out publicly, including at, for example, the Oscars in Los Angeles.

It could be said that the 'coalition of the willing' entered the war without actually having won the 'information war' or achieving the key objectives of winning support for a case for war or frightening the enemy into a 'peaceful' resolution or surrender.

Faced with the difficulty of convincing the world about war, the US and Britain resorted to the presentation of intelligence dossiers of Iraqi's supposed arsenals – weapons of mass destruction. This strategy did not meet with much success either, especially outside the USA. Secretary of State Colin Powell's presentation to the Security Council of the UN did not convince France, Russia and China, permanent members of the Council, and contributed to a failure to get a UN resolution supporting war. British Prime Minister Tony Blair's own presentation about the Iraqi WMD convinced neither the British public nor a large majority of Blair's own party. It partly led to high-level resignations from his cabinet. It has also led to a war with the British Broadcasting Corporation and to the death of scientist and former weapons inspector Dr David Kelly. This resulted in the Hutton inquiry, and has revealed, *inter alia*, the kind of information war that various institutions engaged in and the damage that they caused.

As soon as the military phase of the war began, yet another media strategy emerged: briefing rooms, and how they were decorated. The Americans are reported to have hired a Hollywood stage designer to decorate their briefing room with an eye towards how it would appear in television bulletins. This strategy was an attempt to influence what would be selected in the news.

Embedding Journalists

Embedded journalism has become synonymous with the Iraq war or invasion. In simple terms, embedded journalists were those journalists who travelled – with army approval – with the coalition troops. Some 500 or so journalists were 'embeds'. Embedding journalists has raised a lot of discussion about their freedom to report the war. In part, the debate arises because it is known that the Americans are wary about the media since they believe it contributed to their loss of public support during the Vietnam War. Since then, as attested by the Gulf War, they have been keen on devising more ways to control the media.

Embedding journalists has also raised a lot of discussion because it appeared that the media did not object even when, according to some views, being embedded would compromise editorial independence. This opposing view perceives embedding as a form of censorship. Those who believe it to be a form of censorship link it to the fact that the coalition forces were actually in a war which was unpopular internationally, including among some NATO members, and feared that allowing unfettered reporting could feed anti-war sentiment.

Journalists and media who argue for embedded journalism believe that it gave them unprecedented access to the prosecution of the war, something akin to a ringside seat or an eyewitness account. Embedded journalists could therefore give a blow-by-blow account of the prosecution of the war including the victories and the losses, the failures and successes of military strategies. Being embedded was therefore an advantage, and better than the Gulf War pool system and the Afghanistan controls and briefings. Media organisations like Reuters argue that whatever the disadvantages of the embedded system it could and would be complemented by journalists who were not embedded, called the 'unilaterals'. News media would then combine accounts from 'embeds' and 'unilaterals' to give a 'full' account.

A third argument views the debate on physical embedding of journalists as misplaced because it is not new. According to this argument the only remarkable thing about embedding journalists was the scale on which it was organised and the apparent acquiescence of the media. The key issue though is not about being physically embedded but, more importantly, what perspectives embeds or unilaterals and news media take in reporting events and processes. In this particular case, the issue was how the journalists and the media represented the war – or invasion – given that it was opposed by a considerable section of the international community and was not sanctioned by the United Nations.

It could be argued that there were two main perspectives in reporting the war: one that framed the war as 'illegal' even if the coalition was winning it militarily, and one that framed it as legitimate, and a noble attempt to rid the world of a dangerous regime which possessed weapons of mass destruction. This second argument takes a broader view, about which it can best be said that it considers embedding as ideological. The question then is whose ideological perspectives dominate coverage in world conflicts or events. Embedded journalists could therefore not only be physically embedded but also ideologically embedded, and that this could be seen as a more or less permanent default position that favours American domination.

The representation of the war and especially the adoption of the language of the American-led effort was evidence of this deep form of embedding. The media's use of terms like 'shock and awe', and 'coalition of the willing' seemed to signal acceptance of American justification for war. If this argument is correct, the Americans would have won the contest about framing events and representing them from their own perspective.

The truth of the matter is that embedding of journalists is the latest technique in a long history of trying to control what the media reports about a war. In simple terms, therefore, journalists and the media face a classical struggle to exercise their editorial independence in the face of arrogant power and control.

The South African Response

We speak in favour of peace because our people prefer peace to war. They yearn for peace because they know from experience that without peace there can be no development. Without peace we will not be able to realise the goal of a better life for all.⁶

From the start, the South African government made it plain that they would not support a military campaign in Iraq. Instead, the South Africans put their efforts towards a peaceful resolution to the crisis. Supported by the African Union (AU) and Non-Aligned Movement, South Africa led developing states in opposing the US-led attack on Iraq. There were concerns about how this would impact on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), established to gain international support to promote African interests, as well as good governance and economic growth within African states. There were also fears that Africa would be put on the 'back burner' as developed states focused on Iraq.⁷

At the same time, the South African government was aware of the difficulties it might face if it was deemed to be anti-American. For this reason they were steadfast in their assertion that the matter should be decided by the UN, and that no state should act unilaterally. They were most careful to state that they were not anti-American, but pro-multilateralism.

President Mbeki maintained that the UN, and not the US, should be involved in Iraq. According to Resolution 1441, disarmament needed to occur through inspections, not war.⁸ The greatest concern raised was that the US was undermining the UN by challenging its authority in the international realm. As a result, most of the African Union wanted the UN inspectors to be allowed more time.⁹

To this end, in February 2003, a team comprising of seven scientists was sent to Baghdad to assist with the UN inspection of Iraq for weapons of mass destruction. Aziz Pahad, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, led this team. In his State of the Nation address on February 14 2003, President Thabo Mbeki stated:

We trust this intervention will help to ensure the necessary proper cooperation between the United Nations inspectors and Iraq, so that the issue of weapons of mass destruction is addressed satisfactorily, without resort to war.¹⁰

The opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA) led by Tony Leon, took a slightly different position. Although they too opposed war, they realised the inevitability of conflict and wished to distance themselves from the Hussein regime, as it was “a very serious potential threat to regional and international security”.¹¹ Instead, they advocated that South Africa should play a larger role in the post-war reconstruction process. This debate was covered in both the *Sunday Independent* (March 16 2003) and *The Star* (March 19 2003).

However, all major political parties agreed that unilateral action by the US, in disregard of UN sentiment, was untenable. Once the military campaign began, South Africa was not a member of the ‘coalition of the willing’.

In a document dated March 20 2003, the Department of Foreign Affairs outlined the government’s reaction to the war against Iraq. It read as follows:

1. South Africa regrets the war. War is not the solution to world problems. This unilateral resort to force is compounded by the fact that progress was being made in dealing with the matter of disarmament of Iraq with regard to any weapons of mass destruction.
2. It sets a regrettable precedence, which undermines the authority of the UN in dealing with global affairs.
3. It is unfortunate the action will result in the loss of life of ordinary Iraqis and all others involved the conflict – a tragic consequence of the failure of negotiations and diplomacy.
4. South Africa calls on the UN to assert its authority to ensure that whatever action is undertaken is within the rules on international humanitarian law.¹²

The African National Congress (ANC) also participated in nation-wide efforts to stop the war in Iraq. The action group South Africans United to Stop the War held anti-war marches and events, its purpose being to state simply and forthrightly that all South Africans have the responsibility to stop the war and secure peace and development all over the world. This group presented their concerns to the US Embassy in Pretoria on February 19 2003. The effort was supported by 53 participating organisations, including the ANC Women’s League, the Ceasefire Campaign, the Centre for Conflict Resolution, the Congress of South African Students and the Congress of South African Trade Unions, and the Institute for Global Dialogue.¹³

Protesting Against the War

A SABC/Markinor poll, conducted from 20-24 January 2003, indicated that 63% of South Africans were opposed to war in Iraq under any circumstances, with only 20% supporting war if approved by the United Nations.¹⁴ This was

compatible with the polls conducted by Gallup in 40 countries internationally, showing a distinct lack of support for the military campaign.

The anti-war sentiment was influenced by a variety of factors, one of which being the attitude to the war displayed by two pillars of South African society and Nobel Peace Prize winners, former President Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Mr Mandela criticised Bush during a speech at the International Women's Forum in Johannesburg in January, referring to him as "a president who cannot think properly and who wants to plunge the world into a holocaust".¹⁵ Although this sharp rebuke surprised a lot of political parties, who stated that the situation was not as simple as it appeared, the public responded positively to his statement.

Archbishop Tutu also received a groundswell of support when he declared the war 'immoral'. In March 2003, he told reporters that "this decision [to go to war] will undoubtedly result in the death and injury to hundreds, perhaps thousands, of innocent victims".¹⁶ Even months after Bush has declared the 'mission accomplished', Tutu continues to demand that Blair and Bush apologise for their 'mistake' in Iraq, which made the world "a great deal less safe place than before".¹⁷

South African Television

South African television consists of three broadcasting stations: a national public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC); etv, a terrestrial privately-owned television channel; and M-NET, a subscription service which has an Africa service, Multi-Choice Africa, carrying a bouquet of over 100 channels including BBC, CNN, CNBC and other foreign channels (including China's Central China Television), as well as French and Italian international channels. The SABC has three terrestrial television channels with mixed programming in English, Afrikaans and vernacular languages, and two subscription channels: SABC Africa (a news channel) and Africa to Africa (an entertainment channel).

SABC channels and etv covered the Iraq war quite extensively, using both their own small teams of unilateral journalists and material from CNN and international news agencies. The Iraqi situation was the lead story from the build up to the war and usually took up a third of the 30-minute main news bulletin, generally broadcast at 7 pm.

Television viewers in South Africa, because of the SABC reporter Renee Horne, 'our woman in Baghdad', will most probably remember the coverage of the war in Iraq. It is the first time, for a major war of this nature, that a young woman from an African country was right in the thick of it and filing stories, sometimes 'live'

Horne even stuck it out as more and more of Baghdad was demolished by 'the coalition of the willing' and no running water was left. She was one

of the few who remained while some left or, like the South African *Sunday Times* reporter, were expelled by the Iraqis. The SABC, also in anticipation of what international media and Israel had speculated about the possibility of missile attacks on Israel, sent a reporter to the Middle East, including Israel, who tried to give a Middle East perspective to the conflict.

The interesting thing about the SABC and etv coverage of the war is that to large degree it was influenced by the fact that they are TV stations in a country that made a spirited attempt to avert war by playing shuttle diplomacy for a pro-peace position. That effort was well covered by the two channels and in particular the SABC, who had a team that covered not only the South Africa's nuclear disarmament experts, but Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad's mission to Baghdad.

The SABC also covered the South African Ambassador to the US's efforts at the UN to push for more time for inspections to continue, using their SABC correspondent in the US. As a public broadcaster, and like most public and/or state broadcasters including the BBC, the SABC *broadly* reflected the foreign policy position of the government in its coverage of the conflict. The SABC also reflected popular sentiment against the war. Taken as a whole, the coverage was clearly against the invasion and there was consistent mention in every bulletin that no weapons of mass destruction had been found in Iraq. In other words, the invasion was not necessary and the wrong pretext had been used to go to war.

In addition, both stations reported the advances and setbacks of the 'coalition forces', as well as the claims and counter claims of both the invaders and the Iraqis about victories and losses. As they did not have either embedded journalists or large television crews, this footage was often from international agencies like Reuters or CNN.

Moreover, both etv and the SABC consistently gave fairly extensive coverage to the 'peace movement', the anti-war demonstrations around the world. In covering the anti-war demonstrations, the stations particularly emphasised their global nature. Etv particularly excelled in one main news bulletin when it used a technique of showing anti-war protestors in one country and then cutting to a world map and listing the country, then to another country and back to the map. The final version of the map demonstrated that the anti-war protests were global. In this way, etv gave the impression that there was a global peace movement against the war. News selection and packaging, with the aid of technology, can be a particularly effective way of driving an ideological position.

Both etv and SABC were correct in their representation of the anti-war protestors because the war really was unpopular across the world, even in the United States itself. So as the war dragged on – slowed by some Iraqi resistance – beyond the short time-span predicted by over confident Pentagon and White House planners, evening after evening, anti-war demonstrators in South Africa, the rest of Africa, some countries in Asia, in Australia and New Zealand, in Europe and the US itself were presented on SA tele-

vision channels. In this way, gradually, more time on the bulletins was allocated to South African demonstrations, including one outside Parliament, which included several Cabinet Ministers.

Both etv and SABC consistently brought home the realities of ‘collateral damage’, the cynical euphemism for civilian deaths at the hands of the military, in each bulletin. In particular both channels showed injured babies with tubes stuck in their bodies in hospitals, funerals, or blood-soaked bodies being carried away. The moral of the story in this coverage was that war is bad, because innocent civilians including defenceless babies are killed and maimed.

Both stations used a lot of graphics early on to present possible US invasion plans and weaponry, as well as Iraqi weaponry and possible defence strategies.

Lastly, there were a few local commentators and analysts on TV and also a few special debate programmes on the invasion. Interestingly, the media really only analysed its role in the war in the following programmes: on M-NET, *Carte Blanche* presented “The Media Spin” on April 13 2003; SABC3’s *Special Assignment* discussed “War Spin” on June 3 2003, and etv had a public call-in on their *Morning Edition* show in March. It seems that radio, the Internet and print media outdid TV in this respect.

South African Newspapers

South Africa has a fairly large privately-owned print media industry by African standards. The South African government does not, unlike most African governments, own any print media. In terms of influential large circulation newspapers, there were five major print media companies at the time of the war. South African print media companies are fairly modern and commercially driven, but dependent on foreign news agencies for foreign stories because they cannot afford foreign bureaux and correspondents of their own. This dependency is acute in times of crisis in foreign countries, and even within Africa.

The largest company was Independent Newspapers and Media, totally foreign-owned by the Irishman Sir Anthony O’Reilly who also owns newspapers in Australia, New Zealand, the UK, and Ireland. Independent Newspapers and Media publish 14 newspapers. These papers include the main metropolitan daily newspapers in the key urban centres of Pretoria, Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. Its flagship paper is *The Star* with a daily circulation of 165 000 in Johannesburg and its national Sunday paper *The Sunday Independent*.

The second largest group was Naspers, a company that publishes both Afrikaans and English language newspapers and magazines and has a controlling stake in M-NET, the only subscription television station. These pa-

pers were formerly close to the National Party government in the apartheid era.

The third largest was Johnnic Communications, the largest black owned media company in South Africa, publishing the largest circulation Sunday paper, the *Sunday Times* with a circulation of 500 000 a week and key financial publications in a partnership with the British media firm Pearson.

The fourth largest group was New Africa Publications owned by New Africa Investments Limited, also a black owned company, publishing a large circulation daily *The Sowetan* for the black market, especially those in the townships.

The fifth largest group was the Mail & Guardian Limited owned by Zimbabwean Publisher Trevor Ncube. It publishes a major weekly national paper the *Mail & Guardian* in which the British media group publishers of the *Guardian* has some shares.

The coverage in the papers was much more varied and contradictory than the television channels. In the first place, the newspapers called the conflict by different terms, which also reflected their editorial positions. Below is an example of how pages, or sections of pages, were flagged in some of the key dailies and weeklies:

The Star: Iraq War

Sunday Independent: Iraq Crisis

Sunday Times: War in Iraq

The Sowetan: Iraq Invasion

Mail & Guardian: War of the Whores

Notably, the difference in naming the war was not only between various newspaper groups but also between different papers in the same group. For example, according to one of its editorial executives at *The Star*, there was no agreement as to whether the actions of the US and its allies were legitimate, or illegal and therefore an invasion. So a decision was taken to call it 'Iraq War'. Throughout the war, however, the headlines and slant of the stories in *The Star* were pro-war in the sense that Saddam Hussein was alleged to have WMD and the solution was to overthrow him and liberate Iraq. *The Star* celebrated, in its headlines, stories and photographs, the fall of Baghdad and the overthrow of Hussein, complete with large photographs of his statue being pulled down and some Iraqis apparently celebrating and giving American soldiers flowers.

It is interesting to note that most of the stories in *The Star* came from international news agencies and the Independent Foreign Service, which feeds foreign stories to all newspapers belonging to the global Independent Media Group. *The Star* did not have a team of journalists from South Africa covering the war. However its sister paper, *The Sunday Independent*, carried sto-

ries written by Robert Fisk, a foreign correspondent for the Independent group in Iraq and highly critical of the US and its allies. *The Sunday Independent* also carried, as part of its editorial content, stories from international media on foreign news, including leading American papers such as the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Washington Post*. In some of the articles, the US-led action was depicted as illegal. Further, as indicated above *The Sunday Independent* labelled the conflict 'Iraqi Crisis' and produced a full special edition in the week prior to the commencement of military action. It would appear that the Independent group did not necessarily impose an editorial perspective on the coverage, although it is true to say that its leading daily in South Africa went against popular opinion in taking a pro-war stance and not framing the action as an illegal invasion.

By contrast, the *Sowetan*, a tabloid publication aimed at blacks living in the former apartheid segregated areas popularly called 'townships' boldly called the war – and captioned its pages on the war – 'Iraqi Invasion' or an 'Unnecessary War'. Its news stories, opinion pieces, editorials and cartoons strongly condemned the US and its allies for illegally invading Iraq. Its editorial stance mirrored the stance of South Africa's foreign policy, popular sentiment against the war and the coverage by South Africa television networks.

Equally the *Sunday Times*, a black owned publication targeted at affluent readers in the suburbs (formerly white areas but now multiracial) was critical of the US and its allies. Most of the criticism which branded the war an illegal invasion came from analytical features and opinion pieces written by its regular columnists: legal experts, judges in international courts or tribunals, academics and respected analysts in research institutions. The *Sunday Times* had for some time (he was expelled and allowed back in) a correspondent in Baghdad who reported over and above the copy from international news agencies and stories from foreign newspapers in the US and UK.

The *Mail & Guardian* was one of the newspapers most critical of the US, and labelled the conflict the 'War of Whores' in reference to the so called 'coalition partners'. Taking a radical leftist approach in its news, features, editorials, cartoons and opinion columns from experts in politics, foreign policy and media studies, it portrayed the war as the US's hegemonic domination and abuse of international relations.

South Africa's 'Human Shields'

As part of the protest against the war and in an effort to deter bombing, a group of South Africans went to Baghdad with a view to being human shields. This rested on two basic assumptions: that the US would not want to kill innocent civilians, and that the US would avoid bombing civilians from other nationalities at all costs because of the political implications. A group of 32 volunteers left Johannesburg to fly to Jordan and bus into Iraq on March 18 2003.

The Independent Newspaper group covered this human-interest angle on a daily basis. The first article appeared on January 27 2003 in *The Star*; 'Wanted: 10 000 martyrs'. It was about the British human shields heading into Baghdad. It is possible that this article sparked the decision to conduct a similar mission from South Africa. Once it became apparent that South Africans were prepared to take on this role, dailies provided a story in almost every edition from March 12 to April 4, when they had returned. These stories ranged from personal accounts ('Why I am becoming a human Shield', *The Star*; March 14 2003) to general stories about their preparation and departure from Johannesburg International Airport ('SA human shields ready for risky mission' *The Star* March 12 2003). It should be noted that the South African human shields arrived in Baghdad as the British were leaving, having accepted that their presence would in no way deter the bombing campaign.

Once in Baghdad, reports were filed of the South Africans' experiences and activities in a number of national newspapers. Reports about how terrified they were once the bombing started were soon front-page news ('South Africans on the front line' *Mail & Guardian* March 20 2003; 'Bombs are frightening, SA human shield says' in *The Star* March 24 2003). It also became apparent that many were heading for bomb shelters, and not standing at their posts when the bombing began. This resulted in upset between Iraqi officials, who were housing and feeding them, and the South African volunteers. After five days the first batch of 'shields' were on their way home, citing personal reasons. By the end of March all the group had returned to South Africa claiming that it was clear their presence had had no effect on the bombing campaign and therefore there was no point in continuing to fill this capacity ('I'm a human shield – not a bomb shield' *The Star* March 25 2003; 'SA's 22 human shields head home' *Mail & Guardian* March 29 2003).

Conclusion

In conclusion, although the South African Government and public were largely against the war in Iraq, a lack of correspondents in the affected areas meant that often the news provided did not truly reflect those anti-war sentiments. As a result, media coverage in South Africa was an interesting combination of pro-war stories, acquired from Western News Agencies, and anti-war stories, written by local analysts and editors. Even with a reporter in Baghdad, television news on the public broadcasting service vacillated between supporting the war and condemning it.

However, given that there were voices of dissent in the South African media, and even in other global media agencies, it is clear that any attempts by the American and British governments to 'manage' the media were not completely successful. It should also be mentioned at this time that innovations in new media meant that the anti-war message was being proliferated

outside traditional communication channels, and therefore beyond the reach of press officers and government officials.

As more countries such as South Africa promote peaceful resolution to potential and current conflicts, it may become more difficult to justify intervention to an international audience through an increasingly sceptical international media. Unfortunately, though, a continued lack of resources available to local media for covering foreign events will mean an ongoing reliance on Western news agencies for relevant information. Thus, Western governments will still be able to influence the foreign news agenda to a large extent.

Notes

1. Neuman, J. (1996) *Lights, Camera, War: Is Media Technology driving International Politics?* New York: St Martins Press. That is to say an increase from 10 to 100, or from 100 to 1 000, etc.
2. Nohrstedt, S.A. (1992), 'Ruling by Pooling', in Mowlana, H.; Gerbner, G. & Schiller, H.: *Triumph of the Image: The Media's War in the Persian Gulf*. Colorado: Westview Press.
3. Operation Desert Shield Ground Rules and Supplementary Guidelines, 7 January 1991.
4. LaMay, C., FitzSimon, M. & Sahadi, J. (ed.) (1991) *The Media at War: The Press and the Persian Gulf Conflict*. New York: Gannett Foundation Media Centre.
5. Shuger, S. (2001) 'Turning Over a New Leaflet'. 19 November 2001.
6. Mbeki, Thabo (2003) State of the Union Address February 14 2003. <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mbeki/2003/tm0214.html>
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8. Tromp, B. (2003) 'Pretoria Wants a Peaceful Solution, Not an Overthrow', in *The Sunday Independent* 16 March 2003.
9. ABC News Online (2003) 'South Africa Names Scientists for Iraq Mission' on *ABC Online* 19 February 2003 <http://abc.net.au/>
10. Mbeki, T. op cit.
11. Tromp, B. (2003) 'Whatever Needs to be Done, Must be Done Through UN' in *The Sunday Independent* 16 March 2003.
12. Department of Foreign Affairs (2003), 'South African Government Reaction to the War Against Iraq'. 20 March 2003. <http://www.dfa.gov.za/docs/iraq030320.htm>
13. A comprehensive list of participating organisations may be found at: <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/campaigns/iraq.htm>
14. The survey was conducted through telephonic interviews with 800 South Africans and was not 'confined to metropolitan areas only'. 'Majority of South African oppose Iraq War' *Independent Newspapers Online*. 1 February 2003. http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?sf=13&click_id=13&art_id=qw1044088380492B251&set_id=1
15. Quist-Arcton, O. (2003) 'Mandela Sharply Criticises Bush and Blair on Iraq Stance' 30 January 2003. <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200301300784.html>
16. Fredericks, I. 'Mandela gets hate mail from US', in *Sunday Times*. 16 March 2003.
17. 'Tutu slams 'immoral' war', *Mail & Guardian*. 21 March 2003.
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Arab Media: Did it Cover the Same War?

Ahmed El-Gody

Marshall McLuhan once said that World War Three would be a visual and information war, not a military war. His prophecy came true: Media in the US and in the Arab world have provided two different perspectives of visuals and information about the war, making viewers believe that they were covering two different wars. The aim of this study is to understand how Arab media coverage of the Iraq war differed from that in many Western countries.

Arab media have changed dramatically since the 1991 Gulf War, when CNN was the only station providing news about the region. Today, Arab media is transformed and there are twelve independent television networks providing '24/7' news coverage from the Arab perspective. Arab journalists have proven themselves able to produce quality coverage of news describing, criticising and analysing Arab affairs.

This led many media analysts to believe that if there was to be a clear winner in the third Gulf War global media competition, it would be the pan-Arab private television networks. Arab media had never had such global outreach or taken the lead in global war reporting, but their coverage of the third Gulf war produced quality insightful analysis of the effects of the war in marking out the future of the region.

Arab media did not restrict themselves to defying the official lines of their local governments or the Pentagon by showing hard footage; instead they reported on wounded children and mass destruction of houses and property, and interviewed Iraqi officials supposedly killed in coalition bombing. In short, Arab media revealed the other side of the 'smart-bombing', reporting the war through Arab lenses and challenging the American narrative.

Methodology

An analysis of the content of major Arab broadcast media stations Al Arabeya¹, Abu Dhabi² and Al Jazeera³ was conducted using the selected time-spots for

the comparative study presented in this book which cover Colin Powell's and Hans Blix's presentations to the Security Council, the start of the war in Iraq, and the fall of Baghdad. A systematic content analysis of the three channels was conducted. The study also used non-probability purposive samples for specific datelines and events that took place before, during and after the war. This was done to better understand the agendas of Arab independent and semi-independent media and their role in shaping a new society in the 'post-globalisation' era. Similarities and differences in coverage, source selection and message framing strategies were analysed.

Analysis showed that Arab media were concerned with three main frames during the US-British war on Iraq. First, Arab media employed action frames to shape public perception and opinion; this type of framing, conducted in order to reinforce and cement Arab society's stand against the war, was presented through stories provoking an emotional response and inviting participation and involvement. Second, Arab media were interested in normative frames. This was achieved through stories focusing on humanitarian efforts to aid the Iraqi people and to resolve the dangerous situation in the region. Third, Arab media used framing to emphasise the differences between Arab and non-Arab media.

The Arab World: Preamble

Media ecology of the Arab world for the past 40 years has been shaped by loyalty to a regime. William Rugh's 1979 depiction of media in the Arab world as 'authoritarian' is still valid. By definition, an authoritarian media system is controlled by the government, either by direct ownership or through the application of strict rules and regulations. Authoritarian media follow the government's main policies, and their purpose is to promote government's main political, social, and economic strategies (Rugh, 1986: 12-36).

Since the early development of the Arab press, Arab journalists did not reach beyond the limits of a traditional relationship between the political class and the rest of the population. Governed by principles of obedience and respect for the political establishment, Arab journalists work in an environment characterised by frequent state-, government- or self-censorship (Rugh: 1986: 12-15).

Even with the advent of the new digital technologies, satellite and the Internet, enabling the privatisation of some media outlets, Arab media remained constrained by a state using ever more centralised laws and regulations to maintain the media as a political propaganda tool (Amin, 2000: 3). Arguments for limited freedom of expression in the region usually cluster around one reason: the preservation of a nation's unity and cultural coherence. Liberal hopes of broadening Arab media horizons are dashed by the strictly centralised political systems of the Arab world where it is believed

that controlling the means of communication is important for dominating mass opinion and stabilising the political system (Amin, 2002: 5).

Those factors ultimately led to the failure of the Arab media. Their lack of active presence in international media – for Arab governments focus only on their local media, in order to manipulate their local audience – led them to be peripheral to developed countries, compared to what foreign media present. As for international news, Arab media depended mainly on international wire services and on CNN, as has been said by S A Schliefer in his article 'Media Failure in the Arab World' (Schliefer, 1999: 2).

The second Gulf War of 1991 proved the failure of the Arab media; news was dominated by CNN. Arabs received news and information about their own region from foreign services; Arab media were laggards in showing their point of view to the world. During the next decade, Arab media continued to allow Western media to cover the region without providing alternatives. That ended with the introduction and expansion of satellite communication technology, with Arabs starting to join the 'CNN-ised' world. Ironically, Arab governments joined the new world, using images presented by CNN in their main news items and making Arabs believe only in CNN images and statements (Schliefer, 1999: 3-4).

September 11: Re-defining Arab Media

September 11 2001 was a landmark in the Arab world. Arab media found themselves defending their heritage, religion, culture and existence for a mistake they didn't commit but for which they were nonetheless held responsible. The absence of Arab coverage of an event led to the hasty interpretation that it was an Arab action. Even when it was announced that an attack was planned by Al Qaeda, Arab media did not reach out to the international media in order to explain the differences between the tangled issues of Islam/Arab/fundamentalism/extremism, and terrorism.

The images broadcast after September 11 reinforced Arab media failure by showing people dancing and chanting in the streets, and children mimicking planes hitting walls. Neither Arab leaders' official statements of condolences, nor Palestinian President Yasser Arafat donating blood for the US, nor the Jordanian President leading a march to mourn the tragedy, succeeded in communicating with the rest of the world, for such reactions were regarded as 'staged' (Vicken, 2003: 1).

These images forced the US government to rethink its position on the Arab world. After decades of paying relatively little attention to the problems of democracy in the Middle East, US foreign policy elevated the issue to a position of central importance. Debates over marketing democracy to the Arab world, and how the US could promote democratic change, mushroomed (Vicken, 2003: 1). The American president announced that the US would do whatever it took to promote and enforce democracy in the Middle East. Such

attitudes towards Arab states forced Arab political systems and media to change their official, protocol-driven form of news reporting into more active participation in news coverage, allowing more freedom (Vicken, 2003: 3).

Arab media simply had to become freer and more open in order to survive. They started to play a more active role, analysing not only international affairs but also their own societies, in order to prevent another tragedy. This margin of freedom ranged from opening new independent and opposition media (as in Egypt) to allowing criticism of government (as in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates) to reducing self-censorship (as in Jordan and Oman). The margin of freedom differed from one system to another and from one country to another, but it would be fair to say that Arab media benefited from the September 11 tragedy, as they gained a freer media voice (Alterman, 2003: 8-110).

Arab broadcast media started actively to use media technologies, seeking global exposure in order to understand international fear. In an effort to close the communication gap and to facilitate dialogue between East and West, Arab media started broadcasting live debates between Arab, American and European officials (Shams, 2003, 2-4).

During the US war in Afghanistan, the satellite channel al Jazeera posted itself as the Arab version of CNN and soon became renowned for its live coverage of news from Afghan cities, and the sole provider of Bin Laden tapes. By the end of the war over, Al Jazeera had positioned itself as a major competitor to international broadcast stations. In a paper entitled *The Challenge of the New Arab Media* Vicken Cheterian stated that "Arab media never had such global outreach ... al-Jazeera success did encourage the Arab world to have more global reach to better their image and join international communities" (Vicken, 2003: 4).

Al-Jazeera's success in covering the Afghanistan war encouraged other Arab countries to emulate it. Arab governments, concerned about al-Jazeera's widespread influence, established more channels and invested more money to produce quality broadcasting committed to free expression. Doha Shams, the editor of the media section of *al-Safeer* newspaper in Lebanon, explained that Arab success in covering the Afghan war pushed a number of Arab states to invest 300 million dollars in competing with them by creating competitive channels. Yet, as Shams emphasises, their overtly pro-American position prevented their winning over Arab public opinion. According to Shams the Arab world takes enormous pride in the success of the new Arab media (Shams, 2003, 2-4).

Arab Media Between Two Wars: The Road to Iraq

After the US war on Afghanistan in 2002, many US officials were worried that the authoritarianism of Arab regimes had bred frustration in their countries, and this frustration in turn resulted in the growth of terrorist organisa-

tions – to be eradicated because they threaten the existence of the US. American debates about the need for democracy in the Middle East have triggered a strongly negative reaction from Arab media, and the US intention to use force against agents of terrorism made many Arab countries doubtful about the future of the region especially in the light of continuing threats to promote regime changes throughout the area (Alterman, 2003: 2). The US government threats to hit what it calls ‘terrorism pockets’ in Iraq, Iran, Libya, Sudan, South Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, and Pakistan convinced many Arabs that the Bush administration rejected the long-standing view that its interests in the Middle East were best protected by the stability of friendly regimes (Otaway, 2003, 1).

Arab media taking their first steps towards liberalisation – but, of course, taking the green light from their governments – started asking why the United States was suddenly discussing democracy in the Arab world, and what real motives were hidden behind the talk of democracy. Even pro-western writers such as Dr Saad El Din Ibrahim (in an interview with Abu Dhabi television) questioned US intentions vis-a-vis Arabs, and whether, given its repeated predictions of chaos, the US would force democracy on the region. The pro-government Abu Dhabi station moved away from government support of all US decisions, describing Bush’s language as “...no different from that used by bin Laden in his videotapes”, while the Doha-based Al Jazeera, compared President Bush to Hitler in his “thirst for bloodshed and for declaring war on half the world to satisfy a sense of vengeance”. On the other hand, the newly-launched Al Arabia TV took a softer approach, treating US intentions to deepen democratic values as a foreign policy issue and not up for debate – this, however, does not mean that Al Arabia condoned what it described ‘the new US crusade’.

With the rise in tension in the Middle East, all three channels started to question the real intentions of the US. Were they to promote democracy, or to find solutions to a troubled US economy and colonise the oil-wealthy region? In addition, European countries were supporting increased UN inspections, and sanctions against Iraq until it agreed to UN resolutions.

The agenda of Arab television, in general, can be characterised by its lambasting of the Bush administration for using the promotion of democracy as a code word for ‘regime change’ – an interpretation derived from Washington’s tough talk directed against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

Al Jazeera talk shows were the first to reveal Bush’s objective of waging another war against Iraq. It invited media analysts to paint different scenarios and suggest motives: these varied from continuing his father’s unfinished work, to re-creating himself in the image of an American hero – especially after his failure to capture Bin Laden – or simply to grow the US economy by controlling the world’s oil. Abu Dhabi television augmented Al Jazeera scenarios by reporting US officials’ statements about the threat to world peace from Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction, as well as US fears of Anthrax, which they ac-

cused Iraq to be masterminding, presumably in cooperation with Al Qaeda. Both channels defended Iraq against the US allegations, fearing a new war that would damage the image of Arab leaders and destroy their systems of government. And Arab media worries were confirmed when US National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice stated in an interview with Egyptian Nile TV that the forthcoming war against terrorism, and the presumed changes in the Middle East, would lead to a far-reaching transformation of the entire region.

This interview provoked widespread and angry responses from the Arab stations. Rice declared that the US was committed, not only to the removal of the Taliban regime, but of all forces of evil in the region, in order to “force the democratisation [and the] the march of freedom in the Muslim world” (according to Marina Ottaway in a paper entitled *Promoting Democracy in the Middle East*, the response of the Arab media was ‘vicious’). Al Arabeya was the first to comment, accusing Rice of interfering in Arab solidarity and stating that she had “ignored more than one and a half billion Muslims who will suffer from American greed and oppression and from its cruel and visible war against Islam and Muslims”. In a milder vein, Al Arabeya channel tried to play down US threats; however, it warned the US administration against interfering in Arab states’ internal affairs, adding that the excessive use of power in the Middle East would create a reaction contrary to US interests (Ottaway, 2003: 3-5).

Al Jazeera used harsher language, mocking ‘Ayatollah Condoleezza’ and the US administration’s ‘quest to export democracy’ and warning the US administration against letting loose its power in the region, for if the war were to damage Arab solidarity it might create hundreds of Bin Ladens.

Abu Dhabi channel used the same tone, commenting that the Arab world was not in need of the US model of democracy, and adding that the US needed to stop its arrogance and look at the real reasons behind the terrorist attack which, even if it had emanated from Arab extremists, was a natural outcome of unwavering US support for the Israeli government and its unfair treatment of the Palestinian and Middle East dilemmas. Abu Dhabi channel warned the US against promoting ideas that would lead to a loss of its credibility in the region.

Arab journalists launched into a series of diatribes against the US and its views on the Middle East. “Arabs have lost their faith in international media, especially since the new independent TV channels are playing a part in defending Arab positions”, added Shams.

According to Ottaway, Arab broadcast media during this period focused on three major areas. The first was that the US call for democracy was a facade to distract international public opinion from its real, hidden agenda, which was to dominate the region. The second portrayed the US as a government without credibility when it spoke about promoting democracy, owing to its past record in the region; and the third was that the US had no right to interfere in the internal affairs of Arab countries or to change their politics by force (Ottaway, 2003: 10).

The hidden agenda most commonly identified by Arab writers is the United States decision to allow Israel to control the region, to hand over Palestinian territories and destroy the Palestinian *Intifada*. “The first objective is to serve Israel and implement its Sharonist wish of striking off the map a pivotal Arab country, thus giving Israel full dominance over the Arab region for an indefinite period of time”, stated Abdel Bary Attwan, editor of *Al Quds* newspaper in an interview on Al Jazeera. “Another supposed driver of US policy is a determination to take control of the region by setting foot in [it] beside Iran and Iraq and at the back door of Russia”, said Al Arabeya, adding another angle to the US’s presumed agenda of securing access to Gulf oil.

As for promoting democracy, many commentators on both Abu Dhabi and Al Jazeera channels have regarded it as merely a means of extending US colonisation by lowering resistance to its policies. They believed that the US administration’s plan was to apply pressure on the Arab and Islamic worlds to become more cooperative over its policies on Palestine, Iraq, Sudan, Afghanistan and other areas where Washington was committing gross mistakes.

The many contentions that the United States lacks credibility as a promoter of democracy in the Middle East rest on the belief that US officials are cynical when they call for respect for democracy and human rights, since the US wants only to serve its own interests in the region. Abu Dhabi channel, for example, sees the US raid in the Middle East as a “...countdown to chaos: arguments full of holes can hardly hide the truth, which is about oil, elections, and finding a scapegoat for the Afghanistan failure”. The channel saw the forthcoming war as “another cycle in a tactical manoeuvre to colonise the region”.

Arab Media and the US Declaration of War on Iraq

When President Bush started making warlike speeches against Iraq, Arab media started fully to react in the news. Al Arabeya was, again, the mildest among them, viewing Bush’s speeches as the “address of a defeated president acting like a triumphant president...the American war against terror in Afghanistan has, to date, chalked up only minor victories, incompatible with the high price the US has paid, and perhaps will yet pay, to accomplish its goals”. Abu Dhabi attacked: “With these idiotic threats [he has] accomplished the miracle of bringing Iran and Iraq closer...that many before him had tried to accomplish, yet failed. He has created a global front against his unjustified policies of fear...if the American president has lost his wits because of the acts of one man such as bin Laden, the leader of an organisation whose members do not exceed a few hundred, what state will he be in should he face an alliance of Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Syria, Hamas, [Islamic] Jihad, and Hezbollah – all of which have a rich history of struggle, wars... and ‘frightening’ experience in carrying out operations abroad?”

When President Bush threatened, in his weekly radio address to the US nation, to continue war on terrorism, he was again severely attacked. All Arab media agreed that he was making "...threats in order to hide this reality, to cover up the political losses and loss of life in Afghanistan that have not been made public," as Abu Dhabi channel explained. Al Arabeya and Al Jazeera saw the purpose of those threats as to frighten Arab and Islamic countries in order to cover humiliating American setbacks. Both channels covered, live, statements by British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook in the House of Commons, in a speech that contained a fervent denunciation of the grounds for the war.

Al Jazeera talk shows were very harshly critical of the US president, launching several campaigns and describing him as a 'mad cowboy playing with a rifle', ready to go out into the street shoot at passers-by, and hoping that 'the intelligent people of Europe' would take away his gun before it was too late. Al Arabeya talk shows, on the other hand, expressed a "...feeling of pain and disappointment seeing Congress applauding President Bush and supporting his threats, which will certainly lead to great losses to the interests of their electorate, and will lead their country to bankruptcy and perhaps even collapse", and adding that the axis of evil in the world was not Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, but America and Israel. Abu Dhabi shifted its attention to the Arab world's fear of the region's fate, warning the US President that his threats were unacceptable, and claiming that Iraq, Iran and North Korea could not be compared to the Taliban; they had advanced weaponry, and thousands of years of history. If those countries were to be attacked, their fates would be very different from that of the Taliban.

There were some attempts, led by Al Arabeya, at a more in-depth analysis than mere cheering-on, condemning Arab governments' stand against the new order forced on them by the US and attacking Arab weakness in facing the problems. Al Arabeya launched a series of four episodes attacking the limitations of the Arab system and demanding a unified Arab stand against the US plans of pushing the Arab world into a danger zone to atone for a mistake of a few, as Galal Dewidar, editor of the Egyptian *Al Akhbar* was quoted on Al Arabeya as saying. Arabs were paying the price of the US's mistake in training Bin Laden and Al Qaeda against the former USSR, for when Al Qaeda turned against the West, it made the Arab world its scapegoat. Al Arabeya stated that Arab systems should not be so feeble, and that Arab citizens should act if their governments failed to do so.

In an attempt to narrow the gap of cultures, Abu Dhabi television called for the establishment of an Islamic English-language satellite channel to develop a better image of the Arab World. A Higher Islamic Council meeting endorsed the urgent need for such an initiative. Al Jazeera adopted the idea and announced preparations to open a new English news channel, based in the US, in the second half of 2004.

When President Bush stated clearly that if the Iraqi government did not abide by the UN resolution and allow UN investigation teams to perform their work,

it was seen as a declaration of war. For Arab media it was just a matter of time; they knew their fears were coming true and that the US administration was determined to change the political map of the region by force. Al Arabeya stated in its main news that “Arab society should not surrender to this war...but do everything possible...to reinforce global criticism of possible American aggression against Iraq”. Abu Dhabi channel called on Arab officials to meet their responsibilities, not through “their regular condemnation and criticism, but through applying oil sanctions and economical power.”

This does not mean that the Arab media supported the Saddam regime. On the contrary, they criticised Saddam, holding him responsible for the deterioration of the Arab image by not collaborating with UN inspectors. Al Arabeya stated that the Iraqi leader deserved a prize because he had initiated two wars, one with Iran and one through the occupation of Kuwait and his subsequent expulsion. “Saddam deserves an award because he imagined that the history of Baghdad has started only thirty-four years ago, the day he took over power in the country and destroyed Baghdad’s culture...he deserves an award for fracturing Arab unity...he deserves an award for bringing US forces to the Arab region...and because he caused the flight of Iraq’s writers and scientists and silenced the cry of the Kurds with chemical weapons.” Al Jazeera, however, was more concerned about the fate of the Iraqi people, lamenting the dilemma forced upon them by Saddam. They had to choose between supporting America – which would save them from a ‘despotic and authoritarian’ regime that had squandered their national wealth and practised ‘historically unprecedented’ political savagery, or they could stand firm and fight a losing battle. Abu Dhabi channel shared Al Jazeera’s point of view, sympathising with the fate of the Iraqi people and the troubles they would have to tolerate after over ten years of heavy sanctions. The channel called for the unity of the Arab world, in solidarity with the Iraqi people.

All three channels, however, criticised the weakness of Arab resistance, boldly accusing Arab states of submission. Al Arabeya used a subdued tone, launching a series of documentaries showing the weak role played by the US in the peace process to underline its negative role in the region. Al Jazeera, by contrast, ran powerful talk shows and interactive programmes calling on Arab societies to unite and to put pressure on their governments to help the Iraqi citizens. Abu Dhabi called for international assistance to pressurise the US and to play the role Arab governments ought to have played.

Arab Media, and Colin Powell’s Report to the Security Council

US Secretary of State Colin Powell’s report to the UN Security Council marked the moment of truth for Arab media. At that moment they agreed that the war was inevitable and would break out in a matter of days. Al Arabeya

highlighted the Kuwaiti government's decision to close its northern borders with Iraq as a sign of the start of the war. The channel called on the Arab League to hold a summit to confront this new US aggression against the Arab world. Al Jazeera, on the other hand, highlighted Saddam Hussein's mockery of that meeting as a comic act by the new thieves of Baghdad. Al Jazeera channel underestimated Powell's documents and flimsy evidence, calling them a 'new act in the US game of domination' and highlighting EU leaders' decision not to support the American war initiative. But both Al Jazeera and Abu Dhabi, broadcast millions of Arab citizens demonstrating against it. And, moreover, Abu Dhabi channel, hinting that the Egyptian president had met with his Syrian, Saudi and Jordanian counterparts, dismissed these official discussions. The channel stressed that time had come for Arab citizens to take a stand against their feeble governments. On the evening of February 7, all Arab stations' news broadcasts stated that Iraq was on the edge of a new war, emphasising President Bush's claim that the war was expected and only a miracle could stop it.

Arab Media and Hans Blix's Report to the Security Council

Blix's report to the Security Council coincided with the Muslim holy days of Hajj; Arab media effectively used Islamic messages to gain international sympathy by broadcasting documentaries praising Islamic culture and highlighting the suffering of the Iraqi people since 1990 at the hands of US troops. The NATO veto of the Anglo-American decision was warmly welcomed by Arab media. Both al Arabeya and Abu Dhabi stressed that this veto was a triumph for Arabs and for Islam, signalling a 'change of heart' among the world's super-powers. Both channels called for an urgent Arab summit to form a coalition against the Anglo-American 'crusade'. Al Jazeera was less optimistic, underlining US Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld's statements that the NATO veto would not change his country's decision to disarm Iraq.

On February 13, Al Jazeera highlighted US pressure on Hans Blix to 'tailor' his report before handing it to the Security Council. The channel opened forums to Arab viewers to send messages to the world in order to stop this charade. But on the other hand it revealed Saddam's plan to shut down oil pumps, and destroy dams and bridges as a precautionary measure against an expected war. Al Arabeya underlined Condoleezza Rice's call to Blix to state that the Iraqi government had failed to disarm its weapons of mass destruction, and reported increasing opposition to the coalition.

Abu Dhabi channel was first to call attention to what it called an 'international scandal', when the US government 'stole' Blix's report before its official presentation to the Security Council, hinting that no-one knew what had really happened to the actual report. The channel praised the Egyptian President's statements and his forthcoming visit to France and Germany in a quest to form a united stand against the expected Anglo-American raid. It

emphasised that Arab anger against the US had escalated when Israeli troops had attacked the Palestinian city of Gaza with over 100 tanks, killing and injuring 220 citizens.

Arab Media and the Arab Summit: The End of the Dream of Arab Unity

The Arab summit held in Cairo on March 1 coincided with Rumsfeld's declaration that Anglo-American troops were fully deployed inside Turkey, Kuwait and Qatar, and ready for orders. These statements deepened Arab media criticism of official Arab responses. Al Jazeera attacked Arab regimes and criticised Kuwait's total support for the coalition forces (Kuwait blamed the Iraqi regime and considered the war an act of liberation). The channel also noted the discrepancy between Egyptian opposition to the war and its collaboration with US forces by opening the Suez Canal to US navy vessels, and it accused Jordan of secretly collaborating with the US.

Abu Dhabi channel spoke out against the weak stand of the Arab summit, focusing on deep differences between Arab leaders such as the Saudi Crown Prince and the Libyan President, and maintaining that it was disastrous for Arabs to see their leaders in such a feeble and undecided position. The channel spoke out against the same leaders again after the Islamic summit which issued a declaration very similar to that of the Arab summit. It went on to conclude that unless the Arab world understood Western demands, and stood up to them, they would always follow in the footsteps of the Western world.

Al Arabeya criticism was more generalised, berating Arab systems for their failure to defend Iraqi rights. The channel called on people not to surrender to the war but to do everything in their power to strengthen global opposition to American aggression.

The situation in the Arab world was best described by Abdel Bary Attwan, editor of the London-based *Al Quds* newspaper, in an interview on al-Jazeera in which he claimed that the Arab Summit's 'shameful' stand and position would encourage the US to declare war not only on Iraq but on the entire Arab world. According to Attwan, the long-held Arab dream of unity was over and the fragmented region and its people were paying the price of their governments' failures.

Arab Media and Blix's Second Report to the Security Council

Blix's second report to the Security Council was given scant attention by the Arab media. Al Jazeera's first mention of it was a comment that the world was closely watching Powell's 'fairy tale' giving Saddam ten days to disarm.

It was clear that the war was only a matter of time, especially after the failure of a united Arab stand. This discouraged the Arab media: it was like the end of a dream and time to face reality. After the failure of the Arab and Islamic Summits, Al Arabeya focused on Arabs marching and demonstrating against the war in the US, UK, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Palestine and Lebanon, where millions gathered to say “NO to BLOOD for OIL”. The channel pointed to the US decision to establish an Iraqi council to administer the ‘post-Saddam era’ as a sign that the war was inevitable.

Abu Dhabi on the other hand played up the American plan of destroying Iraqi infrastructure and Saddam’s palaces as a means of creating chaos in Iraq. The channel also showed Israeli settlers attempting to occupy the Al Aqsa holy mosque, and the murder of 70 Palestinians by Israeli troops. This, combined with US forces marching inside Iraqi lands, led the channel to state that the world was on the verge of a third world war owing to Anglo-American-Israeli aggression in the Middle East. Surprisingly, Arab media did not cover the Security Council veto of the war by the French, German, Chinese and Russians. Al Jazeera flippantly stated that although the price of oil was increasing, and that wealthy Gulf region would not be happy with that at the expense of their brothers in Iraq, meaning that the Arab world would not use oil as a trump card against the new raiders.

Arab Media Call for Saddam to Renounce Power

In a last desperate measure to save the region from war, Arab media called on Saddam Hussein to resign, a move resulting from a general feeling that the war was a personal issue between Bush and Saddam. The suggestion was first mentioned during the Arab Summit, when United Arab Emirates president Sheikh Zayed Al Nahyan called on the Iraqi president to step down.

Under the heading “Abdicate or commit suicide”, Abu Dhabi channel called on Saddam Hussein to renounce his positions and leave the country to avoid war on his people as well as the Arab world, which reflected Al Nahyan’s proposal that Saddam spare the Iraqi people the disasters and destruction of war by abdicating the presidency and seeking asylum outside Iraq. Abu Dhabi channel adopted his idea, deploring Saddam’s talk of yet another ‘victorious’ war and concluding that his resignation was preferable to *any* war. Saddam’s regime had collapsed and all his calculations had been proven wrong. The channel stated that the only way to save the country from total disaster was for Saddam to abdicate.

Al Arabeya asked Saddam to avoid another ‘mother of all battles’, stating that despite having lost the first, Saddam continued to believe it was a victory that allowed him to stay in power. The only reasonable route he could consider, in order for Iraq and its people to avoid the tragedies and disasters of war, was asylum, a ‘courageous, responsible and historic decision’ that

would give priority to the future of his country and people over the future of a regime difficult to defend or to sustain.

In a highly unusual step, and to avoid a catastrophe in the Middle East, Al Arabeya called upon public opinion in the Arab world to exercise pressure for the dismissal from power of Saddam Hussein and his close aides in order to avoid the threat of catastrophe in the region. The channel also called for the rule of democracy in Baghdad and for the stationing across Iraq of human rights monitors from the United Nations and the Arab League to oversee the peaceful transition of power.

Al Jazeera believed that only a miracle could save the area from war, calling on Saddam and the central figures of his regime to abdicate and hand over power to a transitional team that would resolve the issue of weapons of mass destruction. And several Arab intellectuals called into an open forum discussing the fate of Iraq, advising Saddam to abdicate or to fire the 'shot of mercy' and finish the tragedy he had started.

The Iraqi regime, however, shut its doors against negotiations with the Arab world and refused to receive delegates from the Arab League. Attacking Arab channels for what they called their weak standpoint and collaboration with the enemy, it resolved to close all Al Jazeera's and Abu Dhabi's offices. Saddam would not go into exile unless the whole Iraqi people was exiled – then, and only then, would Saddam consider whether he himself would depart from the country "to enjoy wealth and pleasure".

Arab Media Coverage of the Third Gulf War

Although the Arabic-speaking world is incredibly diverse, and each media outlet has its own identity, there is a general resemblance between the way Arab media reported this war and the way it was covered by US media organisations. Vicken Cheterian, in a paper entitled *The Challenge of the New Arab Media*, classified the Arab media agenda during the third Gulf War into three primary issues. The first is the legality of the war. Arab media condemned US solitary action against the will of international communities and without a UN mandate. They compared Bush's actions with Hitler's marginalising the League of Nations and posed the question whether we were on the verge of a third World War. They questioned US intentions and asked whether Saddam Hussein's Iraq really represented a threat to world security. Was Baghdad seriously violating United Nations restrictions on weapons of mass destruction? The answer seemed clear: American objectives were domination over the Gulf with its energy resources, and support for the supremacy of Israel.

Second: Arab media wanted to stress Iraqi resistance and point out that it would not be easy for the coalition forces to take over that country. A few days after the start of military operations, the media claimed that coalition

forces had been forced to change their plans owing to their losses. They showed footage of burned tanks and the ruins of combat jets (these were reproduced by major international stations). Images of US prisoners of war caused panic in America and Britain, forcing their media to question whether the US had taken a wise decision in entering the war, and doubting the efficacy of its war strategies. When the coalition forces changed their strategies by targeting civilians, Arab media attacked them severely, focusing on casualties and warning coalition forces that their actions would deepen anti-US feelings among Arabs. Arab media used the human angle to capture the attention of the world: images of a bombed wedding leaving 30 civilian bodies, others of marines killing women and children under the pretext of opposing the suicide attacks, a dead baby in the ruins of its house – all these showed another, non-American, version of the war. These images were backed by others, of millions of protesters world-wide opposing the war and calling for its end.

Third, Arab media drew attention to the frustration of the Arab world. Groups of experts were invited to analyse the situation and the likely future of the Arab world in the wake of the coalition invasion. Those intellectual discussions reflected a deep despair and belief that Arabs would be the only losers and that the end of Saddam's rule would not benefit the Arab world. Arabs didn't understand the two lies: the 'invading liberator' and the 'resisting dictator'. The media claimed that Anglo-American aggression had left not a single Arab house without fear, anxiety, depression, and uncertainty for the future of their children. Images of angry demonstrations sweeping the Arab world, calling for boycotts of Anglo-American products, children crying over an Iraqi flag, were shown not only in the Arab world, but world-wide.

Arab Media and the Days of the Invasion

Many Arab journalists doubted the legality of this war. It was not that they backed Saddam; the Arab world had suffered through Saddam's actions ever since his first war against Iran. It was the US's hidden agenda that they feared and, above all, the establishment of more US military bases in the region. It was the fear of neo-colonialism and US/Western control of oil. Arab media renewed efforts to better their image in the global arena.

Al Arabeya channel called the war 'illegitimate', and broadcast a number of interviews to examine why, in spite of predictions that the price of a barrel of oil would shoot up to US\$ 80, it had instead sharply declined. And it provided the answer: Saudi Arabia was pumping oil at maximum capacity, between 8 and 9 million barrels a day. Al Arabeya described the war as one of total destruction, a continuation of the 1991 Gulf war and the 1998 strikes. Al Jazeera compared the US's dismissal of international concerns, and the marginalisation of the UN, with German marginalisation of the League of

Nations. Abu Dhabi saw the objectives of the war as to open the region to military occupation and then put together a collaborating government on the model of Afghanistan.

All channels attacked US's hidden agenda, questioning the purpose of a war on the poorest spot on earth. The use of heavy artillery against the simple rifles of Iraqi soldiers was derided. Arab media focused on the interpretation, by distinguished international commentators such as John Pilger, Robert Fisk and Peter Arnette that the war was illegitimate.

On the first day of war, the thrust of US media headlines on CNN and FOX channels was typified by "Bush orders start of war on Iraq: Missiles apparently miss Hussein" and "US opens war with strikes on Baghdad aimed at Hussein". But in the Arab media, it was vastly different, with headlines like "Baghdad set ablaze" (Al Arabeya), "US unleashes massive air war on Iraq" (Abu Dhabi) or "US bombs Baghdad by 30,000 tons of missiles" (Al Jazeera). While most US media used the term 'coalition force' to describe the troops, Arab media instead chose 'invaders'. In television broadcasts, CNN labelled the conflict, the 'War in Iraq'; Al Jazeera, called it the 'War on Iraq', Al Arabeya called it 'Gulf War III' and Abu Dhabi named it 'US invasion of Iraq'.

According to Robert Fisk on his Internet site, the US plan was never really to fight a drawn-out battle; it was to create the illusion of victory; once the illusion was created by media, reality would soon follow suit. The reality, however, was early Iraqi resistance in Oum Al Qasr and al-Nassiriya, in southern Iraq, which caused excitement in the Arab media, especially in Al Jazeera's report of resistance activity against the US and British troops. Images of burned tanks and bodies of dead Anglo-American soldiers were highly praised by Abu Dhabi and Al Arabeya channels. When a 'simple farmer' defeated an Apache chopper with a rifle, Abu Dhabi lauded the action, interviewing the national 'hero' who called on Arabs for a holy Jihad against the crusaders.

Five days after the start of military operation, Abu Dhabi news headlines read, "The losses change American plans and the fighting in the south overshadows the advance over Karbala". Abu Dhabi expected that Iraqi resistance would even accelerate in Shiite areas, and few expected that such little resistance would be met in and around Baghdad. Not surprisingly, Abu Dhabi newscasts were extremely critical of the Americans. One famous segment featured by Abu Dhabi TV, broadcasted to the entire Arab world, featured a reporter interviewing bloodied and bandaged women and children injured in the bombing of Baghdad. The interview was conducted against the backdrop of a ruined hospital. The injured girl wondered why foreigners had attacked her house and her family, whom she had not seen since. The announcer concluded his report: "In a matter of minutes, the peaceful life of Iraqi children was transformed into a hell...now the parents of the children are asking, 'who has weapons of mass destruction – Iraq or those who are killing the children of Iraq?'" The channel called on Arab nations to donate

to the Iraqi people; this invitation was a widespread success in all Arab countries, for not only did Arabs contribute to the cause, but some travelled to stand beside their compatriots inside Iraq.

Al Jazeera channel, by contrast, chose “Iraq resists anger raid”, which appeared in several news headlines, while Al Arabeya focused on Bush saying that the war would last longer than expected. The headlines, features, photos and maps of the early days focus on the American war machine, and the military developments on the ground.

Arab-American Media War

The losses of its troops forced the US administration to change its tactics and apply a harder line. This led to the first ‘Arab-American media tactic war’, as it was later labelled by Arab media specialist Hamdy Kandil (interview on Al Mostakbal satellite channel) who believed that the US change of command in Iraq coincided with growing US control over the media war. American networks took care over what viewers saw on their TV screens but spent as little time as possible on anything off camera. “And so it has been with the campaign against terrorism. President Bush strikes heroic poses on TV, but his administration neglects anything that isn’t photogenic”, commented Kandil. No wonder that, just as the Pentagon boasted of its war plan, there was another plan alongside it – a media marketing plan. US troops applied heavy censorship, guarding embedded journalists in the battlefield and fearing information might fall into the wrong hands. The same can be said of the Arab media, as the Ba’ist regime led by Iraqi information minister Mohamed El Sahaf tried to force media to present what suited the regime (though Iraq quickly lost media power to the Arab media).

Al Jazeera Footage of US POWs

Two Iraqis bombed a military camp and a number of American soldiers were captured. Al-Jazeera showed footage, filmed from inside Basra and Mousel, of the attackers next to the prisoners of war. This footage was re-broadcast all over the world. The video was condemned by American and British government officials as a violation of Geneva Convention rules. To Al Jazeera, it was merely a job to be done. Al-Jazeera reporting irritated the US government, and Britain disparaged airing the war from a one-sided point of view. The al-Jazeera website – hosted in the US – was soon hacked into. A group calling themselves Freedom Cyber Force Militia hijacked the Internet traffic destined for al-Jazeera’s website and redirected it to a different page bearing an American flag and the message “Let Freedom Ring” Problems mounted

when the coalition forces banned al-Jazeera crew from transmitting their statements and releases – ironically broadcast from the US base in Qatar – and from joining the coalition TV crew members. Soon, however, both Al Jazeera website contents and crew passes were returned.

Arab Media and the Fall of Baghdad

Towards the end of the war, Arab media were deeply frustrated and uncertain about the future of the region. Al Arabeya emphasised the fact that the Arab world (not only Iraq) had lost the war and was under occupation. Abu Dhabi channel feared for the future of the Arab world, especially Palestine, surmising that the new US new vision of the Palestinian territories would mean giving Israel total power to eradicate the *Intifada* and get rid of Palestinian leaders on grounds that the *Intifada* was an act of terrorism – and accusing the US of depending on Israeli intelligence for bombing which had caused many attacks on civilians.

By the end of the third week of the war, when it was clear that the coalition forces were marching to victory, Arab media started to shift their attention from Iraqi resistance to the numbers of the American-British war machine and the number of civilian casualties. Al-Jazeera concentrated on the mass killing of civilians and the insane bombing of civilian targets, focusing on the US's bombing a wedding with three tons of explosives. Al Arabeya channel derided the remote control war one sees on Fox news and CNN...only green pictures and pictures of bombs, then...casualties and losses of Iraqi troops. News coming from Abu Dhabi showed depression over the mass destruction and surprise at the degree of revenge evinced by the attacks.

Many labels were attached to the war against terrorism in the region. 'The arcade war', 'the remote control war', 'Hollywood war against terrorism', 'the cowboy war' 'Don Quixote and his loyal follower Sancho Panza fighting Arab windmills', among other headlines, illustrate Arab derision. Al Arabeya saw Bush's failure to kill or capture Saddam Hussein as a failure of the war's mission, especially after the US announced dedicating two spy satellite stations to tracking the Iraqi president, warning that he was capable of reuniting with his special forces and launching street wars causing more damage.

US news of its control over Saddam airport brought mixed feelings. Al Jazeera continued supporting the Arab people in the hope that Iraq would never surrender. Abu Dhabi balanced Bush celebrating his troops' victorious march into Baghdad suburbs with the press conference held by Iraqi Minister of Information, Mohammed al Sahaaf, dismissing claims of American capture of the airport by pointing journalists to the satiric film "Wag the Dog" in which an American president wages a phony war, manufactured in digital film studios, to distract attention from domestic political troubles.

Al Arabeya reported that US media had deceived the world by putting Ted Koppel in Baghdad Airport before the area was secured – creating the TV image of US forces ‘in Baghdad’

Arab Media Reactions to the Toppling of Saddam’s Statue

April 9 brought the end of Saddam Hussein’s regime, every TV news channel carrying coverage of the Saddam Hussein statue. Even as fighting continued in other parts of Iraq, that footage confirmed the US victory. US media needed visual verification of the removal of Hussein’s regime. Media critics like Ted Rall believed that the toppling of Saddam Hussein’s statue in central Baghdad joined the lexicon of memorable images, beside the fall of Berlin wall, the collapse of New York’s Twin Towers, General MacArthur’s stroll through the Filipino surf, the raising of the flag on Iwo Jima and the naked Vietnamese girl running from a napalm attack. How did the media really cover the event?

Images of Iraqi citizens cheering at efforts to topple the statue of Saddam Hussein, riding his body in the streets of Baghdad and hitting his face with shoes were condemned by the Arab media. For Arab journalists, the stirring image of Saddam’s statue being toppled on April 9 was fake reality.

Abu Dhabi stated that it was a cheap, staged, US media product for the benefit of cameramen staying across the street at Baghdad’s Palestine Hotel. Images revealed that there were few Iraqis surrounding the statue, which was protected by hundreds of US troops to prevent angry citizens opposing the act. The channel claimed that these false images were as phony as the flag-raising at Iwo Jima and General MacArthur’s stroll through the Filipino surf.

Al Arabeya believed that the US president was desperate for a symbolic ‘liberation image’ to project to the people of Iraq, especially as these images had eluded them in Basra where defenders of the regime fought on desperately against great odds. “Thus the iconic images of Saddam’s statue being toppled and being beaten with sandals by a jubilant crowd greeting liberation were in reality nothing like what was framed on TV and in the newspapers,” stated Cheterian.

Al Jazeera showed a one-hour video of the occasion. The channel showed angry Iraqi citizens, helpless against US soldiers, trying to stop tankers and troops from forcing the toppling of the statue with the assistance of few Iraqi citizens. The video depicted several attempts by troops to force the statue to fall, and it used hard language to illustrate the brutality of the US troops in their treatment of the opposers of the act. In the end, troops had no choice but to use tankers to bring down the statue, “...however, they succeeded in removing only half of the statue...Saddam’s legs remained deeply rooted in

the bronze base” implying that the invaders could not erase the memory of Saddam Hussein from Iraqi memory and that resistance to occupation would never end.

News came confirming the flight of Saddam Hussein and the fall of Baghdad. Abu Dhabi praised Iraqi opposition in different part of Baghdad but acknowledged the fall four hours later in a brief statement. Al Arabeya announced the end of Saddam Hussein’s tyrannic regime, underlining continued resistance in different Iraqi cities. Al Jazeera staff members, dressed in black, mourned not only Iraqi civilians, but the end of Arab unity. The channel statement, in its news bulletins, showed images of angry Iraqis symbolising the continuation of resistance underlined with “the fall of Saddam’s regime...Baghdad under occupation”.

Arab Media: After the Fall of Saddam

Arab media did not spend too much time discussing Saddam’s fate; they agreed that it may have been for the best of the Iraqi people. There should, however, be no foreign interference. They focused their attention on other serious issues and declared that the effects of the 2003 war on Iraq must not fester for decades to come. Arab media started to ask the same questions the US asked after September 11. Why did the United States act as it did? Did Saddam Hussein ever represent a threat to world security? Was Baghdad seriously violating United Nations restrictions on weapons of mass destruction? Did these weapons still exist when the war began? Did the US\$ 100 billion, according to Pentagon accountants, free Iraq’s long-suffering people? What were the full and final costs in lives, military and civilian, and destruction of Iraq’s infrastructure, economy and cultural treasures? Did that country’s people really welcome the ‘liberation’ promised to them in some 30 million leaflets dropped on their country along with an unknown amount of deadly ordnance?

This does not mean that Arab channels did not continue the work of covering the situation in Iraq. However, the Anglo-American troops censored Arab media operations. Live images of the shooting of Al Jazeera Baghdad correspondent Tarek Ayob while on duty, and of a platoon besieging the Abu Dhabi office, put Arab journalists’ work in jeopardy. Al Arabeya focused its attention on what it called a conspiracy by which Saddam leaves power to the US in return for his and his family’s safety and flight to Russia *via* Syria. Abu Dhabi’s reports described the state of chaos in Iraq and the new struggle for power between different Iraqi sects.

Arab media also expressed Arab citizens’ deep fear after ‘the return of colonisation’, asking who would be next on the US revenge roster. Both Abu Dhabi and Al Jazeera invited experts to analyse the situation in the region and address the difficult question of the fate of the Arab world. Al Arabeya

produced a series of documentaries about the history of occupation in the region and the history of Iraq.

US Declaration of Victory

Arab media did not pay much attention to President Bush's victory address on May 3; instead they concentrated on the legality of the newly-established Iraqi governing body. Arab media again saw Bush's speech as the speech of a defeated person, since he did not capture Saddam, find any evidence of WMDs, or stop Iraqi resistance. Abu Dhabi channel emphasised Arab League Secretary General Amr Mousa's statement that the new Iraqi governing body was not welcomed by the Arab League since it did not represent the Iraqi people. Al Arabeya pointed to the new challenges facing the still-troubled Iraq and the expected internal tensions. Al Jazeera continued their support of any Iraqi resistance to Anglo-American forces. The channel's coverage of Bush's address was followed by demonstrations of American families urging the government to bring their children back.

Conclusion

The three Arab stations produced over 4 000 hours to let people know about the other side of the 'war for Iraqi freedom'. The general sentiment in the Arab world is that they lost confidence in Western media, and many Arabs who used to admire the West lost confidence in it all together. Images on CNN, Fox news and the BBC contrasted with what most Arab populations saw in their new media, or what they used to receive from their traditional media sources that reflected the positions of their own leadership, with very little margin of dissent, or none at all. Arab media in general lacked an overall voice. This space is now being filled by the new Arab satellite channels.

Arab channels tried to play the role of alternative sources for news and to challenge US media power. At the start of the raid on Iraq, channels used their experience in covering the region to position themselves in strategic Iraqi cities and to interview Iraqi leaders, revealing the other side of the American holy war against terrorism. Disapproval of the Arab media's war coverage, streaming in from American and British officials, was the proof, for many Arab journalists, that they were on the right track. British Prime Minister Tony Blair ordering a British campaign to counteract what he called 'negative' coverage of war in the Arab media, and American officials calling the Arab coverage of the war 'inflammatory' is regarded by many journalists as proof that they had played the critical role expected of reporters.

Notes

1. Established in 2003, al Arabeya is an all-news 24-hour channel dedicated to covering the Arab region. Operated from Dubai media city and co-owned by Saudi media mogul MBC and several Arab media entities, the channel aims at the non-Jazeera, hard Islamic line and its slogan is 'the other side of the coin'. During the war, the newly-established channel wanted to prove itself as the alternative to Al Jazeera, especially given a rising tide of anti-Al Jazeera sentiment within the Arab world. In its coverage of the tension between the US and the Arab world, Al-Arabeya satellite channel did not restrict itself to showing world service news agency footage, but instead developed a powerful correspondence network in all Iraqi major cities, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Egypt, United Kingdom and the United States in order to produce quality reporting and hard news. Al-Arabeya also interviewed the Bush administration to inform the Arab world of its viewpoint and, at the same time, attacked the US for its excessive use of power and its threats against the Arab world.
2. Abu Dhabi Television consists of three channels: the Emirates Channel, which focuses mainly on the Gulf region; the Abu Dhabi Sports Channel, a pay channel carried in the Middle East on the Showtime platform; and the Abu Dhabi Channel, which includes an extensive news operation that has gained a great deal of attention from Arab viewers, in particular for its comprehensive coverage of the Middle East. During the war, the channel is said to have succeeded in challenging the official American version, and could become an alternative voice to the dominant Anglo-American channels. 'The War For Iraqi Freedom', as the channel mocked it, went on for 720 hours. It was well-documented by 42,000 hours of video. US Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld criticised the airing of the war on Arab channels (especially Abu Dhabi) claiming it contravened the Geneva Convention. British Prime Minister Tony Blair expressed 'horror' after it broadcast pictures of dead soldiers. British military sources repeatedly insisted that an 'uprising' was taking place within besieged Basra, whereas the channel reported from inside Iraq's second city that its streets were calm. Like Al Jazeera's, its Baghdad office was hit by US forces and was under-siege for several hours until the coalition forces controlled the city.
3. One of the best-known news channels in the region network was founded in 1996 by the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, who overthrew his father's regime in a bloodless coup in 1995. Often called the Arabic CNN or BBC, Al Jazeera is the controversial news source for the Middle East. The Qatari based station offers 24-hour news coverage with an Arab focus to more than 35 million viewers worldwide. In a region where most news is strictly controlled by the government, Al Jazeera (whose name translates as 'the peninsula') is an outlet for uncensored viewpoints, and its provocative broadcasts have earned it criticism from both the Arab and Western worlds. During the war, Al Jazeera showed footage of Iraqi civilian victims and American prisoners of war, filmed from inside Basra and Mosul. Its footage, and its logo, were re-broadcast all over the world. Al-Jazeera reporting irritated the US government, and Britain condemned its 'one-sided' perspective. Was it by chance that the TV channel's Baghdad office was hit, as was its office in Kabul, by US planes? The channel was not invited by the US coalition forces to join the official media crews covering the war; however, the channel was able to position itself inside major cities, covering the war from the Arab point of view. It was said that is due to the enormous success of Al Jazeera channel that US were forced to strike at the site of its office, killing senior correspondent Tarek Ayoub while he was reporting a raid over the capital. Al Jazeera was able to convince the media international committees that it was no accident and that the US fully intended to target media sites so as to prevent them operating during the raid on Baghdad.

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Framing Coverage of Iraq War in Pan-Arab Press

A Case Study of Al-Hayat Newspaper

Mohamed El-Bendary

The US-led war against Iraq sent shockwaves around the world, generating a mixture of feelings, with nations – particularly in the developing world – arguing that the Bush administration was venting American anger for the September 11 attacks on Iraq. And nowhere were such anti-American feelings as high as in the Arab world.

This chapter seeks out the themes of the 2003 Iraq war in the newspaper opinion items – staff-written editorials and editorial commentaries – of the 2003 Iraq War in the pan-Arab daily newspaper *al-Hayat*. It does so by analysing *al-Hayat*'s opinion articles in eight time-slots that cover the periods before, during and after the war. A discourse analysis of the themes, or frames, found in opinion items in the pan-Arab daily newspaper is employed to explain the Arab world's position and interpretation of what they called the 'Anglo-American' war against Iraq.

Framing

In the growing literature of media effects, little research has been conducted on the political consequences of frames. A frame is the pivotal organising scheme for realising and making sense of relevant ideas. A media frame is embedded in the way journalists interpret and compose stories to help audiences make sense of events and to maintain audience interest. The term 'framing' is derived from the work of Goffman (1974), and articulates what is at stake. Goffman (1974) argued that cultures produce primary frameworks, which transform "what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful" by presenting a point of comparison, or an intangible structure, through which people can assimilate information (p. 21). According to him, people in a society share frames or principles of organisation that govern social events and our subjective interest in them (p. 21).

The social construction of news involves the construction of frames and the gates through which news travels. Within this pattern, "what we 'know'

about the social world depends upon how we frame and interpret the cues we receive about that world" (Edelman, 1993, p. 231). The most important effect of the mass media is "its ability to mentally order and organise our world for us. In short, the mass media may not be successful in telling us what to think, but they are stunningly successful in telling us what to think about" (McCombs & Shaw, 1977, p. 5). Frames describe ways of interpretation that allow people to organise and understand the world surrounding them. While the frame is implicit or conveyed in a news story, it is explicitly articulated in an opinion article. Scholars (Gans, 1979; Gitlin, 1980) have proved that news media construct frames for conflicts by trying to fit the information they receive into a package that is professionally useful and culturally familiar.

Framing, an extension of agenda-setting theory, was first introduced by Gitlin (1980) when he examined how a television network trivialised a major student political movement during the 1960s. According to him, "media frames, largely unspoken and unacknowledged, organise the world both for journalists who report it and, in some important degree, for us who rely on their reports" (p. 7). Framing analysis has two key meanings and is helpful in identifying influences from ideology. The first meaning is the frame sense in which news content is typically shaped and conceptualised by journalists within some familiar frame of reference and according to some latent structure of meaning. The second meaning concerns the effect of framing on the public. The audience is believed to adopt the frames of reference offered by journalists and to see the world in a similar way. To frame, as further defined by Entman (1993), is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, so as to enhance the definition of a particular problem or promote a casual interpretation, moral evaluation and/or solutions.

Media frames provide contextual cues, giving order and meaning to complex problems, actions and events. They are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol handlers routinely organise discourse, whether verbal or visual. Iyengar (1987, p. 828) argued that viewers are "sensitive to contextual cues when they reason about national affairs. Their explanations of issues like terrorism or poverty are critically dependent upon the particular reference points furnished in media presentations" (p. 828). He shows that news frames reflect the effort of a journalist or a sponsor to add meaning to story, and hence news frames are reflective of the shared "cultural narratives and myths" of the social themes to which journalists are sensitive (p. 163). It is essential to stress here, as Scheufele (1999) argued, that the construction of frame-building, as a first step in the process, involves the influences to which journalists are subjected. These influences could include a journalist's ideology, professional norms, type of medium, organisational routines, external sources such as interest groups, politicians, and other elites (Donsbach, 1981).

Discourse Analysis

Developed in linguistics, discourse refers to the “regulated system of statements or language use which has rules, conventions and therefore assumptions and exclusions” (Branston & Stafford, 1999, p. 152). Discourse analysis explores the values and identities contained, presented or encouraged. It is a process that engages in the characteristics of “manifest language and word use, description of topics in media texts, through consistency and connection of words to theme analysis of content and the establishment of central terms” (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 5).

According to Fairclough (1995), discourse analysis is “an attempt to show systematic links between texts, discourse practices, and sociocultural practices” (p. 17). In media discourse, “the analysis of texts is not treated in isolation from the analysis of discourse practices and sociocultural practices” (p. 19). The media order of discourse can “usefully be examined as a domain of cultural power and hegemony” (67). Semiotic analysis, on the other hand, treats analysis of texts as an essential part of sociocultural analysis of media by “linking properties of text to ideologies, power relations and cultural values” (p. 24). The weakness of semiotic analysis lies in its not systematically attending to detailed properties of the texture of texts. Such analysis of text “is concerned with both their meanings and their forms” (p. 57). Furthermore, intertextual analysis examines text from the aspect of discourse practices. It is a bridge between the text and discourse practice scopes in the context of the critical discourse analysis. In this sense it attempts to reveal the genres and discourses articulated in the text (Fairclough, 1995).

Discourse analysis has proved useful as a technique for analysing language, for unveiling principal assumptions in argument and exhibiting how the use of metaphors, rhetorical strategies and visual images shape the portrayal of information. Lévi-Strauss (1972) argued that an abiding structure of all meaning-making was reliance on binary oppositions, or a conflict between two qualities or terms. A researcher who adopts Levi-Strauss’s theory becomes less interested in the order in which events are organised or framed, the ‘syntagmatic relation’, and digs deep beneath for ‘paradigmatic’ arrangements of themes. Textual discourse looks at tone of headlines, classification of sentence, and choice of words.

Pan-Arab Press

The emergence of the Arabic-language press goes back to the 19th century. European colonialists (like Napoleon Bonaparte) and missionaries brought the printing press along with them (Alterman, 1998). While Arabs in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria have been involved in the media for almost a century, the Lebanese and Egyptians playing a predominant role, a number of Arab

Gulf states did not have newspapers until the 1970s. However, the idea of a cross-border pan-Arab media emerged in the 1970s and 1980s (Ghareeb, 2000). Following the eruption of the Lebanese civil war, some publications began publishing from Europe, particularly from London. For example, Lebanon's major newspaper, *al-Nahar*, published an edition (Arab and international *al-Nahar*) out of Paris; and the Lebanese magazine *al-Hawadith* started to publish out of London.

The impact of the pan-Arab press on Arab public opinion has been immense (Ghareeb, 2000). Today, major Arab dailies such as *al-Hayat*, *ASharq al-Ausar*, *al-Quds al-Arabi* and *al-Zaman*, are published out of London. With London as the new pan-Arab home, these pan-Arab media developed a new notion of Arabism (Hudson, 2001; Anderson, 1999) and constructed an arena for the marketplace of ideas. They play a pivotal role in how Arabs perceive and interpret local and international events.¹

Why Al-Hayat?

A major Arab daily newspaper, *al-Hayat* (Arabic for 'life') is a technologically sophisticated daily with a distribution that does not end at the borders of the Arab Middle East, but extends to the Arab Diaspora in five continents. *Al-Hayat* was founded in Beirut in 1946 by Kamil Mrowe. It rapidly became one of the most popular and well-respected Arabic dailies in the Arab world. Mrowe was assassinated in his office in 1966.² His wife, Salma Bissar, who died in August 2000, took over the running of the paper. A year after the eruption of the Lebanese civil war in 1975, the paper found it difficult to operate from Lebanon and ceased publication. With the financial backing of Saudi Prince Khalid bin Sultan, Mrowe's son Jamil re-launched the paper in London in 1990. Since then the daily paper has embraced some of the latest print technology, making it an internationally recognised publication and a reliable source of information for many Arabs.

The opinion page of the Saudi-owned pan-Arab daily offers a voice to Arabs of all backgrounds and identities. It can carry "provocative essays" that could not appear in official Arab newspapers (Kalb & Socolovsky, 1999, p. 3). Whether Saudi ownership affects the editorial independence of *al-Hayat* is an issue that has been raised but not well documented in academic research. According to *al-Hayat's* former editor-in-chief, Jihad Khazen (1999), the Saudi-owned paper "is relatively free". Khazen observed that he had never been told what to publish but, rather, what not to publish (p. 87). The most common form of censorship in the Arab world, concluded Khazen, is self-censorship (p. 87).

Arab journalists normally avoid writing about matters critical of Arab royal families, broadcast journalists coming under closer control than print journalists (Amin, 2002). There are sensitive areas into which Arab newspapers

do not venture for fear of losing the advertising dollar. The London-based Saudi press may criticise Arab countries “except Saudi Arabia and those in the Gulf” (Ogan, 1995, p. 193). Journalists at *al-Hayat* and *ASharq al-Awsat* tend to practise self-censorship in order to “comply with government restrictions on sensitive issues” (US State Department, 2003). Apart from that, editors of pan-Arab publications, particularly those operating from outside the Arab world, seem to exercise full autonomy within their media organisations. Such autonomy is highest among *al-Hayat* journalists.

Al-Hayat has far more in-depth and balanced coverage, and a wider margin of freedom, than any other Arab newspaper inside or outside the Arab world. Hence, it comes closer than most Arab papers to embracing Western norms of journalistic standards (Ghareeb, 2000). It was the first Arab newspaper to interview Israeli government officials, and publishes articles by Israeli writers. For that, the paper came under attack and was forced to “reconsider” its stand (Khazen, 1999, p. 88).

Method

The study combines a qualitative content analysis with a partial quantitative assessment of the overall frames in opinion items in *al-Hayat*. To compare coverage of the War over time, eight periods are examined. They are:

- US Secretary of State Colin Powell’s report to Security Council (February 5, 6, 7).
- Split in NATO-meeting (February 10, 11).
- Hans Blix’s report to the Security Council (February 14, 15, 16).
- Hans Blix’s next report to the Security Council (March 7, 8).
- US-British-Spanish summit on Azores Islands, Portugal, with the ultimatum issued to Saddam Hussein (March 16, 17, 19).
- Attack on Iraq (March 20, 21, 22).
- Fall of Baghdad (April 8, 9 10).
- Bush declares end of war (May 2, 3, 4).

The qualitative assessment of framing is based on careful identification of the specific properties of the news narrative embodied in the key words, metaphors, concepts, symbols, and visual images emphasised in opinion items (Entman, 1991). A total of 81 opinion articles (staff-written editorials and commentaries) appearing during the eight periods were studied and coded according to a scheme. The main frames and discursive themes were identified after reading the collected opinion articles. The researcher then developed

a coding sheet to measure the frequency of each frame in the pan-Arab daily. Every occurrence of a given frame was tallied. Using a nominal scale, I measured whether opinion articles were 'favourable', 'neutral' or 'unfavourable' towards Saddam Hussein, George W Bush and Tony Blair. Items that did not overtly express any such position were not coded. When the frames were measured, the paragraph was used as the coding unity, with the theme as the textual unit. Paragraphs were multiple-coded for all topics. If more than one topic appeared in a paragraph, each topic was coded separately.³

Eight master frames, or recurring themes, were formulated in *al-Hayat*. These frames, which aim to help readers interpret factors in the news about the Iraq War, were:

- The *UN role* frame argues that as America and Britain went to war without UN resolution, the United Nations is facing a crisis, its role becoming irrelevant. It stresses that the War constitutes a flagrant violation of the principles and provisions of the UN Charter and a blatant provocation against Arab states. It adds that the US and Britain must abide by international law and respect Iraq's sovereignty.
- The *oil* frame: America and Britain went to war for oil. The debate stresses the United States as a key importer of Iraqi oil and how its policy towards Baghdad has always been based on the country's rich oil resources and strategic location on the Gulf (Quni, 2003). The argument that America went to war purely to secure oil can be buttressed by the 1980 'Carter Doctrine', in which President Jimmy Carter argued that the United States would protect its oil supplies from the Middle East. Carter stated, "An attempt by an outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force."⁴
- The *American-European relations* frame stipulates that the war on Iraq will place stress on relations between the United States and Europe that have been stable since the end of World War II. The war could weaken the North Atlantic Alliance and lure Russia into mending its fences with Europe. It stresses the role a united Europe can play to counter America's growing influence on the Middle East.
- The *Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)* frame posits that America is venting its anger for the September 11 attacks on Iraq, adding that the war would result in an increase, and not a decrease, in international terrorism. It adds that when terrorism hits, Arabs and Muslims become victims to the same extent as any other group.
- The *hegemony* frame states that America is a rising hegemon aiming to dominate world affairs. Here, hegemony is defined as a "power sustained by ideology" (Hallin, 1987, p. 11). It is a predominant influence

that has to be won and secured (Hall, 1977). It “is not only constructed from political ideologies, but more immediately through detailed scripting of all aspects of everyday life” (Sharp, 1996, p. 558).

- The *Palestinian-Israeli peace process* frame argues that the war will further cripple any future peace efforts aimed at restarting the troubled Palestinian-Israeli peace process.
- The *Middle East map* frame takes the Palestinian-Israeli peace process frame a little further, arguing that America’s hopes are not only to control oil in the Middle East, but also entail other strategic goals: dividing Iraq and redrawing the Middle East map in such a way that the United States can control Iraq’s resources – oil, manpower, water – for a long time. It stipulates that imposing a new system on the region by controlling Arab resources and splitting Iraq into a smaller state would protect American and Israeli interests in the region and offer the Ariel Sharon government *carte blanche* to eradicate Palestinian resistance and, possibly, for America to attack Syria and Lebanon.
- The *imperialism* frame posits that imperial interest guides American foreign policy today. Imperialism is here defined as “a sufficient political function of the process of integrating new regions into [an] expanding economy” (Gallagher & Robinson, 1953, p. 5). The frame hints at a racist view of Arabs on the part of the US administration, or a desire by the younger Bush to correct his father’s failure.

After frames in opinion articles were identified, and frequencies and percentages measured, a textual discourse analysis approach was used to assess how the debate on the Iraq War was constructed, or shifted, in *al-Hayat*, and whether Saddam Hussein, US President George W. Bush, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and French President Jacques Chirac were portrayed favorably or unfavorably.

Finding

During the eight periods under study, which ranged from February 5 2003 to May 4 2003, a total of 81 opinion articles (staff-written editorials and commentaries) were found. Articles that did not focus specifically on the Iraq War were eliminated. Roughly four opinion articles were published daily, about half of which were written by *al-Hayat* journalists. Each opinion article carried a by-line. A daily cartoon was placed at the top right side of the page – the prime optic for readers since Arabic is written from right to left. The two editorials placed on the left side of the page were shorter pieces constructed in column format and written by *al-Hayat* journalists.

Seventy-one of the total 81 articles were written by Arabs (Lebanese, Egyptians, Kuwaitis, Palestinians, Saudis, Qatari, Iraqis, among others), or

Arab expatriates. An opinion piece was often published by Raghida Dargham⁵, a Lebanese-American who serves as the newspaper's UN correspondent. The remaining 10 opinion items were contributions or translations of articles by non-Arabs authors. Five of the 10 articles were written by Patrick Seale, the British author and journalist who specialises in Middle Eastern affairs and is known for his pro-Arab views, particularly of Syria.

Table 1 shows the finding on whether or not opinion pieces believed that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. In all, 4% of the articles said that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, 54% denied it, and 41% remained neutral in debating the issue.

Table 1. Distribution of Views on Whether or Not Iraq Had Weapons of Mass Destruction

	N	(%)
True	1	(4)
Not True	13	(54)
Neutral	10	(41)
Total	24	(100)

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% owing to rounding.

There were no significant differences in the degree of unfavourableness in the discourse debate on Saddam (36%), Bush (44%), and Blair (21%). All reference made to Chirac were positive. Table 2 shows the number and percentage.

Table 2. Portrayal of Saddam, Bush, Blair and Chirac

	Favourable		Unfavourable		Neutral	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Saddam	0	(0)	26	(36)	5	(36)
Bush	0	(0)	32	(44)	6	(43)
Blair	0	(0)	15	(21)	2	(14)
Chirac	5	(100)	0	(0)	1	(7)
Total	5	(100)	73	(100)	14	(100)

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% owing to rounding.

Criticism of the Iraq War breaks down into three broad categories: war will shift the power system in the region further to Israel's side; weaken US-European relations (viewed as essential for stability in the Middle East); violate the UN Charter; and fulfil America's imperialist interests. Among the number of frames found in the analysis, the 'Middle East map' was the most frequently used (20%) in opinion articles. The second most frequently used

frame, which accounted for 17% of the total, was the ‘American-European relations’ theme. Ranking from third to eighth were the frames of ‘hegemony’ (14%), ‘UN role’ (13%), ‘Palestinian-Israeli peace’ (11%), ‘oil’ (9%), ‘terrorism’ (8%), and imperialism (7%). Table 3 shows in more detail the distribution and ranking of the frames.

Table 3. Distribution and Ranking of themes or Frames

Rank	Themes/Frames	N	(%)
1)	Middle East map	68	(20)
2)	American-European relations	57	(17)
3)	Hegemony	46	(14)
4)	UN role	43	(13)
5)	Palestinian-Israeli peace	36	(11)
6)	Oil	30	(9)
7)	Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)	28	(8)
8)	Imperialism	24	(7)
	Total	332	(100)

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% owing to rounding.

When I wanted to test whether the frames shifted before, during and after the fall of Baghdad, I listed each period separately and found that the ‘Middle East map’ theme ranked first during five periods. The ‘American-European relations’ theme occupied the first rank during the remaining three periods. Table 4 shows in more detail the shifting in frames during the eight periods under study, and cites the number of opinion articles found for each period.

Middle East Map

Ranking first, the ‘Middle East map’ was referred to in many opinion articles, particularly in editorials written by *al-Hayat* journalists. Arab intellectuals saw the war as an attempt by the United States to redraw the Middle East map and establish a new world order with the region as its centre. This, according to them, would invigorate US interests in the Middle East and bring an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict in a manner that most benefited Israel. Quoting from Arab officials in their articles (notably Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al-Faisal) *al-Hayat* journalists talked of a conspiracy to “divide Iraq” (Waleed Shukir, February 7). One journalist mockingly asked: “Will Arab states send ambassadors to represent them in an Iraq run by US military rulers, such as the pro-Zionist General [Jay] Garner who is more extreme in his views than [Paul] Wolfowitz, the Deputy Secretary of Defence who is entrusted with drawing the new map of the Middle East?” (Randa Takieddine, April 9).

Table 4. Ranking of Frames During Eight Periods Under Study

Period I (Feb 5, 6, 7; Articles: 10)		Period II (Feb 10,11; Articles: 8)	
Frames	%	Frames	%
1. Middle East map	27	1. Middle East map	29
2. UN role	20	2. Oil	23
3. Hegemony	13	3. Hegemony	16
4. Palestinian-Israeli peace	13	4. Palestinian-Israeli peace	13
5. American-European relations	7	5. UN role	10
6. Imperialism	7	6. American-European relations	3
7. Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)	7	7. Imperialism	3
8. Oil	7	8. Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)	3
Total	(100)	Total	(100)
Period III (Feb 14, 15, 16; Articles: 10)		Period IV (March 7, 8; Articles: 8)	
Frames	%	Frames	%
1. American-European relations	28	1. Middle East map	25
2. Middle East map	22	2. American-European relations	19
3. Hegemony	15	3. Hegemony	14
4. Oil	10	4. Palestinian-Israeli peace	14
5. Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)	10	5. Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)	9
6. Imperialism	6	6. Imperialism	7
7. Palestinian-Israeli peace	4	7. UN role	7
8. UN role	4	8. Oil	5
Total	(100)	Total	(100)
Period V (March 16, 17, 19; Articles: 11)		Period VI (March 20, 21, 22; Articles: 12)	
Frames	%	Frames	%
1. Middle East map	25	1. American-European relations	19
2. American-European relations	19	2. UN role	19
3. Hegemony	14	3. Hegemony	16
4. Palestinian-Israeli peace	14	4. Middle East map	16
5. Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)	9	5. Imperialism	13
6. Imperialism	7	6. Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)	9
7. UN role	7	7. Palestinian-Israeli peace	6
8. Oil	5	8. Oil	3
Total	(100)	Total	(100)
Period VII (April 8, 9, 10; Articles: 11)		Period VIII (May 2, 3, 4; Articles: 10)	
Frames	%	Frames	%
1. American-European relations	24	1. Middle East map	25
2. Oil	20	2. Hegemony	20
3. Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)	20	3. Palestinian-Israeli peace	20
4. Middle East map	12	4. UN role	20
5. Palestinian-Israeli peace	8	5. American-European relations	5
6. UN role	8	6. Imperialism	5
7. Hegemony	4	7. Oil	5
8. Imperialism	4	8. Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)	0
Total	(100)	Total	(100)

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% owing to rounding.

In an editorial titled, “‘Bush’s Doctrine’ Aims at Changing Entire Regional Systems”, Salim Nassaar (February 15) argued that

The hawks in the Bush administration bet that the reformists in Iran will prevail. This would secure closer relations between Washington and Tehran, and open new avenues to lift the embargo and insure the safe flow of oil and gas. They estimate that Tehran would cease aiding Hezbollah and opposition parties in the West Bank and Gaza. Such reshuffling would do away with the Ba’ath party’s legitimate rule and lay the foundation for new election in which Ba’ath does not form a majority. It is also assumed that such tactics would make it easier for Hezbollah to abandon arms, press Palestinian organisations to stop its operations, and aid Lebanon to regain control of decision-making. American control of Iraqi oil would also lessen its dependence on Saudi oil...

The United States, argued *al-Hayat’s* UN correspondent Raghida Dargham, saw that occupying Iraq and then liberating it “would plant the seeds for unique relations between it [Iraq] and Israel – forming a model to be imposed by US decision-makers on the rest of the Arab states” (March 21). Within this framework of imposing change on the Middle East, Shukir wrote on the same day that US officials “are trying to get us to believe that they are exerting their influence to resolve the Palestinian cause. Some would call upon us to clap for every ‘success’ by Washington to eliminate any created objections to the [road] map ... while Israeli military machines continue killing Palestinians and destroying their homes and ambushing them...”

Since the collapse of the former Soviet Union, explained Patrick Seale, a new “theory of inclusive hegemony” began to arise in the “thinking of all right-wing Jewish groups” (March 7). Such theory, according to the British author, “was founded on the use of military force to ‘restructure’ the entire region so as to make it pro-America and pro-Israel, and to market ‘democracy’ within the deal”. Hence, posited Dargham (March 7), there was a strategic benefit for America and Israel in dividing Iraq. The paper’s UN correspondent added that, “To achieve that may necessitate the implementation of a Somali model in which anarchy makes division possible”. Editorials critical of Israel, however, stressed that such criticism is not directed at the Jewish people but at the Sharon government. Maher Uthman (February 14) saw a striking resemblance between “criminal actions employed by the Nazis against European Jews” and those adopted by Israel in “slaughtering Palestinians”. He concluded that, “Among the Jews are people who deserve applauding and admiration for their respectable stance to support Palestinians’ right for a homeland, and on top of them is Noam Chomsky”.

American-European Relations

The theme 'American-European relations' was the second most frequently-used frame. In a piece titled, "Love the American Way", Kuwaiti writer Mohammed Al-Rumaihi views the War against Iraq not just as a "war to eliminate weapons of mass destruction or to reorder the regional structure of the entire Middle East region, but as a determining factor for future European-American relations which has been stable, at least since World War II" (February 5). According to him, Europeans are fearful of the intentions of the current US administration, an administration he characterised as "founded on extremist religious views". He accused the Bush administration of hiding its true intentions behind attacking Iraq, "in spite of the promises it made to its allies and other nations that it would protect their interests".

On this clash between Europe and America, articles spoke metaphorically about the concepts of a 'new world' and a 'new Europe'. Referring to Europe as the 'old Europe' and America as the 'new Europe', Shukir (February 14) describes Europeans states that have shown subtle resistance to US moves to 'punish' Iraq – mainly France, Germany and Belgium – as a glimpse of hope that a "united Europe may be emerging to shift the balance of power from a unipolar system to a bipolar one". Shukir characterised the Bush doctrine⁶, as an attempt by the United States to "weaken Europe's capability of uniting" and "ensure that no other superpower replace the former Soviet Union". The *al-Hayat* journalist explained that "it was natural for the 'old Europe' to become disturbed and fearful of Washington rearranging the Middle East, in spite of the North Atlantic Treaty which introduced a new world over the past century".

This clash between Europe and the United States was also reiterated in a commentary (February 14) by Seale, who quoted from a speech given by Vladimir Putin during the Russian President's trip to France in February 2003. Putin, who signed a joint declaration on Iraq with both France and Germany, expressed the need for the establishment of a multipolar system instead of a bipolar one. Arabs saw the signing of the declaration as a signal that Moscow might perhaps be doing away with the ties it had forged with America following September 11. America, observed Ghassan Khouri, does not want another power to compete with it economically, politically, or militarily on the world stage (February 16). Hence, he added, "the United States is exploiting the weak structure of the [European] Union to insinuate divisions" that benefit its agenda.

Hegemony

Arab intellectuals also perceive the US-European clash over Iraq as a symbol of rising American hegemony. Articles often labelled the Bush administration a 'neo-conservative government' whose goal is to impose American

hegemony on Arabs. They quoted from Bush's 'pre-emptive strike' doctrine. "Washington", commented Egyptian writer Abdullah El-Ashael, "wants to impose a dangerous new system that divides the globe into nuclear-armed and ready states and non-nuclear states that succumb to the control of the former" (February 6). He added

This would force the rethinking of the agreements on non-traditional arms treaties and obliterate the general norms on which such treaties were founded: ending arms expansion and insuring security for states that destroy their weapons of mass of destruction. These techniques would allow states to seek weapons of mass destruction under the motto: Let the temple topple on top of all of us.

The goal of the war against Iraq, wrote Shukir on March 7, was not merely change of regime. America's goal is to establish a new world order in which the hawks in Washington stand as the 'sole hegemon' on the world centre stage. "In this critical stage", expanded Hisham Sharabi, a Professor Emeritus at Georgetown University and chairman of the Washington-based Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine, "the first Arab demand is not 'democracy', but the freedom from foreign hegemony" (May 3). The Palestinian-American intellectual concluded, "Past experiences have taught us that establishing democracy under colonialism does not result in freedom but in the intensification of foreign oppression." The title of his commentary was "Bush Will Not Win". Like Sharabi, Seale perceives the 'true roots' of the war as stemming from America's neo-conservatives or 'neo-imperialists' who want to impose US hegemony on the rest of the world (February 14). Shafiq Nazim Al-Ghabra, a Kuwaiti professor and political analyst, considered that stationing US troops in Iraq could possibly shift the equation in favour of the American side and increase its power and international influence (March 20). He asserted that such influence and presence in the Middle East would "be a short-term one, ten years, and might benefit it periodically".

UN Role

Numerous editorials raised the question of how the war could result in the dismantling of the United Nations as an international governmental institution and push humanity into a state of anarchy. Consider, for example, Dargham's commentary of March 7:

The first direct casualty of the War will be UNSCOM, not just because of the ending of inspection operations, but also because it will be the most 'used' organisation to achieve goals of no reference to the success or failure of inspection. Assigning UNSCOM the task and then closing its operation ascer-

tains the impression that since its inception it was viewed as a temporary tool to buy time until military preparation is completed.

Under US instruction, the UN role has, according to Dargham (March 21), shrunk to merely that of an aid organisation in the area of disaster and human catastrophe. She added that the shape of the UN Security Council “will be determined at the end of the road by the United States”. The UN’s role, observed Hazim Saghiya, “has been lost since the end of the Cold War and the bipolar system, for it was mainly founded to contain the conflict of that period which has now ceased to exist” (March 19). The prominent Lebanese journalist added that wars in the Balkans and Rwanda have unveiled the weakness of the United Nations role in the new era, as had happened to world unity with the eruption of Nazism in Germany in 1930s. “It may be true”, lamented the *al-Hayat* journalist, “that we are paying farewell to the United Nations. But what will we receive instead? An empire for which there is no one left for it to question or be questioned by”. According to Qatari politician Hamad Abdel-Aziz al-Kuwari, “Conservatives in the United States, who occupy today the majority of seats in President Bush’s current administration, see that times have changed. They see the end of the Cold War and the unipolar system as positive developments which should reshape and be reflected in the status of the United States” (March 22).

Palestinian-Israeli Peace

The newspaper’s deputy editor-in-chief, Abdel Wahab Badrakhan, contended that Arab states “stand divided in the face of crises, yet America and Israel treat them as one entity” (March 8). He saw one motive behind the Iraq war as the eradication of the Palestinian cause from the minds and hearts of Arabs. The people of the Middle East, wrote Salama Niemat of *al-Hayat*, “will remain victims to a possible deal between Washington and its systems in the region: Give us oil and we will offer you security. In the meantime, fight terrorism in your region so that it does not reach us – just as the Israelis ask of Yasser Arafat” (February 10). The *al-Hayat* journalist added: “The difficulty in that equation is that Sharon has failed in his plan to control Palestinian land while still maintaining security, just as Arafat has failed in controlling his people who insist on resisting occupations”. The newspaper’s managing editor, Zohir Koucibati, characterised the ‘road map’ peace initiative between Palestinians and Israelis as a ‘false fig’ by the Bush administration to contain Palestinian violence before attacking Iraq (March 16). Like Koucibati, Niemat (February 10) perceived it as impossible for the US administration to push the Israeli government to strike a peace deal with Palestinians in the miasma and hostility that would engulf the post-Iraq War Middle East. He stated,

Few have been optimistic that the American president, if re-elected, will put real pressure on Israel during his second term in office to withdraw from Palestinian land and allow for the establishment of a Palestinian state under the auspices of international law. Yet, to unseat Saddam from office by force is much easier today than ousting Sharon and his right-wing party due to the alliance conservatives in America formed with the Israeli government.

Oil

Kouri posited that American presidents – from Theodore Roosevelt to Harry Truman and Jimmy Carter – always testified that “securing oil is a strategic matter and that the Middle East is a strategic region” (February 16). He quoted statistics from studies by British Petroleum in which they reveal that the United States has oil reserves for 13 years and Europe for eight years. In an editorial titled, “After Saddam: oil or democracy?” Niemat (February 10) offered another criticism of America’s hidden motives. He sardonically wrote,

Bush’s America wants to regain control over oil in order to protect its strategic interests in the Middle East. It wants democracy as a means of containing extremism which came from the region and attacked it at the heart of its home on September 11. But can there be coordination between controlling oil after ousting the Iraqi regime, and establishing democratic change in the region?

Takieddine stipulated that, “It would be a mockery if an American ‘minister’ can represent the Iraqi occupation authority at the ministerial council meeting of OPEC which has been founded to defend the national interests of member states” (April 9). Following the fall of Baghdad, Shakir also lamented that the power structure of Iraq, with “all its wide human and economic capability now rests in the hands of the US President” (February 21). The leaders of the ‘new Rome’, he added, “can now divide shares among themselves over the entire US oil companies, giant arms corporations, various construction businesses, and enormous choices for decades to come – or at least for two or three decades. These corporations arrived before Bush in Iraq, for they have over 20,000 employees who came to prepare for the post-War period and to work with the US army in preparation for the war before it takes place”.

Terrorism (September 11 tragedy)

Following the September 11 incidents, the Bahraini writer Mohammed Gaber Al-Ansari, claimed that America had entered into a “state of hysteria” (April 9). The incidents, according to Seale, offered “supporters of the American empire and the US-Israeli alliance a golden chance for they have employed

an inexperienced President George W Bush (who rose to power through suspicious elections) as a tool to achieve their premeditated plans" (March 21). Al-Kuwari (March 22) argued that the tragic incidents were the driving force for a US desire to achieve hegemony, change rules, and transform the world into a unipolar system. The Qatari politician added that with the Iraqi crisis, "the prospect for a new world order has vigorously been thrown on the table". Saghiya cautioned that the United States "is venturing into an adventure with negative consequences" for it and for the Arabs (March 22). The *al-Hayat*'s journalist saw such adventure as founded on two theories: the pre-emptive strike doctrine that crystallised following the September 11 tragedies, and the 'just war' metaphor that flourished as the outcome of September 11.

In an editorial titled, "Arab and the World Between two Saddams", Badrakhan (March 22) observed that, "In less than two years, a change in the US administration and its tactic took place. With it an administration which knows no caring, or what is forbidden, rose in Washington. The September 11 incidents further increased that administration's cruelty and extremism" (March 22). Mohammed Al-Ashahab thought that hence "the war on terrorism which was launched from Afghanistan was a prelude to the war against Iraq" (May 4).

Imperialism

Articulated under this frame is the view that the war against Iraq mirrors the distorted view of Arabs by a culturally and militarily advanced West – mainly the United States – and an underdeveloped Arab world which has failed to form common grounds to protect its society. Some articles in *al-Hayat* scolded Arab regimes for failing to embrace political reform; others blamed the crisis in the Arab world on "American arrogance, haphazardness of Iraqi regime actions, and weakness of the Arabs" (Khalid Al-Dakhil, March 16). Most opinion articles did, however, unleash fierce criticism of America as 'a rising empire'. For example, Dargham wrote, "America today rules the world without a pretext, punishing anyone who disagrees with it or that it suspects is not in its yard. It is President George W. Bush who foresees himself as putting on the crown of an apocalyptic empire".

In a commentary titled, "What West is that which we are asked to co-exist with?" Al-Ansari pondered: "A 'free' Iraq or a 'free' West – which comes first? That is the question; that is our disagreement with the West; that is the disagreement of the West with itself. The more the battle for Baghdad intensifies, the more the division in the West's conscience and intellect intensifies" (April 9). He added that among the characteristics of the history of the modern West is a "return to religion and politicisation when faced with danger or direct threat as seen in Nazism and Fascism which did not confine itself only to Germany and Italy, but exhibited powerful symptoms in Western

European states with deep liberal heritage such as France and Britain". Furthermore, Al-Ansari stressed that similar trends toward injecting religion in politics "were witnessed in open Islamic societies such the Abbasids⁷ period which turned to conservative politics and extremism when faced with Mongols and foreign threats". Some Arab writers stressed, however, that the US invasion of Iraq should not be viewed as a form of dominance. "The US invasion of Iraq", wrote Tunisian writer Khaled Chouket, "does not threaten Iraq as an Arab and Muslim state, and any political system founded as a result of such invasion – although it may not be a good one – will not be worse than the current one" (April 10). Most opinion articles portrayed the US-led war as an "imperialistic adventure in the Middle East" (Seale, March 21). Seale wrote on March 21:

Through its bases which spread from Oman to central Asia, the United States tries to recreate of itself a British empire at its peak. Occupying Iraq – that Arab nation located at the strategic centre of the region – would allow the United States to control Middle East resources and redraw the region according to its own interests – that is at least what the Anglo-American strategists hope to achieve.

Conclusion

The role of the news media, particularly the elite press, has long been recognised. In *Public Opinion*, Lippmann (1946) compared the press to "a search-light that moves restlessly about, bringing in one episode and then another out of darkness into vision" (p. 275). He added that such a press could overburden us with endless chaotic and unrelated images that could not be brought together into a sound and helpful picture of the world. Mead (1934) also categorised news in the same manner. "The vast importance of media of communication such as those involved in journalism is seen at once", he wrote, "since they report situations through which one can enter into the attitude and experience of other persons. The drama has served this function in presenting what have been felt to be important situations" (p. 257). A few decades later, McCombs and Shaw (1972) found that mass media were capable of influencing the public agenda by transferring the salience of news items to the public. "What we 'know' about the nature of the social world", according to Edelman (1993), "depends on how we frame and interpret cues we receive about the world" (p. 231).

Middle East scholars have attempted to examine the role of media in shaping public opinion in the Arab world and to offer suggestions for improving East-West relations. For example, Alterman (1998) offered US decision-makers policy recommendations on how to deal with the emerging Arab media that he believed could challenge American interests in the Middle East, particularly if anti-American feelings crystallise as part of the movement:

- Engaging the emerging class of well-educated, well-travelled Arabs.
- Increasing understanding of the nature of Arab public opinion in order to help shape it.
- Encouraging public diplomacy in providing greater access to the Arab media by US officials.
- Devising strategies that actively promote US policy and acknowledge the importance of television images.

Al-Hayat's articles portrayed the Iraq War as a killing field and admonished the Bush administration as much as they scolded Saddam Hussein's regime. Many Arabs today perceive the United States as an invading force, a rising empire that aims not just at controlling Middle East oil but at reordering the Middle East map and shifting the power structure further towards Israel's side. They stipulate that under international law Washington has no rights to change the regime in Iraq. Perhaps the best concise summary of what Arabs view as the main motives behind the war was articulated in the opening paragraph of an editorial by Bishara Nassar. Hours before the fall of Baghdad, Nassar (April 8) wrote that, "Tomorrow or a few days later we will be talking about US occupation of the capital of al-Rasheed⁸ – about a 'conspiracy' to control oil and the benefit of the Likud gang in the White House from the September 11 incidents. But let us also celebrate the near demise of the legend of a dictator [Saddam Hussein]".

Whether these claims by the Arabs are true or not is beyond the scope of this study. What is known is that Arabs had always had a sense of admiration for America as a symbol of freedom, particularly for liberating the world from the dangers of Nazism and Fascism that erupted in Europe in the 1930s. They often talked of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's demand that British, Israeli, and French soldiers withdraw from Egypt's Suez Canal, and often glorified John F. Kennedy when, as a Senator, he sided with Algeria in its struggle for independence from French rule.

A half-century later, fears of Western imperialism remain deeply engraved in Arab and Islamic cultures. In the post-Iraq War Arab world, admiration for anything American has ceased. Religious piety founded on a repudiation of the West is on the rise, with America seen as targeting Arabs and Muslims. Some writers described the Iraq War as a "massacre without witness" (Rasheed Khashana, April 10); others called it a "perfect example of terrorism" (Munir Shafiq, April 10). But what do we really make of these oppositional views of America by Arabs and Muslims? In all, Arabs and Muslims perceived the Iraq War as a war on their traditions, cultures and sense of pride, and accused the West of viewing them through the prism of the 'war on terror'. This criticism by the Arabs of Anglo-American imperialism mirrors the 'Orientalism' and 'Culture and Imperialism' visions of Said (1979; 1993).⁹

If the media may not be successful in telling us what to think, but rather what to think about (McCombs & Shaw, 1977), analysis of the discourse debate

in *al-Hayat* shows that Arabs distrust US motives behind the war. Many Arab intellectuals today are divided between despising their regimes and distrusting US policy in the Middle East. To them, the war was not about planting a democratic system in Iraq. Their message seems to centre on the view that the current world cannot be a unipolar globe with its fates being determined by Washington and Jerusalem. And only by balancing the power structure in the Middle East can Arabs truly hope for any reasonable regional peace agreement with Israel.

It is worth mentioning here that at times reform-minded Arab intellectuals such as al-Kuwari orchestrated vigorous debates pressing for the acceptance of American reform measures. Citing economic stagnation and bureaucratic regimes in the region, these Western-educated intellectuals spoke of the failure of the nation state in the Arab world. Their arguments, which stress that Arabs are also responsible for the 'bleak' situation in their 'neck of the woods', deserve further analysis. Future studies are also needed to examine the reasons behind Arabs' and Muslims' rising resentment of the United States and also the ways and means needed to erect a culture of reconciliation between the East and the West. For whatever the outcome of the Iraq War, America has lost the moral high ground in the Middle East, and with it many of the friends it had in the Arab and Muslim worlds. The challenge for the United States now is how to reforge that link.

Notes

1. It is, however, important to mention here that a number of the migrant Arab media, such as the Middle East Broadcast Centre Orbit, recently moved their operational centres from London and Rome to Dubai and Manama respectively.
2. His assassination was largely attributed to the paper's criticism of Egyptian Gamal Nasser's pan-Arab movement.
3. The coding was carried out by the author who holds a postgraduate certificate in Arabic-English translation and worked as an Arabic linguist and instructor in Great Britain and the United States.
4. See President Jimmy Carter, State of the Union Address, 23 January 1980, as cited by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, "US Foreign Policy: Our Broader Strategy", 27 March 1980, Department of State, Current Policy No. 153, as reprinted in *Case study: National security policy under Carter*, Department of National Security Affairs, Air War College, AY 1980-81, p. 98.
5. Spelling and transliteration of Arabic names into English may vary; they are based on the author's instinct of how they should appear in the English language.
6. The Doctrine does away with the Cold War politics of containment and deterrence and calls for pre-emptive attacks against hostile states.
7. The Abbasids took power from Ummawiyyis in AD 750 and governed from Baghdad, a city founded by the second Abbasid Caliph founded in AD 762, until the Mongols conquered it in 1258 and had the Abbasid Caliph killed.
8. Haroun al-Rasheed was a famous Abbaside Khalifa born in Baghdad in the year AD 760.
9. Said meticulously exposed the ways in which the Orient was distorted by the theories of the European academy. He defined the cultural, political and intellectual system through which the West has for centuries formed its relationship with the Islamic world, arguing that Western culture is complicit in imperialist brutality.

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Even the Toilet Brush Is Gilded

News Coverage of the Iraq Conflict in Selected Austrian Newspapers

Angelika Carfora, Christian Flatz, Martin Hartlieb
& Armin Lanzinger

Several months have passed since US President George W Bush declared the end of the war in Iraq. Many of the stories dominating the news before and during the war have been either disproved by facts and statements (Niger uranium, Jessica Lynch)¹, or called into question owing to lack of evidence (weapons of mass destruction, Kelly affair)². There are hardly any doubts that the Iraq War was preceded and accompanied by an unparalleled propaganda war in the west, particularly in the USA, as confirmed very clearly by numerous media analyses (Cunningham, 2003; Kull, 2003; Smolkin, 2003). This paper examines the ways in which Austrian media communicated the preparations for the allied attack and the war. We use quantitative and qualitative methods and supplement the results with a comparison of the media coverage during the Second Gulf War of 1991. How Austrian media dealt with American-British war propaganda is the key issue we address. In the light of strong opposition to the war by the majority of the media and the population, an additional question arises: which patterns of discourse beyond those of propaganda dominated the Austrian media? Research was based on the two Austrian daily newspapers *Neue Kronen Zeitung* and *Der Standard*.

The Sample

Austria is something of a special case in the European media landscape. It has a limited market, scarce resources and a high level of corporate control and, owing to the failure of regulation policy, is dominated by unusually high market concentration and strong connections between journalism and economic interests: thus, some of the leading newspapers and magazines belong to one media company, the *Mediaprint/News* (*Neue Kronen Zeitung*, *Kurier*, *Profil*, *News*, *Format*). Austria takes the lead in Europe as regards press concentration. The market leader *Neue Kronen Zeitung* (*Krone*), founded in 1959, holds a national market share of over 50%, a level of domi-

nance not known elsewhere in the world (Steinmaurer, 2002: 23). Because of its high circulation, the newspaper is the most frequently read daily paper among almost all social groups in Austria, and its publisher, Hans Dichand, claims repeatedly that the *Krone* is a newspaper for “readers of all classes”, a “people’s paper” (Dichand, 2000: 16). Writing under one of his numerous aliases, Cato, Dichand defines his newspaper immodestly: “We are not only by far the largest, but also by far the most convincing Austrian daily paper, and in addition the paper with the most intensive reader discussion” (Cato, 2003: 3). The newspaper’s journalistic style results from its own perception as yellow press³: trial by media and defamation of individuals, advocacy of law and order, resentment of intellectualism and certain political stances, a kind of ‘inexistentialism’ which denies the nazi past, anti-communism and latent anti-Semitism are characteristics of the ‘Boulevard format’ (Botz, 1994: 599f). Hans Dichand owns 50%, the German WAZ holding another 45%.

Der Standard was founded in 1988, the first daily paper to be established in Austria for 16 years (Steinmaurer, 2002: 19). With a 50% share, the German media company Springer, owner of the leading German newspapers *Bild* and *Welt*, acted as a business investor. In contrast to the right-liberal newspaper *Die Presse*, the daily paper *Der Standard* established itself as a left-liberal quality paper and has a market share of approximately 6%.⁴ After Springer sold its share in 1995, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* joined *Der Standard* in 1998 with a share of 49%.

This study is only a partial examination of Austrian media coverage of the Iraq War. First of all, it deals mainly with reporting by text and image analysis, ignoring message production and reception. Second, the sample analysed is only a small segment of the Austrian media sector, although it includes the *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, a major and particularly opinion-forming medium. The selection of a tabloid and a quality newspaper provides a cross section of the Austrian print media market – albeit a small one.⁵

The role of the media in modern wars is often referred to through the ‘confusing world of pictures’ and the ‘war of pictures’ (Decker, 2003). Studies usually analyse the reporting of TV stations (see Krueger, 2003; Medien Tenor, 2003), but some show that users of print media are informed above average about the situation in wars (see Kull, 2003). Although the numbers of those reading printed media is declining, Europe-wide one in every two persons reads newspapers regularly; in Germany the figure is still nearly two thirds of the populace, and in Scandinavia more than three quarters (see Eurobarometer, 2003: 7). This is another reason our analysis concentrates on two daily newspapers.

We chose a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods for the study. In a first section, selected issues of the two newspapers *Neue Kronen Zeitung* and *Der Standard* are analysed according to quantitative criteria, the central focus being the perceptions of the participating parties and the extent to which conflict is personalised in the newspapers. In addition we examine whether individual contributors made value judgements. Using these

criteria, we embark on a study of media coverage of the Second Gulf War (Studiengruppe InterKom, 1993), in order to be able to draw comparisons.⁶ The results of this analysis are then examined using qualitative methods based on discourse analysis as used successfully for years by Stig A Nohrstedt and Rune Ottosen in researching this field (see Nohrstedt, Ottosen, 2000).

Before the findings of our investigation are presented, a comment about self reflection in the media is necessary: The freelance journalist and *Der Standard* correspondent Åsne Seierstad reported during the Iraq War in *Der Standard* about a journalist embedded with the US military who only wanted to talk about his experiences if he could remain unidentified. "That is their strategy. Shoot first!" he tells the photographer. In a special series of articles, *Der Standard* reflected on the role of the media during war and referred to the difficulties war correspondents face in identifying their sources. "Substantial information about the current military actions is subject to censorship. An independent examination of such data is often not possible for the editorship." (*Der Standard*, March 21, 2003: 2) This kind of self reflection is missing completely from the tabloid *Neue Kronen Zeitung*.

Figure 1. Embedded Journalist, in *Der Standard*, March 28, 2003, p. 32 ("If he says something out of line I'll blast him out, and he knows it")



Media Coverage of the War

Our quantitative analysis is based on a study made by the *Studiengruppe InterKom* on German print media coverage of the Second Gulf War in 1991. Naturally, their findings on the German media cannot be directly compared to ours on the Austrian media, but since we lack data on the Austrian media for the Second Gulf War they should give an indication of how the conflict was covered, and help us with the analysis of the key issues.

We sampled eight 'time-spots' 22 days before and during the war.⁷ With the daily appearance of the *Krone*, 133 articles appearing in the 22 issues were included. Because the time spots included two weekends, and *Der Standard* has a weekend edition covering Saturday and Sunday, only 20 issues were used, providing a sample of 277 articles.

George W. Against Saddam?

During the first days of the US attack on Iraq, the public Austrian TV station *ORF* began coverage of the conflict with a trailer showing the headline 'War against Saddam'. Soon afterwards, because of viewer protests, this was changed to 'War against Iraq'. Such personalisation is not unique in war propaganda, as polarisation is often observed as a conflict escalates; in Bush's 'war against terrorism', for instance, it is emphasised in his 'you are either with us or against us' rhetoric.

As a first step in our analysis we looked for signs of such personalisation of the conflicting parties in the newspapers before and during the war, and coded other key players in the conflict to check if their roles were also covered.

The figures show that the *Krone* has a strong tendency to personalise the Iraqi side, making few references to key players apart from Saddam Hussein himself. The American picture is more differentiated as all other US key players combined receive nearly as much attention as George W. Bush. The third-party key players are dominated by the United Nations and Austria, while others receive little attention.

Der Standard shows a substantially more differentiated pattern. On the Iraqi side, other actors receive as much attention as Saddam Hussein himself, suggesting a much broader coverage of events. On the US side George W. Bush is only in third place, outnumbered even by the allied soldiers.

The result for the *Krone* is on a par with those from the 1991 Second Gulf War, when the tabloid paper *Bild* exhibited a very similar trait. The result for *Der Standard* is also largely in line with the results for the quality newspapers *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Frankfurter Rundschau* (Studiengruppe InterKom, 1993: 116). Thus, the imbalance in media coverage has not changed in the last decade: tabloid newspapers tend towards stronger personalisation, particularly in the case of non-western countries.

Table 1. Key Players in the Media Coverage

Key players	Denominations			
	<i>Der Standard</i>		<i>Krone</i>	
Iraq	90	12,4 %	76	20,2 %
Saddam Hussein	69	9,5 %	39	10,4 %
Other Iraqi players	69	9,5 %	7	1,9 %
USA	123	16,9 %	87	23,1 %
George W Bush	47	6,5 %	41	10,9 %
US-military Elite	20	2,8 %	12	3,2 %
US-political Elite	29	4,0 %	8	2,1 %
Senate/Congress	3	0,4 %	0	0,0 %
Allied Soldiers	52	7,2 %	16	4,3 %
Journalists	10	1,4 %	4	1,1 %
UNO	55	7,6 %	26	6,9 %
UN-weapons inspectors	21	2,9 %	3	0,8 %
Great Britain	27	3,7 %	9	2,4 %
France	36	5,0 %	6	1,6 %
Germany	22	3,0 %	9	2,4 %
Russia	7	1,0 %	1	0,3 %
Israel	5	0,7 %	1	0,3 %
Peace movements/activists	18	2,5 %	2	0,5 %
Austria	24	3,3 %	29	7,7 %
Total	727	100,0 %	376	100,0 %

Quality newspapers incorporate a broader spectrum of participants through their more extensive coverage.

It is worth mentioning that both newspapers concentrate on the US executive arm – the president and the elites – with few or no reports about the legislative arm, represented by the Senate or Congress, a possible explanation for which is that internal conflict of opinions in the US prior to the war was overshadowed by the crises within NATO and the European countries.

A timeline analysis of our data supports this hypothesis. In *Der Standard*, third parties play their main roles in the crisis before the attack on Iraq (this is the time of the split in NATO). There is another, later but expected, peak at the time of the attack itself. The timeline analysis for the *Krone* reveals another pattern. There, the lesser role of third parties in the whole coverage is explained by the fact that the events prior to the war receive less attention than the war itself. Generally, the low coverage of third parties further supports the idea of strong personalisation in the tabloid.

Positions

Three dimensions were examined to find out how the newspapers, and the authors of the articles, placed themselves in relation to the conflict: the ques-

tion of responsibility, the attitude towards parties in the conflict, and authors' attitude towards the war.

Table 2 shows who is named, in an article, as the most responsible party in the conflict. While most articles in *Der Standard* take no clear position or do not blame any one party, the *Kronen Zeitung* shows a clear tendency to blame the USA in more than half of all articles sampled. Only a few mention Iraq or apportion equal responsibility among the parties.

Table 2. Main Responsibility for the Conflict

	<i>Der Standard</i>	<i>Krone</i>
USA	32	80
Iraq	11	8
Both	9	5
No clear statement	225	40

Media coverage shows a clear shift, regarding the question of responsibility, from its reporting of the Second Gulf War in 1991. Then, it mainly held Iraq responsible whereas in 2003 the picture was reversed. This was particularly evident in the yellow press (Studiengruppe InterKom, 1993: 121f), the tabloid *Krone* holding the US and its allies responsible for the war.

In parallel surveys in Germany and Austria, IMAS⁸ found that only 15% of Germans and even fewer, only 8%, of Austrians, unreservedly considered the American way of life and its political and economic behaviour to be a model for Europe. 36% of Germans and, with 53%, a majority of Austrians, firmly reject the notion that the US should function as a model. The level of sympathy for George W. Bush are the same in both countries; out of 18 personalities listed, Bush is in second last place and only just ahead of Saddam Hussein – 59% of Austrians reject Saddam, and 45% reject Bush (IMAS, 2003b: 1ff). This survey, undertaken at the beginning of February 2003, was undoubtedly influenced by the preparations for war, but it may nevertheless be interpreted as latent anti-Americanism both in Germany and in Austria, since the questions asked made no reference to Iraq and the forthcoming war. The Austrians' negative response to the question about the model function is an indication that anti-Americanism is particularly prevalent here.

The next question demonstrates which party to the conflict the newspapers support. In the *Krone* we found many more clearly pro-Iraq articles than articles with no clear statement of position. *Der Standard* remains largely neutral, with slightly more support for the Iraqi side, and few articles adopting any position.

As before, the comparison with 1991 shows a different result (Studiengruppe InterKom, 1993: 123). Then, no German newspapers took the side of Iraq, and pro-American articles outnumbered others.

Table 3. Position Taken on a Party to the Conflict⁹

	<i>Der Standard</i>	<i>Krone</i>
pro-USA	12	15
pro-Iraq	18	20
Ambivalent	12	12
No clear position	235	53

Finally, the quantitative analysis examined the articles' authors' position regarding the war.

The authors in the *Krone* take a clear stand against it. This is not surprising and, combined with the two sets of findings above, again shows clear anti-American tendencies. Few see the war as justified.

Table 4. Authors' Position Towards the War

	<i>Der Standard</i>	<i>Krone</i>
Justified	9	5
Not justified	31	68
Balanced arguments	18	12
No clear statement	219	48

Again, articles in the *Standard* take a predominantly neutral position. Within the category of articles adopting any position towards the war, articles not justifying it form the largest group, but numbers for the other two groups are only slightly lower. Overall, only one fifth of the articles took any position at all.

The comparison with 1991 again shows up the difference. In 2003 the Austrian media largely condemn the war against Iraq as unjustified, whereas in 1991 the German media had justified such a war in many instances (Studiengruppe InterKom, 1993: 124). The research institute IMAS carried out an inquiry in the first two weeks of the 2003 war, and found that 69% of Austrians described as unjustified the attack against Iraq by the US and its allies, while only 13% considered it justified (IMAS, 2003c: 2). Even by February 2003 only 22% considered it legitimate (IMAS, 2003a:1). The tabloid *Neue Kronen Zeitung* obviously reports in line with public opinion in Austria.

It should be noted that much of the above analysis covered articles which went beyond straightforward news. Thus these articles feature disproportionately highly for their percentage of the whole coverage. Even so this does not by any means devalue the findings, as the newspapers' general line is reflected through its commentators whose columns play a greater role in opinion-shaping than bare news-items.

The War of Discourses

The following remarks are based on discourse analyses studies, which in turn are based on the critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995). Different discourses are identified theoretically, and their interaction and mixture is examined against the concept of a global discursive order. Starting from our hypothesis above, we want to examine to what extent the American-British propaganda discourses on the Iraq War found their way into the reporting of the two Austrian daily papers *Neue Kronen Zeitung* und *Der Standard*. We examine this on the basis of two central lines of argument by the propagandists: the accusation that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction which it can use almost immediately against the West, and the allegation that Iraq has links with the terror network of al-Qaeda. We are also interested in two other discourses based on historical discursive patterns: Orientalism in the representation of Iraq and its leading figures and anti-Americanism, which has a strong tradition in Austria. In the next sections we examine to what extent the discursive order shifted in the two newspapers after the beginning of the attacks on Iraq, and compare the results of our quantitative analysis with our discourse analysis.

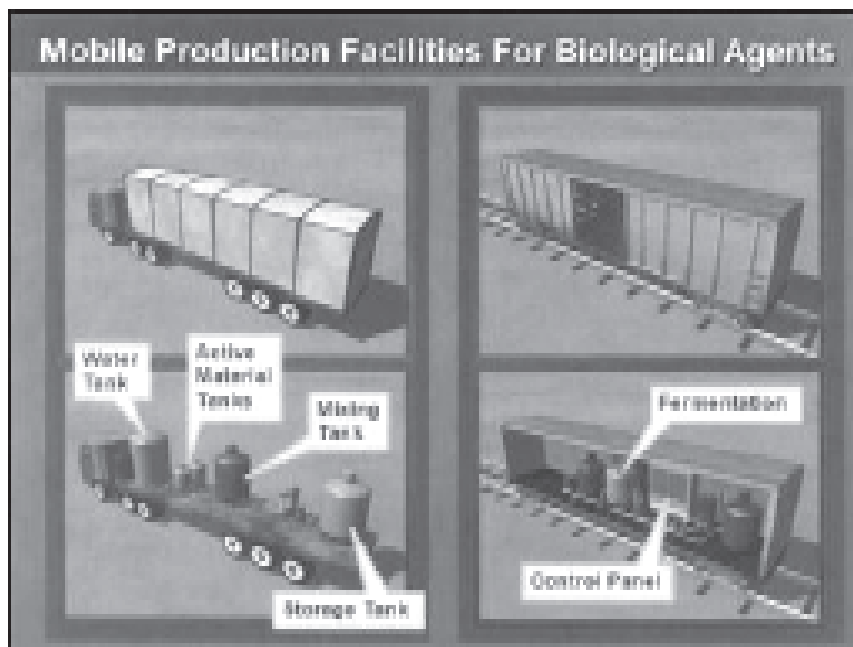
Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

The speech of US Secretary of State Colin Powell to the UN Security Council at the beginning of February 2003 marked the start of a crucial phase in the preparations for the allied invasion of Iraq. One of the central arguments of the Bush administration in favour of the war against Iraq was its alleged possession of WMD, and the major part of Powell's speech was therefore dedicated to evidence of their existence. As shown by the first report of the American CIA representative David Kay to representatives of the US Congress three months after the end of war, up to that time there was, apparently, no proof of large-scale atomic, biological or chemical weapons programmes in Iraq. Instead, Kay concludes that Iraq had limited its activities at the time of the weapon inspections and had tried to conceal existing personnel and technological resources after the inspections (Kay, 2003). David Kay also states in his report that before the war America's knowledge of Iraq's WMD was indecisive: "The result was that our understanding of the status of Iraq's WMD program was always bounded by large uncertainties and had to be heavily caveated" (Kay, 2003: 1).

Colin Powell's speech was represented in the Austrian media as a prelude to real war preparation and as a point of no return. The headline in the *Krone* on the next day was 'War only a question of time!' and, on the day after 'It's getting serious'. This was concluded not least because by this speech Secretary of State Colin Powell, the last moderate voice in the US government, had

swung onto a war course. In *Der Standard*, Powell's role is therefore analysed in detail as 'How Bush's last dove turned into a hawk'. In a commentary in the *Krone*, Powell is quoted on the day before his speech as follows: "There is no evidence of hidden weapons of mass destruction". But on the next day, February 6, the newspaper lists Powell's evidence and prints a plan of the State Department which shows a mobile production unit for biological weapons (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. This Picture was Provided by the US State Department



The major part of the article quotes Powell directly, so he is given space to justify the 'war against Saddam': "He has used weapons of mass destruction, and he will not hesitate to use or pass them on ... Saddam is not to be stopped, except someone stops him. Saddam is not listening to reason". In *Der Standard* on February 6, details of Powell's speech are barely touched on and the article closes with the bland remark "Powell did not put forward concrete proofs for the existence of forbidden weapons in Iraq". The Iraqi government newspaper *al-Jumbouriya* is quoted here prominently: "Powell shows cheap satellite photographs and vague recordings of some discussions". The broadsheet paper *Der Standard* concentrates in its article on this day on the analysis of power relations in the Security Council and diplomatic struggles.

The report of UN chief weapons inspector Hans Blix on February 14 to the Security Council is interpreted in *Der Standard* and the *Krone* as an acquittal for Iraq. The *Krone* headline reads 'No green light for a war!'. The

day before, the newspaper had reported on “forbidden rockets”, which would provide President George W Bush with a pretext for war, and on the Blix report it further says “...it does not look at all well for Saddam...”.

The reactions of the *Krone* and *Der Standard* to Blix’s second report dated March 7th were different. Where *Der Standard* heads with ‘UN Inspector releases Iraq from US charges’, the *Krone* puts a picture of George W Bush on its front-page, with the headline ‘Bush announces the War’. This follows as a result of the US administration’s calling a special press conference just before the presentation of the Blix report at which Bush announced “We need no permission”. *Der Standard* analyses that accurately: ‘US war announcement cuts out report of the weapon inspectors’.

The reactions of the two daily papers to the Powell speech and the Blix report reveal clear differences in handling information as a source of propaganda. *Der Standard* uses American sources in a relatively reserved way and uses quotes only when in doubt, so that Powell’s statements are barely mentioned whereas the arguments by Hans Blix are given prominence. Just as our quantitative investigation revealed neutral war coverage in the quality paper, the discourse analysis shows that *Der Standard* grants relatively little space to current propaganda discourses, concentrating much more on balanced background reporting.

The tabloid *Krone*, however, puts heavy emphasis on propaganda discourse. This is particularly obvious when, owing to the time difference, statements from American press communiqués are taken over by the *Krone*, and then rectified on the next day. The focus on propaganda discourse also becomes particularly clear with the second Blix report, a large part of which is reproduced in the *Krone*’s news section. As we will show later, the newspaper later takes an anti-American standpoint, particularly evident in comments and letters to the editor. It is also obvious in the case of WMD. In a letter to the editor about reports of a new American super-bomb, a reader turns the WMD argument around: “The Americans were the only ones up to now who have used such weapons of mass destruction” (*Neue Kronen Zeitung*, March 19).

The alleged findings of poisonous gas in Iraq during the war are prominently presented in the *Krone*: ‘Poisonous gas in Saddam’s shelters? First tests were positive’. *Der Standard* also puts out this message, but more objectively, as ‘Americans announce finding of chemical weapons’. In another case it says ‘USA: forbidden weapons discovered’. The appropriate correction follows on the next day: ‘Still no poisonous gas has been discovered’.

War Against Terror

While most of Powell’s speech to the Security Council was dedicated to evidence of the existence of WMD, he also spoke about terrorism. He tried to prove a connection between Iraq and the al-Qaeda terror network to sup-

port President George W Bush's 'axis of evil' whereby, soon after the terrorist attacks on September 11 2001, Iraq was defined as a potential enemy of world order. In this way the discourse on WMD and the anti-terror discourse are linked. As Powell expressed it, "The nexus of Iraq and terror is old. The combination is lethal".

In the Austrian papers examined, this second part of the Powell's speech is hardly mentioned. The *Krone* reports on February 5th of a recent terror warning that the al-Qaeda network was planning an "...attack with thousands of victims". The day after Powell's speech, the supposed connection to Osama bin Laden is only mentioned in passing. This point is not taken up in *Der Standard*, which quotes a report from the British secret service that "no connections between the Iraqi regime and the terror network al-Qaeda exist". On February 7th, however, an Austrian military expert is quoted in *Der Standard* declaring Powell's evidence 'watertight' and the column Head of the Day is dedicated to Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi, the alleged al-Qaeda man in Iraq. The hypothesis of the terror war is questioned on February 14th in a guest commentary by Fawaz A. Gerges, professor for Middle East studies, entitled War for Mr bin Laden.

Continuing this line of argument, the *Krone* follows the propaganda discourse by printing premature information from American sources, while *Der Standard* looks for counter-arguments.

After this phase the discourse of the war against terrorists and their allies plays no further role in the two papers, for neither in the *Krone* nor in *Der Standard* are corresponding reports found on the survey dates. Only with the beginning of the allied attacks on Iraq are terror warnings taken over from American sources to appear again in the newspapers. The numerous safety warnings are justified as a reaction to the threat of terror.

When George Bush announced, on the returning aircraft carrier *USS Abraham Lincoln*, the end of the fighting, he described the victory against Saddam Hussein as significant progress in the war against terror. In *Der Standard*, the commentator Gudrun Harrer determines that the issue of WMD is now obviously 'out'. The *Krone* gives more weight to the spectacular circumstances than on the contents of Bush's speech. The headlines say: 'With an embarrassing show of war Bush opens his election campaign'. And Bush's appearance is compared to a Hollywood spectacle.

Altogether, the war against terror as an argument for the war in Iraq dwindles in the Austrian media examined.

Orientalism in the *Neue Kronen Zeitung*

The idea of a 'war against terror' is located in a concept of the world, promoted after the end of the Cold War by countless exponents, and defined in relation to the term 'culture' (Flatz, 1998: 29-59). Their most prominent representative

is Samuel Huntington, who provided, with 'clash of the civilisations', a pattern for the interpretation of future conflicts. The 'axis of evil' from Iraq through Iran to North Korea defined by President George W. Bush runs along the future threat line forecast by Huntington: a coalition of the Confucian-Islamic cultures. This cultural-religious world concept uses traditional oriental clichés to present an argument which is plausible and rational (see Riedmann, 1999: 93-103). "The Orient is an integral part of European *material* civilisation and culture. Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse ..." (Said, 1978: 2).

Media discourse over Iraq is by no means free of such oriental clichés. Thus, for instance, in February 2003 a commentator in the *Krone* brings up American talk about a 'crusade against Saddam', and George W Bush's appeals to the Christian God are mentioned repeatedly. The metaphors used in connection with Saddam Hussein serve oriental clichés: 'Saddam could still save himself from the gallows', 'knife' or 'smoking gun'. In one issue of the *Neue Kronen Zeitung* Saddam Hussein is shown with a sword hanging over an Iraqi map. Gallows, knife, colt and sword serve here as symbols of an irrational, pre-modern and barbarian world. It is also important to note that these oriental prejudices are necessarily accompanied by personalisation, as the quantitative analysis has already confirmed for the *Krone*. The oriental clichés refer directly to the person of Saddam Hussein, who stands as a metaphor for Iraqi society. The publisher of the *Krone*, Hans Dichand, refers directly, under his alias Cato, to this concept of the world: "The chasm between Orient and Occident could become dangerously deeper" (*Neue Kronen Zeitung*, February 16). And in a letter to the editor commentator Kurz Seinitz is quoted thus: "...betrayal is the high art of the Orient" (*Neue Kronen Zeitung*, April 8).

Apart from its racist connotations, Orientalism is shaped by a strong eroticism. "The 'Orient' had become a space in which man could look for desires unfulfillable in Europe", Sylvia Riedmann writes on the sexualisation of the oriental discourse in 19th century Europe (Riedmann, 1999: 57) These clichés live on: 'Saddam Hussein orders over heavily armed female combat troops', says a headline in the *Krone*. The photograph of a uniformed American female soldier in front of a fighter plane is contrasted with one of masked Iraqi women holding machine guns. The caption reads 'Two pretty women, one girlishly soft and blond, the other one racy, with almond eyes...' While the white American is portrayed as asexual and 'girlish', the Arab women are sexualised by the attribute 'racy' (Fig. 3).

With the fall of Baghdad, pictures of the president's palaces go out around the world. The *Krone* prints a photo of Saddam Hussein's supposed bedroom on its front page. A double spread with pictures of Hussein's palaces starts with the headline 'Even the toilet brush is gilded'. With the bed and the toilet brush, articles allegedly from the most intimate personal belongings of the Iraqi ruler are dragged into the limelight, exposing the forbidden 'enjoyment' of the dictator – and, by extension, of Iraqi society (see

Figure 3. Two Pretty Women, One Girlishly Soft and Blond, the Other One Racy, with Almond Eyes..., in *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, March 7, 2003, p. 3



Stavrakakis, 1999: 65). The picture of Saddam in a suit and with a huge cigar in the *Krone* of March 18 is located in the same discourse. That the fall of Baghdad is symbolised in the media by pictures of the penetration by allied soldiers into the most intimate areas of the enemy's life may be taken quite literally. The voluptuous Iraqi body is to be restrained by this penetration.¹⁰

Der Standard does not use these pictures, representing the fall of the Iraqi regime by several photographs of Iraqis tearing down a statue of Hussein. Oriental clichés are notably absent from *Der Standard's* reporting before and during the war.

***Krone*: From Pacifism to Anti-Americanism**

Anti-Americanism is a poorly defined phrase (Rosenberger, 2004: 6), difficult to use in analysis. Nevertheless, there is a long tradition of Austrian anti-Americanism (Bischof, 2001).¹¹ In this study we use the idiom to identify a certain discourse in the Austrian media re-articulating historical forms of anti-Americanism, especially by its right wing. It is therefore important to make a distinction between criticism of US politics and resentment of American culture in Austrian society. Anti-American discourse is here regarded as a bundle of resentments, often articulated in connection with persistent sentiments about Austrian-German relations with the US during and after the Second World War. In Austria, anti-Americanism can be seen on the Right as well as on the Left: "...anti-Americanism can now be located in *all* political

lagers, particularly expressed in the growing chorus of commentators blasting American global hegemony and interventionism in the Balkans and the Near East” (Bischof, 2001).

After the verbal attack against Western European governments by US Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, in which he spoke of the ‘old Europe’, a letter to the editor appeared in the *Krone* calling Rumsfeld a war-monger and defending Europe with its ‘millennia of culture’ against the USA ‘with its swindles, stock exchange manipulations...frauds in the highest circles...even the efforts of the British and US bomber waves in the Second World War did not succeed in extinguishing this...’ – with this forced reference to World War Two, the writer of this letter overturns the pacifist argument, connecting it instead to old anti-American resentment. The *Neue Kronen Zeitung* responds over and over again to precisely such feelings of revisionism (see Botz, 1994).¹²

Figure 4. We are not Afraid! But WE Are!, in *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, February 6, 2003, p. 3



After Powell’s speech on February 5th, a cartoon appears in the *Krone* showing George W Bush and Saddam Hussein in arms and uniform with the caption ‘We are not afraid!’ Beneath them stands a small, frightened European family, holding a placard which reads ‘But WE are!’ (Fig. 4) On the following day the *Krone* opens with a picture of a soldier in a gas mask and writes “Not only could Iraq use chemical weapons, but the US troops also speculate on the employment of nerve gas, which is not deadly, but nevertheless forbidden”. The *Krone*’s pacifist discourse is expressed particularly strongly here, and a third perspective is established in addition to those of the two warring parties to serve as a reminder of international law.

“American ideologists have re-educated the Germans in such a way that they don’t want to fight any more, not even if the Americans need them... (*Es haben Ami-Ideologen / die Deutschen derart umerzogen, / dass sie auf keinen Kampf mehr scharf, / nicht mal bei Ami-Kriegsbedarf ...*)” This rhyme by the *Krone*’s house poet, Wolf Martin, appears on February 10th in view of the German resistance against the invasion of Iraq. At first the statement seems pacifist but the reference to ‘re-education’ gives it an anti-American slant.

A frequent contributor to the *Krone* is Andreas Mölzer, the former FPÖ chief ideologist and cultural advisor to the governor of Carinthia, Jörg Haider. He uses Donald Rumsfeld’s attack against Germany on February 11th as a reminder of the German-American relationship since the Second World War. At the end he writes “For far too long a time, and all too often, the Germans were the rogues in history. For the determining forces...it is no problem to mark them the rogues again”. Through this subtle comparison the author, well-known for his close relationship to revisionists (see DÖW 1994), plays down the German terror regime of the Nazis and positions his argument within right wing anti-American discourse. “The Austrian Right never could accept the defeat of the imperialist, racist and genocidal Hitler regime that they had so eagerly served until the final day” (Bischof 2001).

Rumsfeld’s comment that, owing to its neutrality, Austria obstructs US troop transportation in Europe, also received much attention in Austria. The *Krone* in particular pushes this point and opens with the headline ‘Neutrality now more important than ever’ (*Neue Kronen Zeitung*, February 15), pacifism seeming to be the sentiment, but immediately afterwards a letter-writer sees the need to emphasise that “...Austria isn’t a US colony”.

Anti-Americanism itself is also directly addressed in the *Neue Kronen Zeitung*. In his comment ‘To be against it is not anti-Americanism’, Kurt Seinitz writes, on February 15, “We are ready and willing to be convinced, although unfortunately we were predominantly treated to negative signals by the USA for the last fifteen years, starting with the Watchlist-decision against Waldheim”, and *Krone* publisher Dichand stresses that “...under no circumstances is there any anti-Americanism here ... from the point of view of Austrian neutrality, however, the fundamental question is whether the danger from Saddam is larger than the risks of war. The existence of a majority here against the war is the answer” (*Neue Kronen Zeitung*, February 16).

With the calculated use of historically and ideologically loaded keywords in references, for example, to ‘re-education’ and ‘Waldheim’, and through arguments in its commentaries and letters to the editor, the *Krone* exposes the underlying motive of its pacifist trajectory – anti-Americanism. In addition, the strong plea for Iraq, already seen in the quantitative analysis, emerges – as already mentioned – as anti-Americanism rather than a pacifist position. The repeated references to Austria in the war coverage of the *Krone* also point in this direction. The use of an anti-American discourse should be seen as more a matter of domestic than of international politics.

In *Der Standard*, the discussion about anti-Americanism is led by the commentators. In several contributions anti-Americanism is discussed in connection with the liberation of Europe from nazism (and the need for gratitude), and the role of the Soviet Union, and it is interesting that Saddam Hussein is – although not directly mentioned – juxtaposed with Adolf Hitler. Such depictions of the enemy, and historical comparisons, had already been used as propaganda tools in the Second Gulf War and the Kosovo War (Studiengruppe InterKom, 1993: 117f; Höijer, et al., 2002: 10).

A Shift After the Bombs Start Falling?

The last question to be examined is to what extent the discursive order shifted in the two papers after the beginning of the attacks on Iraq. Before the war, the *Krone* reports on peace demonstrations in the world and heavily uses pacifist arguments to support its anti-Americanism. It provides evidence of Austrian attitudes with a public opinion poll. ‘Austrians are shocked’. But after the first attacks a growing number of comments indicate otherwise. On March 20, Ernst Trost had already said “Now it is necessary to win this war as fast and successfully as possible”. The newspaper begins to stir up fears of Iraqi refugees coming to Austria with ‘The Iraqis come: soldiers at the borders prepared for arrival’ (*Neue Kronen Zeitung*, March 20). With this headline, the *Krone* fuels a xenophobic discourse, one which the paper had itself formed in the 1990s together with the Haider-FPÖ (Schiestl, 1996). After the first attacks on Iraq, Saddam Hussein is portrayed ever more often as a tyrant and the personalisation of the conflict is reinforced: ‘This is the way, Saddam will be destroyed’ (*Neue Kronen Zeitung*, March 21: 5).

A clear shift in discourse takes place after the beginning of the war. The *Krone* concentrates on the spectacle of war. The headlines and, in particular, front-pages, confirm this tendency: On March 21, the front-page headline, supported by full-page photographs of bombardments, reads ‘Rocket shower over Baghdad! 200,000 men storm Iraq’ and, on March 22, ‘Saddam’s palace destroyed by lightning as if by new monster bomb!’ With the impending defeat of the Iraqis, the *Krone* places itself on the winners’ side and suppresses its anti-Americanism to some degree. The pacifist discourse disappears completely and a war discourse starts, endorsing the speedy removal of Saddam Hussein – and all former misgivings concerning peace-politics and international law are thrust aside, sometimes explicitly but at other times in subtler forms, as is illustrated by the report on the threat of Iraqi refugees. The trend, in both papers examined, grows stronger with their war reporting. With the start of attacks the excitement rises and the newspapers are full of reports, comments and analyses on developments.

The appearance of George W. Bush on the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln at the end of active fighting appears on the front page of the *Neue*

Kronen Zeitung: ‘Bush imitates ‘Top Gun’ Tom Cruise’, while *Der Standard* only shows Condoleezza Rice on its front page. Where *Der Standard* concentrates on background reports of events in Iraq, the *Krone* comments on Bush’s appearance, calling it an “embarrassing war show” and resuming the anti-American discourse after the end of fighting.

Conclusions

The *Neue Kronen Zeitung* reports on the Iraq War with strong reference to Austria. This was already evident from the first part of the survey and is confirmed by an analysis of its front pages with, for example, headlines during the conflict such as ‘Neutrality now more important than ever’ and ‘Our blue helmets soon in Iraq?’. In *Der Standard* this perspective is missing altogether. The *Krone* is deeply involved in the conflict and discursively constructs a third position determined by pacifist and anti-American arguments. *Der Standard*, on the other hand, places itself in a more neutral position and acts more like a moderator. The quality newspaper values background analyses more highly, and takes a substantially more balanced position – for instance in most instances the arguments of both conflicting parties are considered and several different reasons for war are analysed. *Der Standard*’s underlying attitude to the conflict is much more neutral than the *Krone*’s. Despite its pacifism, *Der Standard* hardly uses anti-American discourse.

It can be said that propaganda discourse is strongly represented in the Austrian tabloid paper *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, especially in the news section, although commentaries and letters to the editor also show another point of view – a strong anti-Americanism. It cannot be argued convincingly that the *Krone* takes a pacifist position in relation to the war preparations and the war itself. Rather, it seems that the newspaper hides its anti-American sentiments behind arguments for peace and neutrality; this becomes very clear in the writing of commentators like Wolf Martin or Andreas Mölzer who make no secret of their right wing anti-American views. The repeated and direct references to the discussion around anti-Americanism must be seen in this light. It is also noticeable that, during the war itself, the *Krone* relinquishes this discourse in favour of sensational journalism.

The *Krone* is in line with Austrian public opinion. In the Iraq conflict the newspaper succeeds in fulfilling its function as a ‘people’s paper’, and in speaking the language of the ‘small man’, a common figure in Austrian daily politics. Anti-American sentiments are still very commonplace among Austrians and the weight given to this discourse in the *Neue Kronen Zeitung* must be seen as primarily a domestic matter, ‘evil’ America serving as a scapegoat for everything that goes wrong in Austrian society. Nevertheless, there is still a question mark over the extent to which the *Krone* supports the form-

ing, through its news coverage, of this opinion, and the degree to which historical resentments are still prevalent in Austria.

The oriental discourse has to be highlighted because it is particularly prevalent in the *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, and because it supports the illusory nature of the pacifist argument since it undermines Iraq-friendly reporting and reveals that the *Krone* uses pro-Iraqi standpoints above all to legitimise its anti-Americanism. Saddam Hussein's toilet, glimpsed after the fall of Baghdad, becomes the paper's envious confession of its own resentments: 'Even the toilet brush is gilded'.

Notes

1. In his January 28 State of the Union address Bush said, "The British government has learned Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa. In the meantime the IAEA had proved, as Hans Blix reported in a CNN interview, March 21 2004, that "...the alleged contract by Iraq with Niger to import yellow cake, i.e. uranium oxide, [...] was a forgery, and the document had been sitting with the CIA and their UK counterparts for a long while, and they had not discovered it. And I think it took the IAEA a day to discover that it was a forgery." On April 1, Private First Class Jessica Lynch, a 19-year-old army maintenance worker who had been captured in an Iraqi ambush on March 23, was rescued from Saddam Hospital. In a night raid, special operations forces entered the hospital, removed her, and took her to a nearby helicopter which flew her to safety. The story was heralded on front pages and in newscasts across the country. Later on, the media had to revoke much of the coverage of this alleged 'heroic liberation'.
2. Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were one of the main arguments for an attack on Iraq. To this day no substantial evidence for such weapons has been found. David Kelly, a former UN arms inspector and respected expert on biological weapons, killed himself in July 2002, shortly after his employer, the British Ministry of Defence, exposed him as the source of a BBC radio report in May which alleged that the government had 'sexed up' intelligence on Iraq in the run-up to war.
3. Yellow journalism is a type of journalism in which sensationalism triumphs over factual reporting. It may include the use of colourful adjectives, exaggeration, a careless lack of fact-checking for the sake of a quick breaking news story – or even deliberate falsification of entire incidents.
4. See Media Analyse, www.media-analyse.at.
5. Owing to a lack of resources, other media types such as magazines, broadcast and television could not be considered in the sample.
6. The contributions to the media coverage in Germany and Turkey in this volume are based on the same questions. The results are therefore comparable.
7. The following periods were examined: 5/6/7 February, 10/11 February, 14/15/16 February, 7/8 March, 16/17/19 March, 20/21/22 March, 8/9/10 April and 2/3/4 May.
8. IMAS is an independent Austrian Market Research Institute, www.imas-international.com
9. In the *Krone*, 33 articles were additionally coded for anti-American sentiment.
10. During the war news messages emerged according to which Saddam Hussein had worked as a homoerotic porn star in the 1960s. The headline in the Austrian local newspaper *Neue Vorarlberger Tageszeitung* says "Saddam was a former gay-porn actor". This cliché has been repeated for years in news media (see Riedmann 1999: 101ff).
11. For the history of European anti-Americanism see also (Daxlbauer, Fellner, Fröschl, 2004), (Ellwood, 1999) and (Kroes, van Rossem, 1986).
12. That this contribution appeared as a letter to the editor does not devalue the argument. First of all, the selection of readers' opinions is an editorial decision, and secondly this

letter to the editor is particularly prominent by juxtaposition with a large illustration of Donald Rumsfeld. Moreover, there are rumours that some of the letters to the editor in the *Krone* originate from the pen of the publisher himself. That Hans Dichand withdrew a law suit against the Viennese city newspaper *Falter*, which had recently printed this rumour, may be seen as indication of this (see Thurnher, 2003: 5). Dichand's statement about free speech indicates how much importance the publisher attaches to the letters to the letters column. "There are readers, who start reading their *Krone* with The Free Speech" (Cato, 2003: 3).

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Vox Populi, Vox Dei

Reporting the Iraq War in Greece

Sophia Kaitatzi-Whitlock
& Christos Frangonikolopoulos

After World War II, Greece lived through a gruesome civil war. Any war situation, particularly one in its proximity, puts Greece on its guard: the dismembering of Yugoslavia, the bombing of Serbia and, now, the invasion of Iraq by American and British forces. This war in Iraq caused an unprecedented wave of popular reaction and demonstrations, by almost the entire Greek population,¹ against its perpetrators, and could not but shape the way both politicians and press would act. It was a remarkable event for yet another important reason: the war on Iraq took place during the time that Greece held the presidency of the European Union (EU). This put Greece in a unique position of responsibility and international attention, raising the stakes for public intervention.

As it turned out, the invasion of Iraq gave rise to a rare moment of national consensus and responsibility. Since Greece was a key policy actor, the press reported, not only on a war launched by a distant superpower, but also on policy-making in response to this by the Greek EU presidency. This particularity impinges on the research brief for the coverage of the Iraq war in Greece, as we cannot neglect such a significant component in our assessment of the press. Furthermore, more significant components were generated. These concern the springing up of a robust public debate concerning the nexus of European and national public affairs sparked off by the Iraq war. The war and its feared implications gave rise to a formidable wave of reaction by members of civil society, and manifestations of public opinion. The public opinion vector fed back into policy action in its own particular way. We undertake, therefore, to present and assess a process of wider scope where all elements of the polity triangle, government-media-citizens, were in evidence.

Thus, we analyse how the war in Iraq was reported by the Greek press as it embraced two types of contributions and current affairs material: on the one hand journalistic reports and analyses, and on the other hand analyses by academics, experts and citizens who participated energetically in the public debate. We look into these two types of inputs in separate units. In parts

two and three we examine how journalists and editors viewed and transmitted the conflict, while in part four we single out contributions made by external analysts in all national journals. In assessing this material, in part five, our intention is to explore how press material interacted with what originated as the 'voice of society' to become part of a broader public debate. This lively debate featured critical and historical reflection but also scepticism and defiance. The impact of the war – immediate and long-term – on the country attacked, on the world at large, on the European integration project and on Greece was discussed and analysed thoroughly. The newspapers we selected belong to the mainstream, serious Greek press.² Before proceeding with the analysis of the selected material we provide in part one of the article a concise overview of 'Greek specificity' in this war.

Part One: Specificities of the Greek Setting

As often, previously, in major international conflicts, Greece once again found itself in a position distinct from other EU countries. This time the particularity was due to a number of important conjectural events, but also to Greece's historical background, its frontier geopolitical position and its recent, traumatic political past.³ Recent war history shows that Washington considers late winter and spring an ideal time for waging wars.⁴ It happened that in the first semester of 2003 Greece held the presidency of the EU. This put the Greek government and nation in a strenuous position. Given the volatility of the international environment, and the serious split within the EU on the issue of the war, Greece arguably acted as well as it possibly could. Greece is a small country, economically among the weaker members of the OECD.

Despite these disadvantages it bid for, and won, the organisation of the 2004 Olympic Games. Notwithstanding this success, it was economically a cumbersome and complicated responsibility. At the outbreak of the war Greece had about a year to go to the completion of important deadlines in the preparations. The Olympic Games were linked to huge contracts for construction of major public works and for security which, in turn, were also linked to international political pressures on the country. Seen in this light, the challenge for handling the war issue, as set in the 'anti-terrorist-mania frame' complicated the challenges of both the EU presidency and the Olympic Games, threatening that they might turn into liabilities. A host of top priority organisational, diplomatic, security and economic matters were on the agenda at the time government attention was drawn away from them by the impending war.

In addition, during the summer of 2002 Greece came to the centre of international focus owing to the arrest, after close cooperation with British and American intelligence services and in the spell of the 'anti-terrorist mania' created world-wide after the September 11 attacks, of suspected members

of the Greek terrorist organisation known as the 17th November group. These events led to legislative reforms aiming, arguably, at curbing terrorism, but which also trampled on civil rights. The imminent – and subsequently on-going – trial of the 17 November group and the propaganda that surrounded this affair, led by national and international electronic media, intensified the political climate in the country. It accentuated anti-Americanism and mistrust of the government's ability to act independently. It was widely asserted that policy imperatives, which led to authoritarian measures in Greece favouring the interests of the military industrial complex, were imposed from outside the country.

In February 2003, just days away from the outbreak of the war on Iraq, an American diplomat, John Brady Kiesling, resigned from his post as political advisor to the US Embassy in Athens, thereby causing serious political repercussions. His resignation was induced by the US government's action on Iraq and the split within the UN Security Council over the imminent war. In his letter of resignation to Secretary of State Colin Powell, Kiesling wrote: "We spread disproportionate terror and confusion in the public mind, arbitrarily linking the unrelated problems of terrorism and Iraq" (*New York Times*, February 27 2003).⁵ This crucial event contributed immensely to the radicalisation of the Greek debate on, and press coverage of, the war on Iraq, and vindicated all radical positions adopted in Greece, by individuals or the press, in all previous conflicts in which the US was the protagonist. Finally, during the war several Greek journalists were reporting directly from the Iraqi fronts and many stayed on through the most risky phases when Baghdad was being evacuated by diplomats and charitable organisations and even after hotels hosting journalists were bombed by US forces. Such journalistic perseverance secured truthful and verifiable data. A vendetta between journalists and the occupying forces arose when the Australian war reporter Peter Arnett was recruited by the Greek public-service channel NET after having been sacked by CNN for being interviewed by an Iraqi channel. Finally, it is significant to note that the Law Bar Association of Athens filed an injunction against Tony Blair in the International Court of Justice in The Hague, accusing him of war crimes.

Part Two: Glimpses of the Greek Perspective on the War

That the entire sequence of events leading up to the war gripped the Greek public completely is demonstrated conclusively by the great number and variety of protests, political demonstrations and other almost daily actions. Responding to this wave of public concern, the press exhibited a clear commitment and readiness in covering the events. Key events in one national press are not necessarily the same as those of another country. Huge discrepancies can be observed, owing to war propaganda, to 'embedded reporting' and preventive censorship.⁶ Of all the events that led to the war in Iraq, those that

attracted most attention in the Greek press were: [1] Colin Powell's report to the Security Council, [2] the summit meeting in the Azores, and [3] the invasion itself. We shall follow up the coverage of these salient issues, focusing on how the 'facts' given by the American administration about the weapons of mass destruction allegedly held by Saddam Hussein were received in Greece, and how the allegations about their connection to terrorism were treated.

I. The Powell Report to the Security Council: "A Good Story, but..."

Greeks immediately questioned the authenticity of the facts about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction presented by Colin Powell to the UN Security Council. They also questioned his honesty and credibility. It was thought that there could be no trustworthiness in the face of the White House's attempt to manipulate data. This was a 'typical American show', according to the leading article in *Eleftherotypia* (06-02), which suggested that the international community had been fooled in the most undiplomatic way. Writing from Washington, the correspondent of the newspaper, Dimitris Dimas, characterised the effort as a 'bad play by a medium director'. It was but an attempt to gain an 'asylum' for the war, and convinced, as expected, only the British Prime Minister, the junior partner of America's 'New Rome'. Professor Dimitris Conostas stressed that with the economic sanctions of the 1990s, Iraq could not develop such weapons even if it wanted to. What would happen, he wondered, if the USA did not discover them once it had attacked and invaded Iraq? (*Eleftherotypia*, 09-02).⁷

What we are dealing with, suggested Eleni Kochaimidou, journalist on *Kathimerini* (08-02), is the 'thirst of the White House for energy domination'. But the story was well staged, claimed Petros Papakonstantinou, international relations analyst on the same journal (09-02), an excellent 'multi-media show', behind which lay the hidden motive of the USA – to restructure the world according to its own interests. Kostas Spiropoulos (*Kathimerini*, 09-02) thought that the UN was, for the USA, 'too tight a suit' which didn't 'fit' the political fundamentalism of its neo-conservatives. In the new post-cold war era, the USA dislikes the obligation to cooperate over world problems, according to the journal's leading article. Hence, Powell's report was disingenuous. "The war had been decided on and nothing could stop it," said Thanos Oikonomopoulos (*Kathimerini* 09-02).

In this line of argument, Giannis Kartalis, foreign affairs editor of *To Vima*, entitled his article (09-02) "The Game is Over", suggesting indirectly that the decision for war had been settled irreversibly. It was a matter of time and of the conditions under which the White House would go to war. Would it dare to go it alone or would it take heed of a veto in the Security Council? He thought that without unanimous support President Bush would proceed with whichever allies stood by him. Furthermore, Kartalis also stressed that any political solution that would not topple Saddam – as intended by the EU

leaders – did not serve American plans. The break in the North Atlantic relationship was irreparable, he argued.

The international relations analyst of *Kathimerini*, George Delastic (09-02), pointed out that ‘extreme’ and ‘aggressive’ circles in the White House have facilitated the formation of two new power blocks, which increasingly question the structure of the post-1945 international security system. The first comprises the USA and its ‘willing’ allies. The second includes France, Germany, Russia and China. Which block would prevail was not yet clear. Would it be the block that respected the logic of power and preventive wars or the block that ‘dreamed’ of a 21st century multi-polar world? Washington, it was concluded, had alienated itself from its traditional allies, but had also united different and previously opposing powers of the world (France, Germany, Russia and China) against the USA.

II. Summit Meeting in the Azores: The ‘Pirates’ and the ‘Death Certificate’ of the UN

As with Powell’s report, the approach to the Azores meeting was suspicious and critical. *Eleftherotypia* (17-02) described the meeting on its first page as isolated in the Atlantic, far away from the angry voices of the international community, where the three ‘warlords’, the ‘pirates’ of Azores took the arrogant decision to invade Iraq. Despite the opposition of the UN and international public opinion, it continued, the ‘emperor’ (Bush) and his ‘assistants’ (Blair, Aznar), the troika of violence and terrorism, had decided – and ordered the rest of the world to follow them. Why was this so? Richardos Someritis, columnist of *To Vima* (16-02) poured out an array of questions. Was it oil? The growth of reactionary Christian fundamentalism in the US, notably among Bush’s entourage? The fight against terrorism? Or was it America’s strategic project to reshape the Middle East? Or the desire to subjugate the European Union through political division? Perhaps it was all of these combined. But the worst element according to Someritis was that the US was suffering from a ‘deluge of omnipotence’, a sort of ‘empire complex’.

Contextualising the conflict in this way has broader implications. American and British soldiers ought to realise that they were not obliged to fight a war against international law, argued *Eleftherotypia* in its leader (16-17/02). Soldiers should desert and the international community should stand by them, because that is the only way to resist the return to barbarism and prevent the demolition of the UN. President Bush, it was stressed, has no right to sign the ‘death certificate’ of the UN, imitating Hitler and Mussolini who dismantled the League of Nations. But the meeting in Azores sparked deeper worries. One of the major concerns raised addressed relations within the western pact. This Euro-Atlantic schism presaged ‘tectonic’ changes in the international system, argued *Kathimerini* in its leading article (16/02).

In Petros Papakonstantinou's view, what we were faced with was the collapse of the international post-1945 security system, notably the three pillars of the West: NATO, the EU and the UN. But was this a temporary or a permanent phenomenon? Papakonstantinou gave no answer. Neither did he dismiss the 'catastrophic scenario' according to which the USA would continue to 'do away' with the international community by unilaterally invading Syria, Iran and, perhaps, Saudi Arabia. According to the Washington correspondent of *To Vima*, Efstathios Efstathiadis (16-03), the White House has set out to redesign and reshape the geostrategic structure and geopolitical relations in the Middle East and the entire Islamic World. The role that they are forging for themselves is that of the military controller of a region that expands from the Eastern Mediterranean to the borders of India. "America is becoming a clearly *imperialistic power* [emphasis added] – with the political meaning of this concept," the journalist wrote. This was clarified when Efstathiadis pointed out that Colin Powell communicated to all Arab capitals, and to Hosni Mubarrak in particular, that "even if Saddam is removed from power and flees abroad, American forces must and will establish themselves in Iraq".

Writing from the hot-spot of decision-making, Alexis Papachelas (16-02), foreign affairs analyst of *To Vima*, reported, "Washington Hawks are Impatient". In fact, he quoted Richard Perle whispering in Bush's ear: "...the time for action has come, we are already delayed and in danger of losing every credibility". Papachelas reported that this view was also expressed by personalities who were against the war, but who did not wish to perpetuate the climate of indecision and uncertainty for fear of provoking economic damage and of endangering credibility in the Islamic world. In addition, he analysed a new and growing anti-Europeanism in the American capital. Overall, the predominant impression Papachelas got and transmitted was that the "...advance in Iraq, unlike in the cases of Kosovo and Afghanistan, will release the most inconceivable powers and will topple the world system that the Americans themselves chose to establish after World War II." As reminded by George Malouchos (*Kathimerini*, 16-02), this reality, unfortunately, diverted the attention of the European and Greek public away from the fact that on the same day as the Azores meeting, the EU ministers of defence 'coincidentally' gathered in Athens, to finalise the details of the European rapid defence force. However, and despite their good (and symbolic) intentions, the atmosphere in the meetings and discussions of the European ministers, he stressed, was characterised by the 'prevalent presence of a void', the inability of the EU to stop the war.

III. The Attack on Iraq: "Give me Back the Berlin Wall..."

The attack on Iraq caused a near total repudiation among Greeks and the Greek press. Ignoring the rage of the international community, the 'gang' hit Iraq, scattering death and disaster, wrote *Eleftherotypia* on its front page

(20-21/03). "The sky of Baghdad has turned red and even the River Tiger is afraid," wrote the war correspondent of the newspaper, Nicolas Vafiadis (21-03). The central report of *To Vima* was titled "The Attack" and was signed by war correspondent Kostas Vaxevanis. Baghdad, he reported, was thrown into flames, by an attack "which was the greatest fire power ever known in the world in such a short period of time...". The White House, stressed the leading opinion articles of *Eleftherotypia* (20-22/03), had gone beyond all limits, transforming itself into a 'criminal gangster group' against humanity.

The invasion was deadly and barbaric and would poison the world, underlined the leading opinion article of *Kathimerini* (23-02). Washington scattered the 'smell of death' merely because it had the military machinery, not because it needed to protect its interests, it claimed. The chief editor of *Kathimerini*, Antonis Karakousis (23-03), said that we were confronted with a new concept of war that does not allow the weak to defend themselves. It is based on total subjugation to American military power, an unprecedented approach which insults the values, political and human, of our civilisation. It is not war, but "something else, which paralyses human beings and their needs for a peaceful and productive existence...". Such a future is 'murder', wrote columnist Dimitris Kastritiotis (23-03), concluding that he preferred the return of the Berlin Wall and Stalin.

In reality, wrote Giannis Kartalis of *To Vima* (23-03), we were dealing with an illegal war. To support his opinion, he invoked the position of the International Committee of Lawyers, an advisory body to the UN based in Geneva that characterised the war as both illegal and aggressive. He also exposed the rationale of their stipulation about lacking legal basis for the action on Iraq. Even if president Bush invoked the dreaded terrorism and the security of the American nation, the right to self-defence as set out in article 51 of the UN Charter was not applicable in the case of Iraq. Neither did it provide for 'preventive' actions like that deployed against Iraq, which had never attacked the USA or hosted terrorists as had Afghanistan and Al Qaeda. Yet, he claimed, in case of refusal of fresh legitimisation, in 2003, Americans were ready to invoke Decision 1441 as their legal basis for action.

The most significant and positive development against Bush's illegal war, wrote *Kathimerini's* analyst Costas Spiropoulos (23-03), was the mobilisation of citizens in every corner of the world. People were furious with the arrogance of the American leadership and out of this anger, he stressed, a new global civilisation would develop, based on respect for human life, respect for the 'other' and solidarity with the weak and unprotected. The world needs to rethink the principles and structures upon which it operates, added Thanos Oikonomopoulos (*Kathimerini*, 23-03). New alliances and organisations should be established, to protect the weak from the powerful and their 'preposterous' visions for world order and economic neo-liberalism. But who would take the initiative? Could it be the Europeans and the Russians in a common axis that could also include China, against the USA? Certainly, but could the Europeans 'stop the sheriff', asked George Karelias (*Eleftherotypia*, 21-03), and, after

all, which Europeans? Those who supported Bush or those who supported the Franco-German axis? What about American public opinion? Would it be able to stop Bush or would the psychology of September 11th provide the reactionary and arrogant neo-conservatives of the White House with the excuse to continue their 'deadly project'? What should the international community hope for, he wondered. A quick end to the war, or a long and difficult war for the Americans? Logically, we should support the first option, as it would mean less bloodshed for the Iraqis. The second option, however, as he stressed, would not only 'teach the arrogant superpower a lesson', but would also provide vindication, a kind of *nemesis* to the international community.

From Washington, Alexis Papachelas of *To Vima* reported (23-03) the longing of the White House to see the end of the war. His report was entitled "After the War" and subtitled: "In the White House all agree that the sooner we finish the better." He reported that in-fighting had already started over the spoils of war. The key issue was what Iraq would look like after the end of the invasion and which part of it would be controlled by the USA. The prevalent worry was that Iran might take control over the Shiites of the South, while Turkey might push for its claims to invade and control the Northern, Kurdish, region. *To Vima's* frame of reporting the war was: "The Message", subtitled "The New pro-American Arch" and was essentially about disagreement in Washington as to how lucrative contracts would be shared out to supportive firms, enabling them to exploit the re-construction of Iraq after the end of the war. Significantly, the hawks stood for the total exclusion of France and Germany from any contracts or gains. Such exclusion, wrote professor Manolis Dretakis, indicated that we were entering into a neo-colonial era (*Eleftherotypia* 20-03) and only in this way would the 'trans-national criminal elite' be able to control the world militarily and economically. The issue in Iraq, was not democratisation, but the control of its energy resources. This can only be guaranteed by the presence of puppet governments in the wider Middle East area, stressed political analyst Takis Fotopoulos (*Eleftherotypia*, 22-03).

Stavros Ligeros, leading diplomatic editor of *Kathimerini* (23-03) had similar views. The war in Iraq, he argued, is different from that in Afghanistan: "...the aim is not to discover and exterminate cells of Islamic terrorism. This is more pervasive. It aims to radically transform the geopolitical landscape of the broader Middle East area. Iraq is merely the first link in a sequence of actions and will serve as a base for the future phases of America's 'crusade'." This may be a plausible scenario, yet, according to David Ignatius, writing jointly for the *Washington Post* and for *Kathimerini* (23-03), the White House would soon realise that it could not rely on its military might alone – which might allow the US to prevail in Iraq, but not in the Middle East and globally. The mobilisation of global society, the inability to secure the support of the Security Council and even some of its closer allies (Turkey), revealed that the US was diplomatically isolated and would think twice before embarking upon its next 'shock and awe' military campaign.

Part Three: The Greek Presidency of the EU

With Greece at the helm of the EU (January-June 2003), the events that led to the euro-Atlantic crisis over Iraq and the schism between 'old' and 'new' Europe, complex issues mushroomed. How strong and united is the EU? For how long is the USA going to ignore and underrate the EU? What are the consequences of the enlargement for the EU? The answers given in the Greek press will be examined by focusing on the following events: [1] the Joint Letter of the European 'eight', [2] the veto in NATO (10-02) and the meeting of the 'four' (29-04), [3] the *ad hoc* European Council Meeting on Iraq war (17-18/02) and [4] the March European Council Meeting (19-20/03).

I. The Joint Letter of the 'Eight' or the 'Trojan Horse' within the EU

The EU, stressed *Eleftherotypia* on its front page (31-01), was 'stabbed by eight knives'. The traitors had betrayed the unity (31-01) and the very principles (01-02) of the EU, sacrificing the European unification project to President Bush's 'belligerent' projects. This development, wrote foreign affairs editor Kira Adam (01-02), had put the Greek Prime Minister and President of the EU in a grave position. He had been caught asleep. Journalist Erse Vatou (01-02) stressed that this should not be attributed to the weakness of the Greek Presidency, but rather to the European hawks in favour of the war. In fact, she reminded us, President Chirac and Chancellor Schroeder had issued announcements supporting Kostas Simitis; and in addition the action of the 'eight' faced fierce opposition even within their own countries, with their public opinions strongly opposing the war.

Stamos Zoulas, the leading political analyst of *Kathimerini*, disagreed. The 'eight', he wrote (02-02), had ignored and disdained the Greek Prime Minister and his slogan of a powerful Greece. But the leading opinion article of the journal (02-02) stressed that the crucial issue was not the betrayal by the 'eight', but rather the fact that 'old' and 'new' member states were sceptical about the prospect of a Union under the auspices of the Franco-German axis. This tendency, concurred George Delastic (02-02), explained their wish to form a pro-American faction within the EU, led by Britain – a front against France and Europe that would, for years to come, have 'catalytic' consequences on the function and the orientation of the EU.

Most Greek analysts foresaw that the rupture within the EU would grow to become an erosive cleavage. However, Giannis Kartalis (*To Vima*, 02-02), reminded that the 'coup d'état of the eight', was no thunderstorm in a clear sky, but rather constituted the last and most articulated proof of the EU's impotence to emerge in a unitary and effective fashion, particularly in defence and foreign policy matters. He went on to speculate further as to the causes of this emerging anti-EU movement of the eight. These consisted, first, in the traditional Trojan horse role of the UK which was currently coalesc-

ing with the conservative governments of Spain and Italy which also felt sidelined by the Franco-German axis. Secondly, it is due to the indebtedness of the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary to the US for freeing them from the oppression of the Soviet regime. The element of gratitude towards the US for its support for movements such as Solidarity was also highlighted by Tania Bozaninou (02-02), who reflected on the causes of the 'defection' of the eight. Moreover, she too adopted the appellation 'Trojan horse within the EU' for the 'New Europe' states as they were dubbed by Donald Rumsfeld.

Given this ominous development, the question that prevailed was about the desirability of the enlargement. These issues recurred widely. Delastic focused on this *problematique*, by asking if it was a mistake for the EU to enlarge (*Kathimerini*, 16-02). Likewise, Giannis Pretenteris argued that the declaration of the eight threatened a 'new European civil war' (*To Vima*, 02-02). "Only President De Gaulle, who in the 1960s rightly resisted the enlargement of the European Community to include Britain, foresaw this scenario. The end of the European integration project was fixed in 1973, with Britain's accession", claimed Professor Panagiotis Tzamalikos (*Eleftherotypia*, 15-02).

II. The Veto in 'Outdated' NATO and the 'High Risk Initiative' of the 'Four'

The veto of France, Germany and Belgium in NATO received considerable attention in the Greek press. The leading article of *Eleftherotypia* (11-02) focused on the risk of the transfer of the Euro-Atlantic conflict to within the NATO alliance. It advocated that the White House had no prerogative to draw NATO into the war by using the pretext that the North Atlantic Alliance should defend Turkey in case of a war with Iraq. This approach was adopted by several commentators and was sometimes expressed in harsher tones. The veto of the three countries (France, Germany and Belgium) aimed simply to prevent the launching of the war through the back door, maintained Stavros Ligeros (*Kathimerini*, 16-02). Richardos Someritis apprehended that Bush had set in motion the political splitting-up of Europe and the conversion of NATO from a defence Treaty into merely a subordinate collaborator in his preventive wars (*To Vima* 16-02). The NATO pact, however, cannot possibly undertake such operations since it is a defence alliance and no member of it has been attacked or invaded by Iraq. Hence he concluded, for every logical individual "the problem is not the alliance or friendship with the most powerful state on earth. The problem is dependence and subjugation."

Marios Ploritis, the acclaimed pundit of *To Vima*, chose to show up the political cynicism and hypocrisy that characterised this affair (16-02). "So, despite worldwide protests and condemnations the war on Iraq will be launched", he wrote. "But whose side are we on. Are we with the pacifists or with the warmongers?" In so doing, he put his finger on the wound: "the [Greek] government is rightly in favour of a political and peaceful solution. Yet, concurrently, the same government covertly supports the American strat-

egy and policies towards a 'preventive' attack against Iraq. If Americans desire *Souda* [an important port, naval base with a nearby American naval base in Crete] we give them *Souda*...If they want frigates in the Persian Gulf, we give them frigates with our good wishes..." And so Ploritis continued in his mocking tone against the "government that officially condemns the war and unofficially supports it."

The crucial fact is that NATO is divided. Worse still, it has no purpose and role in the post-cold war phase, insisted Giorgos Malouchos (23-02). The fact is that even if Europeans wished to stand by the USA through the alliance, they had neither the military nor the technological capacity to do so. Americans knew this and behaved as if they had already abandoned NATO. Did Europeans desire such a development? If they did, were they capable of providing themselves with an independent military and defence capability? The same journalist repeated this question in May, on the occasion of the initiative of the 'four', (France, Germany, Belgium and Holland) to convene a Summit Meeting in Brussels to discuss the defence autonomy of Europe. The challenge, he claimed was extremely tough and he made his point with an array of questions: Could the initiative be expanded to include the '25' of the EU? If it could not, what was the purpose of the meeting? How would this initiative affect and relate to developments within the EU, notably the issue of the rapid reaction force? Was the support of Britain not crucial for this initiative (*Kathimerini*, 04-05)?

The correspondent of *Eleftherotypia* in Brussels, Costas Moschonas (29/04), reported that Britain would not support the initiative because of fear that it would weaken NATO. He also revealed that Britain, Italy and Spain demanded that the Greek Presidency and the Greek Prime Minister not participate in the Summit Meeting of the 'four', even as an observer. Interestingly enough, the same imperative was also put to Xavier Solana, the EU's foreign policy representative! Bearing this reality in mind, Petros Papakonstantinou of *Kathimerini* (04-5) described the initiative as a 'game of high risk'. If it was limited to the 'four' it would inevitably end as the 'grave of grandiose European ideas'. If, however, Paris and Berlin succeeded in attracting a large number of countries either in the near future or when Aznar and Berlusconi stepped down from power, Britain would face a 'painful dilemma': to resign from its 'special relationship' with the USA or 'stick by it', condemning the island to isolation from developments in the EU.

But this was mere wishful thinking, wrote the foreign affairs analyst of *Kathimerini*, Costas Iordanidis (04-05). What one needed to consider was the real motive behind the initiative of the 'four'. Did they desire to break away from the USA and NATO, or were they only interested in enhancing their bargaining position against Washington?

III. The ad hoc Council: Brussels Cocktail and Delicate Balances

Following the veto by the three members (Germany, France and Belgium) within NATO and the declaration of the 'eight', the Greek Presidency convened an *ad hoc* European Council Summit Meeting in Brussels to discuss and, if possible, forge, a new common European position. It failed to do so, achieving only a lowest common denominator position between the fifteen member states, which *Eleftherotypia* (18-02) described on its front page as the 'Brussels cocktail'. The leading article of the paper (18-02) maintained that the EU juggled two extremes in its attempt to maintain a balance. It commanded Saddam to provide the evidence, thus leaving open the possibility of war. At the same time, it stressed that it desired a peaceful solution to the crisis. In so doing, the Greek Presidency opted for a compromise and not for a common position that would denounce American belligerency outright, argued *Eleftherotypia's* correspondent in Brussels, Kira Adam (18-02). But the Greek government could not do otherwise, responded Michalis Moronis, columnist of *Eleftherotypia* (17-02). Both sides of the Atlantic, he stressed, were undergoing a serious crisis in their relationships; it would not lead to their final 'divorce' because their common interests were far greater than their differences.

Giannis Prententeris approached the matter differently. In his attempt to break isolation Tony Blair had addressed a letter to the other fourteen heads of state urging their support and adoption of his line of action. This initiative created an oppressive climate for the Greek presidency, which came under diplomatic and media pressure. In Britain, suspicions were raised that the Greek initiative resonated unduly positively with the Franco-German axis. In fact, Prententeris reminded us that the *Financial Times* went so far as to insert a wedge within the Greek government itself by presenting Giorgos Papandreou, the Greek Foreign Minister as the man of the Americans in Greece⁸ and by portraying the premier Kostas Simitis as 'swimming' along with Schroeder and Chirac (*To Vima*, 16-02). But Antonis Karakousis reflected that the position of Simitis was rational, given the country's political culture after 1974, (the year when the Greek junta fell) which was not simply characterised by anti-Americanism, but also by the development of a strongly favourable inclination towards European integration, and by forging close ties with the EU core. This was a natural option, if not the logical course of action. Nevertheless, it did not follow that Greece could allow its national security to be endangered; that depended upon the USA and NATO (*Kathimerini*, 23-02).

In the view of Thanos Oikonomopoulos, Greece ought to pursue a pragmatic policy which could only be procured by maintaining a delicate balance between the USA and the EU. The country's future lay undeniably within the EU, yet that future seemed distant and far ahead, as under the circumstances the EU could hardly secure or guarantee a 'stable present' for itself (*Kathimerini*, 23-02). Professor George Koumantos, reminded us that the EU

had not yet decided on its orientation. What did it really intend to be, a Union or an Economic Community? Given this, it would be 'preposterous' to argue that Britain or the 'eight' disdained the Greek Presidency. Even if Germany or France held the EU Presidency during this crisis, Europe could not have stopped the war or 'discipline' the European states that stood by the US, he claimed (*Kathimerini*, 23-02).

IV. The March European Council: a Paralysed or a Hard Core Europe?

Shortly before the outbreak of the war, the EU held a European Council Meeting in Brussels (19-20/03). Again, and despite the good intentions of Kostas Simitis, the EU could not overcome the divisions within its ranks. In fact, the common declaration of the '15' went so far as to express that they wished to enhance the Euro-Atlantic relationship, which remained a fundamental pillar of the EU. In the face of this development, George Karelias, (*Eleftherotypia*, 19-03), suggested that the EU was the second victim of the USA, after the UN. Kostas Angelopoulos, columnist of *Kathimerini* (23-03), wrote that the USA wanted the EU to follow global developments from the sidelines, in a weak condition of division and inability to actively intervene in the handling of international affairs. He wondered whether this could go on forever but instead of answering he claimed that the EU should not remain 'paralysed', passively accepting world conditions made by the USA.

But how? According to the leading article in *Eleftherotypia* (19-03) the right policy for those states that strongly opposed the war should have been to unite against the 'puppet' states of the USA. In foreign policy affairs, as in the case of the euro zone, the EU should develop a hard core and promote a foreign policy in line with its principles, without compromises or subjugation to the USA. The journal warned of the dangers and the stakes while proposing a vision for European integration. This idea was also taken up by George Delastic: the hard core should be limited to a few countries with a high level of commitment and cohesion in all policy areas. Both old and new members of the EU refusing to commit themselves to participating in the European integration project should remain outside the hard core and should instead restrict themselves to economic cooperation (*Kathimerini*, 23-03).

Professor Kostas Vergopoulos argued that this was hardly the crucial issue. First, Europe, despite its contradictory and 'dirty' past, had survived in the post-1945 world through the military umbrella of NATO. Second, member states hesitating to be part of the hard core fear the hegemonic role of France and Germany. The USA cannot be blamed for this. In reality, he insisted, countries that stand by the USA aim to reduce the power of the Franco-German axis, so as to rescue or increase their national sovereignty within the EU framework. Conversely, the Franco-German axis itself was evidently using the war in Iraq in order to reduce or counteract the power of the USA. Thus, the issue was not Iraq, but the need to exist independently as Europe-

ans, and consequently, the hard core argument was not as innocent as it looked (*Eleftherotypia*, 14-03).

With the contributions of this final set of analysts the nexus of problems is elucidated in an in-depth and over-arching way rather than polarised, and a Manichean pro-European or anti-American framework is provided. This rationale allows us to view both the greater power networks, but also subordinate levels of networks of powers where controversies take place and agendas cross lines.

Part Four: The Dialogue among Academics, Politicians, Diplomats and Citizens

We now proceed to present a significant segment of the public debate which surfaced in the press. A lively, inquisitive and multi-sourced debate was generated in the country as an alert civil society communicated its critical and oppositional views. Emphasis was on the historical perspective and the war itself. A *problematique* was produced as to the immediate and long-term impact of the war on Iraq, not only for that country but also for the EU's common foreign and defence policies and the very future of the Union. Distinguished politicians, academics, diplomats and respected journalists initiated this serious dialogue. It is, however, worth stressing that the Greek press hosted articles written by 25 influential analysts from Europe, the USA and the rest of the world, so that Greek readers were offered a wide-ranging and pluralistic account of the causes and the implications of the war. The central themes of this dialogue were: [a] the "New American Way", [b] the motives and limits of American revisionism, and [c] the challenges and contradictions of the EU.

I. The 'New American Way'

Professor Constantine Tsoukalas (*To Vima*, 23-02) argued that Washington's insistence on invading Iraq was merely the result of the underlying paradigm shift in American foreign policy in the post-Cold War period. This paradigm, which he termed ethical imperialism, creates, in the absence of communism, new enemies'. These are to be found among prospective terrorists or other global actors that threaten the 'self-evident good' of the USA and the self-appointed ruler of law and order in the global (security) system. Professor Alexis Heraclides remarked that the present inhabitant of the White House was hostage to the ideas of a small, closed, neo-conservative team, which advocated aggressive military domination by the USA – a policy condensed in the term 'Machopolitik'. Within such a framework, international law becomes the rule of the powerful and not the rule of the weak (*Ta Nea*, 27-03). These ideas echoed the philosopher Jacques Derrida's view that the

logic of the powerful prevails, and Heraclides pointed to the relentless search for 'rogue' states since September 11th (*To Vima*, 09/02). Ulrich Beck's perspective, as aired in *Kathimerini*, broadly concurred with these views. President Bush's campaign against 'evil' had managed to replace the logic of 'make law, not war', with 'make war, not law' (12-01).

Giannis Roumbatis, formerly a member of the European Parliament, considered however that this development was not at all new and could be traced back to the old semi-religious ideological discussion about the destiny of the American nation. That ideology divides the world systematically between good and bad, leaving little room for compromise and dialogue (*Imerissia*, 26/03). According to the British sociologist Ralph Dahrendorf, however, the issue was not *Pax Americana* or the aggressive transformation of the USA but, rather, the defence of the West and its values. The USA, he insisted, addressing proponents of the Franco-German axis, was at the heart of these values "...and if they are attacked, then we are all attacked" (*To Vima* 24/01).

Professor Antonis Maniatakis of Aristotle University disagreed with such views, echoing Samuel Huntington's prophecies. According to him the USA is an ahistorical country, a nation without historical memory. Since it lacks a proper national history, it tends to ignore the history of other nations. What it does have, instead, is the 'American way of life', which it insists on 'selling' to the world or on forcing it on the world through a cultural and racist war that leads inevitably to clashes of civilisations (*Eleftherotypia*, 17-04).

II. The Motives and Limits of American Revisionism

Efstathios Efstathiadis (*To Vima*, 02-03) insisted that we were confronted with a new phase in world history, a phase in which the USA was out to dominate. The plan was prepared in the mid-1990s. Clinton rejected it. Bush accepted it. Why? The answer was provided by Moses Litsis: in order to control the petroleum reserves of the Arab world and OPEC (*Eleftherotypia*, 20-02). Professor Theodore Coulombis added more targets, classifying them in a scale. First: to intimidate those countries which dared question America's hegemony; second in order to project, with the Presidential elections of 2004 in mind, the power of America. Third: Bush aimed to take revenge on behalf of his father; and, fourth, in order to relocate the centre of the conflict in the Middle East but away from the Israeli-Palestinian problem in the wider Arab world (*Kathimerini*, 09-02). Aris Roumbos, a researcher, argued that, with the war in Afghanistan and the invasion of Iraq, the USA aimed to locate itself at the centre of the broader Middle Eastern and Asian region so as to contain its 'peer competitor' China (*Eleftherotypia*, 30-03).

Leonidas Kirkos, an eminent left-wing politician, concurred with this projection, but added that America's determination to impose its leadership, derived from its feelings of 'suffocation' within the post-1945 international system. Washington refused to be restricted and bound up by the collective

responsibilities and obligations of the international security system (*Ta Nea*, 11-02). The rationale of the feelings of suffocation of the super-power alludes of course to the Hitlerite ideology of *lebensraum*. This reality, argued Professor Coloumbis, leads patently to an American 'revisionism' in the doctrine guiding its foreign policy which not only questions the usefulness of international organisations, but also proceeds to substitute them with unilateral doctrines of humanitarian intervention and preventive war. But these are extremely dangerous for the stability of the international system (*Kathimerini*, 13-04). This shift of doctrine frightened many observers in Greece. According to Professor Thanos Veremis, such revisionism is inevitably linked with "...catastrophic consequences in the relations of the West with the Islamic world" (*Kathimerini*, 16-02). Professor Dimitris Konstas put across the same message in different terms: what we were dealing with here was an autocratic ruler (a *hegemon*) going out of his way in order to impose his will both on the 'natives' and on the international system itself (*Eleftherotypia*, 06-02). Yes, but 'King Kong' would end up without any friends, replied Alexis Papachelas (*Vima*, 13-04).

Apprehensive voices from within the political elite of the USA appeared in the Greek press, not only casting doubt, but expressing sober and critical scepticism about the impact of Bush's course of action. Jimmy Carter, ex-President of the USA, maintained that unilateralist strategies harm the credibility of American values (*Kathimerini*, 14-03). In the same vein, the columnist of *The Guardian*, Michael Gordon, hosted in *Kathimerini* (25-01) argued that the policies and visions of the White House are not to be trusted because they lead to ruins instead of hope and change. President Bush insults the democratic tradition of the founding fathers of American democracy, concurred Professor Spilios Paspiliopoulos (*Eleftherotypia*, 26-01); his 'culture of power' should not go unpunished, added Professor Antonis Predimas (*Eleftherotypia*, 24-03). Professor Zoe Constantopoulou agreed (*Eleftherotypia*, 03-02).

Pavlos Tsimas, columnist of *Ta Nea*, opted for a neglected aspect, arguing that the 'other' America is part of the solution to the problem (08-02, 12-04). Tsimas stressed that the first hurdle arose from the interdependence and globalisation of today's world. The second problem arose from the Middle East condition; democracy there would always be a myth unless the Palestinian issue was resolved and the Arabs were offered equality in decision-making.

The synthesis of this diverse public discourse transmitted the message that the USA urgently needed a strategic U-turn that would lead it back to principled world politics.

III. Challenges and Contradictions in the European Union

George Kapopoulos, columnist of *Imerissia*, mentioned that the schism in Europe clearly revealed that the EU did not have the luxury of developing its own world strategy. Meanwhile, the power of the USA, in combination

with the functional challenges provoked by the Union's enlargement, would delay the painful road to independence on world issues (*Imerissia*, 25-01). Fortunately then, for the moment, the Union had avoided the inevitable: suicide, as was argued by diplomat Viron Theodoropoulos (*Imerissia*, 22-03). Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the governing party, PASOK, Theodore Pangalos, asked that the Union not delay any longer in resolving the painful dilemma: submission or independence from the USA (*To Vima*, 02-02). But this dilemma should have been dealt with long ago, stressed Richardos Someritis. What is left for the EU, he added ironically, was merely to watch and mourn its death (*To Vima*, 15-02).

Other observers took a constructive approach. Michalis Moronis argued that the Iraq war offered an opportunity to create a 'political' Europe (albeit one restricted only to core member states) because the war had increased the political and bargaining position of the EU (*Eleftherotypia*, 15-02). Professor Panos Kazakos (*Kathimerini*, 02-03) emphasised that the anti-war demonstrations in Europe de-legitimised both the politics of the USA and those European governments which support the belligerent American vision. In a more contemplative mood, Professor Joseph Wheeler reminded us that power is a relative entity/quantity. It involves impressions. Thus, because of awesome European opposition, the 'mighty' USA could not convince close allies such as Turkey, Mexico and Chile to follow its course. Moreover, it had lost the battle of the debate in the UN, a real victory in the age of *Pax Americana*, which emphasised that the Davids of this world would defy and challenge the powerful Goliath (*To Vima*, 23-03). This approach faced the global tug-of-war in a balanced, long-term manner, suggesting that popular political victories should not be underestimated.

Yet another approach to this major conflict emerged with the analyses of those who did not blame America either for the international impasse or for the rift in NATO and in the EU. Notably, Professor Giannis Voulgaris argued, forcibly, that the schism in the 'democratic lung' of the West was not attributed by all uniquely to the USA (*Ta Nea*, 15-03). Meanwhile, Nikos Gotzias, a Foreign Ministry expert, reminded us that the EU itself does not always abide by the laws of the UN although it is readily law-abiding whenever the interests of the Union, or those of certain member-states, are endangered. Furthermore, given the asymmetry of power between the USA and the EU, it is logical, for the latter to 'rush' to the UN more often than will Washington (*Imerissia*, February-March).

Interestingly enough, Gotzias went so far as to question the underlying rationale of both Greek and European anti-Americanism and to dismiss the stereotypes that it created. Hence, according to him, the issue is not that President Bush and his associates are stupid. If we believe that, we neglect that Washington manipulated and exploited to its advantage the divisions within the EU and in so doing we fail to take into consideration those structures and relations within Europe which intentionally delay the integration project. Thus, he concluded accurately that, in reality, Europeans are united in fear and di-

vided in action. Professor Loukas Tsoukalis (*Kathimerini*, 26-01) said that another truth about the paralysing impasse was that the EU was not yet ready to take the big step of breaking away from its military and NATO reliance on the USA. But if it were to move in that direction, it should not, according to Professor Nikos Mouzelis, ignore the significant role the USA played in the reconstruction of Europe after 1945 (*To Vima*, 26-01). In any case, the Union had finally to realise that the foreign policy of America in the 21st century was in conflict with the interests of Europe. This realisation necessarily entailed that the 'Thatcherite' logic and policies which were readily adopted by EU institutions and which operate only within a free market, should be rejected. The Union should desire its autonomy from the USA and develop a new sense of direction, stressed Professor Dimitris Chrisochou (*Eleftherotypia*, 06-04).

Part Five: Assessing the Mediation of the War in Greece

The aim of this article was threefold. It was, firstly, to analyse how the events leading to the war in Iraq were reported by the Greek press; secondly, to review how the EU's weak stances over the crisis were dealt with through the lenses of the Greek press, as it was Greece that held the EU Presidency from January to June 2003; and thirdly, to explore the energetic and multi-sourced debate comprising articles by both Greek and foreign analysts. These non-press contributions elucidated intricate aspects of the events but also reflected the perspectives of society at large about this war.⁹

The outstanding elements of this press coverage are the common and strong oppositional stance against 'the illegitimate war'; the fact that the press reflects broadly the views of all agencies of a proper tripartite, political communication;¹⁰ and the salience of the Greek government. Greece ranks among the main actors in this affair and is focused on exhaustively. The Greek presidency receives as much attention as Washington, London and Baghdad. Both news coverage and debate material expose the complex role, the challenges, the traps, but also the historic responsibility of the country. Wars are instances of extreme polarisation. However, this was an extraordinary war which raised massive world-wide outcry and unprecedented denunciations. A critical assessment of journalism in liberal democracies must be grounded on the fundamental standards of the professional codes and on constitutional values. These involve truth-seeking, impartiality, accuracy, pluralistic accounts and ensuring that no significant news items are omitted. The implementation of such values in journalistic practice are credentials of good press work and we assess the merits of the Greek press on the basis of such premises.

Although this crisis touched upon significant national security issues, the Greek press did not refrain from criticising the government, even though criticism is more explicit in some journals such as *Eleftherotypia*, *Kathimerini* and *To Vima* than in others. There are a number of instances of blaming

Greek policy. The press did not play down or disguise the fact that Greece followed a double standard policy in that it, both denounced the war and aggression, and let its ports and one of its frigates be used for military action against Iraq. All three journals reflected an explicit anti-war discourse while also proposing ideas for both reactive and pro-active policies. *Eleftherotypia* espoused a vigorous editorial policy against the war and for peace. Conversely, *To Vima* marked a distinct shift of stance over this war while *Kathimerini* held a middle ground. Hence the positions taken now by the three journals were much closer than in past conflicts. This convergence derived from remarkable positional changes, both across newspapers and individual writers. Indeed, this development marks a clear change in comparison to reporting of previous crises.¹¹ The war unfolded at four levels: [1] actual invasion with bombing and fighting, [2] the diplomatic level, [3] the secret service level, and [4] the communicative level. Readers of the Greek press became aware of this complexity while noticing that serious efforts were made to cover all these aspects of modern warfare completely.

News material, commentary and opinion items require different handling of the premise of pluralism. As regards matters of fact, every event or pseudo-event that the USA and the UK created or participated in, were covered in full, often with a multiplicity of sources, by each examined medium. As regards commentary and opinion, the spectrum of participating commentators was exceptionally broad. In commentary, what prevails is a reasoned subjectivity. Most comments gravitated towards a repudiation of war action. The overwhelming majority of contributors positioned themselves against the war and any attempts to justify it ideologically. Analysis and debate elucidated the causes, the motives, the driving forces, the justifications or the imperatives of this war in incisive ways. Analyses varied, and provided original perspectives on the implications of the war, as regards international relations, the rule of law, the future of the EU and the position of Greece. In key controversies, the perspective of the opponents was presented and commented on, more often negatively. News and analysis included historical projections conferring comparability and insight on complex issues. Hence, whether we view journals individually or *en groupe* we find that they functioned pluralistically. Reports and analysis originated from a variety of sources. Many single issues were multi-sourced as journals relied for both news and commentary on: [a] the journals' own correspondents, [b] other channels including international sources such as the BBC, *Deutsche Welle*, CNN and other relevant international journals, [c] news agencies, [d] relevant diplomatic sources [e] independent eye-witnesses. It is noteworthy that each of the examined journals maintains editorial cooperation with major international media. *To Vima* cooperates with a selection of journals while, *Kathimerini* cooperates with the *Financial Times* and the *New York Times* and *Eleftherotypia* with *Le Monde Diplomatique*. During the war a lot of news and commentary flowed from these foreign sources. In spite of feelings of intimidation, bitterness or outrage, journalists, civil society analysts and opinion formers published daring

and insightful contributions. Overall, these created a fuller picture of what happened, why and where it is taking us. Despite near total condemnation of the war, we trace efforts towards a balanced, *pro et contra* analysis into the rationales of war protagonists and their collaborators.

The attack on Iraq was seen as an extraordinary war, but the war *per se* was seen as just one aspect of a more complex phenomenon. Hence, the war was approached predominantly through the lenses of the European presidency which involved at least a dual, if not a multiple, thematology. The view that war-makers were also attacking the unity of the EU occupied a lot of space. In this light, the Greek government was playing in two tableaux: a supranational and a national. On the one hand, the Simitis government had to bear in mind the presidency of the EU and express the quasi-unitary voice of Europe and, on the other hand, it had to defend national interest. As there is still no common defence and foreign policy in the EU this task is vital for a country in the geopolitical position of Greece.

Acting at the high political and supranational level, Greece condemned the war, while at the internal and more pragmatically pressing level, it accommodated the irresistible demands imposed on it by its allies USA and UK. Such ambivalence crystallises government action, but, allegedly, also largely reflects civil society and popular sentiment – Greeks feel relieved as long as a minimum *modus vivendi* can be maintained with the superpower, and their reactions were targeted against the ultra-right-wing elite, not against the American people.¹² This reveals a hope that this dark phase will pass without causing irreparable damage.

Yet the underlying rationale is that non-confrontation with a perceived guilty party boils down to a policy of appeasement. On the supranational level Greece acted proactively, firstly in defence of the integration project of Europe by promulgating a commitment towards a common foreign and defence policy, and secondly by positioning itself in favour of the EU core countries in the eventuality of a definitely erosive trend winning, and thirdly by supporting the existing international relations system of values and institutions and the UN in particular. Concurrently, acting on the national level, it exhibited a more moderate and accommodating stance.

Since the war caused havoc, strife and conflicts within the EU, the prevalent opinion was that the attack on Iraq aimed at scampering the integration process of Europe. The debate that was sparked off addressed the EU's prospects for integration. This discourse focused on an openly threatening contingency, but it was also due to the conjuncture of the Greek EU presidency. It is significant that more analysts were concerned with the future of the EU than with Greece. This is not necessarily a paradox. It rather reveals a high level of identification with the European project on the part of Greek elite, if not by the majority of Greeks, suggesting that national interest is largely incorporated into European interest. In assessing the government's strategy as presidency of the EU, and its challenges, it was appreciated that, despite very negative odds, the Greek presidency had circumvented the impasse and

alleviated the negative climate of the split, leading to a compromise, albeit a thin one. Greece constructed a policy of being part of the solution to the impasse rather than a party to the problem.¹³ In vetting the Greek presidency, the press was positive, more supportive than challenging. On its part, the Greek government was concerned, not only about the resolution of the problems posed, but also about the image that it projected in performing this role, both nationally and internationally.¹⁴

The war on Iraq epitomised an extreme, arguably existential, crisis. Such an experience puts fundamental values and principles in jeopardy. The vantage point of the entire Greek press in view of this danger was that of defending a principled international relations regime. Ethics and the principle of equality were invoked incessantly, even though pragmatic and 'realist school' approaches were used for explanations. In so doing the Greek press stood firmly in favour of all international institutions and the respect of international law. It advocated for political action in favour of institutions such as the UN. For example, when UN Secretary General Kofi Annan was invited to participate in the *ad hoc* EU summit meeting in Brussels, the symbolism and timing of this action conveyed a strong message about the desired global regime. Nevertheless, certain political and academic writers intervened publicly and proactively to stress the need for creating new supranational global institutions.

Consequently, they raised the issue of a new international governance and of institutions that can face the challenges of the future. This necessarily entails a view that existing institutions are by now inadequate to play this role. Overall, the highlighted issues of legitimacy, fair play, pluralism and national *versus* broader collective interest reveal a press and a polity that commit themselves radically to diplomatic solutions and peace. These stances, moreover, expose a proactive political and mediating approach.

An insightful debate unfolded throughout the examined period. The press, acting under the pressure of a unanimous popular anti-war voice, welcomed into its space – in an unusually open fashion – members of academia and organised civil society but, also, ordinary citizens who participated in the debate. Such broad accessibility to the press is uncommon under normal circumstances,¹⁵ and signals the public's increased power in historically crucial times. The debate was forceful, interesting and insightful, but also critical and incisive. It derived from the unprecedented waves of indignation manifest in public opinion which could well be described as *vox populi, vox dei*. The breadth of participation and the scope of the issues raised turned it into a veritable 'democratic breath-taking' which was both a cause and a result of the power of public opinion.

Political communication at its best is the outcome of the interplay between politicians, journalists and citizens.¹⁶ Public opinion is the synthesis of a multi-loop, feed-back interplay. Crises, conflicts and war call for debate in the public forums, for exchanging ideas and views on handling tricky situations, in a wider way than is usual. Crucial decisions and challenging policy-making

call for disagreement, controversy and expression of ideas. Exploring this case, we found that the former paradigm obtained. Various interacting agents, indeed all three kinds of agency involved in a robust political communication context, were manifest: [a] political actors, [b] the press reflecting and reviewing the latter's policy and conduct, but also, [c] civil society with its own views and stances. They all interacted and influenced each other in a dynamic way in regard to the war on Iraq, but also in the face of the multiple crises that the war unleashed. In western democracies the traditional triangle of political communication is usually dominated by the media. Access to media space for members of civil society is controlled and extremely limited and consequently the public is either absent or its role is passive. On this occasion, this framework was overturned. This is perhaps the nearest point to the ideal of the public sphere,¹⁷ perhaps because it is more suited to times of turmoil or restructuring and times for transferring allegiances or changing alliances. At times such as these the 'spiral of silence'¹⁸ is broken, and the Manichean logic that 'those who are not with us are against us' is dismissed.

Notes

1. According to polls referred in 'Kyriakatiki Eleftherotypia' of 13-04-2003, 95 % of Greeks were against the war while 1 % were in favour.
2. The analysis concentrates on the daily centre-left *Eleftherotypia* and the weeklies *To Vima* and *Kathimerini*. The former is part of Greece's strongest media conglomerate (the Lambrakis Corporation) and represents the centre and social democratic forces of the country. The latter is part of the Alafouzos conglomerate and is seen as the conservative paper of Greece, enjoying a high level of respect for its analyses. In the run-up to the war, these three papers mobilized substantial forces and staff, equipping themselves for comprehensive coverage. Journalists, foreign correspondents, reporters and foreign affairs analysts brought in a huge amount of material – news items, reports, features and analytic articles – depicting the atmosphere of war preparations, apprehension and strife.
3. Evidence suggests that the CIA was implicated in the setting up of the junta dictatorships both in Greece (1967) and in Cyprus (1974). For an explicit account of the historical background to Greek stances in the previous conflicts see Kaitatzi-Whitlock et al. (2004) in Nohrstedt & Ottosen (2004) *US and the Others*. Göteborg: Nordicom. See also Kanelopoulos & Frangonikolopoulos, 1995.
4. The Gulf war, the war on Yugoslavia (Kosovo) and the 2003 invasion of Iraq all took place between February and May.
5. "The result," Kiesling continued, "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." Published throughout the world, notably in *Eleftherotypia* and in the *New York Times*, 27/02/03. See attachment for the letter in extenso.
6. According to Max Hastings former editor of the Daily Telegraph "journalism is always conducted against a background of official deceit" As a result "Hutton's charitable vision of our rulers flies in the face of experience" (Hastings, Guardian Weekly, February 5-11, 2004:13)

7. The point of professor Konostas was absolutely vindicated. See Nicholas Watt et al. 'Iraq WMD inquiry forced on Blair':1, and, Julian Borger, 'It's the Intelligence deficit, Stupid':6, both on *Guardian Weekly*, February 5-11. See also statements by Robin Cook (08/02/2004) that T. Blair knew that there existed no weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq. He also requested the new Committee led by Butler enquiring the quality and the credibility of intelligence to explain why such a vital piece of information was not comprised in any of the three reports assessing the situation of Iraq's weapons.
8. The fact that the then foreign minister George Papandreou is an American citizen was discussed broadly in the Greek press in relationship to alleged tensions with the Prime Minister Costas Simitis about respective pro-American /pro-European positions.
9. See for example Sotiris Dalis, 2003.
10. That is that content originates from three types of sources: purely journalistic texts, political agency contributions, and academic – civil society inputs.
11. This can be seen in previous press coverage analyses in Greece. See Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2002, Kaitatzi-Whitlock et al., (2004).
12. Katzilakis, 2003.
13. This strategy was persevered with, successfully it appears, in the case of the Kosovo – Serbia conflict.
14. The Greek government commissioned a study monitoring its international image during the presidency. See Demertzis, 2003.
15. Goldenberg, 1984, McManus, 1994, MacGregor, 1997, McCombs, Maxwell, 1981.
16. Habermas, 1989, MacNair, 1995.
17. Habermas, 1989.
18. Noelle-Neumann, 1984.

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Appendix

U.S. Diplomat John Brady Kiesling
Letter of Resignation, to:
Secretary of State Colin L. Powell

ATHENS | Thursday 27 February 2003

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing you to submit my resignation from the Foreign Service of the United States and from my position as Political Counselor in U.S. Embassy Athens, effective March 7. I do so with a heavy heart. The baggage of my upbringing included a felt obligation to give something back to my country. Service as a U.S. diplomat was a dream job. I was paid to understand foreign languages and cultures, to seek out diplomats, politicians, scholars and journalists, and to persuade them that U.S. interests and theirs fundamentally coincided. My faith in my country and its values was the most powerful weapon in my diplomatic arsenal.

It is inevitable that during twenty years with the State Department I would become more sophisticated and cynical about the narrow and selfish bureaucratic motives that sometimes shaped our policies. Human nature is what it is, and I was rewarded and promoted for understanding human nature. But until this Administration it had been possible to believe that by upholding the policies of my president I was also upholding the interests of the American people and the world. I believe it no longer.

The policies we are now asked to advance are incompatible not only with American values but also with American interests. Our fervent pursuit of war with Iraq is driving us to squander the international legitimacy that has been America's most potent weapon of both offense and defense since the days of Woodrow Wilson. We have begun to dismantle the largest and most effective web of international relationships the world has ever known. Our current course will bring instability and danger, not security.

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 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, this Administration has chosen to make terrorism a domestic political tool, enlisting a scattered and largely defeated Al Qaeda as its bureaucratic ally. 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 do to ourselves. Is the Russia of the late Romanovs really our model, a selfish, superstitious empire thrashing toward self-destruction in the name of a doomed status quo?

We should ask ourselves why we have failed to persuade more of the world that a war with Iraq is necessary. We have over the past two years done too much to assert to our world partners that narrow and mercenary U.S. interests override the cherished values of our partners. Even where our aims were not in question, our consistency is at issue. The model of Afghanistan is little comfort to allies wondering on what basis we plan to rebuild the Middle East, and in whose image and interests. Have we indeed become blind, as Russia is blind in Chechnya, as Israel is blind in the Occupied Territories, to our own advice, that overwhelming military power is not the answer to terrorism? After the shambles of post-war Iraq joins the shambles in Grozny and Ramallah, it will be a brave foreigner who forms ranks with Micronesia to follow where we lead.

We have a coalition still, a good one. The loyalty of many of our friends is impressive, a tribute to American moral capital built up over a century. But our closest allies are persuaded less that war is justified than that it would be perilous to allow the U.S. to drift into complete solipsism. Loyalty should be reciprocal. Why does our President condone the swaggering and contemptuous approach to our friends and allies this Administration is fostering, including among its most senior officials. Has 'oderint dum metuant' really become our motto?

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?

Mr. Secretary, I have enormous respect for your character and ability. You have preserved more international credibility for us than our policy deserves, and salvaged something positive from the excesses of an ideological and self-serving Administration. But your loyalty to the President goes too far. We are straining beyond its limits an international system we built with such toil and treasure, a web of laws, treaties, organizations, and shared values that sets limits on our foes far more effectively than it ever constrained America's ability to defend its interests.

I am resigning because I have tried and failed to reconcile my conscience with my ability to represent the current U.S. Administration. I have confidence that our democratic process is ultimately self-correcting, and hope that in a small way I can contribute from outside to shaping policies that better serve the security and prosperity of the American people and the world we share.

John Brady Kiesling

War Against the Opinion

Johan Gunnarsson

In Spain, millions of people gathered and turned to the streets to protest against an armed attack on Iraq. According to the polls, 80%-90% of the Spanish population disagreed with the pro-war politics of the government. However, one of the major newspapers, *ABC*, argued firmly in favour of war against Iraq, while most of the other major daily newspapers, for example *El País*, *El Mundo* and *La Vanguardia*, argued against it. The conservative *ABC* maintained and strengthened its pro-government position while independent *El País* strongly supported the opposition's demands for a non-military solution to the conflict. This means that during the pre-war phase as well as during the war itself and its aftermath, *ABC* justified the Spanish governments' position, supporting a war against the will of the overwhelming majority of the citizens of democratic Spain. During the same periods *El País* argued against the official standpoint of Spain and of Prime Minister José María Aznar. The purpose of this essay is to investigate how the two newspapers revealed their respective positions.

Politics and Sports

Even though Spaniards turn to the traditional newspapers, such as those mentioned above, for information about what is going on in the world, some of the most popular newspapers are still the sports dailies. According to the statistics from 2002, only *El País* managed to keep the Madrid-based soccer daily *Marca* out of the number one position as the biggest newspaper in Spain. As do its competitors *AS* and *El Mundo Deportivo*, *Marca* covers sports events, focusing on soccer. However, the question of war also reached the sports dailies, at least on March 24. The day before, minutes from facing their rivals from Santander, the entire FC Barcelona soccer team came out against the war, wearing white shirts labelled "*El Barça, per la pau*" – Barça (the team's nickname) for peace – and carrying a giant peace flag to the centre

of the field. All the leading newspapers, such as *El País*, *El Mundo* and the Catalan *La Vanguardia*, reported the protest in their March 24 editions. *La Vanguardia* stated that the team stood “*unidos por una buena causa*”, united for a good cause. More importantly, some of the sports dailies, normally packed exclusively with reports, statistics and facts about soccer and other sports, seized the opportunity not only to report what happened but also to express their opinions. The Catalan *Sport* cried out “*El orgullo de ser del Barça*” (the pride to be a Barça-fan) and “*Este Barça sí que es más que un club*” (this Barça is for sure more than just a club). *El Mundo Deportivo* concluded that FC Barcelona expressed the sentiments of the whole city of Barcelona, saying that Barça was “*el equipo del pueblo*” (the team of the people).

“United for a good cause” could also be the title of the ongoing relationship between Partido Popular and *ABC* on the one hand and the Socialist party PSOE and *El País* on the other. Even though the official standpoint of *El País* is independent, as mentioned above, the newspaper is often recognized as left wing, or ‘broadly pro-Socialist’ in the words of *The Economist* (5 May 2003). From the very beginning, at a time when George W Bush had merely whispered about the possibility of armed conflict with Saddam Hussein, *ABC* aligned itself with Prime Minister José Maria Aznar. At the same time, *El País* allied itself with PSOE and its leader Rodríguez Zapatero. On February 5, *ABC* reported that Aznar would support a new UN resolution, a resolution formulated and, naturally, backed by the USA and the UK. In its editorial on the same day, *ABC*, without judging who was right and who was wrong, expressed a wish for consensus in the UN. Nevertheless, on the following day it was clear who was wrong in the eyes of *ABC*.

Alone or Not?

Together with the USA and the UK, Spain was behind a new resolution in the UN Security Council that would force Saddam Hussein into almost immediate submission. *ABC* pointed out, however, that the actions of the Spanish government did not differ from those of many other democratic countries such as the Italian and Portuguese governments as well as those of a dozen European countries that are candidates for membership in the EU. Even as strong a “democratic symbol” as Vaclav Havel and as prominent a socialist as Javier Solana shared the general opinion of the Spanish government, according to *ABC* (February 6), and Spain’s participation in the war was similar to that of 45 other countries from four continents (March 20). *El País*, however, considered that Aznar and his party, the Partido Popular (PP), were alone and the consensus on foreign policy that existed in the Spanish Parliament was no more (February 6). Not even the PP adherents supported the Prime Minister. According to opinion polls, two thirds of PP’s voters were against a war, with or without a mandate from the UN (March 16). *El País*

also claimed that the issue had not been up for discussion within the PP, some Ministers' blushes revealing that most personal decisions were being taken behind the backs of the party members by the government those days.

According to *El País*, the crisis within the EU was a fact after the meeting between Jacques Chirac and Tony Blair in Le Touquet in early February. A change in France's attitude was not to be expected since Chirac maintained that war was the worst solution and that the weapons inspectors must be given more time (February 5). "Europe does not exist today and if this continues, the EU may end up outside of both the crisis and the work in the Middle East after the war." Without allocating blame, *El País* felt that this development would be sad, especially since the ten new candidate countries for the EU clearly stated that they were more interested in the security the USA could offer than that of the EU (February 7).

Colin Powell's Report to the Security Council

On the day after Colin Powell's report before the Security Council, *ABC* praises Prime Minister Aznar's decision to support a new resolution. The editor states that Aznar is ready to support a second UN resolution that will give Saddam Hussein one last time-limited opportunity to cease threatening world peace, an ultimatum, according to *ABC*, well in accordance with, and incorporated in, international law. The consensus mentioned on February 5 implies therefore that the opponents of the new resolution, above all France and Germany, should give in. The Spanish socialist party PSOE, opposing an attack on Iraq, with or without a new resolution, is criticised for its leniency: "...the socialist party does not seem to offer any other alternative than to protest against an armed attack." While the government takes on its full responsibility, the socialists are denying reality, according to the editor, who disapproves not only of PSOE but of all left-wing groups protesting against a forthcoming war (February 6). However, as early as the beginning of February, *ABC* has already pointed out the two parties that will undergo harsh, sometimes very harsh, criticism in its editorial pages over the following months, PSOE and France with President Jacques Chirac at the steering wheel.

ABC gives two main reasons why an attack on Iraq would not be a crime against international law. Saddam Hussein is an immediate threat to world peace and Iraq does not comply with Resolution 1441 of the Security Council. The world community has both the opportunity and the right to confront and remove the threat that Iraq under Saddam Hussein entails (February 6). It is he, and only he, who is guilty of a possible war in Iraq. All options depend on Saddam Hussein (February 10).

El País opines that the danger posed by Saddam Hussein does not justify an attack, especially without a mandate from the UN, and only the Security Council can give such a mandate. President Bush should not lose his head

and go ahead without the approval of the Security Council as this would be an obvious violation of international law. If there is any possibility that the weapons inspectors' work might prevent a confrontation, then Bush should give in. That Saddam Hussein does not comply with Resolution 1441 should not automatically lead to a devastating answer from the only superpower to an aggressive leader. *El País* also claims that the evidence presented by Colin Powell is fragmentary and unconvincing, especially that of ties that the USA claims exist between Baghdad and Islamic terrorists. *El País* notes, however, that the 'proof' presented by the USA will surely convince those who want to be persuaded, and it is hard to imagine that the USA would change its war plans after having heard Colin Powells' presentation before the Security Council (February 6). Still, war should absolutely be the last solution to the conflict (February 6).

The Spanish government has become a defender of President Bush and his plans, to the detriment of both domestic and European consensus. In addition, the editor of *El País* is talking of a united opposition claiming that Saddam Hussein is not an immediate threat and that war cannot be justified and would be disproportionately detrimental if the aim is to disarm Saddam Hussein. However, *El País* continues, "the most important thing is that there is at least one alternative and that is to give time and resources to the international inspectors" (February 6).

A few days after Powell's presentation, it is clear that the only people he succeeded in persuading were the American citizens, according to *El País*. An overwhelming majority – eleven out of fifteen members in the Security Council – does not recognise the US proof against Iraq as sufficient. Only the UK, Spain and Bulgaria are on the US side (February 7). *El País* asks why Prime Minister Aznar is so dead set against a solution to the conflict that spells inspections.

Split in NATO Meeting

According to *ABC*, the worst crisis in the history of NATO has arisen. It is clear that Belgium, France and Germany are using their power of veto against Turkey's request for preventive protection in the event of war in Iraq. President Chirac is using more radical arguments and he has persuaded the weak German Federal Chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, to his side. Those two want their own timetable: Saddam Hussein to be disarmed without the use of war efforts; more weapons inspectors and overflights to take the edge off US pressure (February 10). And the consequences of France's lack of compliance are also seen outside of NATO. The country's attitude will possibly lead to a crisis when the future constitution of the EU is to be written (February 11). NATO is an incredibly important establishment uniting the USA and Europe, not least symbolically, and has succeeded in overthrowing the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe (February 11).

That NATO is now in crisis is largely due to France's lack of compliance, writes *ABC's* editor (February 11). However, it is clear that Europe and the USA share the view that peace is impossible in the region with Saddam Hussein in power. The invasion of 1990 succeeded in driving Iraq out of Kuwait, but the root of the problem – Saddam Hussein – is still there. A new invasion could, according to *ABC*, be the solution to the problem. The editor also refers to the Kosovo war at the beginning of the 1990s, when NATO stepped in without mandate from the UN since China and Russia threatened to use their vetoes in the Security Council. "And I suppose that no one today doubts the necessity and legitimacy of this intervention against Milosevic's genocide?" *ABC* asks rhetorically (February 11).

El País, however, claims that the two situations cannot be compared. Before the Kosovo war, it is true, the UN was not behind the decision, but both NATO and the EU were united. And above all, there were no alternatives to an armed attack, as is the case now (March 19).

On February 11, *El País* writes about the crisis within NATO; while the USA has its foot on the gas, driving towards war, France, Belgium and Germany are hitting the breaks since the three countries do not want to agree to NATO's proceeding with its plans to defend Turkey in the event of war. *El País*, however, adds that the three countries are not being disloyal to the other NATO countries; it is not a decision on principle but, rather, the timing, that is wrong. France has not closed the door, but its negative attitude in NATO brings something constructive when the country prepares a resolution to the UN Security Council in which the weapons inspectors are given more time and resources. This amounts to taking action, in contrast to Prime Minister Aznar, who, though claiming to be against a war, has not lifted a finger to prevent it, even though Spain has had a seat in the Security Council since January 2003, *El País* writes (February 11). Of the permanent members of the Security Council, those with the power of veto, Russia and China agree to France's proposal. With the USA and the UK on the other side, *El País* expects a confrontation, not only concerning a possible war on Iraq, but also about the power structure in the world. The newspaper is interpreting President Bush's actions as a clear ultimatum: either the UN and NATO obey, or these organisations stop being relevant – that is, useful – to the United States (February 11).

Blix Reports to the Security Council on February 14

Iraq may not fulfil the demands of Resolution 1441, but according to the heads of the weapons inspectors, Hans Blix and Mohamed El Baradei, the inspections work. This is clear, and especially after the report to the Security Council on February 14, according to *El País's* editor. Therefore the weapons inspectors' work ought to proceed.

ABC focuses on the opponents to the triple alliance US-UK-Spain. Europe has not been able to unite but brings its disagreements to the UN and NATO, writes *ABC* (February 14). At several points, *ABC* lets it be known that it takes offence at the actions of France. Since a few countries, including France, are in opposition, consensus cannot be reached. President Jacques Chirac is said to suffer from an identity crisis and, only wanting to fill the void in Europe left by Germany, he is striving to make France an important part of the new world order. And since France is blocking a possible agreement in both the UN and NATO, it is France's fault that the world community cannot agree. President Chirac is also accused of double standards when, according to *ABC*, he claims to be a peace lover when France, at the same time and without any authorisation whatsoever, is involved in the conflict in the Ivory Coast, where real massacres are taking place (February 16). On the other hand, President Bush is commended on his keen ear when he claims to seek consensus within the UN and NATO before a possible attack on Iraq (February 16).

Blix Reports to the Security Council on March 7

El País believes that President Bush's diplomacy is a fiasco. Even before the presentation of the new report from the weapons inspectors, *El País* says that London and Washington are ready to compromise on the new resolution and give the weapons inspectors more time to appease domestic opinion. Less than 50% of Americans say that they are for a war under present circumstances, *El País* writes and Prime Minister Aznar is more or less in the same situation as Tony Blair since it could be devastating for him to force Spain into a war without a mandate from the UN. However, the newspaper means that Washington is trying to keep the door open to two possibilities. Facing low support from domestic opinion, and with France and Russia threatening to use their power of veto in the Security Council on the new resolution, the political leaders in the USA can either maintain that they have the full right to invade Iraq, regardless of what the Security Council says, or abandon any attempt to get *carte blanche* from the Security Council, letting the UN investigate the possibility of a third way out of the conflict instead. To force a vote in the Security Council is a bad choice, according to *El País*, because it would jeopardise the future of the Security Council and the UN and the worldwide security system which – in spite of everything – has worked to a lesser or greater degree for the past 50 years, would also fall apart. Therefore, every attempt at a solution whereby Iraq is not directly attacked should be investigated (March 7).

On the next day, however, hopes of a peaceful solution have run out, according to *El País*. "Judging by Bush's words, the decision to go to war has already been made. The USA, the UK and, unfortunately, Spain, are not ready to give the head of the UN weapons inspectors, Hans Blix, the respite

that he suggested.” Just before the meeting in the Security Council, President Bush has taken on the role of prosecutor, judge and executioner when he said that the USA does not need permission from anybody to defend itself – or in this case to attack, the newspaper writes. A war would be devastating, it would be immoral and, without the mandate from the Security Council, it would even be illegal. A war could destabilise the entire region and impede a peaceful solution just when the weapons inspectors’ work is starting to bear fruit. No-one is saying that Saddam Hussein has capitulated because of a possible attack and it is true that Iraq is not cooperating 100%, but *El País* refers to Hans Blix, who claims that the inspections are starting to yield results and that they need more time (March 8). It is unfortunate that the military agenda of the USA should be allowed to dictate to the whole world and it is immoral to attack Iraq with the aim of deterrence (March 8). *El País* states that no one doubts that Iraq is conceding more and more under the threat of an armed attack and there is no support for a new resolution. The weapons inspectors should therefore be given more time for their investigations that, slowly but surely, are becoming productive. Instead of allying himself with the US and the UK, Aznar should use his position and work for a diplomatic solution to the conflict (March 8). The Spanish Prime Minister is accused of being President Bush’s defender and even the Secretary of State, Ana Palacio, is strongly criticised. Palacio was the only one who connected Iraq to al-Qaeda after the meeting, *El País* says: “To hear from a Spanish Minister that ‘we do not allow more games from Saddam Hussein’ would sound like a farce if thousands of people’s lives were not at stake” (March 8).

When Hans Blix and Mohamed El Baradei submit their report to the Security Council on March 7, *ABC* states that the information contains no news. As Resolution 1441 is interpreted in different ways, the two sides use the new report to support their own standpoints. According to the editor, it is now clear that nothing the weapons inspectors may find will be decisive when it comes to whether or not there will be an armed conflict in Iraq. “The technicians do not have the key to peace”, *ABC* writes on March 8.

Background to the Conflict

According to *ABC*, the background of the conflict with Iraq lies in the new world order. After the end of the cold war it is obvious that there is no effective way to meet the new threat which carries terrorism as its trademark. The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11 are a clear sign of this. Some countries do not hesitate to commit acts of terrorism or to harbour terrorists, and Iraq is without doubt one of them, claims *ABC*’s editorial of February 16.

El País claims that the Americans were traumatised by the bombings of September 11, and want to get rid of every shred of threat against their se-

curity. "On this side of the Atlantic, a lot of people, including influential governments, feel that tragedy has blinded the judgment of those governing the only superpower and its fate" (February 16). In addition, the newspaper means that Bush, by not letting the weapons inspectors' work continue, is clearly demonstrating that the motive for an invasion is something other than looking for and destroying weapons of mass destruction. The underlying motives are said to be the US's intention of occupying a strategically important oil-producing country and of changing the power structure in the Middle East – at the cost of human life and human suffering (March 17).

Images of the Leading Figures

In *ABC*, Saddam Hussein is described as a cruel dictator who has always ignored human rights. Terror is his foremost ally and the more he spreads in Iraq the more secure he feels. He does not, in any way, show that he will comply with the demands of disarmament and full disclosure to the international community. Instead, according to *ABC*, he is biding his time. "The Iraqi leader is hiding behind a barricade of corpses and oppression that has increased over the years..." (February 10). The USA, on the other hand, is described in much more positive terms. After having defeated the Nazis and the Communist states in Eastern Europe and having been the leading force in shaping and governing NATO, the USA is now clearly the leading nation, through its own initiatives but also because of the lack of unity within the UN, NATO and Europe (February 14; February 16).

Neither has *El País* any sympathies for Saddam Hussein. He is described as a despot and a leader with a lot on his conscience; apart from this, the newspaper gives little room to personal descriptions of the main characters in the conflict.

Protests from the Masses

ABC claims that the protests of the political opposition are only an attempt to win points in domestic politics before the upcoming elections. The left parties, led by PSOE, are accused not only of being behind the demonstrations that brought hundreds of thousands of Spaniards into the streets in early February, but also of benefiting from the strength of the protests. It is wrong of the opposition to encourage people to demonstrate and protest since these protests may eliminate democratic mechanisms. The government should naturally listen to popular opinion, but it is at the polls that the people should express their views (February 16).

El País, by contrast, says that the politicians are insane not to listen to the people. The demonstrations attracting millions across half the world show that

citizens seem to have something that politicians lack; a united foreign policy. This is argued since the same pattern is seen in several countries, including the UK, where citizens and their governments have completely different opinions (February 16). In connection with the summit meeting in the Azores on March 16, *El País* speaks again of major demonstrations against the war. More and more people are joining the protest activities, which is logical since people do not understand why a war against Iraq is necessary; "They do not understand the reasons since these are changeable and contradictory" (March 16).

Top Meeting in the Azores

It seems to be the case that what is already decided is that there will be an attack, and what is left to do is to come up with the motives and the explanations for why it will happen, *El País* says. At first, a preventive war against terrorism, which is in itself contradictory, was advocated. Then the question of disarmament came up, with the motive of finding, in the fact that Iraq was not fulfilling the terms of the truce of 1991, legitimacy for an attack. The argument that the weapons inspectors' work is starting to bear fruit because of pressure from the rest of the world, and that this pressure would be even more effective if the world were united and strong, fails at the moment Bush says that disarmament proves that Saddam Hussein is lying and that he, President Bush, will attack in any event, with or without a resolution from the UN. This invites Saddam Hussein to hold on to his most dangerous weapons in order to defend himself, *El País* claims. Although it would surely be desirable for the regime in Baghdad to fall, democratic values do not allow a preventive war, which is also illegal without the support of the UN and the Security Council (March 16).

After the summit meeting on the Azores, *El País* claims that the USA and its allies are relying on Resolution 1441, which was the result of a compromise. The resolution which, according to the editor, means quite the opposite of what the US and its allies are claiming, rules out that violations of it automatically lead to new acts of war. In any event, it is up to the UN to decide on possible sanctions or other actions, and it is an insult to international law to claim that it is legally correct to try to justify the war by the contents of Resolution 1441, without a new resolution (March 17). Later, *El País* also writes that the three countries, headed by the USA, decided not only to attack Iraq but also to put all the blame on France because of the deadlock in the Security Council. "The government should make an effort to persuade The Fifteen [EU-countries] to come together and stop the absurd political and verbal attack by the USA on France, which so many of us are united with and pin our hopes on. That would open up for *rapprochement*..." (March 21).

On the day after the summit meeting in the Azores, *ABC* writes that the triple alliance, the USA, the UK and Spain, is showing that a new coalition

has appeared because of unsuccessful negotiations and vetoes in the Security Council. The triple alliance offers a short-term option for the future in the void that was left after the setback mentioned above (March 17). The fracture and disagreement within the Security Council risk paralysing the UN as an organization to count on in the future. *ABC* accuses France and Germany of inadequate knowledge of the Iraqi issue, and of being unreasonable. The two countries are supported by Russia and China, countries “far from the democratic culture” pertaining when the UN was formed. But France will not be allowed to stop the new order, the ultimatum to Saddam Hussein to surrender within a few days, or the USA and its ally will attack. On the other hand, just after the outbreak of war *ABC* reports that rhetorical Chirac has not closed the door to alternatives. However, the disagreement between the two sides will surely lead to a historical re-evaluation of the international pacts of defence and cooperation, *ABC* predicts.

Preparing for War

During the days before the outbreak of war, it is clear that Spain is sending non-fighting forces to Iraq, including medical staff and personnel and equipment to facilitate logistics, and, in addition, a unit of experts on chemical, nuclear and biological weapons. Such weapons characterise Saddam Hussein’s weapons arsenal, and therefore *ABC* sees this unit as very important for the mission. The forbidden weapons arsenal is “the main motive for the military intervention and it entails a risk to world security and this has to stop” (March 20).

Aznar is given nothing but praise in the *ABC* editorials. His most distinctive trait is that of accepting responsibility. When it is clear that Spain will not participate in the war with fighting units, *ABC* states that only Aznar has acted to reinstate the international law that has been ignored and damaged during Saddam Hussein’s time as Iraqi leader. “The will to actively participate in a war was never intended to be Spain’s role and interest...” (March 20).

By March 19, it is clear that Saddam Hussein is ignoring the American ultimatum to leave the country if war is to be avoided. *El País*, however, speculates that he might still help his country and his people by going into exile even after the outbreak of war, in which case the military leaders could choose to give up in the face of the overwhelming power of the USA and its allies, which are capable of turning Iraq into hell (March 20). Concerning Spain’s active participation in the war, the newspaper concedes that it is true these are not ‘attack troops’, but, rather, medical staff and personnel for chemical and bacteriological defence; nevertheless they might still find themselves in war situations and be held accountable in the international court. That Spain’s participation takes this shape is due to Aznar’s desire to calm his own party, according to *El País* (March 19).

On the day before the outbreak of war, *El País* is commenting on Colin Powell's statement that 30 or so countries stand behind the USA and its allies: "...but in reality the USA, with all its military might, is alone in its war. Such is also the case for the PP, which, in spite of its absolute majority, is finding itself in immense political and social solitude. Those who take the world to war are making a mistake which will sow disruption in international relations and lead to public confusion because people do not understand what is happening. Aznar's statement that 'we have done all we could for peace' is an insult to intelligence. The decision to go to war was made a long time ago, as was that of Spain's military participation." Aznar is said not to have any reassuring answers to the Spanish community's concerns about an unjust conflict "that in no way benefits the Spanish and instead makes us more vulnerable" (March 19).

The Attack on Iraq

When the war breaks out, *ABC* has no doubt whatsoever that it will be a short one. In Iraq, the coalition under the leadership of the US is winning land, the attacks are precise and controlled and Saddam Hussein's freedom of action is undoubtedly limited, as is the morale of the Iraqi soldiers. The attacks are going by the book and new fronts are constantly opened. Within a few hours, Basra will be occupied and the opening of Turkish air space means new opportunities. Everything is inexorably pointing to the end of Saddam Hussein, who can only prolong the suffering of his people. This is stated by *ABC* only 24 hours after the outbreak of war. However, they warn their readers that the evil Saddam Hussein is capable of a lot, including setting fire to the Iraqi oil wells (March 21).

The US strategy and war plan are presented extensively. The superiority of the allied forces is striking: smart bombs, invisible aircraft and exact and sophisticated weapons such as the Tomahawk missiles, are conducive to a surgical attack that, during the first charge, caused only one civilian death. It is, *ABC* states, important to remember this one death since the use of high technology and sophisticated weaponry may lead to a short war that minimizes the number of casualties. "This type of technically sophisticated weapons is what makes the difference and they dramatically increase the possibilities of a swift intervention" (March 21). The bombings are precise since the targets are perfectly defined. As early as the second day of war, *ABC* reports that resistance is non-existent and that it is only a matter of time before the Iraqi government will fall. "The US offensive brings a warning to the Iraqi government which is showing clear signs of inability to respond to the attacks." It could be possible to reinstate democracy in a country ruled by a dictator since 1979 (March 22).

As early as the day after the outbreak of war, *ABC* says that it is time to repair diplomatic relations. Saddam Hussein does not deserve to go down in history as the person who caused irreparable cracks in national and international consensus. Prime Minister Aznar is quoted: "...there is room for *rapprochement* and agreement" – a constructive standpoint, according to the *ABC* editor who, however, claims that the leader of the opposition, Rodrigo Zapatero, has failed to understand it. Cloaked in pacifism, the opposition has taken an aggressive standpoint and is seeking clashes. On the international scale, *ABC* sees a few signs of improvement. Within the EU, tension is relaxing as countries seek agreement on how to give humanitarian aid to Iraq and rebuild the country. The editor notes a few cautious signs of possible agreement. Gerhard Schröder is talking about the strong bonds that still exist between the US and Germany, and Jacques Chirac has not closed the door to anyone or anything – even though his attitude toward the Iraqi issue has not exactly contributed to stronger ties within the EU (March 21).

After the first day of war, *El País* starts talking of a low-intensity attack. The USA is focusing on eliminating the Iraqi leadership, while Iraq is responding by sending outdated rockets over Kuwait. The US Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld, is quoted saying that the days of Saddam Hussein and his gang are numbered and Washington promises to protect the civilian population, telling it not to leave the country. However, *El País* predicts that a low-intensity war will soon develop into experiences of horror. The newspaper also sees the danger of Turkish troops invading Kurdistan; the US is responsible for keeping an eye on that region, in order to make sure that a conflict does not appear there as well. *El País* also severely attacks Prime Minister Aznar for posing as one of the heads of the coalition and talking about peace being war – the attacked being the attacker – and is convinced of the legitimacy of the war. All against him are to be reprimanded. "There is no room for neutrality or indifference", he is quoted as saying (March 21). However, *El País* writes, the fact that all parties and the Spanish community are against the war does not mean that they are neutral or indifferent. "They were not neutral or indifferent in the choice between war and the frustrating possibility to disarm Iraq with peaceful means and they were not so in the choice between freedom and Saddam Hussein." It is wrong to blame Saddam Hussein for the war just because he did not surrender his power (March 21).

After the second day of war, *El País* reports that the most devastating phase has started, with massive bombings such as have never been seen before. "This disproportional and barbaric strategy may prove to be militarily effective, but it will nourish not only fear but also hatred" (March 22). The people of Iraq have been punished, first by Saddam Hussein, and now by their liberator. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld is said to be more enthusiastic about the new weapon technology than concerned for those suffering from the rain of bombs (March 22). With the exception of the massive bombings, the US's actions are compared to a cat's toying with a mouse. Bent on destroying communication between the Iraqi cities, the USA wishes to create panic within

the Iraqi army, and the marines in the front lines are meeting with little or no resistance (March 22).

Media

It makes for big news in Spain when Spanish reporters are shot dead. Both *El País* and *ABC* talk about new conditions and possibilities for journalists now that they can go with military troops to the front lines. However, this also means increased danger for reporters. "This is the best-covered war in history, but from what has been seen so far it is also the most dangerous", *El País* writes on the day after the Spanish reporter Julio Anquita Parrado's death in Iraq (April 8). In the same breath, *El País* writes that whatever the criticism, there can be no doubt that embedded reporters find out more about the events and horrors of war. "War is horrible. But the horrors must be reported to the citizens who choose and judge the governments that have started the war" (April 8). When another Spanish reporter, cameraman José Couso, dies, *El País* demands that the USA must explain itself. The first explanation, that the tank that shot at the hotel where the reporters were staying was acting in self defence and that the reporters knew well that the hotel was a military target, is not good enough and does not correspond to reality (April 9).

After the Fall of Baghdad

Later, *El País* is talking about increased terror, blood baths and more suffering for the Iraqi civilians, without getting into the number of deaths. On April 8, the newspaper writes that the American-English military victory is secured, but whether it will take hours, days or months remains to be seen. What also remains is the task of winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people and of the entire Arab world, for the aftermath of the war will last a long time (April 8). On the following day, *El País* observes that the war seems to be short. It is not over, but the transition to a new, representative government in Iraq has started although that transition will be complicated after 20 years of totalitarian rule. It is obvious that the Iraqis will have to rely on the USA and the UK, not least because the conventions of war demand that the occupying power guarantees stability, food supply and security in the country. That task will be enormous, *El País* predicts, especially since the mere presence of the USA in Iraq contributes to "giving wings to armed Muslim fanatics." The way in which Iraq will be governed and treated after the war will be decisive for the entire explosive region (April 9).

On April 10, *ABC* declares that not only Baghdad has fallen but also Saddam Hussein's regime and with Saddam Hussein's regime gone, so is one of the main reasons for instability in the Middle East. Now is an excellent opportu-

nity to beat terrorism and set the stage for a peaceful discussion (April 10). The expected battle for the capital Baghdad had not taken place since resistance was non-existent. The tyrant who promised hell for the allies, but instead retreated in disarray, is now fleeing or dead, writes the editor. "The war is over, even though work still remains: fighting snipers, searching for the people responsible for the dictatorship and securing peace" (April 10). *ABC* also reveals the United Nations to have been proven weak in the latest crises, and ascribes this to the fact that the UN has not changed since it was formed, even though the world has. Maybe now that the Iraq war is over, it is time to open an honest, broad and generous discussion where the democratic and developed countries can create a new consensus that, with the US at the wheel, can "remedy some of the faults and predict some scenarios that could not be guessed when the organisation was founded in San Francisco." However, *ABC* thinks the future of the UN is uncertain. The world after the cold war does not look as it did 50 years ago and even though there are still threats to world peace, the international scenario is completely different now and those threats are not the same as they were (April 9). All countries do not agree on the role of the UN and there are those who have wanted to use the Security Council as an arena for their own interests, the editor writes, sending a clear message to France. In addition, the various interpretations of the resolutions taken by the Security Council, and the use of UN symbols for private interests, have not consolidated the position of the UN. Neither have those who have tried to claim that the allied troops demolish international law. Bush has "written down their names", states *ABC* (April 10).

El País concludes that there are no 'clean' wars. It is true that the USA and its allies have attacked Iraq with a speed and concentration of precise bombings never before seen, but it is also clear that many civilians and soldiers have died. "The world feels better without this dictator, but the circumstances of this conflict contribute to weaken the already weak international order", *El País* writes on the day after the fall of Baghdad (April 10). The war was not inevitable and there were other roads to be taken, roads that would not mean more suffering for the people of Iraq. Furthermore, *El País* contends that the risk of tension in the Middle East is increased after Saddam Hussein's fall. "Not many Arabs will cry over Saddam's disappearance, but it is likely that many feel humiliated." The newspaper also draws a parallel with Germany: "We must not forget that Nazism was born one decade after the German humiliation of Versailles" (April 10). The USA will sooner or later discover that although many Iraqis certainly hated Saddam Hussein and his regime, they nonetheless have no wish to be occupied by foreign forces (April 10).

Even though *El País* does not think that the war is completely over, the editor demands answers from Prime Minister Aznar about his convictions before the attack. In spite of all the allies' propaganda, Saddam Hussein has not used the chemical or biological weapons that he was accused of having. Such weapons would be found, in order to justify the war, but the informa-

tion would not be credible unless it emanated from an impartial source such as that led by Hans Blix (April 10).

Bush Declares the End of War

On May 2, *ABC* states that the war is over. President Bush had done the same on the previous day. The newspaper gives a sort of summary of the whole crisis. Now that the first part of the Iraqi liberation is over, France wants to participate. This should not surprise anyone, *ABC* writes, since France only wants to establish itself in the international arena. There were those who realised the danger of the threat posed by Saddam Hussein and there were those who only wanted to gain international influence at the expense of the USA. Among the latter were France and Russia, according to the editor. But the military effort was convincing, brief and effective enough not to give room to those who wanted to use the war for their own ends. Spain, on the other hand, has no ambitions of becoming a major power, *ABC* claims. But Spain knew what the events of September 11 meant. Spain ventured to neutralise the threat posed by Saddam Hussein and this time Spanish interests coincided with those of the UK and the majority within the European Union. A country must choose its allies according to how its own interests are best defended, *ABC* writes (May 2).

Under the headline “War without end”, *El País* writes on May 3 that the American president has declared the war over, at least when it comes to the big battles. However, he is also presenting several dangerous ideas, one being that in the global struggle against international terrorism, Iraq and Afghanistan are only the start. The USA will continue its preventive wars (May 3).

Summary

At several times during the period under investigation the two newspapers argue about whether or not the armed attack on Iraq was legal in terms of international law. *El País* believes that Resolution 1441 does not legalise the attack while *ABC* says it does. *ABC* also contends that the actions taken by the Spanish government – supporting the war and sending non-fighting troops to Iraq – are not only very responsible but also perfectly compliant with Spanish laws since they do not mean that Spain is actually going to war, or declaring war on another country. *El País* maintains that the military action is illegal and that the government is foolish not listening to the opinions of the vast majority of the Spanish population. On the other hand, *ABC* argues that while the government should certainly listen to the people, it need not always act immediately on what the masses say, and instead of protesting

against the government and its actions citizens ought to show their opinions when it is time to vote.

Long before the outbreak of the war *El País* is saying that Prime Minister Aznar and his party stand alone. Instead of aligning themselves, and Spain, with the USA and President Bush, Aznar should seize the opportunity of working towards a peaceful solution to the conflict, to act responsibly and to work for consensus, not only in the EU but also in the UN. However, *ABC* says that the Spanish government acts no differently from other governments all over the world. And this time the interests of Spain coincided with those of the USA and the UK.

Epilogue

On March 11 2004, Spain's capital Madrid became the target of a series of bomb attacks. The attacks left over 200 people dead and approximately 1,500 injured, about a hundred very severely. The attacks took place three days before the country's parliamentary elections.

Initial reports from the government and the security forces alike claimed that most leads seemed to indicate that the Basque separatist movement ETA was behind the attacks. *ABC* also pointed directly to the ETA. The motive, *ABC* claimed, would be that the ETA wanted retribution, once and for all, for the setbacks of recent years in which Prime Minister Aznar stubbornly refused to negotiate either with the ETA or its allied political parties. *ABC* urged the country to unite against the ETA (March 12). In its editorial on March 12, *ABC* did not even mention any possibilities, other than the ETA, as responsible for the attacks. *El País*, however, was open to several possible culprits; its editorial drew certain parallels to attacks carried out by terrorists from the Middle East. The tapes containing verses from the Koran in Arabic found in a van in Alcalá de Henares could also indicate that Islamic terrorists were behind the bomb attacks. The most likely scenario however, the paper claimed, is that the ETA was to blame.

The following day, Prime Minister Aznar was praised in *ABC* for facing up to his responsibility by, among other things, twice making himself available to the media. The Minister for the Interior, Ángel Acebes, also received praise for the dissemination of information. In very vague terms, the *ABC* editorial mentioned other possible culprits; however, singling out the ETA is hardly a *faux pas* since the organisation has equalled terror in Spain for the past 30 years – indeed it would, rather, be irresponsible not to believe that the ETA is capable of such atrocities. Referring to the coming election, *ABC* called for a high election turnout as evidence to the terrorists that the Spanish people stood united. Those about to vote, it said, should carefully consider which government was better fit to lead the country into an uncertain future. Aznar's own party, *Partido Popular*, was said to have a clear lead in the opinion polls (March 13).

The government maintained that the ETA was most likely guilty of the bomb attacks, but according to *El País* there were several factors that suggested otherwise. The fact that the ETA would have planted the tapes found in the van speaks against itself as terrorists generally want everyone to know when their specific organisation is behind an attack. In addition, the explosives found and linked with the attacks are of a kind not used by the ETA. Moreover, the Minister for the Interior was admonished for not having admitted, until pressured, that there were possible suspects other than the ETA. His conduct entailed certain problems, the paper claimed. Spain's unity and support for action against terrorism required trust in the government to do everything in its power to protect its citizens and also to deliver reliable information in order to maintain national unity. *El País* also quotes Acebes referring to those who do not believe in the guilt of the ETA as the 'miserables' and in the same breath the editorial states that although the denunciation of terrorism did not depend on whether the ETA or al-Qaeda were behind the attacks, this might very well influence the election outcome in either direction (March 13).

Not until election day, three days after the blasts, when the arrest of three Moroccans and two Indians raised the likelihood that Islamic terrorists were behind the attacks, did *ABC* directly refer to possible culprits other than the ETA. Aznar's government continued to receive praise for accepting its responsibility and for being transparent. Not even the election campaign hampered the inquiry. The *ABC*'s editorial claimed that it was a good thing that the citizens knew the inquiry was ongoing and that there were some primary suspects (March 14). *ABC* also referred to voices being raised from the left about the government's hiding information. This was not true, *ABC* stated; the only credible information had been that provided by the government without any thought to the way in which the coming election could be influenced (March 14). The paper declared, however, that it was time for those who wish to put the blame on Aznar and the government for the Spanish soldiers killed in Iraq and the two hundred dead in Madrid, to do so.

Both *ABC* and *El País* called for a high turnout on election day. Full ballot boxes are the best response to terrorism. *El País* claimed that it was only logical for citizens to be considering the significance of their votes and the uncertainty of who was behind the Madrid attacks, whereas Acebes' questionable conduct, including giving misleading information, planted further doubt. Of course citizens were wondering who was behind the attacks as they came to cast their votes. The arrest of the three Moroccans and the two Indians, combined with certain concessions from Acebes, meant that the Spanish people had finally been given sound information (March 14). It was a mistake, however, claimed *El País*, to link Spain's involvement in the Iraq War with the Madrid attacks without any further discussion of the reasons.

El País still kept an open mind as to possible culprits. If they would prove to be al-Qaeda, the national security would have to be scrutinised. The editorial also had a dig at Aznar, accusing him of making light of the threats from al-Qaeda in October 2003 (March 14).

On the day after the election both newspapers established that the turnout was high and that this favored the Socialist party PSOE which, surprisingly, won. *El País* declared the bomb attacks in Madrid and the aftermath a likely cause for the victory. The government's focus on the ETA was a mistake, it claimed, and Acebes was accused of maintaining the guilt of the ETA in order to avoid the Iraq War being brought into the election campaign (March 15). *ABC*, however, claimed that Aznar could leave his post with a clear conscience, and that the nature of the election and its outcome was to punish the party *Partido Popular* rather than to favour the PSOE – a conclusion made by *ABC* after comparing the election result with the opinion polls before the election. The PSOE was indirectly accused of using the bomb attacks as an argument against the PP, and had, according to *ABC*, every reason to reflect upon this in the future. *ABC* concluded with a prediction that Spain was facing an uncertain future (March 15).

Selection

The article is based on studies of a selected number of editorials from the Spanish newspapers *ABC* and *El País* in February, March, April and May 2003 and in March 2004. The selection is based on eight important events concerning the war in Iraq: Colin Powell's report to the Security Council (February 5); Split in NATO meeting (February 10); Hans Blix reports to the Security Council (February 14 and March 7); the top meeting at the Azores (March 16); the attack on Iraq (March 20); the fall of Baghdad (March 8) and Bush declares end of war (May 2). For each event, two or three editorials before and after the date in question have been studied.

Sources

ABC editorials, 2003

- February 5, "Frenesí diplomático"
- February 6, "Con la legalidad internacional"
- February 10, "Todas las alternativas pasan por Saddam Husein"
- February 11, "Crisis de identidad y de credibilidad"
- February 14, "Hacia un nuevo orden mundial"
- February 16, "El último recurso"
- March 7, "Ultimátum para un desarme total de Irak"
- March 8, "Tramo final"
- March 16, "Oriente próximo y el nuevo orden"
- March 17, "La hora de un cambio en el mundo" and "La manipulación de Europa"
- March 19, "Desafío político para Tony Blair"
- March 20, "El papel de España en el conflicto" and "La reconstrucción de Irak"
- March 21, "Restaurar las relaciones diplomáticas" and "Manual de guerra"
- March 22, "Golpe al corazón del régimen" and "Europa ante su futuro"
- April 8, "Corresponsales de guerra"
- April 9, "Cumbre en Belfast"
- April 10, "El fin de Saddam, una nueva etapa"
- May 2, "Algo más que una agresión" and "París, Madrid, Bagdad"

May 3, "Traspiés de Blair en las urnas"

ABC editorials, 2004:

March 12, "Con España, con la constitución, con las víctimas"

March 13, "España contra el terror"

March 14, "Jornada de irreflexión"

March 15, "Tres días que cambiaron España"

El País editorials 2003

February 5, "El Canal divide"

February 6, "Las razones de EE UU" and "...y la soledad de Aznar"

February 7, "Respuesta a Powell"

February 11, "Freno y acelerador"

February 14, "Iran atómico"

February 15, "El tiempo necesario"

February 16, "Un clamor mundial"

March 7, "Momento crítico"

March 8, "Cuestión de días"

March 16, "Banderas de paz"

March 17, "Consejo de guerra"

March 19, "Justificar lo injustificable"

March 20, "La hora cero de Sadam"

March 21, "Lo peor está por llegar" and "Ni indiferencia ni equidistancia"

March 22, "El día A" and "Discursos alarmistas"

April 8, "Un duro tributo", "El sonido del silencio" and "El gran crispador"

April 9, "Planeando la posguerra"

April 10, "El derumbe" and "Hotel Palestina"

May 2, "Decae una alianza"

May 3, "Guerra sin fin"

May 4, "En clave de paz"

El País editorials 2004

March 12, "11-M"

March 13, "Después de la matanza"

March 14, "Más que nunca: a las urnas, ciudadanos"

March 15, "Vuelco electoral"

The Economist, Europe section, April 5 2003, page 33.

Headlines from *El País*, *El Mundo*, *La Vanguardia*, *Sport* and *El Mundo Deportivo*, March 24 2003.

The FC Barcelona homepage, March 24 2003. (<http://www.fcbarcelona.com>)

La Oficina de Justificación de la difusión (<http://www.ojd.es/>)

Irish Media, Iraq and the Charge of Anti-Americanism

Sean Phelan

The charge of anti-Americanism is, in short, an essentialising device to regulate political difference. It seeks to deny the possibility of a hybrid political identity, to propagate the myth of a unified America, and to fix public discourse on a closed range of positions. The enduring symbolic power and authority of the anti-American trope, what Said (1991) might describe as its false universalism, have been lamented by many. Yet, in accordance with the propagandised imperatives of wartime (Nohrstedt, Kaitatzi-Whitlock, Ottosen and Riegert, 2000: 384), some commentators predictably sought to reduce international media and political discourse about the 2003 Iraq war to the terms of this emotive label.

This chapter considers the charge of anti-Americanism as part of a general investigation of how the Iraq war and diplomatic crisis were represented in a specific sample of Irish¹ media texts. It is not arrogating itself as a chronicle of all the interesting Irish media coverage; nor is it claiming to be a comprehensive discourse analysis of the selected texts. Instead, the focus is on those aspects of the texts – within the particular sample – that help illuminate the constructivist grounds of the anti-American charge. This chapter addresses three interrelated concerns: how the selected Irish media texts represent the Iraq war and diplomatic crisis; how the selected media texts represent the spectrum of anti-war/pro-war stances; and what characteristics of the media coverage leave some Irish media open to the charge of anti-Americanism from other media actors.

The current articulation of the anti-American charge in an Irish media context can be seen as part of the fallout of a post-September 11 shift in US journalistic culture that seeks to align – more transparently than before – ‘certain preferred discourses of “patriotism” and “professionalism”’ (Zelizer and Allan, 2002: 15), renounce the ‘pretence’ of journalistic ‘objectivity’ (or at least a particular interpretation of the objectivity principle)², and brand any resistance to elite propaganda discourse as an elite discourse in its own right. It is exemplified by the *Sunday Independent* journalism of Eoghan Harris (see below), who indicts both *The Irish Times* and RTE³ for their ‘consistent

hostility [sic] to this war', accusing 'RTE in particular ...[of being] so partisan as to be propagandist'. *Sunday Times* columnist, David Quinn, likewise reproaches *The Irish Times* and the 'especially bad' RTE for 'getting it wrong on Iraq' and for their 'blind [sic]...anti-Americanism' (Quinn, 2003). And *The Irish Times*' regular columnist Kevin Myers criticises the brand identity of his own paper when he suggests 'the war for Iraqi freedom occasioned much posturing fatuity in this country, a great deal from readers of this newspaper' (Myers, 2003).⁴

This analysis is interested in how the selected media texts *could* be decoded as privileging either anti-American/anti-war or pro-American/pro-war readings. Through the loose application of a critical discourse analysis theoretical framework (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999), it examines how the 'foregrounding' of particular discourses, news actors, sources and discourse categorisations shape and structure the interpretative 'frames' (Entman, 2002) produced by the selected media texts. It emphasises the particular importance of headlines and leads – what Van Dijk calls the 'macrostructures' of news media texts (Nohrstedt et al., 2000). And it focuses on the importance of both television and front-page images as news framing devices and signifiers of ideological discourse (Perlmutter, 1998).

The Irish Media and Cultural Context

The sample is largely structured around media content from two of the institutional opinion leaders in the Irish 'media field' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 103): *The Irish Times* newspaper and RTE, the national television and radio broadcaster. *The Irish Times* is the country's second biggest selling weekly newspaper, culturally valorised as the national paper of historical record, and is independently owned by *The Irish Times* Trust. RTE is state owned, but largely dependent on commercial income through advertising (Flynn, 2002). These two institutional actors are chosen, first because of their symbolic standing, and second because they are, as suggested already, the mainstream media organisations most likely to be censured for their left-liberal, anti-American (Quinn, 2003) leanings.⁵ Their representation of events is contrasted in turn with the coverage of the *Sunday Independent*, the biggest selling Sunday newspaper, which has since the 1980s cultivated an ideological identity grounded in a mix of conservative and libertarian polemic (Horgan, 2001). The basic supposition, therefore, is that *The Irish Times* and RTE framing of events will invite a more critical reading of 'America' and American foreign policy (this analysis focuses on the commonalities between both media), while the *Sunday Independent* will assume more of a closed and uncritical pro-American stance.

The sample is organised around what are posited as five key moments in the unfolding of the Iraq war narrative: (a) Colin Powell's submission to the

UN Security Council on February;⁶ (b) Hans Blix's report to the Security Council on February 14;⁷ (c) the start of the military attack on March 20;⁸ (d) the 'fall' of Baghdad on April 10;⁹ and (e) George Bush's declaration of the end of major military combat on May 2.¹⁰ The sample in each of these sections – unless otherwise stated – is strictly limited to:

- *RTE's* main 9.00pm news bulletin.
- *The Irish Times'* front-page coverage. (The front page is treated as a distinct text in its own right).
- The *Sunday Independent's* front-page coverage. (The *Sunday Independent* sample is taken from the edition immediately following each of the five key dates outlined above).

Since the Irish state was not officially part of the American-led military coalition, Irish media were under no obvious pressure to feel part of a patriotic, cheer-leading bandwagon (Hammond and Herman, 2000) and could thus assume a certain critical distance from the heavily 'media-ized' (Louw, 2003: 211) war discourses circulating, for instance, in the US and Britain. That said, the Iraq crisis accentuated tensions that have been latent in Irish political culture ever since the September 11 attacks, tensions culturally informed by, on the one hand, Ireland's historical valorisation of its military neutrality and commitment to the United Nations (Kenny, 2001) and, on the other, its recent economic indebtedness to American multinational investment (Kirby, 2002). This unease was exemplified by the Irish Government's decision to continue allowing American military use of Shannon airport as part of the build-up to war, despite the widespread criticism of the decision as a breach of Irish military neutrality. (The issue of American military use of Shannon had been a contentious public issue ever since the use of the airport to help coordinate the American-led military assault against Afghanistan in October 2001. The high media profile of the issue in February 2003 was a direct consequence of the estimated €20,000 worth of damage inflicted on a US military plane by an individual peace protester in January). The official Irish position on the war therefore was both paradoxical and furtive: indeed, while the Government seemed to indicate its tacit support for the war in March 2003, this was not to preclude Taoiseach¹¹ Bertie Ahern from attempting to reinvent his Government's stance as an oppositional one in December 2003 (Beesley, 2003).

Powell Submission to the Security Council: February 5 to 7

The Security Council deliberations of February 5 are framed from a perspective that foregrounds the 'US case for... war' (*The Irish Times* headline, February 6). The contents of the Powell presentation are summarised in Carole Coleman's *RTE* report of February 5, which is immediately followed by a

Cathy Milner report summarising the responses of other Council members. Emphasising the 'mixed reaction' to the US evidence, Milner predictably casts Britain as 'the only other member with a veto to appear completely convinced' and lists – over video close-ups of the respective Foreign Ministers – the particular reservations of France, Russia and China, the other three permanent members of the Security Council. The framing of the Council's response as unimpressed is later internalised by Coleman in a subsequent live interview with *RTE* news anchor Anne Doyle, where, in response to Doyle's question 'how successful was Colin Powell today?' Coleman replies, 'well, it's hard to say...he didn't look quite as elated on the way out as he did on the way in', adding that what 'everyone thought' was an impressive start turned into 'a lot of...old stuff we had heard before'.

The UN diplomatic process dominates the news agenda. The US challenge to the UN's authority is foregrounded ('Bush challenges UN to pass new resolution for Iraq war', *The Irish Times* headline, February 7), though the prospects of US diplomatic success are regarded with some scepticism ('George Bush is having little success in trying to convince the world it is time to attack Iraq', asserts the start of one *RTE* report on February 7, 'his threat to Saddam that the game was over was met with French derision'). The concerns of UN weapons inspectors are foregrounded in *The Irish Times* front page of February 8 ('Inspectors fear concessions by Iraq may not avert war'), while the anti-war (or what is also described as the 'more time') stances of the other, non-permanent Security Council members – Germany, Mexico, Angola, Guinea, Syria and Cameroon – are explicitly cited in *The Irish Times* reports of February 6 and 7. The trope of French resistance is emphasised throughout (*The Irish Times* front pages of February 6 and 8, and the *RTE* news of February 6, include directly sourced comment from French politicians), while the international geo-political tensions are animated by colourful metaphors and equivalences: 'the war of words continues; and not just between Baghdad and Washington' (*RTE*, February 7).

Irish angles feature prominently. The news that the 'largest commercial airline carrying American soldiers through Shannon Airport to the Gulf' has 'suspended its use of the airport...amid mounting concerns over security' is given front-page billing by *The Irish Times* of February 5, while the implicit *cause* of the suspension is signified in the paper's main front-page photograph, which features, among various anti-war signs and placards, a single, unidentified protester carrying a sign inscribed 'Defend our neutrality. No to War'. Joe O'Brien's *RTE* report of February 6 chronicles the subsequent arrival of Irish military troops in Shannon as a 'security' measure, and court appearances by named anti-war protesters are the subject of *RTE* reports on both February 6 and 7. And while the *RTE* report of February 7 acknowledges two of the (again named) protesters have been remanded in custody because of Garda fears of further damage to US planes in Shannon, their actions are given some cultural legitimacy, as the self-attributed religious, and specifically, Catholic motives of all five protesters are clearly cited: they

were 'led by the Holy Spirit in this act of disarmament', asserts reporter Cathy O'Halloran.

Irish trade union support for the Irish Anti-War Movement is the focus of a separate *RTE* report of February 6. The report includes a directly sourced, anti-war appeal from ICTU¹² leader David Begg and a directly sourced rebuttal of Colin Powell's presentation by the head of the Irish Anti-War Movement, Richard Boyd Barrett. Illustrating the cultural need to disclaim the spectral presence of the anti-American charge, reporter Eileen Whelan notes, 'The union leaders stressed they were not anti-American, but condemned a war which they said could claim the lives of hundreds of thousands of people'.

The perspective of *ordinary* Iraqis now living in Ireland informs *RTE*'s final Iraq-related report of February 6. The report is introduced by Anne Doyle as an account of the different opinions among Iraqis living in Ireland 'about the prospects of war and the effect it might have on Iraq'. Yet, while both an anti-war and a pro-war perspective are represented in the report, the anti-war position is given a more sympathetic billing. The report opens with a biographical sketch of Abher Amin, a 31-year-old doctor now living in Dublin, whose family, reporter Bernard McMullen tells us, 'were forced to flee Iraq when he was seven'. 'He would like to see the end of Saddam's regime but also opposes any attack on his homeland', adds McMullen, as the report directly moves to sourced comment from Abher, who decries the possibility of 'inhumane bombing', which could 'render cities... uninhabitable for many many generations to come'.

The report then summarises the position of another Irish based Iraqi, who McMullen describes as one of those who support international military action. Although the name of the man appears on screen, his name is not verbalised by McMullen, and his story is without the rich biographical sketch attributed to Abher. In conclusion, the report returns to further video footage of Abher at home watching television, while the addition of further biographical detail works to align Abher's position with the popular mood in Iraq: 'Abher...is *in constant contact* [emphasis added] with his family at home. People are anticipating war [shots of Iraq streets]. Many have made plans to free the cities in the coming weeks'.

The *Sunday Independent*'s main front page headline of February 9 situates the Iraqi diplomatic crisis in a very different ideological frame from that of either *The Irish Times* or *RTE*. 'Hillary tells us to back Bush's war', asserts the headline, as the subtitle goes on to note the fact that 'Former First Lady Clinton [also pictured] calls on Ireland's support for military action to disarm Saddam Hussein in a war that involves us all'. Clinton's comments are framed in terms of an appeal to a recalcitrant national subject ('the former First Lady urged the Irish government and people *to get off the fence* [italics added] and support America's efforts to rid Saddam Hussein of his weapons of mass destruction'), while the paper's emphasis on the 'us' pronoun affirms Clinton's efforts to align Ireland as part of an American sponsored – and what she also calls a 'civilised world' – in-group (Van Dijk, 1998). Conversely, the problematic

news that 87% of the respondents to a *Sunday Independent* telephone poll remain unconvinced by the American case against Iraq is relegated to the background and only mentioned eleven paragraphs into the same article.

Blix's Report to the Security Council: February 14 to 16

The contents of the Blix report are anticipated by *The Irish Times* front page headline of February 14: 'Blix report expected to support continued inspections of Iraq'. The formal public release of the report dominates the 9.00 pm news bulletin of February 14, with Ann Doyle's introduction emphasising both the mixed reaction to the report and the absence of any immediate causal justification for war: 'His findings have something for the hawks and the doves *but* [emphasis added] contain no trigger for war'. The 'bitter' UN divisions over Iraq are emphasised throughout the *RTE* broadcast, while *The Irish Times* of February 15 describes the diplomatic impasse as 'one of the most serious crises in ...[the UN's] 58-year history'. The starkness of the register is epitomised by Margaret Ward's introduction to the first of the *RTE* reports on February 14 ('Would it be war or peace?' she asks), which goes on to knowingly observe that 'today's report was always going to be used by both sides to justify its position'.

In line with the structure of the February 5 broadcast (see above), the *RTE* report of Blix's presentation on February 14 is immediately followed by a summary of the now pre-ordained range of polarised Council stances. The positions of China, Russia and France, on the one hand, and US and Britain, on the other, are recounted, while the enthusiasm of the wider UN assembly for the metonymical French position – the symbol of anti-war sentiment globally – is clearly signified by a wide-focus shot of the Council chamber and a voice-over assertion: 'the reaction...[the applause of delegates is clearly audible] a rare demonstration of support'. Carole Coleman offers a more open-ended interpretation of the American position in a subsequent live interview with Doyle (she describes a comment attributed to Ari Fleischer¹³ that 'America is in no rush to go to war' as 'very different' from the more familiar 'time is running out line'). Yet the stark political choice facing America – for America is cast as the *determining* agency – is emotively formulated by Coleman:

Perhaps this weekend is going to be the time when they [The Bush Administration] finally acknowledge the huge level of opposition around the world to this war ... Tomorrow there will be millions of people right around the world protesting against it. Or perhaps this will be the weekend when they decide that after all the UN has no backbone and it's time for them to go ahead on their own.

The Irish anti-war frame is again prominent. Citing the fact that 'a poll in tomorrow's *Irish Times* shows an overwhelming majority of people oppose US use of Shannon ...without a UN mandate', the signalling of committed national opposition to the prospects of a war is animated by Charlie Bird's colourful assertion that 'people will be coming [to the Dublin march of February 15] from the four corners of the country' (*RTE*, February 14). A similar anti-war interpretation of the same opinion poll dominates one *Irish Times* headline of February 15, while the main front-page headline collocates US attempts to pass a new Security Council resolution with a discourse of UN division: 'US to seek second resolution as UN divisions increase'. The same article goes on to preview the anti-war protests taking place 'in world capitals today' (it even gives precise details of the time and route of the Dublin march) and, affirming the trope of Irish opposition, it quotes an extract from an *Irish Times* opinion piece by Mary Robinson (former Irish President and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights) who is described as 'cautioning against any action not sanctioned by the Security Council'.

The global anti-war protests dominate the *RTE* news coverage of February 15. Five anti-war reports are broadcast, two of which report on Irish protests, while the other three cover protests in London, Europe (mainly France) and New York. The Dublin march is described in the introduction as attracting a crowd of up to 100,000 people, while Charlie Bird again invokes the metaphor of a people who 'had come from the four corners of the country to say no to war'. And while three of the Dublin march's speakers are directly sourced and identified on screen, the news frame prioritises the 'subject positions' of (so-called) ordinary people, many of whom, asserts reporter Orla O'Donnell, 'are taking part in demonstrations like this for the first time'.

In stark contrast to *RTE* – and the subsequent *Irish Times* report of February 17, which describes the Dublin protest as the biggest demonstration in the capital for over 20 years – the *Sunday Independent* of February 16 contains no headline or photographic allusion to either the Dublin or international protests. The register of the sole front-page headline reference to Iraq is satirical: 'If our economy depended on Iraq, Bertie [Ahern – Irish Prime Minister] would have Celia [Ahern's partner] in a burka'. It functions, however, as a cue for the article's subsequent articulation of a *realpolitik* discourse, which asserts, 'governments act primarily out of self-interest, not the objective desire to do the "right thing"'. In contrast, the article ends by anti-thetically suggesting that 'it's for the marchers who turned out in such numbers around the world yesterday to show their leaders the *almost mythical* [italics added] right thing to do [the labelling here is key; it ultimately suggests the unworkability and political naivety of a moralistic anti-war stance], even if their advice is not followed'.

The Start of the Military Attack: March 20 To 22

The commencement of the American-led military attacks against Iraq led to a predictable downpour (Savarese, 2000) of war-related media coverage. This shift in news framing, which can be one-dimensionally interpreted as media capitulation to US hegemonic imperatives, is evident in several respects. First: it is obvious in the foregrounding of the war narrative itself, which draws primarily on the military and strategic discourses of elite US, and British, political and military players. Second: it is suggested by the increasingly unproblematic use of the official 'coalition' nomenclature ('Coalition makes early gains' asserts the main front page headline of *The Irish Times* on Friday 21), even though there is scant attention to coalition agents other than the US and Britain. Third: it is evident in the foregrounding of various battlefield reports (see, for instance, *The Irish Times* reports of Jack Fairweather, March 20 and 22), which chronicle and pre-empt the specific military gains of the coalition forces.

Yet the framing of the war-related coverage, particularly on *RTE*, remains *open* to critical readings. The high media visibility of the anti-war frame is sustained, and there are reports of national and international anti-war demonstrations in the *RTE* broadcasts of March 20, March 21 and March 22. The anti-war stance is again aligned with the positions of unnamed, ordinary people, as signified by the images of Dublin school children releasing 250 white balloons for peace on March 21, the direct sourcing of a 9-year-old girl's appeal for peace at a Dublin anti-war rally on March 22, and sourced comments from two women protesting outside the White House on March 21. In addition, the trope of committed international and national opposition to the war is, list-style, evoked by visual and voiceover reference to demonstrations in Washington, New York, Australia and 'across Europe and Asia' (March 20); San Francisco, 'towns and cities across Europe', Argentina, Belgium, China, Philippines, Tokyo, Australia, Galway, Limerick and Cork (March 21); Dublin, 'Helsinki to Sao Paulo', Oslo, Brussels, London, New York, Washington, Berlin, Florence, Madrid, Gaza and Tunisia (March 22).

The politics of the war remain visible. 'Europe looks divided and defeated', asserts *RTE*'s Tony Connolly at the start of his March 20 report of the EU summit, while Europe correspondent, Sean Whelan, in a follow-up live interview with Anne Doyle, unflatteringly describes the agreed statement of European leaders as 'about the only thing they could cobble together at the moment'. Yet, while these and other reports continue to organise political positions around anti-war and pro-war axes, the political frame does signal a shift towards 'humanitarian' concerns, as evinced by the directly sourced comments of Pat Cox, the Irish born President of the European Parliament, in the *RTE* broadcast of March 20.

The domestic political tensions over the war, particularly the Irish Government's controversial decision to sanction American military use of Shannon, feature prominently. The *RTE* broadcast of March 20 includes a David

McCullagh report on the Dáil¹⁴ debate over Iraq, which describes the Government position as one 'strongly criticised by the opposition who accused the Government of abandoning Irish neutrality and undermining the United Nations'. Of the eleven sources directly sourced or referenced in the *RTE* reports of the Dáil debate of March 20 and the Seanad debate of March 21, seven express, or are attributed with, anti-war stances. Moreover, the Government position is largely framed as a defensive posture, grounded more in self-interested calculation rather than any strong, pro-war convictions.

There are genre similarities between *The Irish Times* reports of Lara Marlowe¹⁵ and the Baghdad-based reports of *RTE*'s Richard Downes, both of whom assume the register of 'bearing witness' to the war's human impact. Combining first-person narrative with colourful scenic descriptors, the Marlow front-page article of March 24 – headlined 'Missile reduces family homes to dust in quiet Baghdad suburb' – is structured around her recounting of the destructive effects of American military actions on ordinary Iraqis: 'A 30-foot-deep inverted cone-spaced crater filled with water was all that was left of Abdul-Samaraii's little Villa', she asserts. Downes adopts a similarly humanitarian position in his *RTE* report of March 22. The viewer is presented with hospital images of wounded Iraqis over audio of young children crying, while one close-up shot of a bloodied Iraqi also features in the March 22 news introduction. Although he expresses clear scepticism about the Iraqi Ministry of Information claim that 'these injuries were specifically inflicted in civilian areas', Downes nevertheless asserts – in an emotionally charged register – a categorical causal link between the injured people in the film and the American-led attacks: '... *there is no doubt* [emphasis added] that their injuries were caused by last night's bombardment'.

In vivid contrast to both *RTE* and *The Irish Times*, the front page of the March 23 edition of the *Sunday Independent* assumes a much more benign attitude towards the war. Under a large, symbolically valorising photograph of members of 'the 1st battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment'¹⁶, the main front-page headline reads: 'I am unalterably opposed to the war on Iraq'. The editorial encoding of the main headline is actualised in the sub-title: 'Ronan Fanning is resolutely anti-war, *but* [italics added] nonetheless welcomes the Government's decision on the use of Shannon'. Fanning, a regular contributor to the paper, and a History Professor at University College Dublin, then goes on to legitimise the Irish Government's decision on historical grounds, while unequivocally distancing himself from what he categorises as 'the smug, sanctimonious and self-appointed leaders of our so-called moral majority against the war'. The moral pedigree of the anti-war position is assailed with similar polemical fervour in another front-page article by Eoghan Harris, who indicts *RTE* for its 'anti-American canteen culture that cuts it off from a constantly changing world'.

The Fall of Baghdad: April 8 to 10

Even before the symbolic removal of the Saddam Hussein regime on April 9, the 'Post-war Iraq ...agenda' (*The Irish Times*, April 8) dominates the news coverage of the preceding days. The 'new divisions' (*The Irish Times* headline of April 9) over a UN role (*The Irish Times* April 8) are foregrounded, as is the trope of French opposition to the attributed US-British view of the UN's input (which *RTE*'s Carole Coleman describes, in an April 8 report, as being 'short on detail').

The defining image of the toppled statue of Saddam predictably dominates both the *RTE* news of April 9 and *The Irish Times* front page of April 10, and the attributed delight of Iraqis is asserted without challenge. (See for instance, the *RTE* report of the 'celebration march' organised by members of the Dublin Iraqi community on April 10). Yet, while the symbolic authority of a simple liberation meta-narrative is partly undercut by the cautious official response of both the Bush and Blair administrations, the framing works to weaken the narrative even further by emphasising the problematic implications and effects of the military intervention.

This ambivalent framing of the fall of Baghdad is exemplified by *The Irish Times* headline of April 10: 'Scenes of joy, scenes of terror as Saddam's regime is toppled'. The anarchy frame is foregrounded (there are numerous voice-over and video allusions to the lawlessness, chaos, looting and infrastructural destruction of Iraq on the *RTE* coverage of April 9 and April 10), while the news that the Red Cross is to suspend its operations in Baghdad because of sporadic shooting is cited in the *RTE* introduction of April 9. The subsequent trajectory of events in Iraq is anticipated by Gareth O'Connor's report of April 10, which notes the apparent suicide bomb attack on an American convoy and draws on an *ABC* sourced video to signify an (embryonic) guerrilla war context: 'American soldiers at checkpoints are increasingly nervous: In this case [the sound of chaotic night-time gunfire is clearly audible] opening fire on a car that failed to stop' (*RTE* April 10).

O'Connor's report of April 9 describes the fall of Baghdad as being 'rich in symbolism'. Yet the deliberate, propagandistic construction of meaning is immediately signalled: as the scene visually unfolds on-screen, O'Connor frames the images of US marines momentarily draping the stars and stripes flag over the statue of Saddam as political symbols for domestic TV consumption in the State. Then, over video of an American soldier shaking hands with a local Iraqi, O'Connor disclaims a simplistic liberation reading: 'Some locals had a traditional warm Arab welcome for the visitors. But one protester made her feelings known', as the report moves to video of a lone woman haranguing a convoy of US tanks and uttering the audible cry of 'you murderers'. The fall of Kirkuk is problematically portrayed as a specific *American* liberation: 'Kirkuk falls to Kurds' [italics added] asserts *The Irish Times* headline of April 11. Instead, the active role of Kurdish Peshmerga militia, whose military success is juxtaposed with the 'extreme anxiety in

Turkey' about the prospects of a Kurdish declaration of independence, structures the body of the news narrative.

The 'sullen resentment' of the Arab World (*RTE*, April 9) informs both Tony Connolly reports of April 9 and 10. Although he emphasises the 'mixed reaction in the Arab World to events in Baghdad' (*RTE* April 9), only one of the six sources he uses (his sources are a mixture of named experts and unidentified 'ordinary' people) is clearly aligned with the American position. As the conclusion of the April 10 report emphasises, what is projected above all else is the bitter resentment of the Arab world and the likelihood of strained relations with the West 'for many years to come'.

Surprisingly, the headline and visual framing of the April 13 edition of the *Sunday Independent* largely deflects immediate attention away from Iraq. Instead, the two main headlines allude to what the paper suggests is Sinn Féin's¹⁷ moral equivocation over terrorism, while Eoghan Harris, in the second of the articles – and with inter-discursive reference to Iraq – again condemns what he categorises as the inherent anti-Americanism of Irish public opinion.

The End of Major Combat: May 2 to 4

Bush's televised speech on board a US military aircraft carrier, announcing the end of major military operations in Iraq, is previewed rather than retrospectively reported on, and is only mentioned on page 12 of the May 2 edition of *The Irish Times*. The speech is also anticipated in the *RTE* news of May 2, but forms part of a generic Iraq story, which features ninth in the broadcast and highlights Donald Rumsfeld's warning about Iraq remaining a place of danger and insecurity. Although *The Irish Times* reporter, Conor O'Clery, observes the reluctance of the US authorities to formally declare the end of the war, the signifiers of a victory speech are clearly suggested: 'The theatrical setting symbolised victory, though that word was carefully omitted from Mr Bush's text' (*The Irish Times*, May 2).

Interrogating the Charge of Anti-Americanism

This paper has sought to show how elements of the news coverage of the Iraq war and diplomatic crisis in *The Irish Times* and *RTE* can be decoded as an implicit critique of American power. (The hypothesis is that the charge could be made, *ex fortiori*, if one was to broaden the scope of the analysis to include, for instance, opinion pieces and discussion programmes). This is not to suggest a critical reading is the *only* possible reading of these texts. However, based on the particular sample, one can identify some general features of the comparative 'orders of discourse'¹⁸ that give constructivist

grounds, at least, to the argument that some high-profile Irish media are disposed towards anti-American stances: the cultural valorisation of the moral authority of the UN and the moral agency of the anti-war protests; the representation of the popular Irish position as anti-war; and the cultural distrust of an unproblematic liberation meta-narrative.

The evidence presented in this analysis suggests the grounds of the anti-American charge lie primarily in the open-ended and self-consciously objective character of the RTE and *The Irish Times* coverage, and the clear refusal of both media – in stark contrast to the *Sunday Independent* – to privilege an elite American reading of events. Both adhere to a professional ideology of objectivity (Tuchman, 1972) that ritually and strategically places the nominal American position in competition with others. And while neither media institution affects an overt hostility towards America (this comes as no great surprise, given the mostly formal news genres in the sample), the pro-war position is represented as politically contentious and problematic from a broad cross-range of national and international, popular and elite perspectives, though all clearly operating within a culturally specific sphere of legitimate controversy (Schudson, 2001).

This suggests Irish media operate in a discursive and symbolic space where the political charge of anti-Americanism has a limited censorship (Bourdieu, 1991) effect. It even has a limited effect in the pages of the *Sunday Independent*, which, presumably for market-based reasons alone, cannot reduce its corporate stance to that of pro-war evangelism.¹⁹ Hence, the self-image amongst those ‘media intellectuals’ (Bourdieu, 1998) articulating the charge is effectively that of a small cadre of counter-hegemonic agents rallying against what they see as the false consciousness and the wishy-washy idealism of the national anti-American ‘doxa’.²⁰ As David Quinn, triumphantly declares in the *Sunday Times* of April 13, ‘So who got it right [on Iraq]? The list is short. This newspaper did. So did Kevin Myers, Eoghan Harris and John Waters’.²¹

Quinn is correct in one respect: the evidence of this analysis certainly doesn’t suggest a national media culture awash with pro-war polemic. It suggests instead a sceptical media culture, determined to *show* the problematic political and social implications of the American-led military intervention and determined not to confuse – however much they might be conflated – anti-war scepticism with (false) anti-American universals. Our understanding of the hegemonic²² formation of the Irish media field should not, therefore, be reduced to the formal strictures of an American-centric propaganda model (Herman and Chomsky, 1998); nor should it be generically aligned with any nominal Western, Anglicised or even Atlanticist²³ stance.

Ireland’s historical experience of colonial interventions, its historical mythologising of the effectiveness and resolve of guerrilla warfare (for instance, the television images of American soldiers firing shots at an unseen enemy is pregnant with Irish cultural resonances) and, most recently, its direct experience of terrorism in Northern Ireland, all affect the cultural framing of

the war. And although much of the Northern Ireland conflict was mediated to southern audiences through a censorship climate²⁴, the Northern 'Troubles' are perhaps now culturally regarded as an exemplar of the dictum that the problem of terrorism cannot be resolved militarily. What is valorised above all else (though it should not be confused with nationalist nostalgia) is the *perceived* ability to articulate 'our own' national voice (Grundman, Smith and Wright, 2000) despite the intensity of the symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1991) of the Bush-led war on terror. This is evident in the dearth of syndicated material in the sample, nearly all of which is produced by journalists affiliated to Irish media. But it was probably best illustrated metaphorically by the rapturous reception given to *RTE* reporter Richard Downes (see above) when he appeared on *RTE*'s highest-rating light entertainment show²⁵ on his return from Baghdad in April.

The international context is vital; indeed, the Irish case points to the limits of any attempts to model the relationship between the media field and the political field on self-contained national terms (Robinson, 2001). The charge of anti-Americanism is produced within a (self-consciously) ideological universe, a universe of moral absolutes, which behoves us to view the actions of American political actors in benign and moral terms. It is part of a discourse formation (a curious mix of nationalist and globalizing discourses) that seeks to undermine, not only the idea of an open-ended, American public sphere, but also the idea of distinct international public *spheres*. It aligns itself therefore – and its proponents are hardly naïve about the strategic dynamics of alliance forming – with an ideological project that regards the idea of a distinct public space, and the idea of a public-minded infrastructure to mediate that space (Herman and McChesney, 1997), as both antiquated and quaint. Hence, any perceived anti-Americanism on the part of the national media culture is, at source, a defensive and relational response: a metaphorical assertion of 'our' (however limited) symbolic autonomy from the hegemonic impulses of the Bush administration, the hegemonic compulsions of US media norms and the self-interested calculations of our own (relatively powerless) Government.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has illustrated the diverse representation of the Iraq war and diplomatic crisis in three Irish media organisations, *The Irish Times*, *RTE* and *Sunday Independent*. The evidence suggests the *Sunday Independent* largely aligns itself with a closed, pro-war and pro-American position, in contrast with the more sceptical and open-ended framing of the war in *The Irish Times* and *RTE*. The analysis concludes it is the forthrightness and ritually objective nature of the coverage that leave *The Irish Times* and *RTE* open to the charge of Anti-Americanism, and not because of any overt antipathy to the

nominal American position. The sample limitations of this study do, however, point to the need for a more comprehensive analysis of Irish media content, which complements this study's predominant focus on formal reportage with further analysis of opinion, comment and discussion genres.

Notes

1. Unless otherwise specified, Ireland is used here to denote the Republic of Ireland.
2. The post-September 11 critique of objectivity is conceptualised here as ideologically motivated, rather than epistemological.
3. Radio Telefís Éireann (RTE) is Ireland's Public Service Broadcaster.
4. The articulation of the charge was evident, too, in an Irish political context. For instance, Deputy Prime Minister Mary Harney labelled the motives of the Irish Anti-War Movement as 'anti-American' in February 2003 (Crowley, 2003).
5. Another important factor behind their selection was the ease of access to database archives. *The Irish Times* and *Sunday Independent* were accessed through the Lexis-Nexis database and their respective online archives at www.ireland.com and http://www.unison.ie/irish_independent. RTE, in turn, has a very comprehensive, and free, online news and current affairs archive available at www.rte.ie.
6. The sample covers the period from February 5 to 7 in the case of *The Irish Times* and *RTE*. However, because of the news lag for newspapers, I also sample content from the February 8 issue of *The Irish Times*. The same sampling principle is applied to the other block periods.
7. February 14 to 16 sample.
8. March 20 to 22 sample.
9. April 8 to 10 sample.
10. May 2 to 4 sample.
11. The Irish Prime Minister.
12. Irish Congress of Trade Unions.
13. Fleischer was at the time the senior press spokesperson of the Bush administration.
14. The Dáil is the main representative chamber of the Irish parliament, while the Seanad is the so-called Upper House.
15. Marlowe shares the byline of different front-page reports on March 20 to 24. I refer, in the specific instance, to the single byline reports of March 21 and March 24.
16. The Regiment is part of the British Army.
17. Sinn Féin is the political party affiliated to the Irish Republican Army (IRA).
18. A concept appropriated by Fairclough from Foucault, order(s) of discourse alludes to all 'the discursive types' used in a particular social or institutional context and the 'point of the concept...is to highlight the relationships [of power] between different types in such a set' (Fairclough, 1995: 55).
19. Along with Ronan Fanning, Colum Kenny (Kenny, 2003) and Declan Lynch (Lynch, 2003) are two of the paper's regular columnists who assumed more of a sceptical anti-war stance.
20. Bourdieu uses the term *doxa* to describe the commonsense, taken for granted assumptions of a particular social order: or the widespread cultural acceptance of 'things without knowing them' (Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1994: 268).
21. John Waters was another dissenting pro-war voice within the ranks of *The Irish Times*.
22. I am working from the assumption that a hegemonic formation can also involve a more productive and progressive use of power (Laclau, 1986).
23. By Atlanticist, I mean those discourses that seek to align Ireland ideologically with an Anglo-American 'free market' tradition opposed to the social democratic 'norms' of continental Europe.

24. The so-called section 31 provision, a measure introduced in the 1970s, banned all radio and television interviews with political representatives linked to Republican paramilitary groups up until the early 1990s (Horgan, 2001: 149).
25. *The Late Late Show*.

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Good-doers or Bad-doers?

*Images of the War in Iraq in the Mainstream Norwegian Press*¹

Rune Ottosen

The attack on Iraq, which began on March 20 2003, came in an international atmosphere in which the US and the United Kingdom, with a willing coalition of smaller countries, went to war despite broad global protest including the majority of NATO member-states. After September 11, George W. Bush had made it clear that he would use all means possible in the 'war on terror' and the war preparations against Iraq were placed in this context. "Either you are with us or with the terrorists," he had already said in a televised speech on September 20 2001. This was the first warning of a polarised world, divided into two groups, 'friends' and 'enemies'. We now know that immediately after September 11 the circle around President Bush started preparing for a new war against Iraq to remove the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein, but the problem was to link the September 11 attacks to Iraq in a manner convincing for a global audience. The 'smoking gun' that could link Saddam Hussein to al-Qaeda was never found, but the decision was taken regardless of the lack of evidence; Saddam Hussein was to be removed at all costs.

The attacks on Afghanistan in October 2001 signalled the first phase of the war on terror, the declared aim being to chase potential al-Qaeda members from their bases in the Afghanistan mountains and remove the Taliban regime² (Ottosen, 2002b). From the very beginning, the US tried to draw in Norway as an ally in the war on terror, and so Norway, and the Norwegian media had to take up a position in this new global landscape. The purpose of this paper is to see how Norwegian media covered the war against Iraq. As part of an international comparative project, I will analyse selected time-spots before, during and after the war in two mainstream Norwegian newspapers. In addition I will analyse how the Norwegian military presence in Iraq was covered through a discussion of the coverage of Norwegian forces' departure to that country in July 2003, and the coverage of a claim that the Norwegian contribution to the war was illegal and unconstitutional.

Background

Norway has traditionally been a close ally of the US and a loyal NATO member since 1949, and Norwegian mainstream media have traditionally been supportive of their government's general security policy (Ottosen, 2001). After the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, NATO developed a new activist policy, representing a break with the traditional collective self-defence concept. Norway has played an active role in the NATO-led IFOR³ and SFOR⁴ forces in Bosnia and the KFOR⁵ forces in Kosovo, and Norwegian forces, were involved in military intervention for the first time since the Second World War when the former Yugoslavia was attacked in March 1999. At that time, Norway had given military support, providing fighter planes and placing Norwegian pilots at the disposal of the attacking NATO force. The war in Afghanistan represented an added dimension, with Norwegian ground forces taking part in the hunt for al-Qaeda forces in the mountains of Afghanistan. The Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget) responded positively when the US sought Norwegian military support in Afghanistan, contributing fighter planes, transport planes, helicopters and ground forces, a central task of which was to clear undetonated mines. Some, however, of the forces' tasks were a part of enduring freedom and kept secret from the Norwegian people, for 'security reasons' as explained by government officials (Garbo, 2002:40-50).

The historical dimension of this military action was underlined when NATO formally took over leadership of the international peacekeeping forces (ISAF). This was the first time in history that NATO had assumed such a responsibility outside Europe, although no-one doubted that the US would remain the dominant force within ISAF.

In Afghanistan, Norwegian soldiers saw battle outside a UN framework for the first time since the Second World War, and this brought several important and serious legal issues to the surface in public debate. Did the action have a legal basis in international law? Would Norwegian soldiers fall under the command of Norwegian or of American officers? In a situation in which Norwegian soldiers might violate international law, should they refer to Norwegian or to US law? These concerns were raised again when Norway sent troops to Iraq in the spring of 2003.⁶

An interesting aspect of the Norwegian debate was that military personnel participated in it to a greater extent than usual (Norwegian officers have traditionally maintained a low profile in discussions concerning foreign and security policies). Many officers and their professional organisations were active discussants: if they were going to war they wanted clear answers from the politicians.⁷

War or Humanitarian Intervention?

This debate should be seen in the light of discussions at the time of the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999. At that time, Norwegian Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik was criticised for refusing to call the action a war, terming it instead a humanitarian intervention. Four years later, speaking to a large audience of NATO officers, Bondevik withdrew from his previous position, admitting that it should have been called a war in the first place (*Dagbladet*, 3 September 2003) – an attempt to counter discontent within military circles over Norwegian politicians, who were admonished for not properly standing behind the soldiers. A similar discussion began after Norway's decision to send troops to Iraq in the spring of 2003. On several occasions spokesmen for officers' organisations have reprimanded the government for not facing up to the consequences of its decisions to send troops to Iraq and for not openly declaring that they were actors in a war scenario. The spokesmen claim that, by portraying them as a part of a 'humanitarian mission' rather than of the forces of war, the Norwegian government had betrayed the soldiers who risked their lives on the ground in Iraq. This criticism was repeated when, in July 2004, after a year in Iraq, the first group of 130 soldiers returned to Norway from their first mission (NTB 5.7 2004), a group of 15 Norwegian officers having been left behind in Iraq, on request from the US government, to support the occupying forces.

Project Design and Sample

Selection of newspapers and the time-spots is based on those chosen for an international research project, comparing war coverage in several countries.⁸

The selected time-spots are:

- Colin Powell's report to the Security Council (5, 6, 7 February 2003);
- the split in NATO meeting (10,11 February 2003);
- Hans Blix's report to the Security Council (14, 15, 16 February 2003);
- the attack on Iraq (18, 19, 20, 21, 22 March 2003);
- the fall of Baghdad (8, 9, 10 April 2003);
- and Bush declares the end of war (2, 3, 4 May 2003).

I will provide a general overview of the coverage of selected time-spots in the period leading up to the war, in the two newspapers *Aftenposten* and *VG*. The choice of these two newspapers was made to include Norway's largest, and potentially most influential, morning paper, *Aftenposten*, as well as the largest Norwegian newspaper, the tabloid *VG*. It should be noted here that *VG* bears no comparison to British and German tabloids such as the *Sun*

and *Bild Zeitung*, since *VG* is regarded as a serious newspaper in tabloid format. Neither should the choice of these two newspapers as a sample be regarded as representative of the Norwegian press, since openly critical newspapers such as the left-wing *Klassekampen* and the more liberal *Dagbladet* are not included. *VG* was chosen because it is the most popular newspaper in Norway, with a daily circulation of 390,000 and an additional 100,000 on Saturdays (figures from 2002).

In the last part of the analysis I will go beyond the time-spots and look at media coverage of the Norwegian military presence in Iraq. I will present an analysis of Norwegian media coverage of the war in Iraq with special reference to the coverage of Norway's role.

Based on earlier research, my hypothesis will be that, despite many similarities, the coverage in *Aftenposten* will be found to be more critical towards the US-led war in Iraq than that of *VG*.

Theoretical Approach

A comparative project on the five countries involved in the first Gulf War, edited by myself and my Swedish colleague Stig A. Nohrstedt, reached two major conclusions: (a) that crossnational variations in the media coverage could be explained by the security and foreign policy settings; and (b) that a drift towards the US propaganda-image of the conflict gradually emerged in the European media (Finnish, German, Norwegian and Swedish) studied (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2001).

The official American picture of the war in Iraq was that it was a necessary step in the 'war against terror' after September 11. The critics, however, saw it as one of several examples of American hegemony and imperialism (Chomsky, 2001). All modern wars are also media wars. Since the Gulf War in 1991, when CNN made its commercial breakthrough with 24-hour satellite broadcasts, the battle to win hearts and minds globally has also been a media battle (McLaughlin, 2002). Media strategies are developed by the parties involved in order to win the propaganda war, and all sides try to control and influence the journalists (Solomon, 2001). In all wars, the protagonists try to place their own acts and motives in the most favourable light; this is the very purpose of war propaganda. According to Jowett and O'Donnell, propaganda is "the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist" (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992). A challenge for journalists covering wars is to identify propaganda as a part of the general news environment.

Methods including persuasion and physical control over journalists' movements are used in propaganda strategies. When it is impossible to keep them away from the battlefield through restrictions, censorship and security regu-

lations, they form systems of mutual cooperation such as the pool-systems of the Gulf War in 1991 and the embedded system of the Iraq war in 2003 (Ottosen, 2001). The situation for global television has also changed dramatically since the Gulf War in 1991 since CNN is no longer a global monopoly and other western players such as BBC World, SKY television and Fox television have arrived in the global satellite television market – not to mention Arab players, with Al Jazeera in the forefront (Figenschou 2004).

The Embedded System

The purpose of all media strategies imposed by the military is to have media war coverage represented as closely as possible to the official propaganda version. Through the embedded programme in the Iraqi invasion, the Pentagon changed its policy from that during the Afghanistan war, when heavy restrictions were placed on journalists' access to the battle zone. Some 600 journalists, travelling with American and British troops, were able to follow the invasion. Through the embedded programme, journalists were given military rank and operated closely with soldiers at the front (Lewis et al, 2003). They gained direct access to the battle but, according to a study by the US-based Project for Excellence in Journalism, the embedded coverage was largely anecdotal, combat-focused, live and unedited (<http://www.journalism.org>). A detailed discussion of the embedded system lies beyond the scope of this paper, but it should be mentioned that one Norwegian journalist was part of the embedded programme. Lene Østbye, from the commercial channel TV2, was embedded with US soldiers while they were stationed in Kuwait although she returned to Norway for safety reasons when they joined the invasion forces and went into Iraq. A journalist and a photographer from the Norwegian newspaper *VG* were allowed to follow the invasion forces in their own car even though their status was unofficial. The embedded programme is thus relevant for this project since one of the newspapers (*Aftenposten*) did not take part in it, while the other (*VG*) followed the invasion forces outside the formal embedded-programme.

Media Framing of the Norwegian Military Presence

One issue to be discussed in this article is what possibilities were open to the Norwegian government for creating an image of its military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq that was different from that of the US. Obviously, the attack on Iraq was controversial since it had no mandate from the UN and was in violation of international law. The Norwegian government had criticised the attack on Iraq, offending the US government; it tried to compen-

sate for this and repair the damage to the US-Norwegian relationship by sending troops in July 2003, as soon as the UN Security Council, through resolution 1483, adopted May 22 2003, called for international participation in rebuilding Iraq and securing the situation for the Iraqi people. Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jan Petersen, has on several occasions claimed that Norway's military presence had solid UN backing because of this resolution. Critics have, however, continued to maintain that in practical terms it is difficult to differentiate between the occupation forces and the forces deployed after this resolution was adopted.

The framing by the media of an event does, to a large extent, reflect elite positions in public debate (Tuchman, 1978). Framing analyses can be used both as a general theoretical approach to media analyses and as a practical guide or tool for content analyses (Allern, 2001, Entman, 1993). Both aspects of frame analyses will be applied in this article.

In this particular situation, the media image of the Norwegian military presence was important. Was it framed as a peace effort or as a violation of international law? Had it been possible to send in troops a few months *after* an illegal invasion and separate the activities of those troops from those of the occupying forces? The answer to this question is important in understanding the character of this conflict within the global conflict context.

It might be useful to look at the coverage of 'Norwegian' issues in the light of Pierre Bourdieu's interpretation of 'doxa' (based on Ottosen, 1994). Doxa is a room with closed doors and is thus a space excluded from public debate. The term is taken from the Greek *doxa* – the non-political, or the issues not up for discussion. According to Bourdieu, there are doxic rooms in all societies, something one does not question since a society's fundamental structures are taken for granted. According to Bourdieu, one's opinion is formed by two forms of discourse, the heterodox (the questionable) and the orthodox (the agreed). But the doxic room itself is not open for discussion (von der Lippe, 1991).

In this context issues such as access to oil, US strategic interest and geo-political aims are all part of doxa and are thus not discussed in the running news coverage. Such issues, which John Pilger calls the hidden agenda, are left to dissidents and not brought into the framework of mainstream media (Pilger, 1998). One issue discussed in this article is the media coverage of the Norwegian military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq. A hypothesis is that the image of the Norwegian presence will be framed as 'good-doing', to borrow an expression from the Norwegian historian Terje Tvedt.

In an analysis of the image of Norwegian development aid, Tvedt identified a segment in Norwegian society – including the Ministry of Development Aid, NGOs receiving funding from the government and journalists writing about north-south issues – defining Norwegians as 'good-doers' regardless of actual policy. The goodwill of Norwegian efforts to help the poor in the South out of their poverty is protected from any form of critical discourse (Tvedt, 2003).

This image of Norwegians as being by definition 'good-doers' can easily be transferred to Norway as a 'peace factor' in the international arena. This image is cultivated in the Israeli-Palestine conflict with Oslo as the channel or bridge-builder – even though this channel proved ultimately to be a dead end. The political motive of the Oslo channel is never at fault, because Norwegians are by definition good-doers. With this approach the poor results and basic failure of the Oslo peace process is toned down and the Norwegian government is never held politically accountable for its failure (Øvrum, 2004). The same approach can be used to analyse the role of Norway as mediator in conflicts in countries such as Sri Lanka, Guatemala and Sudan. Norway is never blamed if the peace process fails, because as good-doers we can never be responsible for anything bad or evil (Tvedt, 2003). My hypothesis is that the media image of the Norwegian military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq will be coloured by this concept of Norwegians as good-doers. This was, actually, already clear in the war in Yugoslavia, when the military force sent there was defined as a humanitarian force whose main purpose was clearing mines and taking care of security. Potentially problematic side effects of the Norwegian military presence, such as the possible killing of innocent civilians, were sealed in the doxic room, to use Pierre Bourdieu's expression (von der Lippe, 1991).

Methodology

In both the Iraq and Afghanistan studies I have used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology. The coding of all the articles is documented in a separate report (Figenschou 2004b); here I merely summarise the main findings. The strength of the 'framing analysis' method is that it allows us to identify the presence of certain ideological positions in the articles and use of sources in a quantitative manner. However, this analysis must be used carefully since it does not give a clear picture of the main story in each article; and for main story I refer to Teun van Dijk's definition (main framing, title and lead) (van Dijk, 1988). This quantitative presentation reflecting the view expressed by sources must therefore be analysed together with a more detailed examination of the coverage in the selected time-spots. It should also be noted that an article can include more than one framing, and therefore the number of total framings is higher than the number of articles (see table 4.).

The framing of the articles will be analysed according to the following five categories:

A) *Iraqi version*: The US is the main imperialist suppressor and terrorist. Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction, but the US uses false evidence as an excuse to go to war. UN sanctions against Iraq have, since the Gulf War in 1991, caused the death of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children and caused

tremendous suffering among the Iraqi people. The US uses the UN to gain control over Iraqi resources, and its ultimate aim is to control the Middle East.

B) *UN version*: UN weapons inspectors must be given the time and facilities to do a decent job. Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction must be found and destroyed. According to UN Security Council 1441 (of November 8 2002), Iraq and all other players with weapons of mass destruction must hand over information to the UN weapons inspectors and give them the opportunity to as good a job as possible. UN Security Council is the right forum, with sufficient authority to lead the development of the Iraqi crisis. War must be avoided in the interest of the civilian population in Iraq and of world peace.

C) *US version*: Saddam Hussein has already played cat and mouse with the international community for too long. If the UN Security Council is to have any credibility it must demonstrate the ability to act and to crack down on repeated violations of UN resolutions. Since September 11, Iraq, with its weapons of mass destruction and connections to international terrorist organisations, has represented a threat to US security. The Iraqi authorities are playing hide and seek with the weapons inspectors and are hiding their weapons of mass destruction. The enemy is not the Iraqi people (who deserve better than the misery and suppression under which they live today), but their brutal leader. The US has shown great patience in avoiding war, but now time is running out for Saddam Hussein. The weapons of mass destruction must be found and destroyed, the regime of Saddam Hussein must be removed and a new democratic government will eventually be installed.

D) *Norwegian angle*: What will happen to Norway and Norwegians if a war starts? Examples within this framing are stories reaching the news threshold because Norway or Norwegians are involved. The comments, or expression of views, by Norwegians is not in itself sufficient reason for inclusion.

E) *Neutral*: Straightforward descriptions of events and situations, and factual commentary.

Part I: Content Analysis of the Iraq War in *VG* and *Aftenposten*: Empirical Findings

In the following content analysis I will examine the 288 articles selected from *Aftenposten* and the 485 articles from *VG* falling into the chosen time-spots explained above. I will look at the framing of articles and the use of sources. As we can see from Table 1, *VG* has more articles in all genres, but the share of news articles in the sample is quite similar in the two newspapers (57,3% in *Aftenposten* and 53,8 % in *VG*).⁹ *Aftenposten* usually places more emphasis on foreign news than *VG*; the reason that, during this period, *VG* ran more articles than *Aftenposten*, is that during major conflicts such as the War in Iraq *VG* increases its foreign coverage dramatically.

Table 1. Articles in *Aftenposten* and *VG* in Selected Time-spots During the Iraq War

Genre	<i>Aftenposten</i>		<i>VG</i>		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
News	165	57,3	106	53,8	271	55,9
Feature/ reportage	3	1,0	4	2,0	7	1,4
Commentary	34	11,8	24	12,2	58	12,0
Editorial	15	5,2	11	5,6	26	5,4
Brief	69	24,0	43	21,8	112	23,1
Interview	2	0,7	9	4,6	11	2,3
Total	288	100,0	197	100,0	485	100,0

Table 2. Types of Sources in *Aftenposten* and *VG* from Selected Time-spots During the Iraq War (per cent)

Type of source	<i>Aftenposten</i>	<i>VG</i>	Total
Expert source	22,8	14,2	19,4
Politician or spokes-person for authorities	42,0	43,1	42,4
Man in the street	17,8	5,7	13,0
Victim	0,5	1,9	1,0
Editorial source	5,1	5,2	5,1
Other media	9,1	20,6	13,7
Other	1,5	8,1	4,1
Combination	1,2	1,2	1,2
Total (n = 1 068)	100,0	100,0	100,0

The main difference between the two newspapers in the use of sources is that *Aftenposten* tends more to the use of both expert and 'man in the street' sources. The most common sources for both papers are politicians and spokespersons for the authorities. Victims are virtually absent as sources in both newspapers (0,5% in *Aftenposten* and 1,9% in *VG*). This reflects the orientation of both papers towards the elite.

Table 3. National Origin of Sources in Selected Articles from *Aftenposten* and *VG* During the Iraq War (per cent)

National origin of source	<i>Aftenposten</i>	<i>VG</i>	Total
US	19,2	36,5	26,0
Norway	35,8	33,5	34,9
Great Britain, Spain, Italy	8,0	7,3	7,7
Iraq	13,0	11,3	12,4
France, Germany, Russia	7,0	2,8	5,3
Other Arab countries	11,7	4,5	8,9
Other	5,2	4,0	4,7
Total (n=1 011)	100,0	100,0	100,0

The biggest difference between the two newspapers is that *VG* uses more US sources than does *Aftenposten*. *Aftenposten* uses more sources from Iraq, from other Arab countries and from NATO-countries (France and Germany) opposing the war than *VG*. The findings support my hypothesis of a more critical level of reporting in *Aftenposten* than in *VG*. These figures, however, must be interpreted together with the more quantitative analyses of the articles considered later in the article.

Table 4. Framing of Articles as Expressed by the Sources from Selected Time-spots in *Aftenposten* and *VG* During the Iraq War (per cent)

Tendency	<i>Aftenposten</i>	<i>VG</i>	Total
Iraqi version	7,4	4,0	6,1
UN version	22,2	15,2	19,4
US version	14,9	25,7	19,2
Norwegian version	12,5	10,9	11,9
Neutral	37,6	40,1	38,6
Combination	5,4	4,0	4,9
Total (n=1 070)	100,0	100,0	100,0

The analysis of the framings shows that the differences are not that great but, taken together as a general reflection of Norwegian media coverage, the strong US orientation documented in previous studies is confirmed in this research as well (Ottosen, 2001). Both *VG* and *Aftenposten* have 'neutral' as the biggest category but, as we can see from the table, *VG* uses more (25,7%) of the 'US version' than *Aftenposten* (14,9%) and also more of the UN version (22,2% as against 15,2% in *VG*). Both these tendencies support the hypothesis of more US-friendly coverage in *VG*. *Aftenposten* remained loyal to the policy of the Norwegian government, which wanted a strong UN presence in the conflict, while *VG* was more aligned with the US decision to go to war without a UN mandate.

The conclusion of this quantitative analysis is that, overall, the similarities of coverage in the two newspapers is more visible than the differences when it comes to content, use of sources and framing. On some points, such as framing and national origin of sources, the differences become more noticeable when we use a qualitative analysis with a more in-depth day to day examination.

Critical or Supportive War Coverage: A Qualitative Analysis of the Coverage in *VG* and *Aftenposten*

In this section I will compare coverage in *VG* and *Aftenposten* in some of the selected time-spots in a more qualitative manner, testing the hypothesis based on earlier studies that *VG*'s coverage is more supportive of the US than *Aftenposten*'s.

Colin Powell's Presentation to the Security Council

Aftenposten's Coverage on February 6

On February 6 the two newspapers covered Colin Powell's allegations of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of Saddam Hussein. *Aftenposten's* main story on the front page presented Colin Powell's speech to the Security Council under the title "Aims at war – USA has made up its mind", and an editorial entitled "Closer to war". With eight other articles, the coverage is broad and balanced. The US correspondent Kristin Nilsen quotes Powell extensively but the framing expresses doubt about the credibility of the claimed evidence. Expressions like 'tried to convince' and 'claimed' marked her distance from the credibility of Powell's arguments.

VG's Coverage on February 6

VG also ran a front page article on February 6 – "This is why US will go to war". An editorial entitled "The hourglass is about to run out" signals *VG's* more US-supportive framing, compared to *Aftenposten's*. The main story was "The sabotage" – a reference to Iraq's claimed lack of cooperation with UN weapons inspectors. Eighteen articles on the topic presented a broad picture, including points of view both from countries which supported the US, like Norway (the Norwegian Prime Minister, Kjell Magne Bondevik, found Powell's presentation 'convincing') and from open critics of the US, like Nelson Mandela. But those who expressed doubt about Powell's argument were presented in briefs or small side stories while the supporters of the US received more prominence. The three main stories about Powell's presentation had a US-friendly framing, with titles like "Saddam's arsenal" and "The terror network" – supportive of Powell's allegations, and basically a repetition of his arguments (Powell is the only source). *VG*, as opposed to *Aftenposten*, rarely distanced itself from his message by using verbs like 'claimed'. The day after (February 7) *VG* was much more critical referring to several sources with arguments against Powell's evidence and arguments.

The Split in NATO Over War Preparations

Aftenposten's Coverage on February 11

Aftenposten's front page article, "Fear of loss of credibility in NATO. USA blames France", documented the historical split in the NATO alliance over how to deal with Iraq. Twelve articles on that day dealt with the uncertain situation within the alliance. In an article headed "...Petersen against the three [countries]...", Foreign Minister Jan Petersen was quoted in support of the US and attacking Germany, France and Belgium. One of the stories was a critical article about the Iraq correspondent from the Norwegian broadcasting company who had been expelled from Iraq that day.

VG's Coverage on February 11

With the headline “Historical crisis in NATO”, the front page of *VG* was devoted to the split in NATO. The editorial carried the polemical title “Madness in NATO”, expressing concern over the split within the alliance. The news about the expelled correspondent from the Norwegian broadcasting company was also among the eight articles. Interestingly enough, one of the stories was devoted to a new type of professional soldier in the Norwegian armed forces as Norway prepared to play a more active role in the war against terror; these new soldiers replaced drafted soldiers and should be seen in the context of the new ‘out of area’ doctrine in NATO. In terms of current NATO policy, Norwegian soldiers must to an increasing extent be prepared to fight wars outside Europe, whereas the traditional Norwegian military defence was designed to protect Norwegian territory.

Hans Blix's Presentation to the Security Council*Aftenposten's Coverage on February 15*

On this day *Aftenposten* presented Hans Blix's report to the Security Council. On the front page there was a reference to an article on the foreign page with an almost polemical title: “Unbelievable that US will not accept further inspection” (use of ‘unbelievable’ signals a break with the paper's traditionally neutral titles). The 16 other articles gave a broad representation of the continuing crisis in NATO. The title on the front page was an unusually clear statement for a news article; it is actually taken from the editorial openly critical of US policy and of the claim by president George W Bush that ‘time is running out for Iraq’. If the split in NATO a few days earlier could be called historical, *Aftenposten's* coverage on that day is remarkable as well. To the best of my knowledge, *Aftenposten* had never before been that polemical, in its news coverage, towards Norway's most important ally.

VG's Coverage on February 15

In contrast to *Aftenposten*, *VG*, on this day, supported US policy both through the framing of some of the eight articles and in a commentary by the political editor, Olav Versto, entitled “Unfortunate split” and arguing that Norway had to choose to side with the USA and the United Kingdom because of its historical debt to the two allies. The article was critical towards France and Germany, claiming that they had sabotaged the ‘UN track’. As clearly as *Aftenposten* had marked its opposition to US policy, so *VG* in its editing, framing and language openly supported it. In the article “Time has run out”, Colin Powell's case against Hans Blix, was supported by *VG* through the use of verbs such as ‘stated’ and ‘underlined’. Hans Blix's arguments were hardly mentioned although most of the space was offered to US reactions against them. The arguments of the other UN members were hardly mentioned ei-

ther. The coverage in *VG* and *Aftenposten* on this day proved beyond doubt that the two newspapers, which had traditionally shared common ground in their support for NATO and US foreign policy, had now chosen different directions. *Aftenposten*, openly and in a remarkably aggressive manner, opposed US policy in Iraq, while *VG* chose to support it.

Start of the War

Aftenpostens's Coverage on March 18-22

On March 18, the main story in *Aftenposten* presented Bush's 'Go in exile or war' demand – that the Iraqi president should leave the country or take the consequences. Colin Powell declared that the UN Security Council had 'failed its exam'. US Ambassador to the UN, John D Negroponte, claimed that the UN was close to a Security Council majority in favour of war – but to bring a resolution to the vote was pointless since France would veto it in any event. As early as March 8, Norway's Prime Minister had officially – and clearly – declared Norway's opposition to a war without a UN mandate. On March 18, in an interview with *Aftenposten*, Bondevik expressed the fear that the UN would be weakened by the crisis, but that a war without a UN mandate was not necessarily a violation of international law. Foreign minister Jan Petersen, in another interview, ruled out the possibility of Norway's sending troops without a UN resolution. On March 19 the *Aftenposten* editorial "Against UN" repeated its opposition to the war and presented a poll in which 75 % of the Norwegian population declared its opposition towards a war without a UN mandate and referred, by way of contrast, to an American poll in which 66% of all Americans had backed President Bush's decision. *Aftenposten* ran a series of articles and background analyses, including a brief interview with the author of this paper, on the role the media would be likely to play in the coming war. The 'Norwegian angle' was present in an article on March 20 entitled "Norway will help USA"; it was based on anonymous governmental sources and a statement from Prime Minister Bondevik that despite lack of support for the war Norway's general loyalty towards US had to be emphasised. In the morning edition of March 21, *Aftenposten* brought the first news on the start of the war, and a wide range of articles and commentaries filled most of the paper. *Aftenposten* was using the freelance reporter Åsne Seierstad to cover the war from Baghdad; on March 20, Per Kristian Haugen from the paper's foreign desk said that Seierstad had decided for herself how long it would be safe to remain in Baghdad.

VG's Coverage on March 18-22

On March 18 *VG* ran a main story similar to *Aftenposten's* with a focus on Bush's demand to Saddam Hussein, under the title '48-hour time limit'. A Norwegian analyst predicted the war would start in two to three days. *VG's*

framing of Foreign Minister Jan Petersen's statement put the spotlight on his all too obvious irritation at France's behaviour. *VG* also stressed Prime Minister Bondevik's opinion that a war would not automatically mean a violation of international law even though Norway did not support it. Two stories showed typical signs of propaganda: one claiming that Saddam Hussein was distributing chemical weapons thereby threatening the British and US troops, and another claiming that 30 000 Iraqi soldiers had already deserted. The report from *VG*'s reporters travelling with the Third Infantry division without being formally embedded, on the boarder between Iraq and Kuwait refers, under the title "Last hymn before the war" to a ceremony conducted by the field chaplain, who is quoted as saying that George W Bush was appointed by God to disarm Saddam Hussein and to bring peace to the world. On March 19, as a part of its broad coverage, *VG* printed a story containing interviews with families of American soldiers, including the wife of a soldier who informed *VG*'s reporter that she had told her children their father had gone to capture an evil man – nonetheless, she feared that if he didn't return the children would blame him for going to war. *VG* also reported, on this day, the resistance of many artistes, including the pop group Dixie Chicks, against the war. Because its deadline was later than *Aftenposten*'s, *VG* had the advantage of being able to report on the start of the war on March 20. In an editorial "The difficult war" *VG* criticised the opponents of the war who urged the Norwegian government not to support it: "If the government should be criticised, it should be for not taking a stand behind the two countries (US and Great Britain) which above any have guaranteed Norway's peace and security for more than 50 years". Interestingly enough, *VG* suggested that the Norwegian government had a hidden agenda: to support the war while publicly opposing it: "Our past history suggests Norwegian solidarity with US and Great Britain in a difficult international situation. As we understand it the government has, in its contacts with the US and Great Britain, expressed itself in a way that raised no doubt where Norway's sympathy really is in this matter".

The main focus in *VG*'s news coverage was the alleged attempt to kill Saddam Hussein in the first strike. The article, written by *VG*'s American correspondent, suggested that the focus on Saddam as the target would draw attention away from civilian victims. Six times in the article, and with no source other than an anonymous 'official source', it was repeated that Saddam Hussein personally was the target. The bomb attack was termed a 'surgical operation', evoking images of 'smart bombs' during the 1991 Gulf War (Holmøy & Wernersen 2004). White House press spokesman Ari Fleischer was quoted as saying that although the President hoped the war would be as brief as possible, he would accept nothing less than victory. On March 21 *VG* ran a report from Urban Hamid, a freelance reporter inside Baghdad: "The Earth is trembling". On the same day, it presented a poll showing 50% support for the war among Norwegian men but only 21% support among women. The first report ("Storming through Iraq") of many from *VG*'s re-

porters inside Iraq, was printed on March 22. The dateline was 'somewhere in south Iraq' and it was basically an eyewitness account from the road through the desert of what the reporters had heard on the radio. They also interviewed a local Bedouin named Fars who said that Saddam was evil; that USA was good and that his house was still in ruins after the 1991 Gulf War.

Part II

Coverage of the Norwegian Military Presence in Iraq

The Norwegian government's decision not to support the war in Iraq was solidly backed by public opinion according to polls showing that a vast majority of the population opposed the war. The Norwegian government obviously felt uncomfortable about this split with a powerful ally. The lack of Norwegian support provoked the US government to the extent that the US ambassador to Norway openly criticised the Norwegian government in a public speech (VG, March 13 2003). In an effort to repair the relationship, Norway decided to send a limited number of troops. Although these troops were sent after the UN had urged countries to assist in the rebuilding of Iraq and with the security situation there, the decision to send them was taken before this UN resolution was adopted. The purpose of this part of the paper is to analyse how the two newspapers in this study covered the event of the troops leaving the country for their mission in Iraq. Then I will investigate how an important speech, by a professor in law claiming that the war was illegal and unconstitutional, was covered in a bigger sample of Norwegian newspapers.

The Coverage in *VG* and *Aftenposten* of Norwegian Soldiers' Departure for Iraq

I will analyse how *VG* and *Aftenposten* covered the departure of 150 Norwegian soldiers on July 9 2003, the day after they left.

VG did not cover the event at all that day – which is in itself an interesting point. However, the paper had carried a news story on June 26 about a first group of soldiers, who left before the rest. This happened at the same time as six British soldiers were killed in the very area of southern Iraq where the Norwegian soldiers were headed. *VG* underlined the risks for the Norwegian soldiers. It also ran an editorial on July 10 entitled "Norway at War", the main points of which were the dangerous aspects of the operation. *VG* held that the operation had a solid basis in international law. The positive aspects of the Norwegian government's decision was, according to *VG*, that the troops could operate within a UN mandate and at the same time contribute to repairing the damage to US-Norwegian relations caused by Norway's

refusal to take part in the invasion. Interestingly enough, the editorial ends with criticism of the Defence Minister, Kristin Krohn Devold, for not being frank about the fact that part of the reason for sending troops to Iraq was to placate the US government. To refute this was, according to *VG*, 'both blue eyed and stupid'.

Aftenposten's July 9 issue carried four news articles and one editorial on this subject. Two of the news articles were framed on the personal danger for the soldiers involved. The first, "Knows it's dangerous...thinks we are pretty safe", emphasised the human element: "...yesterday 104 Norwegian soldier left for south Iraq...many of them feel badly about leaving their families, but many of them have been abroad on missions before". The other article, "Life-threatening mission in Iraq", featured interviews with two researchers and critical comments. Vegard Hansen from the Norwegian Institute of Foreign Affairs said that the Norwegian soldiers could be subjected to harassment from people opposing the presence of foreign soldiers and that Iraqis might have difficulties in distinguishing the Norwegian soldier from the occupier. Another researcher, Henrik Thune from the same institute, underlined that it was not Iraq but the US and the United Kingdom which had invited the Norwegians. A third article ("A deal in the last moment") dealt with conditions for the Norwegian soldiers; Gunnar Heløe, the State Secretary of the Defence Department spoke of an agreement between Norway and the occupying countries to the effect that the Norwegian soldiers could be used merely for humanitarian purposes. The most interesting article, for me, was the editorial "Norwegian soldier unsafe in Iraq". It starts by discussing the legal aspects of the Norwegian soldiers' presence. The conclusion is clear: "Norway is on solid legal ground in the decision to send a force of engineering soldiers. UN Security Council resolution 1438¹⁰ of May 22 gave the mandate to establish a special force in the country, and at the same time asked the member states to contribute with personnel and equipment. It is this request the government has met". The editorial nonetheless raises some doubt about the operation, both concerning the soldiers' safety and whether they could be regarded as a part of the occupying force: "A new, civilian government is still not in place in Iraq and this could strengthen ordinary Iraqis' view that Norway is a part of the occupying force, despite UN resolutions'. The article concludes that "it should have been more thoroughly discussed before the forces were despatched". Reluctantly, *Aftenposten* accepts the decision to send troops.

The legal aspects of the Norwegian military presence were disputed by a Norwegian professor of law, Ståle Eskeland. In a speech to the Oslo Military Society four months later, on October 6 2003, he challenged the government's Iraq policy: "War and peacekeeping operations: Legal, illegal or criminal?" was the title of the presentation (Eskeland, 2003).

Was the Norwegian Military Presence in the War Against Terror Unconstitutional?

There are many ways to frame a news story and Gaye Tuchmann and others have observed that the social environment in which journalists operate, their social background, gender and age, are among the essential factors to be considered in understanding how a news agenda is defined (Tuchman, 1978). Norman Fairclough's theory of speech as discursive event points out that the media coverage of a given subject must be analysed within a discursive ideological and political framework in any given society – "language use conceived as social practice" (Fairclough, 1995:135). This means that language should be contextualised and analysed within a power struggle for ideological hegemony in a society.

Several discourses during the war in Iraq reflect such a power struggle and the different interests involved. First, there was the *political elite discourse* represented by the government and the social democratic opposition in Parliament. They shared the concern that Norway, like many other small countries, had to find a balance between the need to be loyal to its tradition of staying within the framework of international law, and the need to not provoke the US through criticism and behaviour that might be seen as disloyal and might harm the bilateral relationship.

Then there was the *peace movement discourse*, represented by the Socialist Left party in Parliament and the peace movement, which openly opposed the war based on its traditional criticism of US foreign policy. During the run-up to the war, the majority of the population which has historically supported the alliance with the US and our security policy within the framework of NATO, openly opposed the war (opinions polls showed that over 70% were against it). This represented a dilemma for the mainstream media, traditionally loyal to our security policy (Ottosen, 2001).

The *media discourse* had to find a balance between the political elite discourse and the peace discourse in order not to provoke its audience.

In this situation, Professor Ståle Eskeland's *legal community discourse* presented an interesting challenge to the media because it offered a strictly legally-based critique of the Norwegian government's Iraq policy by not only opposing it, but also declaring it unconstitutional and illegal. It should be mentioned here that Eskeland is one of the leading experts on criminal law in Norway. That the speech was delivered in a military forum should have offered the mainstream media a good opportunity critically to challenge government policy.

It is not possible to refer in detail to Eskeland's speech here, but in essence it was based on the argument that the only legal way to go to war was with a mandate from UN Security Council. According to the UN Charter article 4 (2) there is no exception to this rule. Based on this, Eskeland claimed that Norway's active military role in Yugoslavia in 1999, in Afghanistan in

2001 and in Iraq in 2003 was illegal and, in addition, a violation of the Norwegian constitution.

Going through the Iraq war, Eskeland observed that the Norwegian government was pressurised by the US to support a UN resolution that, if it was supported by the UN Security Council, would have made the attack on Iraq legal. Norway opposed the attack on Iraq, but, in the end, decided to send troops after the fall of Baghdad upon request by the occupying forces led by the US and the United Kingdom. Norway has insisted that those forces had a UN mandate, but it is a known fact that the Norwegian Parliament decided to send the troops before the formal adoption of resolution 1483 on May 22. The Norwegian government has consistently argued that the Norwegian soldiers are a humanitarian force and not a part of the occupation forces. This was challenged by Eskeland who, in his speech, pointed out that in the Norwegian legal tradition, the issue of compliance is very strict; Eskeland's example was the conviction, after the Second World War, of Vidkun Quisling on a charge of negligent manslaughter of Jews. He never personally took part in any atrocities. That he should have known what happened to the Jews after they were sent to Germany was enough to make him legally culpable.

Eskeland pointed out that the Norwegian forces are, formally and in reality, under the command of the British 38 Engineer Regiment. Since this regiment is part of the occupying forces, legally it is of no importance whether the Norwegian government declares its forces not a part of the occupation force. Eskeland holds that by virtue of the statutes of the International Criminal Court (ICC) article 25(3), Norwegian soldiers can be convicted for war crimes committed by the occupation force even if Norway declares that they are not a part of that force. Eskeland's conclusion is that 'It's deeply tragic when our political leaders pretend to operate within the national and international legal order when this is not the case, or that they unjustifiably pretend that clear legal matters are unclear, thus giving [the government] space to manoeuvre'.

This powerful message from one of the foremost legal experts could have been used as a platform for journalists to challenge the very core of Norwegian policy. How did the media respond to it?

Media Coverage of Eskeland's Speech

To find out how the mainstream media reacted, I searched 'A-tekst', a database covering *Aftenposten*, The Norwegian News agency (NTB) and seven other daily newspapers¹¹. *VG* is not represented in the database but the archivist at *VG* informed me that *VG* did not cover the speech (e-mail message July 8 2004). It should be noted here that broadcasting is not a part of this project and that Eskeland's speech draw some attention in both the news

in the public service broadcasting, NRK radio, and the topic was later in discussion programmes like *Dagsnytt 18*. I will also make clear that a search in 'A-tekst' can not replace a systematic content analyses in the printed version because the database is not a complete version of the printed issues. But a search in the database is at least a strong indication of how widely the issue was covered. It should also be noted that some of issues raised by Eskeland have been discussed in newspapers like *Aftenposten* and *Dagbladet* on other occasions. But I will argue that Eskeland's speech was a rare opportunity to raise the issue of the legality of Norway's military operations abroad. In a telephone interview with the author Eskeland himself confirmed the impression that his speech was almost unreported in the mainstream media (telephone interview with the author, November 15 2004).

NTB issued a news release (which was found in the database) the same day the speech was made, under the title "Law Professor: [Prime Minister] Bondevik has contravened the constitution". In a search covering the three weeks after the speech was given, I found ten references in the database – all published in the left wing newspaper *Klassekampen*. The speech provoked an intense debate in this newspaper, including a long article from the present state prosecutor and expert in international law, Arne Willy Dahl, opposing some of Eskeland's legal arguments. I have no knowledge of how many newspapers chose to print the news article from NTB, but it is worth noting that none of the mainstream press followed it up independently. The debate came in *Klassekampen*, a paper with a modest circulation of 8000 and the newspaper in Norway with the strongest profile as a war resister. If Eskeland's ambition was to elicit broad public debate through his frank speech, he failed, since the mainstream press did not respond. Instead, he seems to have fed the already-convinced opponents of the war in *Klassekampen* with new arguments.

With few exceptions, Eskeland's legal arguments have not been contested by the judicial community in the period after this debate in *Klassekampen*.¹²

Conclusion

My hypothesis that *Aftenposten* would demonstrate more critical reporting than *VG* was confirmed. Given that the Norwegian government decided not to support the invasion of Iraq, it came as no surprise that *Aftenposten* also openly criticised the US government for going to war. *VG* and *Aftenposten* chose opposite directions in the weeks leading up to the war when *VG* continued to be more supportive for the US policy in Iraq. The fact that these two newspapers, traditionally standing together on foreign policy issues, chose different directions, must be regarded as a historically split.

The media discourse on the Norwegian military presence in Iraq seems to have been more preoccupied with the danger it represented for the sol-

diers than the legality of the operation. That the left wing newspaper *Klassekampen* was the only newspaper to take up the challenge

from Professor Ståle Eskeland when he claimed that the Norwegian participation in NATO operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan was illegal and unconstitutional, demonstrates that the mainstream press is reluctant to challenge the government on matters of principle and legal issues in security policy and foreign policy. The fact that the discussion on the legal issues continued in a small left wing newspaper demonstrated the significance of Eskeland's arguments even to those who disagreed with him. That the mainstream press avoided taking this discussion forward to the public arena is a sign of doxa, and an indication that the tradition continues of not challenging the government on issues of principle in security policy. The political elite discourse embodies an implicit rhetoric representing Norwegians as good-doers, a point not challenged with any conviction by the mainstream press.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented to the IAMCR-conference in Porto Alegre July 25-30, 2004 and Norsk medieforskerkonferanse Trondheim October 21-22, 2004.
2. The Bush doctrine was announced later, in State of the Union address of January 2003, with three main strands: the concept of 'pre-emptive war'; regime change in hostile countries housing potential terrorists; and aggressive promotion of US-style democracy.
3. (IFOR) Implementation Force was established according to UN resolution 1031 after the civil war in December 20 1995.
4. SFOR (Stabilisation Force) replaced IFOR force from December 20 1996.
5. KFOR (Kosovo Force) was established in June 1999.
6. See the article 'Norwegian soldiers at war in distant countries' (Norske soldater i krig i fjerne land), *Aftenposten*, May 5 2003.
7. See, among others, the article 'The US, NATO and Norwegian Security' (USA; NATO og norsk sikkerhet) by Jacob Børresen in *Aftenposten*, June 26 2003.
8. This author initiated the project together with my Swedish colleague Stig A. Nohrstedt at the University of Örebro.
9. My research assistant, Tine Ustad Figenschou, is responsible for coding the content analyses and Jarle Havenes has coded the material to SPSS.
10. This was probably a mistake since the number of the UN resolution adopted on May 22 was 1483.
11. The following dailies were represented in the A-tekst base at the time: *Adresseavisen*, *Aftenposten*, *Bergens Tidende*, *Dagsavisen*, *Dagbladet*, *Dagens Næringsliv*, *Nordlys* and *Klassekampen*.
12. One exception is the article Jan Erik Hemner: Juss og militære operasjoner. *Norsk Militært Tidsskrift* nr. 12.

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The Iraq War in the Slovenian Media

Karmen Erjavec

The 2003 Iraq war was a major media event constructed in different ways by different media in different parts of the world. How did the Slovenian media report on it? What did they report about and what did they leave out? Did all main Slovenian media report the events of the Iraq war in the same manner? Even though the role of Slovenia in this war was not an active one, the meaning of sound reporting in the Slovenian media is no less important than it is in the countries actively involved. How were Slovenian citizens informed of this central foreign policy event? I will attempt to answer this question by semantic analysis of news items from two national television stations and one national quality daily newspaper in Slovenia which published on five major events of the Iraq war (Powell's report to the Security Council; Blix's second report to the Security Council: the attack on Iraq; the Fall of Baghdad; and Bush's declaration of the end of the war).

The first section of the paper presents information about the specific Slovenian background; the second section is devoted to the theoretical framework; and the third to the discourse analysis of the selected news items. The discussion and the conclusion sum up the findings of the discourse analysis and relate these findings to the main questions of this article.

Slovenian Background

From February 5, when the US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, presented his report to the UN Security Council and until May 2, when President Bush declared the end of the war, the Slovenian media devoted a lot of attention to the Iraq war. The numerous and widely responsive articles cannot be attributed only to the war reporting, but also to the referendum of March 23 regarding the entry of Slovenia to the EU and, particularly, to NATO since the preparations for the Iraq war and the attack itself occurred during an intense media debate on the entry of Slovenia to NATO. In these circum-

stances, Slovenian foreign policy was forced to respond to the new conditions in international relations. When the Slovene Minister of Foreign Affairs signed the 'Vilnius Declaration' (February 5 2003), which expressed support of the American way of solving the Iraqi crisis (by the use of war), the Iraqi crisis, as the primary foreign policy question, became the interior policy problem *par excellence*. Slovene policy was divided into 'Pro-European', which was fundamentally against the war and would accept it only if passed by the UN Security Council, and to 'Pro-American', which was in favour of the coalition's war. This polarisation was also interesting because the government coalition, with the exception of the Foreign Affairs Minister and the President of the Parliamentary Council for Foreign Policy, was on the Pro-European side, while the opposition right-wing coalition and the abovementioned politicians, were on the Pro-American side.

With such divisions in government, and with the indecision of the media, certain political players in particular stood out: on the one hand there were the Foreign Affairs Minister and the head of the opposition coalition who were in favor of the pro-war standpoint; on the other hand there was civil society consisting of left-oriented intellectuals and students who organised global anti-war and anti-US protests (January 31 2003 and March 15 2003) and independent anti-war demonstrations (March 3 2003 and April 18 2003), which met with a warm response from the citizens of the capital.

In addition, public opinion polls continually showed that more than 55% of Slovenians were against the coalition's attack on Iraq.

All political actors were keeping an eye on the way in which the media reported the situation. The Foreign Affairs Minister, in particular, often stated in press conferences that the media were biased. In point of fact, the journalists and the editors of the largest media houses, who were in the critical firing-line were, according to their statements, very careful to publish balanced news.

Theoretical Framework

In recent years, mainstream research on media discourse has been within the broad framework of critical discourse analysis, which deals with issues such as the projection of power through discourse, the installation of dominance and inequality in discourse, the ideological underpinning of discourse and the affiliation of discourse with social change (Fairclough, 1989a; 1995a, 1995b; Fowler, 1991; Fowler et al., 1979; Hodge and Kress, 1993; Titscher et al. 2000; van Dijk, 1993). The methodological assumption underlying the critical discourse analysis qualitative approach is, as Fairclough (1992) claims, that discourse is socially shaped (constituted) and shaping (constituting), meaning that discourse is not only a product or reflection of social processes, but is in itself seen to contribute towards the production or reproduction of these processes. The word 'critical' is a key theoretical concept in critical

discourse analysis and signals the need for analysts to de-naturalise ideological underpinnings of discourse that have become common beliefs or even 'common sense' and that go beyond the description of discourse to an explanation and interpretation of how and why such realisations were produced.

Although the concept of ideology is one of the most controversial and elusive academic issues, I will utilise Simpson's definition: "a mosaic of cultural assumptions, political beliefs and institutional practices" (1993: 176). Since language is regarded as the physical form of ideology, the analysis of language is thus an indispensable part of any attempt to study ideology (Fairclough, 1995b; Fowler and Kress, 1979; Thomson, 1984). By analysing the linguistic structures and discourse strategies in the light of their interactive and wider social contexts, we can unlock the ideologies and recover the social meanings expressed in discourse. Media discourse, which is abundant in quantity and convenient in access, would often be targeted as a research object of critical discourse analysis, because researchers are interested in how the media mask their ideological positions, embodied in their attitudes and opinions, in the way they present people and issues (Bell, 1991). For instance, Trew (1979) shows how British newspapers portrayed the same event in vastly contrasting ways, which reflected their differing ideological standpoints. Similarly, in the analysis of an interview with Margaret Thatcher, Fairclough (1989) describes and explains how the discourse, which combines authority with popular solidarity, is able to create an 'authoritarian populism', effectively persuading Thatcher's audience to accept her vision by making it their vision. Brookes (1995), working within a critical linguistic paradigm, exposes the neo-colonial racism evident in the portrayal of Africa and Africans in two British newspapers.

The aim of this article is to clearly portray the main views of the Slovenian media regarding the Iraq war through a study of their choice of lexicons, the presence/absence of some propositions in the news items, and the use of information sources. At the same time, the relationship between the differences in the coverage, and the different underlying ideologies, are interpreted and analysed.

News about the Iraq War

The three main Slovenian media, chosen according to the largest viewer ratings and their influence in the Slovenian media sphere, are the only national quality daily newspaper *Delo*, and both national television stations: public television station *TV SLO* and commercial television station *POP TV*. Based on the response of Slovenian society, the intensiveness of reporting, and the difference between the media, I decided to choose five main events (Powell's report to the Security Council: February 5-7, Blix's second report to the Security Council: March 7-9, Attack on Iraq: March 20-22, Fall of Bagh-

dad: April 8-10, and Bush's declaration of the end of the war: May 2-4); three days of coverage were followed for each of the events. The sample used in the discourse analysis consists of 52 news items (6 short news, 20 news reports and 26 analytical articles) published in *Delo*, 39 news produced by *POP TV* ("24 ur" (24 hours) news programme), and 44 news by *TV SLO* ("Odmevi" (Responses) news programme). *TV SLO* also presented five one-hour programmes on the Iraq war. Furthermore, it ran panel discussions and interviews, which included many opposing the war and criticising the way it was conducted. The following sections deal with lexicons, propositions, and news sources respectively.

Lexical Choice

It is a widely accepted fact that the choice of words in news is by no means arbitrary. It is not the journalist's own creation, but has something to do with his or 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 lexicalisation, involves ideologies. The media coverage of the Iraq war will be studied, first of all, at the lexical level, because the choice of words is crucial in representing the intended situation regarding the news events to the readers, and hence is an indication, whether implicit or explicit, of the ideological stance of the media in general, and journalists in particular.

Reference to the Iraq War

In referring to the same situation, different media used different nouns or noun phrases, as shown in Table 1. As van Dijk (1998) indicated, ideologies are rooted in general belief, such as knowledge and opinions; therefore the lexical choice basically mirrors the news professionals' views on the issue, which are formulated on the basis of their ideological stances.

Table 1 displays two general characteristics in referring to the situation. Until the beginning of the attack on Iraq, all selected media used 'Iraqi crisis' to describe the situation; thereafter, the media consistently used the term 'Iraq war' – the most commonly used word association in *all* media and a type of Slovenian media mantra. The second characteristic is that different media used different references. Among the analysed media, the national quality daily newspaper *Delo* used the most diverse references to describe the situation. This can be attributed to the fact that quality newspapers, in general, provide more detailed information about politics and current affairs than television programmes. Television news is differentiated from newspa-

per journalism on a functional dimension. Because television news broadcasts are short, they serve more as a headline source – short news, rather than full-strength news.

Table 1. Reference to the Situation

<i>Delo</i>	5 –7 February 7-9 March 8-10 April 20-22 March 2-4 May	Iraqi crisis, Iraq war, American invasion, Iraq war, war in Iraq, war on Iraq, war against Iraq, American occupation, the occupation of Iraq is its 'liberation', military spectacle, Pentagon war of 'shock and awe', invasion of Iraq, war of slaughter of Iraqi people, destruction of Iraq, 'Operation Iraqi Freedom', 'pre-emptive strike', war with an intent to 'export democracy', 'a crusade', 'war of liberation'
<i>TV SLO</i>	5 –7 February 7-9 March 20-22 March 8-10 April 2-4 May	Iraqi crisis, Iraq war, Iraqi drama, War in Iraq, destruction of Iraq, occupation of Iraq
<i>POP TV</i>	5 –7 February 7-9 March 20-22 March 8-10 April 2-4 May	Iraqi crisis, Iraq war, war in Iraq, war of liberation

Furthermore, *Delo* summarised, regularly and in detail, the reporting of different media from *CNN*, *BBC*, *Fox* to *AlJazeera*, and displayed their perspective on the Iraq war, using their vocabulary. *Delo* also applied words used by the US administration to describe the situation, such as 'the occupation of Iraq is its liberation', 'Pentagon war of shock and awe', 'Operation Iraqi Freedom', 'pre-emptive strike', 'war with the intent to export democracy', 'crusade' and 'war of liberation'; however, these words were used in quotation marks, giving them a special status which can be read as the journalists' disagreement with US policy.

The public television *TV SLO* additionally used words, such as 'destruction of Iraq' and 'occupation of Iraq' to display its negative reaction, and the term 'Iraqi drama' to connote a tragic and shocking event. On the other hand, *POP TV* used 'war of liberation' to describe the Iraq war positively. This syntagm was consistently used by *POP TV*'s war correspondent.

The choice of words shows that the Slovenian national quality daily newspaper *Delo* evaluated the preparation for the war and the war itself in an extremely negative fashion. The public television *TV SLO* response was also negative, while the commercial television *POP TV* described the coalition's attack on Iraq in positive terms.

Reference to the Leading Figures

Table 2 shows terms used by the media to describe the two leading figures in the Iraq war, George W. Bush and Saddam Hussein.

Table 2. Reference to the Leading Figures

<i>Delo</i>	George W Bush	President George Bush; President Bush; Texas macho; Bush invoked fear and moralistic rhetoric of good and evil.
	Saddam Hussein	President Saddam Hussein; Saddam; the tyrant of Baghdad; Saddam Hussein is acting in the same way as Milošević; Hussein as Lenin.
<i>TV SLO</i>	George W Bush Saddam Hussein	President George Bush, President Bush. President Saddam Hussein; Saddam Hussein; Iraqi ruler.
<i>POP TV</i>	George W Bush Saddam Hussein	President George Bush; President Bush: George Bush. President Saddam Hussein; Saddam Hussein; Iraqi dictator.

The daily newspaper *Delo* again used the most diverse expressions for describing both presidents. When, in an article about the legitimacy and the legality of the possible attack on Iraq, published on February 8, *Delo*'s journalist represented the viewpoints of different political actors, the pro-war supporters compared Saddam Hussein with the former president of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milošević, and the communist leader Lenin, thus hinting at the legitimacy of the coalition's attack on Iraq. On the other hand, in the same article, a member of the public called Bush a 'Texas macho', presenting him as an overbearing cowboy. On March 7, the paper referred to Bush's performance at a press conference the day before as having invoked fear and a moralistic rhetoric of good and evil, and quoted his 'simplistic' version of world division (you are either with us or you are against us).

Both television stations used similar vocabulary. While Bush was referred to by his name and function, Saddam Hussein was often called an 'Iraqi dictator' (*POP TV*) or 'Iraqi ruler' (*TV SLO*).

Delo's attitude was quite different from that of the television stations. Both Saddam Hussein and George W Bush, were designated negatively, while television stations designated only Saddam Hussein in a negative fashion.

Macro-Prepositional Analysis

To continue the analysis of the media news items which has thus far focused on the microstructure of particular words and phrases, the macrostructure of the language is now examined in order to investigate the meaning of the media discourse regarding the Iraq war. The semantics of discourse deals with meanings in terms of 'prepositions' (Brown and Yule, 1983). A preposition is a conceptual structure, which consists of a predicate and one or more arguments. Brown and Yule point out that the prepositional analysis is not

without problems, since no specific means have been provided to reduce the semantic representation of prepositions; furthermore, various interpretations of one text are possible. According to Van Dijk (1988), prepositions are the smallest independent constructs of language and thought, typically expressed by single sentence or clause.

On the basis of prepositions, Van Dijk (1980, 1988) introduces the analysis of thematic organisation of the news. This hierarchical structure consists of (macro-) prepositions that define the most important or relevant pieces of information in the text. Semantic macrostructure is derived from local meanings of words by macro-rules, such as deletion, generalisation and construction. Such rules have omitted irrelevant details, connecting the essence on a higher level into abstract meanings or constructing different meaning constituents in higher-level events or social concepts. The thematic organisation is directly connected with the discourse schemata or the so-called superstructures (Van Dijk, 1980). Not aiming at investigating the thematic structure of the news discourse, I will investigate the inclusion or exclusion of the prepositions by the selected media reporting on the Iraq war.

In this study, a preposition is defined as an 'idea unit' in the form of a single sentence, several sentences, a paragraph or whole news story. A preposition is a unit only for the convenience of comparison. The analysis of a type of macro-semantics, which deals with global meanings and enables the description of the meanings of news items, will be presented.

The most important or relevant piece of information in the articles will be defined using the abovementioned macro-rules. This is a rather subjective process on the part of the researcher. However, since only a single researcher has made the definition, it is assumed that news discourse is on a basis of equal comparison and contrast. I intend to find the prepositions, which are conveyed, or are missing, in news items about the same events and around the same date. The main prepositions are organised in sections with regard to thematic focus.

Legality and Legitimacy: the Iraq War and the Background of Conflict

The comparison of the prepositions of the 17 news items from three media published around a similar date (February 5-7 and March 20-22) enables us to discover that the preposition *the Iraq war is illegitimate, and illegal, because the coalition does not have the UN's mandate* was included by every medium analysed. The main meaning is that, when George W. Bush declared war on Iraq, the US and other members of the war-coalition violated international law and the will of the UN.

However, another meaning was developed on *POP TV* and *TV SLO* at the same time, the meaning about the legality/legitimacy of the Iraq war, which

was continuously emphasised by sources from the Slovenian coalition, government politics and foreign policy: *The coalition, especially the US, can legitimately attack Iraq, since Iraq is posing a threat to them through the possession of weapons of mass destruction.* In addition – as previously mentioned – these sources also compared Saddam Hussein to Lenin and Milošević and used the comparison to legitimise the coalition's attack on Iraq. I should add, however, that the journalists themselves did not appropriate this meaning. It resulted from the journalistic norm of 'balanced' reporting and from the pressure of pro-war sources, which continuously emphasised that the media were not considering their opinion. The source analysis will show that the media were indeed considering their opinion, although it did not dominate.

If we take a look at the presence of the previous preposition in the continuation of reporting on the Iraq war, we will discover a fundamental difference. *Delo* and *TV SLO* repeatedly returned to the original problem: the illegitimacy/illegality of the coalition's attack on Iraq. But in subsequent reporting, *POP TV* focused on daily events, without questioning the legality/legitimacy of the attack. Thus this commercial television station created an implicit assumption that the Iraq war was legal and legitimate. According to Fairclough (1989: 85), ideology is most effective when its workings are least visible. Invisibility is achieved when ideology is brought to discourse, not as an explicit element of the text, but as the background assumption, which leads the text producer to 'textualise' the world in a particular way on one hand, and leads the interpreter to interpret the text in a particular way on the other. By not addressing the issue of illegality/illegitimacy *POP TV* presupposed that the Iraq war was legal and legitimate.

US Motives and Objectives

Based on the 18 news items about US motives and objectives during the days when the US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, presented his report to the UN Security Council (February 5-7) and when the head of the inspectors, Hans Blix, presented his second report to the UN Security Council (March 7-9), a common preposition can be found: *The reason for the coalition's attack on Iraq is not to shut down Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, since the UN inspectors have not found them.*

TV SLO also added that *the American objectives are the domination over the Gulf, and its energy resources.* *Delo* added that it was a *war for Bush's re-election.* In order to be re-elected, Bush needed a major victory and a symbolic triumph over terrorism to conceal the failings of his regime both domestically and in the realm of foreign policy.

Casualties and Smart Bombs

The preposition *Iraqi civilians are killed and wounded by the coalition's attacks* was common to all 16 analysed news items during the coalition's attacks (March 20-22). When summarising the reporting of *Al Jazeera*, all media focused on civil casualties and presented the painful suffering of Iraqis. In an article about global media coverage of the war, *Delo*'s main statement was that *US media reporting of the Iraqi civilian casualties is non-existent, while US casualties are reported in great detail. The US media described the civil casualties as 'collateral damage'*. Although I have already analysed the choice of words, I should again mention the coalition's choice of euphemistic terms, such as 'collateral damage', with the purpose of describing the deaths caused by its military forces in a lighter fashion. *Delo* printed the euphemisms, and other terms, used by the US administration and the coalition, in quotation marks and thus expressed its disagreement with these expressions.

POP TV's correspondent reprimanded the Iraqi television station *Al Jazeera* for its reporting, and said that *the display of the dismembered bodies of American soldiers is excessive*. The correspondent was referring to the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners, although forgetting that this convention was (and still is) violated by the USA, for example in Guantanamo.

At the time of the fight for Baghdad all media reported – citing the International Red Cross – the growing numbers of casualties and the fact that the hospitals were overwhelmed and could no longer count the casualties and help the wounded; *No place in hospitals for growing numbers of Iraqi civilian casualties* was included by every analysed medium.

In addition to the overly numerous civilian casualties, the media also raised the question of how it was possible for the so-called smart bombs, which are precise, surgical and precision-guided (hence humane), to have killed so many innocent civilians. *Coalition's 'humane' weapons are killing Iraqi civilians* was the main preposition of *TV SLO* and *Delo*.

There were also coalition casualties. The journalists of all analysed media summarised the reporting of *CNN* regarding the casualties of the coalition. However, *Delo* and *TV SLO* also reported the American victims thus: *The majority of them hail from poor and working class backgrounds*. The implicit meaning of this preposition is that they are the victims of poverty.

Attack on Journalists

There were also casualties among the journalists. While *POP TV* quoted *CNN* on this subject and offered a key meaning on April 8 2003, stating that *the US military killed the journalists of Reuters and the Spanish network in the*

Palestine Hotel in Baghdad, through the sniper fire which had been directed at the tank, TV SLO quoted the journalists at the hotel (where most non-embedded international reporters in Baghdad were based) who claimed that there was no sniper fire and showed records from French television, which confirmed the statement that *on April 8, US military forces deliberately attacked independent journalists.*

The meaning of *Delo's* report was the same as that of *TV SLO*; however, *Delo* had earlier also presented a detailed report about an American aircraft which fired a single missile at the Qatar-based *al-Jazeera* office, killing a journalist.

Victory or Defeat?

When journalists were reporting about the 'fall of Baghdad' (April 8-10) and Bush's declaration of the end of the war (May 2-4), they had to assume a standpoint regarding the question of whether this war was a victory or a defeat. The answers to this question differed. With the help of its embedded journalist, *POP TV* clearly assumed the standpoint that the *Iraqi regime is defeated, the coalition won.* This commercial station repeatedly showed the image of the destruction of Saddam Hussein's statue, which became a metaphor for Iraq's 'liberation'.

TV SLO assumed a negative standpoint regarding the coalition's victory: *Coalition did not win in a war,* since it did not fulfill its objectives in starting the attack on Iraq: *Coalition did not find the weapons of mass destruction and did not catch Saddam Hussein.* No weapons of mass destruction were used in Iraq and there were no credible discoveries of such weapons. Based on the doubts regarding the reasons for this war, *TV SLO* concluded that the *Iraqi weapons of mass destruction never existed in the first place.*

Delo concluded that the *Iraq war was a coalition disaster.* It exposed the fact that the coalition did not 'free' the Iraqi people since it did not have their support, as was seen in the growing Iraqi demonstrations against the US occupation and the continued violence throughout the country. Anarchy and chaos ruled throughout Iraq, including the looting of museums and archives. *Delo's* journalist wondered how it was possible that, while a company of soldiers guarded the Oil Ministry, the National Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the National Archives and various ministries and hospitals were looted; he then constructed the statement that the *coalition was only interested in the oil and...deliberately allowed the looting of the cultural heritage.* Furthermore, on April 11 the journalist wondered whether the powerful images of the removal of Saddam's bronze statue actually meant victory. He stated that this *symbol of the coalition's victory actually displays its defeat,* since there were only a few people assaulting the Hussein statue. Only a relatively small crowd gathered around it, while most of Fardus Square was empty.

War Correspondent and Embedded Journalist

I should like to briefly present the role of the only war correspondent who worked as an embedded journalist in Iraq. I shall be using both the prepositional analysis and the analysis of lexical choice.

While the correspondents of *Delo* and *TV SLO* were based in Jordan (because they did not receive Iraqi visas) and able to report only from the Jordan-Iraqi border, the *POP TV* correspondent was still in Kuwait on the first day of war, March 20, where he was reporting live to the news show by videophone. On the second day he was moving across Iraq with the American forces. This reporter took over the role of an officer, explaining the details of the attack in a superior fashion, from the position of a future winner: "Americans pulverised the Iraqi front line and crushed the smaller pockets of resistance". At the same time he described his emotions in detail, mainly his fear – and his happiness when the Americans were winning. On the second day of the war, the correspondent asserted: "*Our* troops are advancing smoothly", and on the third day: "The Iraqis launched four earth-earth rockets to our side". Thus he clearly positioned himself on the side of the coalition. On March 21, he stated, regarding the signature of a document limiting his reporting, that "all correspondents agree that these limitations are completely understandable and in the whole twelve years that I have been a war correspondent, I have never seen such freedom of movement". Perhaps he was being sarcastic.

While the *Delo* and *TV SLO* correspondents portrayed the war as it affected the population in Iraq, and used the help of different co-speakers (Arabic as well as English) to present the everyday events of the war and the background to the conflict (albeit working with the limited access they had at their disposal), the correspondent of *POP TV* clearly placed himself on the side of the coalition and focused his attention entirely on reporting the movements of the coalition's military forces.

Information Sources

All three media used different voices and sources in order to develop the abovementioned prepositions, which presented views from different perspectives, but were quoted in different ways. *Delo* used the largest number of sources. *TV SLO* used at least two sources for its everyday reporting, while *POP TV* generally used one source.

More than half (52%) of all the sources published in the analysed media were against the war. *POP TV* published 27% fewer sources than *TV SLO* and the largest number of pro-war sources (60%). Official voices, including current and former government employees of the Republic of Slovenia, civilian and military, accounted for 17% of overall sources, while 15% constituted

sources from civil society. 15% of all primary sources came from foreign media, predominantly *CNN World* and *al-Jazeera*; 9% of all sources were experts, predominantly from the academia sphere, such as military, media/communication, theologians and sociologists. 18% were journalists and correspondents. The use of different sources by the analysed media enabled multi-perspective reporting.

What is the Reason for the Differences in Reporting?

Although the reporting of the analysed Slovenian media can generally – and briefly – be summarised as balanced, multi-sided, and using different voices, certain differences in reporting did exist. While *Delo* and *TV SLO* were wholeheartedly anti-war, *POP TV*'s war correspondents took a more cautious anti-war standpoint. Later, however, pro-war and pro-coalition reporting dominated on *POP TV*. The characteristic of the *POP TV* reporting was – in contrast to the detailed reporting of the remaining two media – also the focus on daily events. *POP TV* did not question the legality or legitimacy of the war, or raise issues such as the slaughter of victims. Rather, it concentrated on the details of the events. Such withholding of information is seen in the presentation of irrelevant details; according to Van Dijk (1991: 185), ideological implications give a different weight of relevance to information.

What are the reasons for the differences in reporting? The first is ownership. While *Delo* and *TV SLO* are owned either by the state or by Slovenian capital (the main owners are investment funds, which are connected with political parties). *POP TV* is predominantly owned by an American corporation. Its programmes are produced by Pro Plus, a service company owned by the American corporation CME (78%), Tele59 television (21%) and by an RTV organisation, MMTV1 (1%). CME has a 10% ownership share in both Slovenian partners and has 33% profit share; therefore its real economic interest in Pro Plus amounts to 85,3%. Most decisions can be made by CME alone even in the case of disagreements with other partners. Owing to the predominantly American capital, we can assume that the American corporation influenced the fact that *POP TV* reporting on the Iraq war favoured the coalition.

The second reason is institutional practice. Even though the quality daily newspaper *Delo* was first published during communist era and many still place it among pro-government newspapers, it did not reflect the point of view of the Slovenian foreign ministry. The same is true of the public television *TV SLO*, while *POP TV* is a private profit-driven organisation, with weightier market considerations. This disparity affects media output, and leads to differing opinions, and the multi-perspective reporting can be attributed to the fact that *POP TV* wished to attract as wide an audience as possible, including those who were in favour of the war and those against it. Profit is in the forefront of

reporting, and when news departments that derive most of their income from advertising seek to maximise their audiences, they must create content that attracts more than merely the supporters of one political directive.

The third reason is new journalistic practice. A clear shift in the position of *POP TV* towards the Iraq war can be sensed with the beginning of the reporting of the war correspondent. While the journalists of *Delo* and *TV SLO* reported independently from the military, *POP TV* had an embedded journalist who travelled with the coalition throughout Iraq and depended on its protection, lived with the military, signed papers agreeing to a rigorous set of restrictions, and was not allowed to report in a way which would harm his own troops. In such a way the journalist became one with the soldiers so that they became 'ours'.

Conclusion

The findings of the analyses can be summarised as follows: Slovenian media generally respected the ethical norms of balance, fairness, and impartiality during the coverage of the Iraq war. The commercial television station *POP TV* was an exception, since it lost its credibility owing to excessive cheering for 'our side'. Slovenian citizens following different media received quality information regarding the international situation, while those who followed only *POP TV* (the number of which approximated to the number of *TV SLO* viewers) received mainly pro-war and pro-American points of view.

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Media Reflexivity in the War on Terror

Three Swedish Dailies and the Iraq War

Stig A. Nohrstedt

In contrast to the previous Gulf War in 1991, the Iraq War in 2003 had already, before it started, been questioned on both legal and political grounds. It was criticised for being a violation of international law and also for being illegitimate, morally and politically, even by allies that seldom deviate officially from the side of the USA. European political leaders were outspoken, and urged the Bush administration to move carefully and in concert with the traditional friends of America and the international community.

One of the most significant indications of legitimacy problems with this military intervention was that even prestige media in the USA later expressed uneasiness about their support for President Bush's Iraq policy. Between late May and mid July 2004, leading American newspapers confessed publicly that their reporting of the Bush administration's accusations against Iraq before the actual military intervention was launched in March 2003, had been uncritical and flawed. On May 26 2004, *The New York Times* foreign desk editors published an article in which they wrote that after having criticised the failings of intelligence reports, "especially on the issue of Iraq's weapons and possible Iraqi connections to international terrorists" over the last year it "...is past time we turned the same light on ourselves" (NYT 26-05-04). The major mistakes, according to the above mentioned article, were lack of aggressive examination of claims about the threats from Iraq; trust in a circle of Iraqi informants, defectors and exiles bent on 'regime change' in Iraq, "people whose credibility has come under increasing public debate in recent weeks"; and that the charges against Iraq were more prominently displayed than the doubts about whether these accusations were valid. Four days later, the press ombudsman of NYT added that the problem was institutional and not individual, not a question of placement of articles, and that the editors' *mea culpa* would serve its function only if it was followed-up with "a series of aggressively reported stories detailing the misinformation, disinformation and suspect analysis that led virtually the entire world to believe Hussein had WMD at his disposal" (NYT 30-05-04).

Six weeks later, *The Washington Post* expressed regrets that pre-war articles raising questions about the threats of which Iraq had been accused did

not make the front page. Howard Kurtz, the newspaper's media writer, signed the confession and the assistant managing editor, Bob Woodward, a journalistic legend after the Watergate revelations, was quoted as saying: "We did our job but we didn't do enough, and I blame myself mightily for not pushing harder...we should have warned readers we had information that the basis for this was shakier than widely believed. Those are exactly the kind of statements that should be published on the front page." He thought that he, as well as the intelligence officials, had been victims of 'group-think'.

Examining the newspaper's coverage retrospectively, one reviewer concluded that the US government had privileged access to front page appearance whereas critical views were far less prominently placed – if placed at all. Karen DeYoung, a reporter and former assistant managing editor who covered the pre-war diplomacy, said in the article: "We are inevitably the mouthpiece for whatever administration is in power." This was evident the day after Colin Powell's speech before the UN Security Council, according to the *WP* ombudsman. "Not until the ninth paragraph did they offer a 'however' clause, saying that 'a number of European officials and U.S. terrorism experts' believed that Powell's description of an Iraqi link to al Qaeda appeared to have been carefully drawn to imply more than it actually said." (*WP* 12-08-04)

These professional self-confessions are as clear-sighted as one could wish for. The problem, of course, is that they came so late. But they are remarkable because it is rare for leading media to admit their shortcomings, even in retrospect, although mistakes almost as spectacular have been noticed in the records of the trade. For example, to my knowledge none of more prestigious news media, either in the US or in Europe, have publicly regretted the way the 1991 Gulf War was depicted as a clinical war; afterwards they only released fragments of information contradicting that image, as for example when noticing long afterwards that only some 7% of the bombs were so-called smart bombs.

If such are the results for some of the leading American newspapers' involvement in the propaganda war before Iraq was invaded in March 2003, what was the case with the European media? As mentioned by the *WP* some European officials had certainly raised doubts about American and British accusations against Iraq. Did the media on this side of the Atlantic display a more reflective and sceptical attitude towards the official motives of the 'war alliance' than their American counterparts? Is that why we have not seen any similar self-confessions for mistakes and things neglected from them? In other words: were they not as much a mouthpiece of the superpower's propaganda as were the American media?

And did they develop reflexivity at a higher level than the US media managed at the time? These are the bottom-line questions behind this study of media reflexivity in connection with 'the new wars' in late modernity (Kaldor, 1999; see also Ignatieff, 2000).

A few introductory remarks should be added about the general aims and background of this study. It takes three Swedish newspapers' images of the Iraq War 2003 as the empirical basis for a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to the 'war on terror'. By applying some specific concepts from the CDA on a limited sample of media texts I will try to illustrate how contextual analysis can be conducted without neglecting detailed examination of the concrete media material. However, such an approach has necessarily to rely on a theoretical understanding of the fundamental conditions and the institutional setting of war journalism, because otherwise a relevant focus would be missing. As explicated in this article, this means contextual reading of the texts in relation to the historical and political setting, including the national and regional (e.g. European Union) levels, but also in relation to the international political situation and the diplomatic and ideological controversy released in conjunction with US/UK pressure for military intervention in Iraq in the autumn of 2002 and spring of 2003. In methodological terms, this means that I have based the analysis mainly on headlines and leads, although the entire texts have been thoroughly studied.

In this chapter I will concentrate on media reflexivity in three Swedish newspapers in the Iraq War 2003 against the backdrop of how they covered the Gulf War 1990-1991. In a comparative study of the media war at the time in more than five countries, we concluded that the war had never ended – and today one can only regret how true that prediction was. Furthermore, we concluded from the analyses that the national political contexts of the media affected the content. For example, the security and foreign policy traditions of the respective countries meant that the media in non-aligned countries (e.g. Finland and Sweden) were more reluctant to relay the US war propaganda than, for example, the German and Norwegian media – not to mention the American media (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2001). In a study of the media war in connection with the Kosovo conflict 1999 we showed similar results, i.e. 'nationalised images' (cf. Riegert, 1998) and varying degrees of susceptibility to the NATO propaganda in British, Norwegian and Swedish media, particularly in the initial stage of the military intervention (Nohrstedt, Höijer & Ottosen, 2002).

In the Iraq War 2003, military intervention without a UN resolution was, according to the official Swedish position, a violation of international law that Sweden could not support. But this position was not expressed loud and clear. Rather, the Swedish government kept a low profile and let the leading EU powers, such as France and Germany, stand for its opposition against the policy of 'the war alliance'. To many Swedes that was a surprise and disappointment considering the non-alignment foreign- and security-policy tradition reaching as far back as the Napoleonic wars. And within the Social-Democratic party some members were uncomfortable that the legacy of the late Olof Palme, a former Prime Minister with a worldwide reputation as a spokesman for the non-alignment movement during the Cold War, had been forsaken.

Analytical Framework: 'A Global Discursive Order'

The contextual approach applied in this chapter takes advantage of the concept 'discursive order' as explicated by Norman Fairclough in his application of critical discourse analysis (CDA). As indicated in the Introduction of the book, the general idea of using the concept 'discursive order' in studies of media content is to also include inter-discursive relationships, i.e. media content, in relation to other discourses such as public diplomacy, propaganda and humanitarian work. Given the rapid development and changes of the media landscape on the global level in the last two decades, these inter-discursive relations are not limited to the nation-states. On the contrary, important globalisation-promoting processes within the media sector – for example concentration of ownership, advent of international satellite television channels with global reach and technical convergence between previously separate media forms (e.g. press, radio, television) due to Internet and telecommunication inventions – have connected media discourses beyond national borders. This is not to say that the notion of national media is definitely obsolete, but rather that national-local media discourses are interacting much more with global media discourses, and in far more complex ways, than ever before.

A 'discursive order' is the actual configuration of a certain complex of discourses or "...a particular social ordering of relationships amongst different ways of making meaning, i.e. different discourse and genres and styles" (Fairclough, 2003:2). The reason why this concept is needed in discourse analysis is that various discourses are usually mixed and interact with each other in certain ways. It is, however, important to clarify that when applying the notion of discursive order I do not subscribe to a deterministic structuralism which would deny any leeway for agents and discursive opposition. As Norman Fairclough has emphasised, a discursive order is contested terrain, and is more often than not challenged by some opposing social forces. Nothing is predestined in the 'dialectics of discourse' (Fairclough, 2003:3). Thus, to use the analytical concept discursive order does not imply that one excludes the possibility of critical reflections from opponents to it. On the contrary, *reflexivity* is explicitly mentioned as a dimension of the dialectics of discourse: "...people do not only act and interact within networks of social practices, they also interpret and represent to themselves and each other what they do, and these interpretations and representations shape and reshape what they do" (Fairclough, 2003:4).

The emphasis on the reflexivity dimension is also related to globalisation theory, the backdrop on which the historical setting of this study is based. In Stig Hjarvard's discussion of how the public sphere is de-territorialised as a result of globalisation processes, reflexivity is another related consequence:

... due to the public sphere's increased openness and connectedness to a world beyond national borders, including other public spheres, a *global reflexivity*

gradually gains foothold... Thus, globalisation of the public sphere is not about the creation of *the* global public sphere, but rather about the increased presence of global connections within the national framework. This introduces a global reflexivity in the public sphere that, in the long run, will influence and alter the structure of the national public sphere and its relation to both political institutions and civil society. (Hjarvard, 2001:24-25; emphasis in original)

Quoting a few lines like this may give the false impression that Hjarvard belongs to the naive *globalists* (cf. Held & McGrew, 2000). He does not and he underlines contradictory trends, i.e. that globalisation may widen and narrow views of the world at the same time. But when it comes to reflexivity it seems that Hjarvard sees a direct causal relationship that could be problematic. The aim of this study is to analyse the conditioning of global reflexivity in media discourses in particular, with regard to self-reflections within the context of the Iraq War 2003. The concept of discursive order is helpful in that endeavour, because it throws light on the institutional settings of media war reporting.

Which discourses, then, are 'ordered' in the present case? Focus is primarily on *media discourses* in relation to *public diplomacy*, *war propaganda* and *compassion* (cf. Nohrstedt, Höijer & Ottosen, 2002). The notion 'public diplomacy' refers to the political debates around issues of legality and legitimacy; for example, whether a new UN resolution was needed to make the military intervention in Iraq legal. By 'war propaganda' I basically refer to the discourse on possible Iraqi possession of weapons of mass destruction, but also to references from the respective parties in the conflict as to the nature of the conflict, the warfare as such, military operations, and so on. The compassion discourse, finally, constitutes the discussions around the humanitarian aspects of the war – for example civilian casualties and human suffering (cf. Höijer, 2004). The format of this article only permits a summary of the results from the other dimensions of the discursive order except the reflexivity dimension and for further details see Nohrstedt 2004.

Material

Three daily Swedish newspapers have been selected for the analysis: *Aftonbladet* (AB) is the largest daily newspaper, not only in Sweden but also in the Nordic countries, with a circulation of 442 100 copies on weekdays¹, and the leading tabloid. Its editorial position is independent Social-Democratic and it has defended the non-alignment tradition of Swedish foreign and security policy, and usually expresses rather strong critique of the USA in relation to international politics. *Dagens Nyheter* (DN) is the leading quality paper, with readers mainly in social and cultural elite groups. Its circulation amounts to 362 500 copies daily in weekdays. On page four DN pub-

lishes debate, and is generally regarded as the most important agenda setter in the country. Its editorials are officially claimed to be independent liberal, and during the 1990s they have urged Sweden to apply for NATO membership. *Expressen* (*EXP*) is the second tabloid in the sample. Before 1996 it was the largest daily paper in Sweden (Hadenius & Weibull, 1999: 64), but was then pushed back in the competition with *AB* and now sells 226 400 copies every weekday. Like the two other papers it is officially independent, and claims to promote liberal ideas. It belongs to the same leading media conglomerate in Sweden – the Bonnier sphere – as *DN* and, like *DN*, it has strongly argued for Sweden to become a member of NATO.

The periods from which the material has been selected are:

1. 5, 6, 7 February 2003: Colin Powell's report to the UN Security Council.
2. 14, 15, 16 February 2003: Blix's report to the Security Council; peace demonstrations worldwide.
3. 20, 21, 22 March 2003: the military attack on Iraq.
4. 2, 3, 4 May 2003: Bush declares end of the battle of Iraq.

The media material consists of editorials, debate articles and news, including feature items such as analyses and commentaries. Letters to the editor are not included. Visual images are not studied specifically, but have been integrated in the text analyses.

Inter-discursive Representation, Positioning and Identification in the Media Discourses

For a start I will present briefly the main findings with respect to the following three themes of particular relevance for a CDA analysis of the media content. Firstly, *representation* of other discourses has been studied, i.e. inter-discursive relationships between the media discourses and media-external discourses as manifested in the former. Secondly, the *positioning* of the papers' stance in relation to the international and national levels. With respect to the international level, emphasis has been placed upon how, in particular, the editorials take sides in the conflict between the members of the so-called war alliance and the various agents arguing for a peaceful solution to the conflict and criticising the military intervention policy. On the national level, the discursively constructed relationship to the government, public opinion and the peace movement was the prime focuses. Thirdly, *identification* of a certain Swedish attitude to the conflict and its parties and main actors in the media discourses has been analysed. This was basically deduced by close readings of the cases where Swedish citizens or opinions are mentioned. An evident example is when Hans Blix appears in the ma-

terial – is his national identity emphasised and is he depicted as a representative, not only of the weapons inspectors, but of a Swedish way of handling conflicts as well? But there are also other items where Swedish people are mentioned and it seemed worthwhile to take a closer look at whether these items are indicative of identity paradigms. After the summary of the findings concerning these themes, I will elaborate on the *reflexivity* dimension of the media discourses.

With respect to the *inter-discursive relationships* the following conclusions can be drawn from the analysis:

1. The Swedish newspapers relate both to the 'war alliance', Iraq and the peace movement's diplomacy and propaganda, i.e. although the US/UK alliance has a prominent position in the media discourses it is not dominant.
2. In the first period, i.e. in connection with the UN Security Council session in which Colin Powell presented accusations against Iraq for possession of WMD, criticism and questioning of the accuracy of the charges are frequent, based on experts' opinion and Iraqi denials.
3. In the second period, when the heads of the weapons inspectors presented their reports before the UN Security Council, the French and other European nations' critique against the war policy of the US/UK alliance became highly exposed in the media, together with news reports from peace demonstrations almost world-wide.
4. In the third and fourth periods the US/UK news sources attained a dominant position owing to the media focus on the military operations and the marginalisation of Iraqi and Arabic sources. The Iraqi voices heard in the Swedish dailies are civilians fearing the consequences of the war. In *Aftonbladet* and *Dagens Nyheter* the peace activists still get quite a substantial amount of attention.

In terms of the newspapers' *positioning in the conflict* the findings are:

5. From the first to the second period the Swedish dailies gradually take a more explicit stand against the US/UK war policy.
6. On the domestic political scene the newspapers take different positions: *Aftonbladet* sides with the Swedish government's (read: Foreign Minister Anna Lindh's) line which is described as critical towards the war-alliance, while *Dagens Nyheter* and *Expressen* give voice to strong opposition against the government (read: Prime Minister Göran Persson).
7. In addition to points five and six, a humanitarian pathos is evident in the Swedish newspapers, mostly articulated in the two tabloids.

When it comes to the discursive *construction of Swedish identity* the main results are:

8. Identity constructions of this kind are more common and prominent in the tabloids than in the quality morning daily.
9. The 'Swede' is depicted as committed to peace and motivated by humanitarian compassion.
10. Further he or she is brave, reliable and firm.

Reflexivity – Discursive Construction of Validity Claims

One theme that seems to receive more attention over time in the media coverage of war is the risk of flawed reporting because of propaganda and of manipulation by the involved parties. International studies report that this topic was more extensively covered by the media in the Iraq war 2003 than before (Media Tenor, May 2003; here from Buchinger et al., 2004:218; see also Tumber & Palmer, 2004:7). The experiences of the Gulf War 1990-91 are often recalled in the Swedish newspapers, and with them the illusions of clinical warfare and smart weapons. Media experts and researchers are interviewed about the problems for journalists giving a dispassionate image of the events in wars, and audiences are urged to be critical in their news consumption. Therefore, a crucial aspect of the discursive order is what regime of truth is created in the relationships between the media and various other claimants of possession of a correct image of reality (cf. Ekström, 2004).

The classic liberal press idea about fair reporting is to balance partial views with each other, thus achieving an objective report. It is, however, intriguing to notice that this principle is more often than not lost when it comes to war reporting. Rarely, if ever, will one find media coverage that devotes equal space and equal credibility to both sides in war, or even a reasonably fair balance between them (cf. Nord, et al., 2003). As Daniel Hallin has convincingly argued, there are norms in the media for what are regarded as legitimate and illegitimate conflicts and from that distinction it follows that only some views will count as relevant for the media (Hallin, 1986). There could be a number of reasons why some descriptions and some sources of information are not regarded: for example that they are connected with previously untrustworthy agents, or that they cannot be checked out as in the case of totalitarian regimes. Here I am not aiming at a discussion about whether the media has made rational choices and assessments when trusting, or not trusting, some sources of information. My objective is rather to study the ways in which media indicate in what sense and why its content should be trusted as valid and relevant, fair and credible. With the advantage of hindsight this has become much more important after the debacle of the accusations about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and links to al-Qaeda that were displayed

as major reasons for launching the attacks on Iraq in spring 2003 (cf. Tumber & Palmer, 2004).

The analysis below will look specifically at three aspects of the epistemological problems: first, how the media discourse relates to truth claims from the involved parties in the conflict *when they are explicitly discussed* (in the major part of the material the validity of presented information is not addressed at all); second, how the professional conditions of journalists reporting from the war and the implications for the credibility of their reports are presented; third, (and if so) what is said in the media about attempts from the parties in the conflict to change the epistemological foundations for assessing the validity and trustworthiness of their claims. Such an analysis will not produce any conclusive findings with regard to truths and lies in the Iraqi propaganda war, or even tell us much about the degrees of truth in the media content. But it will hopefully give some empirical findings from which journalism practices and professional moral positions on ethical standards can be compared (cf. Ekström & Nohrstedt, 1996).

Owing to the limited material from the fourth period, only media material from the first three periods will be used in the the reflexivity analysis.

First Period: Comments on the WMD Evidence as Presented by Colin Powell

On February 5, the US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, presents the accusations against Iraq for obstruction of the UN demands on the country to dismantle all weapons of mass destruction. The following day, February 6, Colin Powell appears in a first page headline of *Dagens Nyheter*: "USA provided Iraq evidence. Secretary of State Colin Powell accused Saddam of hiding weapons and threatening researchers"². According to an expert quoted in the article, the information was more serious than expected, but no definite proofs were produced. One full foreign news page is devoted to the speech by Powell and his allegations against Iraq. But the headlines of three commentaries on the very same page indicate that the speech was met with doubts: "No clear swing of opinion" is one example. The other two are: "Drawings were obviously no direct proof" and "Satellite pictures do not impress".

Aftonbladet (AB), the Swedish tabloid newspaper with the largest circulation, has the story about Colin Powell's speech in the UN Security Council as the major news on its front page on February 6: "All the US evidence against Saddam". The editorial also addresses the Iraqi conflict and Powell's argumentation in the Council: "A General searching for his war". The argumentation by the US Secretary of State is described as spasmodic and said to throw long shadows back in American history – more specifically to 1964 and the lie about the Tonkin attack from North Vietnam on the US Navy that was used as a pretext for the start of the Vietnam War. The editorial rejects the

alleged connection between the Iraqi regime and al-Qaeda. Furthermore the accusation that Iraq has a nuclear power programme is doubted because, the editor argues, the IAEA, CIA and the weapons inspectors have all proved the opposite. The *AB* headline on the foreign news page is significant for the paper's sceptical position: "UN: Wait with the war". The subtitle supports it: "The Security Council wants more time for Blix to find weapons".

In relation to doubts concerning the American charges expressed in other parts of *Aftonbladet*, a remarkable line of reasoning is presented in the analyses written by one of its special journalists, Wolfgang Hansson. On February 6 his comments on the evidence presented by Colin Powell are more than sceptical: "Each of the 'evidence' taken for itself was not very impressive. Isolated conversations. Many buildings and lorries. What was in them was not revealed by the satellite images. But together the presented material created a massive and serious image of a country that very consciously tries to hide things and to stop the weapons inspectors' work. Which cannot surprise anyone." (*AB* 06-02-03). The next day the same journalist develops the argument a bit further to its conclusion in line with the baseline of Colin Powell's speech before the Security Council – namely, as the headline reveals, "Saddam decides whether there will be a war". In the lead, the argument is elaborated as follows: "The ball is with Saddam Hussein. He is the only one who can stop a war against Iraq." The precondition, according to the daily, is that the Iraqi president yields, not to the US threat, but to the Swedish head of the weapons inspectors: "But then he must surrender to Hans Blix." It is further mentioned that Blix is expected to visit Baghdad the coming weekend and after that report back to the Security Council. "If Blix still repeats that Iraq is not entirely co-operating, then that will be the starting signal for the war." In retrospect, it is revealing to note how the US propaganda trap closes around the journalist's perceptions and makes him put all the burden of proof on the Iraqi side: "Saddam must...bring forward some of the weapons he probably hides and make it look like he is really disarming. Only then is there a chance that the USA will cancel the war." (*AB* 07-02-03)

The second largest tabloid in Sweden, *Expressen*, also exposes the Iraqi crisis on its front page on February 6 with the headline: "How you are hit by the Iraqi crisis". The editor-in-chief is not convinced that military intervention can be justified by Powell's evidence as presented in the Security Council. In the editorial it is suggested that the weapons inspectors should be given time to accomplish their work. The headline states: "Wait with the war", and the subtitle adds: "It is difficult to be convinced that a quickly-forced war against Iraq would make the US safer." On the news pages covering the Iraqi crisis, the headlines are large and wide – the following two covering two pages each: "Here are 10 new pieces of evidence" and "How you manage the war". With respect to Powell's allegations the paper reports "...but the expert gives Powell the mark 'Failed'". Another article dealing with Powell's appearance before the UN regards it a defeat for the US: "Iraq won the war – in the Security Council".

In conclusion, all three of the Swedish newspapers in this study presented critical and sceptical responses to the proof brought before the Security Council. Obviously the impression was that Powell had not convinced the Council and the world about the crimes of which Iraq was accused. In retrospect, this was probably a more rational stance than was the case in some other media in the Western countries. But what does that imply for the media image of Iraq? Were the Swedish media more prepared to take what the Saddam Hussein regime said at face value or were they as critical and doubtful as they were to the US/UK – or even more so?

The very same day that Colin Powell makes his case before the Security Council, the Swedish quality paper *Dagens Nyheter* runs a big interview with Saddam Hussein. The headline on the first page states: “Saddam Hussein denies connection with al-Qaeda”. In the article on the inside page the Iraqi president is quoted in the headline: “Iraq has no interest in waging war”, and in the following text two key statements are reported from the interview. First: the denial of any connection between Iraq and the terrorist network al-Qaeda; second: the Iraqi president repeats that the country has no weapons of mass destruction. According to the Iraqi president there are other motives behind the US threat of military intervention. “Saddam Hussein said that the USA wants to control the oil fields of Iraq and is under influence from Israel... ‘It seems that the decision-makers in the US are motivated by aggression against our region that has been obvious for more than a decade’, he said.” There are no reservations or doubts about the Iraqi president’s credibility in this article other than the quotation marks in the headline. But when the *DN* correspondent in Amman reports the next day about the reactions there to Powell’s speech, the speech by Saddam Hussein is also mentioned. As predicted, according to this correspondent, the ‘dictator’ denied the three main accusations against Iraq. The uncritical relaying of Saddam’s message by the Jordanian media is noticed and believed to have been well received by the people he met, since they are “repeating, almost word-for-word, what Saddam Hussein had said the previous evening”. Besides this indirect reference, there is no mention of Iraqi comments on the accusations from Powell in *DN* on that day.

In the two tabloids *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen*, the presentation by Powell is as dominating as in *DN*, but here the Iraqi side is at least referred to in connection with the accusations, and the reported Iraqi reaction is total denial of the accusations.

Second Period: The Weapons Inspectors’ Report

What about the critical attitude in the Swedish media when bringing the news that Hans Blix, the only Swede of some importance in this drama, has presented a report to the UN Security Council? The studied dailies do not have

any doubts about the accuracy and credibility of the presentations by the UN inspectors, Hans Blix and Mohamed El-Baradei. In *Dagens Nyheter*, an analysis on the news page is headed "Both sides find support for their line" and it is noticed that positive as well as negative conclusions may be drawn. Nor are any critical comments of the reports to be found in *Aftonbladet* which, under a seven-column picture of Hans Blix, calls him "The world's most important Swede" (15-02-03). *Expressen* deviates slightly from the other two dailies by publishing a debate with the headline: "Chili Mallat wants to give Hans Blix a holiday. Liberating Iraq is more important than the UN's disarmament". The weapons inspections are only a pretext for making the military intervention look more like a multilateral concern and acceptable to the world outside the USA. Even if the Middle East expert suggests that Blix should be released from his 'mission impossible' there is no questioning of the credibility or accuracy of his report. Nor is there in the news coverage in *Expressen*. For the three Swedish newspapers in this sample the credibility of Hans Blix is beyond doubt, thus in accord with how Swedes in general are depicted (see above). What is discussed to some extent is the political context of his mission and whether the weapons inspections are in reality more of a smoke screen than a real attempt to search for the 'smoking gun'.

Third Period: The First Days of the War

Following the expiry of the deadline issued by the Alliance, the media tension rises in the face of the outbreak of war. Front pages proclaim that the war has started (*AB* 20-03-03) and that time is up for Saddam Hussein (*EXP* 20-03-03). During the Gulf War in 1990-91, there was within Swedish media an ambition to show the 'true face of the war', i.e. to maintain independent reporting by focusing on the suffering and sacrifices of the civilian population. But as that war broke out, the media reporting was in all essentials dominated by the image of the 'clinical war', in which the consequences for the civilian population were more or less conspicuous by their absence. The question is what conclusions have been made since in the newsrooms, and what measures were taken as a result when the Iraq War started on March 20 2003. Were the media able to avoid becoming a passive tool for war propaganda aiming at concealing innocent victims? And how did they inform readers of the risk that the news could become a channel for the propaganda of the parties involved? Since the experiences of the Gulf War 1990-91 clearly point to the media as being most vulnerable to manipulations at the initial phase of the war, I have chosen to study more closely the occurrence of media critique during the period March 20-22.

In *Dagens Nyheter*, Per Jönsson, *DN's* correspondent in the Middle East and at the time stationed in Amman, had, on March 19, already declared that he intended to stay in Jordan and perhaps later cross into Iraq. His

motivation was that “the chances are that Saddam would sacrifice his own population and release chemical and biological weapons...”. The heading emphasises that *DN* is not the only one making this assessment: “Many media leave Iraq”. Like other journalists, Jönsson is providing accounts of how the Coalition propaganda of Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction, and recommendations to leave Iraq, had an effect on where the media stationed their correspondents, thus determining a certain framework for the reporting (cf. Slapgard, 2003). When the war breaks out, *DN* as well as several other Swedish media base their reporting on the accounts of freelance journalists who have made their way into Iraq, such as the Norwegian female reporter Åsne Seierstad.

Media critique in *DN* during the period March 20-22 is made up of four articles published on March 21 and 22 respectively. In addition, there is an indirect allusion to the propaganda war on March 20 in an article on some Swedish citizens with immigrant backgrounds travelling to Baghdad because, as cited in the headline, “We are the eyes that the US do not want there”. However on March 21, the first article during the period in which the conditions of media reporting is a central theme, is published, with the heading “Censorship and lies part of the game”. The problems of the media are here discussed in the same way as in a somewhat more exhaustive article the following day (see below). When *DN* in a short editorial article on the same day under the heading “Weapons of mass persuasion” discusses the war propaganda, attention is focused on attempts to influence the Iraqi resistance fervour with the help of flyers and fax machines. “Balancing act for the media” on March 22 is a headline referring to the difficulties of the media in connection with, *inter alia*, the report that ‘a large number of Iraqi soldiers’ have surrendered to the British-American troops. The article emphasises that the newsroom staff are making an effort not to become defenceless victims of the propaganda war, by asking sceptical questions as well as by giving detailed accounts of the source material and drawing attention to media’s vulnerability to propaganda influence.

The article claims that mediation of disinformation can, however, not be avoided, as unconfirmed reports may also be of importance in their effects on public opinion. The article concludes with an observation that it would be wrong to interpret openness about the difficulties and uncertainties in reporting as resignation on the part of the media. “Doubts and reservations are part of all truths” (*DN* 22-03-03). On the same day, *DN* follows this up with an article giving an account of some of the conditions for media reporting: “Bold American TV venture on the front-line”. The introduction states that the Iraq War is covered by five hundred journalists, including several TV crews, who are part of the military forces. The significance of the so-called embedded journalists is, however, played down. The arrangement does not necessarily result in more information for the viewers and has “...so far mainly resulted in low-quality digital images of desolate desert landscapes”. In Baghdad, the threatening attitude towards the TV companies is growing,

the result of which might be that the only options left will be filming in secret, and image-free phone reports, or reliance on al-Jazeera. The Arabic TV channel is described in the following way: "The Arabic TV station, consistently used by Osama bin Laden, is the only station with permission from the Baghdad regime to film in large parts of Baghdad" (DN 22-03-03).

On the same day as fighting erupts, *Aftonbladet* chooses to give considerable column space to the problem of manipulated information (20-03-03). An entire spread is dedicated to the propaganda war and its consequences for the possibility of providing a fair image of the war. The main part of the spread discusses American psychological warfare in a report from the embedded reporter at a base in Kuwait. But two other articles discuss the conditions in Baghdad and how readers can defend themselves against propaganda. The former is written by the CNN reporter Nic Robertson from his experience from working in Baghdad, both during the Gulf War 1991 and now at the outbreak of war in March 2003. He tells that all Western media in Iraq have to work through the Iraqi Ministry of Information, but that pre-censorship of the material has been removed. Media experts in the second article recommend the readers to, *inter alia*, compare different media reports and to make their own probability assessments. One of these experts is the author Philip Knightley and his prediction is that the Pentagon will be considerably harder on the journalists now than during the Gulf War and that many journalists will probably be killed; this because the big TV stations want to show the fighting live and because the Pentagon has warned the media that the military will not make allowances if journalists get in the way. The editor-in-chief, Anders Gerdin, is also interviewed, on what measures *AB* takes in order to resist propaganda. He emphasises the importance of source critique, of careful sifting, of comparing different sources and of making sure that the sources are given. He admits that there is a problem in that the paper mainly uses Western news sources, but points out that the newsroom staff also have access to al-Jazeera and Iraqi TV. The importance of having one's own reporters on site in order to secure reliable reports is emphasised. Gerdin is also humble with respect to the paper's ability to be impartial: "No, that is of course not possible. When war breaks out, no media company can claim that they are 100% free from propaganda". He also expresses a certain resignation in the light of experiences in 1991. To the question "Is anything different this time compared to the last Iraq War?" he replies: "I think that we and other media are more aware of the difficulties involved and are thus more critical. Before the last war, we all had good intentions, but once the war broke out it was not easy to resist the propaganda" (20-03-03).

Expressen also brings up the theme of media critique but waits to publish this material until the day after the outbreak of war. Three articles discuss different aspects of the media's vulnerability to the propaganda of both sides. As in *AB*, there are retrospectives of the Gulf War 1990-91, but in this case a considerably more optimistic conclusion is made. A column by Per

Andersson with the heading “Bombshell” discusses the central role played by CNN in the Gulf War 1991. Many then believed that this was the beginning of a period of extreme concentration of media power. But it was in fact the opposite, and he claims that nobody any longer believes in clinical warfare (21-03-03). Over an entire spread with the headline “Iraq shows its victims” the paper exposes pictures of the injured. It is stressed that the reports of civilian casualties of ‘George Bush’s attack on Saddam Hussein’ originate from the Iraqi authorities. In an adjacent article, the conflicting war descriptions of the opposing sides appear in the headline: “Propaganda flows from both sides”. The preamble provides an example: “‘Civilian targets’, claims Iraq about the bomb attacks. ‘Military installations’, claims the US. ‘Manipulation is becoming increasingly elegant. It is almost impossible to defend yourself against it’, says Michael Nydén, PhD in Political Science.” As do the other newspapers, *Expressen* depends upon experts being able to immunise readers against the infectious effect of propaganda. The third article on this day on the media critical theme promises a quick fix in the headline: “Experts help you to be more critical” (*EXP* 21-03-03). On the following day *Expressen* returns to Iraqi propaganda efforts to deceive the media and public opinion – the casualty bluff. The eye-catching article splashed over the paper reports on the Iraqi Ministry of Information’s attempts at magnifying the number of casualties in the nightly bomb raids. A number of false cases are uncovered by the reporter who has paid visits to a nearby hospital (*EXP* 22-03-03).

The conclusion of this survey is that while *Aftonbladet* mostly focuses its media critique on US attempts to influence reporting, *Expressen* distributes attention more evenly between the media manipulations of the opposing sides, which means that the Iraqi attempts at manipulating the media receives more attention in *EXP* than in *AB*. To a greater degree than the others, *Dagens Nyheter* avoids pointing fingers at any one side in the conflict when discussing the vulnerability of the reporting in the propaganda war’s crossfire of accusations and counter-accusations, disinformation and lies. The paper achieves this in part by expressing itself in general terms, and in part by focusing mainly on how the media act in order to avoid becoming disinformers themselves.

However, the study of the papers’ explicit indication of source critique and their claims for truth would not be balanced without a discussion of the spreading of rumours and disinformation of which they, at the same time, are guilty. If the biggest propaganda stunt in connection with the Iraq War was the official American and British motivations for intervention, to which the papers remain relatively sceptical, there are quite a number of other examples of how the papers are pulled into the haze of disinformation, half-truths and staged news events of the propaganda war.

As already mentioned, the accusation about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction led many Western media, including *DN*, to refrain from sending their own correspondents to Baghdad at the initial stage of the war (cf. Knightley, 2004). *Aftonbladet* writes that “Working Swedes may become

Saddam's targets", the graphics and the text describing Iraq's missile arsenal as extensive, containing both Al Huseyn and Scud missiles – the former with a range of 650 km and the latter with a range of 300 km (AB 20-03-03). On the next day, the paper's correspondent in Kuwait gives accounts of gas attacks from Iraqi missiles: "The gas alarm sounds – in the desert. *Aftonbladet's* reporter taken unawares by attack – kilometres from cover" (21-03-03). In other words, the paper is conveying the impression that there has hardly been any disarmament of Iraq's military capacity since the Gulf War 1991.

In the same way, or perhaps to an even higher degree, *Expressen* has fallen victim to misleading propaganda from the war alliance. The reporting of the first day of war offers, among other things, insights into Saddam Hussein's resistance strategy: "Saddam's strategy. How he will strike back against the US". The newspaper knows for a fact that Saddam is becoming 'more and more desperate' and that the strategy includes chemical counter attacks, blown-up oil wells, destroyed bridges and 'murdering his own men'. The sources of this imaginative inside information are only referred to in terms of "...according to reports to the *Evening Standard*..." and "Iraq has, according to American information, access to hundreds of tons of poison gas...". Another example is the reports that Iraqi soldiers have started to surrender. With a reference to American military sources the paper states that at least 17 Iraqi soldiers have deserted. The problem with this report is not whether the information is true or false but that the journalist – in this case Mats Larsson – uncritically and one-sidedly relies on these sources, which leads to a biased description of reality. A Captain Darrin Theriault is given the opportunity to say that the US Military believes several Iraqi soldiers will surrender. The journalist knows, however, that this can create problems: "During the Gulf War, large groups of Iraqi soldiers chose to raise the white flag. The American forces were not quite prepared for this. Soldiers intended for combat in great haste instead had to take care of starving and exhausted Iraqis." A lot can be said about the way in which surrendering and fleeing Iraqis were treated during the Gulf War, for instance at what came to be known as the Killing Fields of that war, but a more one-sided account than Larsson's retrospective can scarcely be found (20-03). On another spread, *EXP* highlights the risk of gas attacks on Israel from Iraq with an eye-catching headline: "Fear of gas. Nursery turned into shelter". As in the other papers, the journalist has deemed the reports of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction true, as have probably the civilians in the article who have turned their nursery into a gas-proof shelter. Thus, everything that is conveyed in the report about the family's efforts to protect themselves against possible gas attacks may be true in detail and yet the whole article is grossly misleading since the grounds for the protection measures, as well as for what the reporter implicitly holds to be true, are unfounded. In this way, this article well illustrates how vulnerable war journalism is vis-à-vis the manipulating menacing picture constructed by the Bush and Blair regimes as the propaganda platform for the war. The problem is not only, nor even primarily, that journalists convey an exagger-

ated threat against Iraq's neighbouring countries, but that entire populations' behaviour and opinions are governed in a way which, via the media, seems to confirm the seriousness of the threat.

A final example from *Expressen* has to be the story of Tariq Aziz's alleged escape. According to David Miller, who bases his analysis on reports in the *Sunday Mirror* and *The Independent*, this was one of the Iraq war's psychological operations in which disinformation played a central role in order to lure the enemy into a trap. By announcing a false report about the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, the idea was that he would be forced to deny this on TV and then be traced as he returned to Saddam Hussein's bunker (Miller, 2004: 93) In splashing the rumour of Aziz's escape all over the paper, *EXP* is thus joining, probably unaware, a game with more than one layer: "Tariq Aziz: We are ready to fight". In the preamble, the conflicting reports are mentioned: "Tariq Aziz is dead? Tariq Aziz has escaped? The reports caused a rise on the Paris Stock Exchange yesterday afternoon – but last night he appeared in his military uniform, pistol in hand, vowing to fight for Iraq" (EXP 20-03-03).

To sum up the reflexivity analysis: it is evident that the Swedish newspapers contain crucial and media-critical information which should facilitate reflections on the part of the audience about the accuracy and objectivity of the war coverage. The way in which this is achieved is both through well-exposed critical comments by experts on the even more heavily exposed US and UK accusations against Iraq of WMD possession, and through specific articles with media-critical information about attempts to manipulate the reports and other propaganda activities. In dealing with this theme attention is divided slightly differently in the analysed newspapers. Where *Aftonbladet* focuses mainly on attempts by the war alliance to control the media, *Expressen* is more occupied with Iraqi manipulation. *Dagens Nyheter* takes a neutral position when it comes to media manipulation, by expressing its comments on this topic in rather general terms and without pointing out any specific side in the conflict, and by concentrating on the measures taken by the paper in order to stop disinformation. But at the same time as the papers give attention to attempts at manipulation and criticise key components of the US/UK war propaganda, in particular the accusations of Iraqi possession of WMD, they contain a lot of material – especially visual – which actually presumes that the allegations against Iraq are true. This material includes speculations as to possible Iraqi counter-attacks with WMDs and the severe consequences for civilians both in Iraq and neighbouring countries. The media coverage of possible Iraqi WMD possession then becomes very contradictory, if not indeed totally confused.

The professional challenge for war journalism of how to manage the war propaganda, lies, half-truths and staged events, is discursively handled in an interesting way by the studied newspapers. By no means do I wish to disavow the difficulties involved in war journalism, but it seems that there are some epistemological problems that have not been properly considered

so far. Some instances of a peculiar logic have been mentioned above, for example the *AB* journalist who argues – after having rejected the US accusations of Iraqi WMD – that the only way Saddam Hussein could avoid war is to destroy a substantial number of such weapons. Or the *DN* journalist who writes that disinformation must also be part of the news, because it might have an important impact on the development of the conflict, and then ends with the conclusion that doubts and reservations are part of all truths. In retrospect, I assume that these are the kinds of comments in which the respective journalist will not find much consolation. I shall come back to this matter of professional concern in the conclusions below.

Conclusions

In this study, three Swedish dailies' discourses on the Iraq War 2003 have been examined with a critical discourse analysis approach. The main theoretical focus has been on the ways in which the media discourses are contextually situated within the global discursive order and the forms of reflexivity they express with respect to these conditions.

The conclusions with regard to *reflexivity* are basically three:

1. There are many examples in the newspapers of reservations as to the validity of statements and information from the parties in the conflict. Above, it has particularly been noticed how the accusations from the US/UK side against Iraq for possession of WMD, and the allegations of Iraqi involvement in the terrorist attacks on September 11 2001, are framed with scepticism and doubts expressed by experts and journalists. Hence, the Swedish media obviously offer their audiences contextual information about the propaganda war and issue warnings that the media content can be infected by disinformation.
2. In comparison, the three dailies take different angles when addressing the topic of propaganda activities directed at media and public opinion. Both the two tabloids focus on how the parties in the conflict try to manipulate the news reports, but where *Aftonbladet* primarily notices the activities of the 'war alliance', *Expressen* is more occupied with Iraqi propaganda. In *Dagens Nyheter*, however, the coverage of media management efforts in the propaganda war is less concrete than in the tabloids. Here the angle is more on the anti-disinformation measures in the newsroom – as if this quality paper is anxious to assure its readers that its reports are credible.
3. The general problem from the reflexivity point of view is whether the media can protect themselves against a 'regime of lies' of the kind that was put in place by the 'war alliance'. When the superpower USA, to-

gether with its allies, releases its massive resources – political, military and propagandistic – for actions of a global magnitude like the Iraq War 2003, based on consciously false premises, then the contingent effects are likely to look like confirmations of the mendacious propaganda construction of reality. As exemplified above, in many ways the propaganda about Iraqi WMD did have discursive repercussions which – probably without the media's intention – tended to confirm the fabricated accusations. Examples are the risk assessments when the media take decisions on where to place the war correspondents, graphic displays of Iraqi weapons, premature reports about Iraqi missile attacks on Kuwait and other neighbouring countries, speculations about how and when the dictator in Baghdad would use his WMD resources. These are all examples of discursive instances that at the time seemed to validate the US/UK charges against Iraq.

It is quite worrying that even media, such as the Swedish newspapers in this study, that reported extensively on the doubts and critique against the *causa bellum* arguments, in a somewhat similar way as later regretted by, for example, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, were carried away by the war drums. Bob Woodward mentions group-think as an explanation of why *The Washington Post* did not fulfil its duty as watchdog of the administration's war policy. It seems that an almost global professional group-thinking of a kind influences media discourses in pre-war periods. As expressed by the Pentagon correspondent of the same newspaper about the psychological-political climate: "There was an attitude among editors: Look, we're going to war, why do we even worry about all this contrary stuff?" (WP 12-08-04). Epistemologically, this amounts to nothing less than acceptance of a view that the White House security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, allegedly expressed when asked about the proofs against Iraq. She implied that the threat from Iraq was so great that verification of the accusations was not needed (Slapgard, 2003:52). As an epistemological position this is an extremely wide-ranging relativism: if the threat is serious enough the question of truth is subordinated. In order to legitimise pre-emptive strikes it would be sufficient that a state perceiving a threat could make it seem plausible that it is sincerely convinced of its seriousness. Besides the horrifying implications of this 'logic' for future conflicts, one should also notice the possible implications for journalistic practices. The exemplars mentioned above may indicate an epistemological drift from the justified reporting of *imagined* threats as such to representations of these threats as if *verified and real* in the mediated framing of the conflict.

Do the Swedish newspapers also have reasons to regret their reporting, in spite of having called attention to the flimsy evidence behind the accusations? The point here is not to reduce or neglect the importance of these doubts – it would of course be much worse if the US/UK charges had not been challenged in the media discourses – but to indicate that the relative

importance of critical comments of this kind is more limited than often expected. That is partly evident in the self-critical remarks in the American newspapers mentioned above. Even if doubts and uncertainties about foundations for the administration's accusations against Iraq are noticed on inside pages, it does not erase the false impression given by the front-page exposure of the charges; that is admitted by the American editors. This is not to say that the Swedish newspapers in this study did not expose the critique more prominently than did these American media. They certainly did. Having said that, it is nevertheless worthwhile to consider the ambiguous and contradictory nature of a media discourse that, on the one hand, marks reservations about US/UK accusations of an Iraqi threat to world peace and, on the other hand, reveals that media and journalists take war propaganda for granted. Certainly, such a discourse is open to different interpretations and leaves its audience with deep uncertainty when trying to make sense out of it.

This ambiguity and multi-seminal nature of the Swedish media discourse is not totally unexpected if understood in relation to the notion of discursive order, primarily because it emphasises the institutional setting and other societal conditions that constitute the content and forms of the media discourses. With that in mind it is particularly relevant to look for the power and interest influences on the media discourses by way of control over the material world, the sequences of events, the access to information sources and distribution channels. Therefore, with this theoretical perspective it is natural to explore in what ways diplomatic conflicts and international political struggle, war propaganda and peace appeals, threat images and critical remarks about lack of evidences, have repercussions on several discursive levels. In this study, this is implemented by, for instance, focusing attention to how the media's practical operations and graphics are conditioned upon the images of an Iraqi threat that the US/UK spun for propaganda purposes.

It is also important to pay attention to the self-interests of media companies and journalism as social institutions. Media and journalists on the news market are dependent on some credibility in the eyes of the audience. A well-exposed and far-reaching self-criticism and reflexivity may risk that credibility. And that is where the business interests of the news media companies are at risk, and limit reflexivity, which is illustrated by the reasoning in *Dagens Nyheter* when it claims to balance fair and accurate reporting on the one hand with disinformation on the other. That balance, the newspaper has it, is achieved by way of its public declarations of uncertainty and doubts about the truth value of the information it relays. To put it bluntly: truth is equivalent to disinformation plus marked uncertainty. By this disputable definition of truth, the reasonability of which depends on whether the media has managed to present the amplitude of the problems with respect to validity and accuracy in the actual discursive order, *Dagens Nyheter* maintains its truth claims to its readers. An affiliated discursive figure is used when the media rest the responsibility of the consequences of their profes-

sional judgements on their audiences. Journalists assisted by experts, often media researchers, comment on the risks that the news reports are polluted by propaganda with the explicit intention of assisting the audience to 'become more critical' – the bottom-line message to their publics being that at the end of the day the truth will eventually be established and reported to them. The question is: will it? As argued by the ombudsman at *The Washington Post* it seems that only if the media are prepared to extend their self-criticism into serious reporting on all the ways in which they misled the public – and were misled themselves – in the period leading up to the Iraq War 2003, will it be possible to take their regrets and apologies as more than a pretext to continue with business as usual. This has not happened yet, either in the US or in the Swedish media. The limit for media reflexivity is thus, so far, drawn where professional credibility and market position come at risk.

Notes

1. All circulation figures are from year 2003 (*TS-tidningen* 27 February 2004. Tidningsstatistik., www.ts.se, visited 14 June 2004).
2. All quotations have been translated by the author.

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Through a Distanced Lens

New Zealand's Coverage of the Iraq Conflict

Margie Comrie & Susan Fountaine

New Zealand's centre-left government was opposed to the invasion of Iraq without a United Nations mandate and this, accompanied by strong public support, undoubtedly influenced media coverage of the conflict. The major media reflected opposition, which was expressed in terms of support for the UN and international law, fears for the civilian population of Iraq and some cynicism about United States' motives. At the same time, opposition to the invasion of Iraq was tempered by repugnance toward Saddam Hussein's regime, and concern that New Zealand was abandoning its traditional allies – combined with a more self-interested fear that this would threaten trade agreements and security arrangements.

Local newspapers and television stations relied heavily on international news providers. However, the nature and balance of the news selection reveals local sentiment about the conflict and a certain introspection about what it meant for the country's role in the 'global village'. Balance was present on two levels: in the media's attempt to be generally even-handed in selection of 'pro' and 'anti' articles; and in New Zealand's own diplomatic tightrope, which involved the government balancing international obligations and 'schmoozing' with key powers, while retaining its commitment to multilateralism.

Background

New Zealand is both small in size and in population with just over 4 million people. It is also an isolated country, which is perhaps why its people are such avid media consumers, among the top readers of newspapers in the world (Le Duc, Niemi & Norris, 1996). Although television has replaced newspapers as the major source of news and information for voters (Roberts & Levine, 1996), the print media are currently enjoying a period of readership growth, with 55% of people over 15 years reading a daily newspaper (Chapple, 2002).

New Zealand's media market is the world's most deregulated (Norris, 2002). Every major private sector company is owned by overseas interests and there are no restrictions on foreign or cross-media ownership. The country's newspapers are run by a duopoly. At the time of the conflict, INL (itself 49.9% owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation) owned two of the four metropolitan daily newspapers, both Sundays and eight provincial newspapers (about 64% of these combined markets)¹. Its rival, APN News and Media (owned by Tony O'Reilly), covers 29% of the market with New Zealand's largest daily newspaper, the *New Zealand Herald*, along with eight provincial newspapers. O'Reilly also controls about half of New Zealand's commercial radio market. Only one metropolitan newspaper, the *Otago Daily Times*, is independently owned. New Zealand has no national daily newspaper.

There are four major free-to-air television channels. State-owned Television New Zealand, working to a newly-introduced public service charter, has the majority audience share with TV1 and TV2. Its 6pm *One News* is regularly in the top ten programme ratings with two thirds of the potential audience. Canada's Canwest, which also runs radio stations throughout New Zealand, owns TV3 and Channel Four. There is a pay-to-view Sky television network (owned by INL), and small free-to-air players, Australian-owned Prime Television and various regional television stations.

New Zealand's response to the first major armed conflict of the 21st century is rooted in much earlier events; particularly its colonial history and its attempts to control its economic destiny. New Zealand was granted self government by Britain in the 1850s but depended on the 'mother country' as major trading partner and cultural mentor well into the 20th century. Even in the 1980s older, *Pākehā* (Caucasian) New Zealanders routinely called Britain 'home' and today London is still the first port of call for most young New Zealanders heading off-shore for a few years of 'OE' (overseas experience).

But Kiwis (named after the country's iconic flightless bird) are gradually building a national identity. This has grown from diverse elements, including extreme pride in the country's natural beauty, delight in its high sporting profile, and a strong belief in the ingenuity, inventiveness and creativity of its people. This identity is underpinned by a sometimes reluctant but slowly increasing recognition of the importance of the indigenous Māori culture to the nation.

Military history and alliances played a key part in the emerging concept of nationhood. As memorials in every small town attest, New Zealand contributed generous numbers of troops to wars in Europe. The long defeat at Gallipoli in 1915 was traumatic for both Australia and New Zealand. Historian Michael King (2003) says, "The necessary myth evolved quickly in both countries that they had 'come of age' on the slopes of Gallipoli" (p. 299). Anzac Day was established as an annual day of commemoration, and "for the next three generations it would be the focal point of national mourning for all wars, and for expressions of patriotism" (p. 299).

New Zealand's diplomatic relationship with the United States began in 1942, when – with most of its troops in Europe, and Japan gaining increasing control in the Far East – it sought to strengthen the likelihood that America would guarantee the security of Pacific countries. The ANZUS treaty (linking New Zealand, Australia and the United States) was signed in 1951. Despite large Vietnam War protests, the alignment with the United States was never seriously questioned at government level until 1984 when the fourth Labour government opposed nuclear testing and banned nuclear-propelled or nuclear armed ships, effectively closing New Zealand ports to the US military. New Zealanders were stunned by the extent of America's reaction; shutting some economic and diplomatic doors and effectively destroying ANZUS. While the conservative opposition lamented the economic price paid by the policy, polls showed it to be popular, and it has remained.

Tensions in the military alliances have been matched by economic tensions. New Zealand's economy, dependant on primary exports, is vulnerable and in a leap of faith in the global market it has dropped almost all protective trade barriers over the last decade or so. Media reports made it clear that the United States urged these reforms while its own barriers continue to take their toll on New Zealand farmers. Meanwhile, New Zealand reshaped its military to meet what had become a largely peace keeping role in the new world order. September 11 had little effect on this reorganisation and direction. New Zealanders realise that, compared to that of big powers, their military operation is tiny. However, they derive pride (cultivated by publicists) from the role of troops as peace keepers, and of military engineers restoring water supplies, rebuilding schools and roads in the aftermath of war and natural disaster. Restructuring the military for such purposes was popular, but the 2002 sale of the country's fighter planes proved controversial, accompanied by accusations that New Zealand was reneging on its military obligations.

Media Coverage of the War

The New Zealand media gave extensive coverage to the Iraq conflict, particularly during the invasion, from late March to mid April, when stories of fighting dominated front pages and large segments of the evening news. Production values were excellent, with extensive use of page banners, textboxes, graphics and slogans, multiple sources, live crosses and so on. However, except for fleeting visits by journalist and news presenter Mike McRoberts (TV3) and TVNZ's Europe correspondent, Ian Sinclair, war correspondents were noticeable by their absence as the media relied on packages from mainstream Western media organisations. Indeed the New Zealand media often further blended the overseas material, so that it was impossible to source some elements of the coverage.

We selected two newspapers: the country's largest daily, the *New Zealand Herald* (circulation 210 910) and the capital city's daily, the *Dominion Post* (circulation 99 089), and we backed this up with an overview of coverage by the two competing prime time national news programmes.

In our sample, editorial and commentary originating in New Zealand were not generally supportive of US action and were overwhelmingly critical of President Bush himself. Apart from some business columnists who worried about the consequences of going against America's wishes, the only local commentator supporting US action was Dennis Dutton (a former American). In a *Herald* column headlined "Blood-splattered despot has to go", Dutton argued that getting rid of Saddam Hussein would change the face of the Middle East and that no nation had clean hands over past dealings with Iraq, so they must step in to fix things. Cartoonists pilloried Bush and his march to war. The *Dominion Post's* Australian correspondent also provided critical coverage of Prime Minister John Howard's pro-American stance.

We begin with two precursors to the war: US Secretary of State Colin Powell's address to the UN Security Council in early February and, 10 days later, the report by chief weapons inspector Hans Blix to the Security Council. We then discuss some coverage of the Iraq invasion in late March and of Bush declaring the end of the war in early May. Finally, we look at the debates, which were sparked by the war, about New Zealand's role and identity.

Colin Powell's Case for War

Colin Powell's presentation to the UN dominated the television news on November 6 (despite this being Waitangi Day, New Zealand's national day marked by political celebrations and, often, racial controversy). The story also made the front pages of news and world sections in the following day's newspapers.

TV3's news programme was broadcast live from official celebrations at Waitangi, where presenter Mike McRoberts linked the anniversary of New Zealand's 'peace treaty' with preparations for war in Iraq. The six-minute lead package dealt with Powell's presentation and local and international response. Neither of the international stories in this package was sourced, although the first appeared to be BBC, and was very similar to *One News's* BBC item. Both channels maximised visual impact by running extracts from the presentation, such as the intercepts, video and photographic 'evidence', and including Iraq's dismissal of the presentation as a "typical US show complete with stunts and special effects". The slightly longer TV3 package also canvassed the responses of the French and British foreign ministers, while *One News's* package, from BBC and NBC, included official reaction from UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. TV3 also ran a short extract from an exclusive *60 Minutes* interview with Powell. Both channels included slightly dif-

ferent reaction comments from New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark. In the *One News* clip, Clark said she thought the US timetable did not fit with further inspections and that war was inevitable, and in the TV3 piece she said the US appeared to have produced evidence of a pattern of deception and suggested there was a “very, very high chance” war would ensue.

The following morning, the *New Zealand Herald* led with the banner headline “US hammers home warning” and a large centre page picture from Reuters of Powell holding the vial of powder. The tone, however, was sceptical. The caption read “Political theatre: Colin Powell displays a vial of power to illustrate the danger of anthrax. In fact the substance he showed the Security Council was a harmless silicon compound provided by the CIA”. Meanwhile the story, datelined New York and sourced only to ‘Agencies’, had as its subhead: “Colin Powell’s UN presentation has done little to convince doubters on the Security Council that war with Iraq is the only answer”. The story, containing a brief overview of the speech and response from Iraq, also cited Helen Clark saying the evidence presented no ‘smoking gun’. To the right of the picture a one-column story by Marcus Warren of the Telegraph Group concentrated on the style of Powell’s performance. He compared it to a school ‘show and tell’ but also said, “From the moment he walked in, his commanding presence dominated the chamber”. Warren described the glass vial demonstration as “the most chilling point of his speech”.

The *Herald* devoted a whole inside page to the US case for war. There were large reproductions of Powell’s satellite photos, including before and after shots, labelled as chemical plants and storage facilities, and drawings of mobile chemical labs, “Terror on wheels”. Below was an extract from Powell’s speech reviewing tapes of officers’ conversations referring to evacuation and cover-up of weapons sites and, to the right, a Reuters story headed “US observers award Powell good marks”. This story cited a former CIA man and senior analyst at RAND.

The *Herald*’s editorial page appeared distinctly anti-war, selecting a *Melbourne Age* editorial entitled *Keep faith with the UN* that called on Howard to recall Parliament to allow debate on the deployment of Australian troops. The editorial cartoon by Malcolm Evans linked Powell’s speech to the saying, ‘lies, damn lies and statistics’.

Powell’s presentation dominated the first page of the *Herald*’s World section, although the reader’s eye was first drawn to a large picture of carnival masks of Hussein and Bush in a Rio de Janeiro factory. The main story, “US case yet to hit home”, compiled from Reuters and AP sources, reinforced the front page’s angle that despite Powell’s ‘electric’ presentation, Security Council members did not believe it provided justification for war. Another Reuters story revealed that a UN tapestry featuring Picasso’s *Guernica* had been covered by blue cloth and a row of flags in time for Powell’s presentation.

Inside, the paper returned to Powell’s speech, with contrasting views from *Independent* correspondents; praise from Rupert Cornwell who argued that while there was no smoking gun the case for war looked overwhelming,

and below this, censure from Robert Fisk who called the smoking gun a damp squib.

Wellington's *Dominion Post* front page took a different approach. The dominant photo featured a promotion for the International Rugby Sevens. While the paper used a page-wide space beneath the banner and front page teasers to present graphics and bullet points from Powell's presentation, its front page main story, in contrast to the *Herald*, placed Powell's speech in the local context of Helen Clark's reaction. In the story, "War in March, tips PM" by political reporter Ruth Berry, Clark used a UN report to warn of 'catastrophic' consequences of a now inevitable war. In what was to become a theme of local war coverage, the report drew attention to Clark's manoeuvring: "Miss Clark repeated that New Zealand would only support a United Nations-sanctioned war, but she continued to avoid directly criticising US plans to go to war with or without UN support". Clark was also reported as saying that while Powell had not presented a smoking gun he had presented evidence of "a pattern of deception". A story below this by the military roundsman Hank Schouten stressed what little support military New Zealand could offer. The story portrays troops, tied up in peace-keeping duties in places like East Timor, as ill equipped and with "little recent training in war". It concluded with a call from the opposition National Party's foreign affairs spokesperson urging New Zealand to support its traditional allies in getting a resolution through the UN to support the use of force.

On the following page the main story, "US 'has not justified' case for war", reported comments from former UN diplomat Terence O'Brien saying Powell's speech "begged the question as to why the US had not given this information to the inspectors" and that there was "an element of contrived crisis".

The front page of the *Dominion Post*'s World section was devoted to Powell's speech with a banner headline "Powell fails to sway". The story, sourced to *The Times* and Reuters, echoed coverage in the *Herald* and mentioned the "electric atmosphere" in the chamber but was less pointed about the theatricality of Powell's performance. A further story reported on one of Powell's tapes and there was a large Reuters graphic of how the spy satellite system worked to intercept Iraqi communications. The three column picture of Powell was captioned "No more nice guy: US Secretary of State Colin Powell makes a point during his dramatic speech to the Security Council..." On the following page the Doonesbury cartoon reinforced the anti-war message by linking US war aims with economic gains.

In summary, the newspaper coverage tended to be anti-war but also anti-Saddam, with polite and limited scepticism about the reasons for US action. The next day the tone was tougher. The *Dominion Post*'s editorial picked up Clark's theme of the horrible consequences of war on a nation already suffering under a tyrant. Whether or not the war is sanctioned by the UN, the editorial said, "The missiles will sound the same. The fear will feel the same. And the human devastation will produce the same terrible grief". The writer supported Terence O'Brien's suggestion of a contrived crisis and added

that much of Powell's evidence was "unlikely to have survived cross-examination in a properly convened court of law". The same page featured "Famous False Predictions #2", a cartoon by Garrick Tremain. Bush Senior and Barbara in carpet slippers are standing outside a bedroom door decorated with a teddy bear and labelled 'Dubya's room'. The dialogue reads: "Barbara, the boy's having another of his 'terrorists under the bed' nights ...", "Don't worry George – He'll grow out of it!"

Media Coverage of the Blix Report

The report of UN weapons inspectors to the Security Council received less coverage than Powell's address, and did not make the front page. Newspapers on Saturday February 15 (the metropolitans do not have a Sunday edition) could only preview the event, which was old news by Monday. However, the forthcoming report did dominate the front page of the *Dominion Post's* world section, canvassing the views of UN inspectors Mohamed El Baradei and Hans Blix, and world leaders including Bush, Blair, Tariq Aziz and Putin. The drama of the story was captured in a large Reuters photo of a determined-looking Bush, standing in front of a group of sailors with an American flag flying in the background. The caption read,

Calm before the storm: President George W Bush waits to speak to sailors in Florida yesterday. He told them that they faced 'great tests', and that the United States would be the 'leader in freedom's cause'.

The implications of these events for the world were highlighted in an accompanying story about a terror alert at London's Gatwick Airport.

The *New Zealand Herald* coverage of the report was restricted to the back page of the World section. The lead article, from Reuters and AP (headlined "Bush: we're ready to win a war"), began:

United States President George W Bush told troops yesterday he was confident they were ready to win a war with Iraq...Standing on a pier with the guided-missile cruiser Philippine Sea moored close by, Bush rallied thousands of cheering sailors and families...

The article put less emphasis on the weapons inspectors' views than the *Herald* (only mentioning they were due to report that day in the second part of the story), although it did note the rifts between Western powers. A large photo of a heavily armed security guard linked this story with the other Iraq-related item on the page, "Terrorist suspects held near Heathrow".

In feature articles on February 15 there was a pervasive sense that war was inevitable. The *Dominion Post* published a piece from the *Independent*,

“Iraqi children stalked by horror of war”, which stated, “looming war in Iraq will have immediate and devastating consequences for the country’s children”. The *New Zealand Herald* ran a double page spread in which three sources (the *Observer*, *Newsweek* and the *Independent*) considered different post-war scenarios, under the large headline, “Long road ahead in the aftermath of war”. This was an early example of what was to be continued preoccupation (even before the invasion) with fears about whether the US would be able to manage post-war Iraq, which contributed to a negative slant to the newspaper coverage generally. This concentration on an apparently imminent war seemed to imply that whatever Blix reported to the Security Council, he would be sidelined, and may explain the scant attention paid to this event.

The timing of the Blix report was better suited to television stations which were able to cover it in their evening bulletins. On 15 February, *One News* led with a six minute package on Iraq, comprising an NBC item on the Blix report and Iraqi reaction (with Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz saying the American scenario was not reality but ‘a bad American movie’), and coverage of international and local peace protests. Introducing the NBC story, the TV One presenter said Blix had given a new boost to those wanting to prevent war, and the NBC item stressed the challenge his report posed to Powell. Both channels noted that France received rare applause for its contribution to the Security Council debate. TV3 covered the Blix report and protest stories after the first advertising break. John Campbell, introducing the item, noted that for the US, the Blix report was ‘still not enough’, and the reporter concluded the divisions seemed starker than ever. Both the channels’ reports on protest action in Melbourne and around the country noted the numbers attending, variously said to be the highest since Vietnam or New Zealand’s Springbok tour.

The Invasion

Once the invasion began, the media appeared fascinated with military power and the war machine, beginning in mid-March with the ‘first military precursor to war’ – the US bombing of Iraq radar sites. A dramatic *Herald* headline foreshadows this approach: “Supersonic bowlers knock out strategic radar sites”. While the television stations devoted as much as half of their one-hour bulletins to war stories, many of which depicted the gore and glory of combat through sound and visuals and were often accompanied by live links, the newspapers were not outdone in visual terms, with dramatic photographs taking up around half the front page on the majority of combat days.

The newspapers also made use of slogans and textboxes such as those headed “war by numbers” to give updates on numbers of troops and casualties. There was also coverage of what sort of troops (e.g. SAS and Desert Rats) would go where and do what, accompanied by military analysis of likely strategies and tactics, their risks and advantages, and timing. On March 21,

the *Herald* devoted two pages to diagrams of war equipment, specifying structure, capabilities etc. in what resembled pages from an encyclopaedia or Boys' Own annual rather than news.

The drama of war is summed up in headlines such as this for an *Observer* article run over four pages of the *Herald's* world section: "The Road to war: with the world more divided than at any other time since the end of the Cold War, we reveal the key events along the road that led to war". The emotional impact of the language is also clear in captions such as "It's *rain-ing bombs*"; "*Massive strike* renews efforts to kill Saddam" and "Palace *seized* as US *storms* into Baghdad" (our emphasis).

As the war gathered pace, there were stories fed from embedded journalists on board USS Bunker Hill, on the road to Dibajan, with the Third Infantry Division, at Camp Doha and so on. Progress was covered positively. On April 8, a large headline on the front page of the *New Zealand Herald* stated, "We own Baghdad", while the *Dominion* proclaimed "We own it all". The shift to 'we' seems at odds with New Zealand's attempts to distance itself from the war but shows how seductive the rhetoric of war is for the media, even in a nation opposed to the war and cynical about US action. However, some of this war admiration gave way to concern when friendly fire claimed lives in early April amidst accusations that the lessons of the Gulf War had not been learnt. Overwhelmingly though, the media reiterated the bias surrounding a 'successful' war and this undermined the balance apparent in earlier coverage. It also seems at odds with the cynicism about 'spectacle' which was apparent in stories about the so-called victory announcement.

Media Coverage of Bush's 'Victory' Announcement

By early May, coverage of the Iraq conflict had reduced substantially, replaced by national news stories such as the looming power crisis and a huge recall of health supplements. Even the US announcement of an end to armed combat did not receive the media attention of the earlier diplomacy and 'shock and awe' fighting, in either the newspapers or on television.

On May 2, the *New Zealand Herald's* main Iraq story – foreshadowing Bush's victory announcement – ran on the front page of the World section, below the lead item on an earthquake in Turkey and headlined "Bush flies to carrier in Pacific to proclaim peace in Iraq". Washington-based Rupert Cornwell of the *Independent* focused on the spin and spectacle of the media event, planned for primetime. He began:

In a production the White House might have borrowed from Hollywood, President Bush will tell America today – from the deck of a homecoming aircraft carrier in the Pacific – that to all intents and purposes the war in Iraq is over.

Cornwell noted that Bush would announce the end of major combat operations rather than victory, as troops would continue fighting resistance and searching for Saddam Hussein and other leaders. The article concluded, "the stage management of tonight's address is also part of Bush's domestic strategy, as he gears up for the 2004 election campaign".

Evening television coverage of the victory announcement on 2 May was very low-key, particularly on TV One. Both channels used international footage with local voiceovers which emphasised the stage-managed nature of the event and employed a 'strategy' frame to interpret Bush's actions. For example, TV3 promoted the item in headlines: "The big gun plays top gun: Bush flies in for a victory speech aimed at the voter" and when introducing the item, the newsreader said "...the visit was also a perfect photo opportunity laying the groundwork for his re-election next year". On the other channel, *One News*'s 29-second piece referred to the event as a "spectacular joyride". Interestingly, TV One finished its item with a brief soundbite from Bush praising military tactics and weapons that prevent violence against civilians and then went straight into a story about an attack on US forces in Iraq, in apparent retaliation for 15 civilian deaths earlier in the week. TV3 used more footage and soundbites from Bush's speech and supporters than *One News* but the 2.5 minute item was prepared by a local reporter who noted "this from a man who refused to fly over Vietnam", commented on the 'real' reason the US did not declare victory (so they would not have to release prisoners of war) and pointed out that "tonight Iraq remains unstable".

On the following day, May 3, there was some newspaper coverage of the victory announcement. The *New Zealand Herald* ran a large article on the back page of its Weekend Review and World section which noted both the drama of the occasion and the cautious international response. However, the accompanying Reuters photograph was dramatic and patriotic. It featured the President, shot from below so that he was silhouetted against the blue sky, walking the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln with a long line of crew in the background.

The *Dominion Post* also covered the announcement in its World section, devoting most of the section's front page to the story. The main headline announced "Bush declares end of combat", but the angle was signalled in a smaller headline, "America still has plenty of unfinished business in Iraq". The *AP* article's focus was clear in the opening paragraph:

The courtroom's air conditioner does not hum; it was looted. The judges are at home, waiting for laws to interpret. The lawyers are huddled at the bar association down the road, and a handwritten sign adorns the courtroom door: 'Cluster bombs. Don't risk your life'.

The article concluded that as Iraq descends into further chaos the tasks ahead appear more daunting than the removal of Saddam Hussein. As in the *New Zealand Herald*, though, there were two Reuters photos of Bush that were

more positive than the text. One, captioned “top gun”, showed Bush in his flying gear, shortly after landing on the aircraft carrier and the other, much larger photo showed Bush giving the thumbs up to an applauding crew. Like the *Herald*, the *Dominion Post* ignored the victory announcement in its front section. A story on page two did, however, revisit the issue of the harm done to New Zealand by Clark’s suggestion that the US would not have attacked Iraq if Al Gore was President. Headlined “US ‘threatened Clark with severe retaliation’”, the article repeated claims made in the *Wall Street Journal* that the US had taken a tough line against critics and was prepared to reward supporters and penalise detractors.

By May 5, the end of the war was no longer in the news, although both newspapers led with stories about New Zealand and the Iraq conflict. In an interesting example of anti-Clark framing, the *Dominion Post* seized on comments made by the Prime Minister to the *Guardian* newspaper, that Britain and the US might come to regret unleashing the ‘law of the jungle’ in their attack on Iraq. The newspaper’s lead story was headlined “Law of the jungle: PM *cuts loose* on US and Iraq *again*” (our emphasis) and began,

Prime Minister Helen Clark has arrived home to a fresh torrent of criticism after telling Britain and America they might live to regret unleashing the ‘law of the jungle’ through their war in Iraq. While Miss Clark was accused of driving a wedge between New Zealand and its closest allies, the United States rolled out the red carpet for Australian Prime Minister John Howard on his trip to America.

Emphasising the point, the front page of the world section was dominated by an article on Howard’s and Bush’s meeting, proclaiming “Bush rewards Australia: Howard wins deal, NZ pays Iraq price”.

In contrast, the *Herald*’s lead story began by discussing New Zealand plans to send troops to help stabilise Iraq (“Britain wants NZ force in Iraq: Clark to brief Cabinet today on Blair plan”), and only later noted the negative response to her law of the jungle comments. The *Herald* also quoted Green Party MP Keith Locke calling Clark’s comments “courageous”, a quote absent from the *Dominion Post*. The *Herald*’s editorial on the same day, “Clark attained right touch on European trip”, reinforced a more positive view of Clark’s diplomatic efforts. It argued that friendships between nations should not be undermined by differences over one issue, something Britain seemed to have understood but the US did not, and concluded:

...if Washington is so ignoble as to want to penalise behaviour it considers errant, so be it. Dignity demands the Government stands by the principle of multilateralism that underpinned its desire for a United Nations-mandated solution in Iraq.

Analysis of the Iraq conflict made it clear that while the New Zealand media ran extensive news coverage from abroad, it was filtered by the country’s

own stance and national concerns. The following section explores the theme of national identity that persisted through news coverage of the Iraq issue.

New Zealand's Inward Focus

"If the mighty aircraft carriers of the US and UK are dependent on the good offices of Te Mana I'd be rather surprised". Helen Clark denies a New Zealand frigate monitoring terrorism activity in the Gulf of Oman amounts to supporting war preparation. (*New Zealand Herald*, February 11)

The Yanks, the Brits and the Aussies cook the dinner. Kiwis wash the dishes. (Letter to the editor, *Dominion Post*, February 18)

Located at the bottom of the world, New Zealanders simultaneously worried about the repercussions of not supporting their traditional allies (all of whom were part of the 'coalition of the willing'), and acknowledged that its actions were apparently inconsequential. Running alongside this 'too small to count' theme was the contrary notion that the country could make a difference through leading by example. In particular, *Dominion Post* editorials suggested an ambitious New Zealand role. One, on March 20, titled "We'll be here to pick up the pieces", ended on this note: "We have an exemplary record in peacemaking and peacekeeping. Helping to rebuild Iraq should be our next project."

Editorials, cartoons and most commentators supported the stance taken by the Government. It was up to the Opposition parties in Parliament to voice the unease some New Zealanders felt about breaking away from traditional allies. Rightwing ACT Party leader Richard Prebble was typically blunt: "When has continental Europe ever given a continental about this country?" (*Dominion Post*, February 17).

Similar points were made in letters to the editor columns. But overall support for the war was so rare that a *Dominion Post* editorial commented:

It was reassuring to see National's defence spokesman Wayne Mapp belatedly insert some steel into the backbone of the party's policy by announcing that whither Washington, Wellington should follow.

On March 21, the *Dominion Post's* left wing commentator Chris Trotter described the country as "adrift now, in unfamiliar seas ... Never before have we found ourselves in such profound disagreement with our friends". New Zealanders must get used to feelings of isolation and vulnerability, he said, "because they are the price of independent nationhood".

Historically New Zealand has followed the urgings of its larger allies and loyalty, as much as security, has often been evoked as the reason for going

to earlier wars. What was now to replace this concept? New Zealand has a long commitment to the United Nations and its ideals, so the UN card was frequently played. The phrase 'peaceful and diplomatic means' was in regular currency, as was 'the international rule of law'. Helen Clark's speeches frequently referred to multilateralism and she aimed to align New Zealand with a number of other countries with which it traditionally had little in common:

As a small country, New Zealand has more at stake in the multilateral system working because small countries don't have muscle. Small countries have a voice at the UN...Small countries are very dependent on the rule of law. (*Dominion Post*, February 17).

But 'multilateralism' does not have the emotional resonance of 'loyalty', and centre right National Party leader Bill English's riposte probably struck some chords: "In the end, we should make our own foreign policy. Multilateralism is not an excuse to have our foreign policy made by France and Germany."

However, doubt about taking the same side as Germany or France (the perpetrator of the 1985 Rainbow Warrior bombing) received less mention than the regret of not 'being there' for the Australians. A *Dominion Post* editorial on March 11 lamented the loss of Anzac 'mateship':

In what is looming as the first major international conflict of the new millennium, a long-standing military tradition is set to be broken....The break, close to 100 years since the Anzac legend was written in blood in Gallipoli, will come as Australian troops go off to war while New Zealand defence personnel stay home.

There is strong sibling rivalry between the two countries, reflected in sporting competition and a long tradition of jokes at each other's expense. Here, an astute observer provided one of the few laughs for Kiwis during the conflict and the story spread through workplaces with the speed of urban legend:

Missing in action – Australia is an ally of the United States, right? Well, you could be forgiven for thinking otherwise in the giant media briefing room in Qatar. The backdrop, which was coordinated by a Hollywood designer, is a map of the world. A map without Australia on it. Or New Zealand, for that matter. (*New Zealand Herald*, March 22).

Underneath the surface, however, run strong economic, political and cultural ties that few want severed. So Australia's part in the coalition of the willing, small as it was in international terms, was of intense interest in New Zealand. Similarly, the build-up to war itself was cast in the shade when John Howard visited New Zealand in early March. The *Herald's* political editor, in an article headlined "Let's just agree to disagree", predicted media coverage would focus on Australia's war policy but that for Clark and Howard,

who have an extraordinary rapport, it would not be a key discussion point. The *Dominion Post*'s Nick Venter said the leaders had "successfully negotiated a diplomatic minefield". One *Dominion Post* editorial criticised protestors targeting Howard and this attitude affected the coverage. The front page of March 11 featured a large picture of Howard bowed in contemplation at a wreath-laying ceremony at the National War Memorial. Front page coverage of the protest was restricted to a description of a scuffle and arrests as Howard left a state luncheon. More detailed coverage, accompanied by a smaller picture, was left until the inside page. This may have reflected a more generic dislike of protest action. On February 17, while the *Dominion Post*'s World section featured a large story on international protests accompanied by a striking photo of a protestor with a dove-shaped placard in silhouette, New Zealand "kicking off a global day of protest" received cursory front page treatment accompanied by a small lacklustre photograph taken from above. This contrasted with full coverage given to both local and national protests on television news.

Part of the challenge for New Zealand's new-found independence was managing international relations while not supporting the war. Political reporter Nick Venter characterised Helen Clark as attempting to tip-toe a diplomatic and political tightrope: "Philosophically, the dovish prime minister agrees with France, Germany, Russia, Sweden and Canada ... But she has religiously refrained from directly criticising New Zealand's traditional allies for their hawkish stances." Three days later the editorial picked up the tight-rope analogy and called Clark's performance masterful, and added, "accepting that others walk to different drumbeats from our own – will not have endeared her to domestic doves or our erstwhile allies, who prefer overt backing, but cannot have damaged those contacts too much, either." Similarly the *New Zealand Herald* noted that Clark had distanced herself from the "dangerous precedent set by friends outside the Security Council" but did not criticise traditional allies and expressed determination that the difference of opinion would not damage long-standing friendships.

With trade deals under threat it is perhaps unsurprising that opposition to the Government's stand was concentrated in the business sector, with New Zealand's two business weekly papers bucking the media trend by supporting the US case for war. Similarly it was in the *Herald's* business section that Fran O'Sullivan argued that we should expect more from Clark. She contrasted New Zealand with Australia, and noted that "New Zealand's independent stance has its own consequences". However, O'Sullivan was a lone voice in comparing New Zealand unfavourably to Australia. Most news coverage depicted a nation deeply divided over Howard's decision to commit troops to the war.

A sharper business-based critique came from *Dominion Post* columnist Gareth Morgan, on March 22. He called Clark 'naïve' and described her position as 'twisted'. Citing former Prime Minister David Lange's back down

on the Rainbow Warrior affair, he said our morality was selective and “pious till squeezed in the wallet”.

Clark’s careful diplomacy inevitably came under attack as time went on. In a March 22 opinion piece, *Herald* political editor John Armstrong said there was truth in ACT leader Richard Prebble’s claim that Clark was playing three different tunes at one time: a poll-driven, anti-war stance; allowing the continuation of frigate activity in Middle East; and refusal to say she was either for or against America. This was accompanied by a cartoon of three Clarks (with signs saying yes, no and maybe), and Armstrong noted that opposition MPs were attacking her where she was most vulnerable, in relation to rattling on traditional allies.

There was also general agreement that Clark had made a serious mistake when she suggested the war might not have occurred if Al Gore had become president. The Prime Minister was at first unrepentant, saying she had merely been stating the “bleeding obvious”. However, it soon became clear that the US (probably the White House) had taken serious exception and she was quickly under diplomatic pressure to apologise. A *Herald* editorial (April 3) was titled “Clark’s insult to Americans unnecessary” and a further one (on April 8) called the remark ill considered. A number of stories followed: “Clark makes another peace offering”, and “Diplomacy: The PM acts on blunt advice from NZ’s ambassador in Washington”, in which she was said to be working to heal the wounds created by her comments. The *Dominion Post* was more critical of Clark’s apparent reluctance to apologise until forced into a corner. In “Clark rebuke came from the top” the writer pointed out the limited nature of her apology (she simply apologised for any offence taken, which she said was unintended). The right-leaning paper clearly found its truce with Clark a strain and by May (as previously mentioned) was fanning the embers of criticism of Clark’s comments about the law of the jungle.

While most of the domestic reaction to the war centred around responses to New Zealand’s allies, there was a thread of concern that Iraqis in New Zealand might be targets of abuse, but there were no reports of this occurring. Instead Iraqi New Zealanders were used as representatives of innocent Iraqi civilians caught up in the conflict. For example, the *Dominion Post*’s Ruth Berry contrasted the world of diplomacy with that of civilian suffering:

As Prime Ministers Helen Clark and John Howard tucked into roast vegetable terrine at a Beehive banquet yesterday, an 85-year-old Iraqi woman drummed her hands on the iron barricades outside, tears streaming down her face... It was the ‘children of Iraq’ she was crying for, she said.

Perhaps the most bizarre comment relating to Iraqi immigrants came from Race Relations Commissioner Joris de Bres who urged Kiwis to mark Race Relations Day with a little bit of local hospitality and understanding:

In the finest New Zealand tradition, we can give them a smile in the street, bake them a cake, give them some flowers or veges, drop a card in their letterbox or invite them to a function or event. (*Dominion Post*, March 22)

This was perhaps the ultimate attempt at translating a far off tragedy into something that locals could relate and respond to and linking it to their sense of nationhood.

Conclusion

So, what characterised New Zealand's coverage of the Iraq conflict? Importantly, New Zealand newspapers did not send correspondents to the war zone and television relied on fleeting visits from non-specialists, leaving the media reliant on overseas coverage. While there was a large selection to choose from, the media (like most Western nations) restricted itself to the mainstream: Reuters, AP, AFP, *The Times*, *The Telegraph*, the *Washington Post*, *BBC*, *CNN*, *NBC* and so on. The resultant coverage reflected the reports of embedded journalists, various biases of some media outlets, and mixed attempts to be objective and balanced. This was fed through a New Zealand perspective that generally opposed the war but still supported its prosecutors. The result was arguably inadequate. The editor of Scoop, a major news Internet site, castigated local media for swallowing propaganda and leaving the vast majority of people uninformed about what happened in Iraq (Thompson, 2003).

The government and newspaper editorials proclaimed opposition to the war, the public was clearly opposed, so why did New Zealand's coverage not more clearly portray what opponents believe was the true story of the war and its causes? The answer lies largely in the country's willing consumption of mainstream Western media and the values they espouse. We also believe the coverage reflected the government's equivocal response: opposed to the war, but not its perpetrators; sympathy for the victims tempered with respect and muted admiration for allied (particularly British) soldiers. The 'war as spectacle' element of much coverage matched the mood of many New Zealanders, echoed by a government particularly tuned to public opinion polls (O'Leary, 2002). War was inevitable, we had expressed principled and law-abiding opposition and now as a small player our role was to await events. In this context, newspapers strove for balance by putting a slightly disparaging caption on a positive photo, placing a more cautious headline on an upbeat article, balancing a pro-war column with a piece by Robert Fisk. But it was balance within strict limitations.

Note

1. In July 2004 Fairfax Ltd, an Australian newspaper group, bought all the INL papers, leaving the company its share in majority Murdoch-owned Sky TV NZ.

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In Murdoch's Interest

The Australian's War Against Global Terrorism

Martin Hirst & Robert Schütze

Rupert Murdoch's Fox cable television network led the charge for patriotic journalism in the United States during the second Gulf War. Murdoch does not own a television station in Australia, but his company, News Corporation, does control two thirds of the metropolitan daily newspaper market, and over 75% of the lucrative Sunday market (Audit Bureau of Circulation: 2000). With the two most popular papers, Melbourne's *Herald Sun* and Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*, and the only nationally circulating daily newspaper, the *Australian*, in his stable, Murdoch is an important player in the Australian media, which also makes him a figure in Australian politics (Bowman, 1988; McQueen 1977; Schultz, 1998; Tiffen, 1989; Windschuttle, 1988). Therefore, knowing how Murdoch's antipodean media empire tackled the war in Iraq is central to an understanding of how the conflict was framed for the Australian public. The *Australian* is not Murdoch's most profitable newspaper – the major classifieds traffic goes to his other titles – but it is the only nationally-circulating general news daily in the country and provides Murdoch with a powerful tool of influence. This chapter examines how News Corporation's flagship masthead, the *Australian*, covered Iraq in the context of the alignment of Australia's national interest with Murdoch's global interests, the 'war against terrorism' and the invasion hysteria surrounding asylum-seekers attempting to reach Australia by boat from the Indonesian archipelago. The white Australian fear of Asia is well-documented, and we would agree with those who contend that it is a manufactured racism, fed by the media in the interests of a dominant class and its culture (Markus and Ricklefs, 1985; Hall, 1998). It is widely believed in Australia that the conservative Prime Minister, John Howard, won the 2001 federal election on the basis of stirring up and manipulating racist sentiment over a group of asylum-seekers (Solomon, 2002).

For at least two years before the March 2003 offensive against the Iraqi regime, the *Australian* was firmly committed to the coalition of the willing and the so-called 'war on terror'. It consistently provided well-orchestrated support for Howard's 'national interest' arguments about the potential threat

of terrorism, and was quick in linking this to the subsequent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. This is obvious from the tone and content of the editorial “UN must take tough action against Iraq” (*Weekend Australian*, 12 October 2002), which set the tone, in the next six months, for nearly all (*Weekend Australian*, 2 October 2002) news features and opinion columns on the need for war. On one level this is not surprising, given the global nature of Murdoch’s US\$42 billion News Corporation empire and the likely economic benefits from the Iraq war to big business. Yet economic self-interest must be ruled out if we are to hold Murdoch to the public service rhetoric that marked the beginning of his rise to media power. In 1961, shortly after acquiring his first Sydney newspaper he said, “What rights have we to speak in the public interest when, too often, we are motivated by personal gain?” (Mayer, 1968: 51). Forty years later, the dichotomy between public and private interests crumpled as Murdoch’s Australian chief executive, Ken Cowley, told parliament:

We take the view, as simple as it is and as corny as it sounds, that what is good for your country is good for your business and what is good for your business is good for your paper, its readers and our employees. (cited in Schultz, 1998: 102).

This argument underpins the national interest frame that the Murdoch press places over its reporting of national and international politics, economics and social issues. Editorial writers have become particularly adept in framing economic rationalism, deregulation, privatisation, tight budgets and the user-pays principle as being good, not only for the nation as a whole, but for individual citizens as well. So perhaps the *Australian’s* support for the Iraq war was underpinned by more than mere economic self-interest. Certainly the rhetoric employed by the paper invoked nationalist discourses which exploited the threat of global terrorism and historical fears of invasion (Hall, 1998; McGinn, 1994) to sell what has always been one of the most unpopular public policies in Australian history – the commitment of Australian troops to war.

An Archaeology of the ‘Terror’ Frame: Methods and Theory

In examining the specific period, March 19 to 22 2003, we have used a minimal amount of direct empirical data. The sheer newsworthiness of the event itself, the unprecedented scale and the potential impacts of the unfolding military drama, automatically guarantee an enormous volume of coverage. The ongoing global political fallout and debate was also covered in great detail – in this regard the Australian coverage was similar to that of many other nations. The additional element was Australia’s military involve-

ment in the conflict and strong support for the United States' positions in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

More than 500 individual items were captured in a database search of the *Australian* alone. When this figure is multiplied by a representative sample of Australian print outlets, it creates a potential database of several thousand items. We deliberately made two decisions to shrink the project to a manageable size. First, we felt that an analysis of the Murdoch-owned *Australian* would provide an internationally comparable case study of one section of the News Corporation global news media networks. Such a study would demonstrate whether Murdoch's Australian news operation, News Limited, was politically in line with other of the family's assets and what, if any, local conditions applied to generate differences.

Additionally, in order to deal with the complexity of the coverage, this chapter employs what we call 'media archaeology' – a method of drilling down through a core sample of stories. Measurements are taken of the overall site and a 'catalogue' created. A smaller number of representative 'artefacts' is chosen for closer study to explain and illustrate the news framing placed over the coverage of particular events. By sifting the layers and by chronologically ordering ('carbon-dating') the news texts in our catalogue we can trace the thematic structures, news framing, style and rhetoric of the coverage as the story unfolds over any given time-period (Tuchman, 1991; van Dijk, 1988). This coding method can explain a lot about the emotional attitudes expressed in the editorial choices about angles, issues, sources and story structure to determine 'the most important information of a text' (van Dijk, 1988: 72). In the context of such a small period for this chapter (four days), the concentration of artefacts displaying common news values and interpretive frames provides a reliable sample.

While media archaeology does not originate from Foucault's archaeology of knowledge, there is one interesting similarity. Foucault examined and explained the ways in which culturally and socially constructed ideas might be transmitted through institutions – the asylum, or the prison for example – and through tradition (Cousins and Hussain, 1984: 79). The archaeology of media explains institutional and traditional methods of transmission of ideas within news content. The institution of the news organisation, in this case the *Australian*, and the intellectual-political tradition established by the editorial hierarchy, will play an active role in determining the paper's position on the war in Iraq.

Media archaeology also borrows the processes of qualitative 'content analysis', checking for local and global coherence in which the news script links the proposition (the paragraph and idea) to the concept (the ideological construct) (van Dijk, 1991: 112). Archaeologists rarely find a whole city or site intact. Instead they deduce from the evidence collected. They conduct what John Hartley (1996) describes as a 'textual analysis' of the found materials – the artefacts. From this process we deduce information about the objects themselves – how they were constructed, what they might have been

used for and the symbolic meanings they conveyed in the emotional dialectics of the culture that produced them. More importantly, we learn about the culture itself from a 'reading' of these artefacts. But archaeology is about more than cleaning, arranging and reading artefacts. In the study of news texts it requires alliances with other disciplines to fully articulate the purpose and value of the objects of study. So it is with journalism and the media:

...textual analysis is not abstract, decontextualised or abstractly political, but on the contrary is a form of historiography; a 'method' of demonstrating just how meanings are embedded in history, in a sense of who 'we' are, and in a network of other texts, contexts, meanings and dialogue without which they cannot be explained. (Hartley, 1999: 19)

A useful adjunct to archaeology and textual analysis is the concept of news frames and news framing. Fowler (1991: 17) identifies frames as 'tacit mental categories for the sorting of experience' through which audiences dialectically process news events and values. A news frame, placed over a news event, creates the conditions for a shared world view based on a 'chunk of unconscious knowledge' (Fowler, 1991: 43) that draws on a 'cultural schema' of stereotypes and deeply ingrained ideological assumptions. Hallin, (1986; 1994) demonstrates how, in the production of news artefacts, the sharing of assumed world views creates dialectically-tensioned spheres of consensus, limited controversy and deviance.

In this chapter, the framing and placement of news content about the 2003 Iraq conflict is analysed from the perspective of news as a generative source of 'popular reality' (Hartley, 1996) and as a crucial site for the playing out of the emotional dialectic within, for and against dominant framing of significant news events. This is a process that Hartley (1999: 19) has called the 'privatised maintenance of common knowledge'. In this chapter we examine the consistent articulation of a pro-war message through news placement, editorial direction and selection of opinion-leader writers. The chapter uses the archaeological method to code and identify the 'common knowledge', the assumed ideological messages about the 2003 Iraq war that were embedded in a version of popular reality presented through the news pages of the *Australian*. In particular, the chapter articulates how the *Australian* has played a part in developing, promoting and naturalising as part of a constructed 'popular' view of the world, the 'terror' frame to place over its reporting of the 2003 Iraq war. The ideological messages are then 'encoded' (Fowler, 1991: 224) within the terror frame and thus naturalised for the audience. Fowler's (1991: 201-7) example of how a news story about the contamination of baby food in English supermarkets became framed as a case of consumer terrorism provided a useful model for this present study. The application of a dialectic to the issue of framing is crucial in order to understand the contested nature of meaning in the news as competing frames are introduced by news actors, the news producers and audiences with competing social and political agen-

das (Tuchman, 1991: 89). The media archaeology method, when combined with content and frame analysis, provides representative and reliable data. It delivers a useful sample from which to test our argument that the *Australian's* coverage was, for the most part, sympathetic to the allies, based on a world-view dominated by the news frames of national interest and terror.

Framing the 'National Interest'

The national interest frame is a position generally supportive of the liberal-democratic belief that an elected national government embodies the ideals, interests, culture and consciousness that make a society a nation (Hudson, 1988; Hutchinson, 1994). Palfreeman (1988: xii) describes the international system of nation states in liberal-democratic terms of a vast 'market place' where bargains are struck over security, more resources and more recognition. In the Australian context the nation and the national interest have historically been bound up with the remoteness of Australia from its perceived European roots and its dependence on strong military allies for complete security (Babbage, 1988; Hudson, 1988). The Australian national character is built around the fear of invasion and dependency that has developed over a period of only 200 years (Alomes and Jones, 1991: 125). When a threat emerges, such as terrorism, the national interest frame demands loyalty and sacrifice from the population; the news media are often expected to support a nation's war effort and accept some constraints on traditional liberal notions of the free press (Chiasson, 1995; Knightley, 1975, 2001; Raboy and Dagenais, 1992). In a chapter discussing the 1982 Falklands conflict, Wilcox (1992: 59) describes the complexities of an ideologically-controlled media terrain of image and text where there is a struggle for control of the concept of nationhood and national identity which manifests itself particularly during times of national conflict and stress. The ideological messages are coded as 'evocative popular narratives'. As we argue in this chapter, the narrative structure of the 2003 Iraq conflict was woven around the frames of national interest and terror infused with emotional and alarmist talk of fear and threat to 'our way of life'. This news framing assisted the promotion of the government's agenda in the conflict and led to the *Australian's* becoming, as the American press had largely been in the 1990-91 conflict, 'a propaganda organ for the administration, while failing to promote a genuine debate of alternatives to war' (Kellner, 1992: 58). Kellner's essay is instructive in that it unconsciously adopts our archaeological perspective, describing and critiquing significant news events against the background of round-the-clock coverage.

The methods of media archaeology can provide plenty of clues about the dialectic of the front-page that operates during a critical political event like a war. The dialectic operates as a series of tensions, a process of combined and uneven development of political opinion in response to conflicting so-

cial forces. It can provide a window into the ideological sphere of consensus (Hallin, 1986, 1994) in Australian political journalism. Hallin has documented in studies of both the Vietnam War and the 1990-91 US-Iraq conflict how concentric spheres of consensus, limited conflict and deviance operate to set the tone for government press relations. The American position in Vietnam lost much media support when it was clear that the government and military were divided and public opinion was turning against the war. As Hallin and others (Jesser and Young, 1997; Kellner 1992) have pointed out, successive American and other governments have learned from their mistakes in Vietnam and more recent conflicts. Further, it is common knowledge in 'popular reality' that under Murdoch's control, his network of media outlets has been deliberately and consistently positioned as a supporter of conservative causes and governments. In 2003 the Murdoch media, including the *Australian*, was ready for active duty in the global war against terror.

As part of the research for this chapter we collated a database of newspaper articles printed in the *Australian* for the period 19 to 22 March 2003 in order to conduct a close analysis of this material. This sample is also contextualised against and compared with other sources, such as the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Canberra Times*, and electronic media outlets. The limitations of space and our focus on the Murdoch press means that our discussion of these examples is limited. An advantage of the archaeological method in the context of an overwhelming amount of empirical data is that when patterns are identified other, smaller collections of artefacts provide interpretive reference points (Kellner, 1992). In line with the methods of media archaeology, an appraisal of the *Australian's* coverage of the 2003 Iraq conflict can provide an acceptable degree of historical tracing and context-building for the following analysis of terror framing in the *Australian's* coverage of the 2003 Iraq conflict.

Terrorism, Fear and the Post-Cold War News Frame

Since the devastating terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001, the national interest frame has been slowly melded with the new terrorism frame in the mainstream Australian media, particularly in the Murdoch press. In its moral simplicity, the terrorism frame is reminiscent of the old Cold War news frame, which dramatised superpower rivalries and pitted East against West, or Capitalism against Communism (Giffard, 2000: 389). Within the terror frame, bomb-wielding Islamic fundamentalists have replaced the 'reds under the bed' as the West's public enemy number one. While geography is not so clear – there is no Iron Curtain – the dichotomies are equally stark, as respected Australian journalist and author Christopher Kremmer notes:

Media reporting on the war on terror is riddled with the simplistic notion that this is a battle between innately good, wise, Western, liberal, democratic paragons and dark-skinned, bearded, fanatical, evil-doers. (Kremmer, 2002)

In this post-Cold War terrorism news frame the battle lines are drawn between *good* and *evil*, *us* and *them*, with a jingoistic reassertion of nationalist pride. The *Australian's* foreign editor, Greg Sheridan employed this frame in response to the October 2002 Bali bombings:

Just as we love Australia, the evil men who murdered our people and others in Bali, they surely hate Australia. And why do they hate us. They hate us not for our wickedness, which is occasional and undeniable. They hate us for our oddly persistent goodness. (Australian 17 October 2002: 13)

The uncritical use of terror framing devices in the Murdoch press from October 2002 helped naturalise an otherwise problematic concept – that the war against terror represents a tangible conflict that needs to be resolved militarily. The *Australian* began uncritically using this concept of waging war against an unspecified enemy soon after the attacks on New York and Washington DC in 2001 and consistently promoted the argument that Australia should join the fight. As Douglas Kellner (1992: 57) noted about the American press during the 1990-91 Iraq conflict, non-military solutions were constantly derided by the Murdoch papers. The *Australian* heartily endorsed Prime Minister John Howard's justification for joining Bush's military incursion into Afghanistan on the basis that nobody is immune from the threat of terrorism and therefore what happens in the rest of the world affects 'us'. As the *Australian's* own media columnist, Errol Simper, noted on the same day as Sheridan's strident call to arms: "the media has, more or less, tended to let the politicians run with the terrorism story" (Australian 17 October 2002: Media, p. 6).

The Murdoch press was selling fear long before the January 2003 summer of terror. Ironically, for a nation founded by European invasion just over 200 years ago, invasion anxiety has been a strong and recurring theme in white Australian history. The notion of an amorphous external threat goes back to the influx of Chinese workers during the 19th century gold rushes, and later spawned the White Australia policy (Alomes and Jones, 1991). As Simon Philpott notes (2001: 376), fear of an imagined 'other', which for Australia has traditionally been Asia, helps galvanise political unity by locating threats to the national well-being beyond our borders. Fear of being 'swamped' by Asians helped to turn a barely literate fish-and-chip shop owner Pauline Hanson into a runaway political success late in the 1990s. More recently, the institutionalised fear of invasion has manifested as hysteria over refugees, or 'boat-people' as they are referred to in the mainstream press.

The *Australian* contributed to the moral panic with blanket coverage of the *Tampa* crisis and all subsequent 'illegal' arrivals. In November 2001, just days before John Howard's coalition won a federal election by exploiting immigration and security fears (Solomon 2002), the *Australian* (8 November 2001: 1) gave front page coverage to Howard's unfounded claims that refugees might be terrorists. In the same edition the conservative columnist

Tim Blair promoted this idea explicitly under the headline “Beware of terrorists in refugee clothing” (Australian 8 November 2001: 11). Yet conclusive evidence debunking that spurious link received little attention in the *Australian* less than a year later (23 August 2002: 2). Even when the two issues were treated separately, their prominence in the Murdoch press, which filtered events through the terror news frame, raised the level of public insecurity to produce what Ghassan Hage (2003: 1) calls ‘paranoid nationalism’.

Bali: Australia’s September 11?

Public fears about terrorism were dramatically realised when two huge explosions ripped through Bali’s tourist Mecca of Kuta in October 2002. The *Australian*’s first headline screamed, “TERROR HITS HOME”, and the phrase became the banner heading for all subsequent coverage. This framing of the bombings as an attack on Australia provided the key emotional link to September 11, and posthumously seemed to justify Australia’s role in the war on terror. As the *Australian*’s media writer Errol Simper pointed out, amidst the grief and outrage that ran through the Bali coverage, there was an element of wish-fulfilment:

To deny that segments of Australia appeared to crave at least a share of the adrenalin and global media attention that accompanied September 11 is to deny the nose on your face. (Australian 17 October 2002: Media, p. 6)

The link was also borne out in the rash conclusion from day one that the Bali bombings were an attack on Australians, just as September 11 was an attack on Americans. As the *Australian*’s foreign editor Greg Sheridan proclaimed on the first day of coverage, “There can be little doubt that Australians were specifically targeted” (Australian 14 October 2002a: 11). The conclusion is both hasty and vain. It highlights the perverse cultural imperialism that has transformed a part of Indonesia into an Australian territory – perverse because Australia has persistently denied its geography and nurtured cultural links to Europe and North America rather than see itself as part of Asia. As the latest white paper on foreign affairs and trade states, “Australia is a Western country located in the Asia-Pacific region with close ties and affinities with North America and Europe” (Advancing the national interest: Australia’s foreign affairs and trade policy white paper 2003). Asia, particularly Indonesia, has been Australia’s imagined ‘other’ in true Orientalist fashion. So to call this small part of Indonesia our ‘home away from home’, as Murdoch’s national daily did in an editorial proclaiming “We must remain firm in the face of terror” after the bombing seems paradoxical (Australian 14 October We must remain firm in the face of terror 2002: 14).

But from the barrage of emotive journalism sprang a more serious and sinister message in the *Australian* – that this was war – and a decisive campaign was called for. Greg Sheridan proclaimed, “The terrorist empire has struck back” (*Australian* 14 October 2002: 11), and said the war on terror had moved decisively into stage two. An editorial on the same day said Bali was a wake-up call to the civilised world that terrorism must be defeated: “Bali proves that all freedom-loving peoples are at risk from terrorism, at home and abroad.” The editorial echoes the rhetoric and the language of George W Bush and John Howard. This was a decisive moment for the sabre-rattlers. Howard’s central premise justifying action in Afghanistan, and later Iraq, is endorsed here – namely, that terrorism affects everyone, so it is in the national interest to fight terrorism throughout the world, Iraq included.

The *Australian* roundly quashed the anti-war arguments that saw Bali as a payback for Australia’s support for America in Afghanistan after September 11 2001. On the Monday after the attack (14 October), Prime Minister Howard was given space to repeat the mantra that terrorism can touch anybody, any time and in any country (PM calls review of security, *Australian* 14 October 2002: 4). The paper repeated this mantra, a formula integral to its campaign of ultimately justifying invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. But when the Australian Greens Senator Bob Brown was pressed for his opinion on Iraq in the light of the Bali bombing, his anti-war position was labelled opportunistic by political editor Dennis Shanahan (Deaths will not sway PM on Iraq stand, *Australian* 14 October 2002b: 4).

Instances of the *Australian*’s overt support for the war on terror, and particularly for invading Iraq after the Bali episode, are too numerous to list. Certainly, with the foreign editor Greg Sheridan, “A threat we ignore at our peril” (14 October) and editor-at-large Paul Kelly “The Islamic front is at our back door” (*Weekend Australian* 19-20 October 2002) talking up Australian involvement in Iraq, the pro-war lobby got a huge free kick. But, on a more insidious level, the *Australian* helped sell Howard’s war by re-inventing him as a sensitive, trustworthy statesman in the aftermath of the Kuta attacks. In pictures, the usually wooden PM was shown hugging distraught mourners; in headlines he was given the heart to weep (“Howard weeps at ‘cruel view of humanity’”, *Weekend Australian* 19-20 October 2002). His rhetoric was designed to validate the popular reality of the nation’s anger. Howard used the vernacular well, saying, “We’ll get the bastards,” and knowing the words would be used in sound-bites and quotes.

In a clear indication of the lack of critical distance between some senior Murdoch journalists and Government policy, Howard’s words and sentiments were quoted and shared by the *Australian*’s Paul Kelly. In a column written only days after the Bali bombings, Kelly supported the Prime Minister’s emotional play for the hearts and minds of the Australian public (Hearts and minds, *Weekend Australian*, 26-27 October 2002: 19). As Paul Kelly noted in his “Hearts and minds” column just two weeks after the Bali blast, “having divided the nation so bitterly for so much of his prime ministership,

Howard is now a figure of unity. It is bizarre". Helped by the Murdoch press, Howard scored a major political boost after the Bali bombings, his approval rating soaring 7 percentage points to 61% a week after the attacks. In a similar vein of uncritical endorsement, Dennis Shanahan's report ("PM soars in wake of terror", *Australian* 22 October 2002: 1) is quietly pleased with this result.

Howard's moral and ideological victory out of the Bali tragedy was crucial to the ultimate success of his campaign to join the war against Iraq because it earned him much-needed trust and successfully raised the profile of defence in the public mind. Therefore, even if the intelligence reports and the arguments for invading Iraq didn't add up, Howard's popularity and track record on security insulated him somewhat from the anti-war backlash. Even the vitriol of Bali victims and their families was muted when Howard explicitly linked his pro-war stance to the Bali bombings during a visit to New Zealand in the week before the American assault on Baghdad. The anti-war *Canberra Times* led its March 11 edition with the backlash story, proclaiming, "Outrage at Bali linkage". In stark contrast, the *Australian* picked up an AAP wire story and tucked the embarrassing episode away on page five. What this shows is that on both the editorial and the news pages, the *Australian* manipulated the Bali bombings to plead the case for war in Iraq. Meanwhile, even using the massaged figures in the *Australian's* own reportage ("Support for war growing", *Weekend Australian* 22-23 March 2003: 1,7), up to 75% of Australians opposed the war before the start of combat operations.

Allies Under Pressure: 13 March 2003

Just a week after the start of combat operations, the *Australian* was reporting the frantic attempts by President Bush and Prime Minister Blair to pull something out of the public relations disaster of the United Nations. In a series of reports and an editorial published on 13 March, Tony Blair was described as 'bleeding politically' while the White House was claiming that any vote by the Security Council to support war would be a moral victory, with or without a veto by China, Russia or France. John Howard is again placed centre stage as he is 'called in' to help George W Bush convince other governments to join his coalition. Yet, at the same time, the paper's editorial stance described the French threats of a veto at the UN as irrelevant ("French toast irrelevant UN", *Australian* 13 March 2003: 10). Prime Minister Howard's 20-minute phone conversation with troubled British PM Tony Blair was the second lead on 13 March, telling us how Australian diplomats were 'frantically lobbying' at the United Nations on behalf of the coalition. This story was reinforced by a UN scorecard on Page 8, outlining how former colonies of France and the United States were being pressured for their crucial Security Council votes ("Council minnows resisting tug of war", *Australian* 13 March 2003: 8). The 13 March editorial, "French toast irrelevant UN" makes

it clear that the *Australian* regarded Chirac as a faded power living an impossible dream and whose arguments at the UN were "less weak than feeble". France, the editorial warned, could be accused of "reducing global politics to a competition between great powers in which a nationalist France cannot compete". Foreign editor Greg Sheridan again led the *Australian's* support for the Australian government. On 13 March, Sheridan resolutely defended the morality of the war in the face of an 'unreasonable' veto by one of the non-permanent Security Council members. In this article, "UN power play cannot effect war's morality", Sheridan described the recently completed UN debates as "emotional and irrational" and "hysterical" and then he restated all the well-rehearsed lines defending the morality of an attack on Iraq ("UN power play cannot affect war's morality", *Australian*, 13 March 2003: 11).

On the first weekend of the assault on Baghdad, Greg Sheridan went on to cheer the psychological strategy of the Americans, in particular 'Shock and Awe', which he described as a "dislocation operation directed at the Iraqi leadership" ("Americans try to psych rational opponent", *Weekend Australian* 22-23 March 2003: 11). To be fair, Sheridan's support for the war is tempered by two other opinion pieces on the same day (Saturday 22 March). Washington-based commentator Harlan Ullman argued that US unilateralism might have profound implications for the world geopolitical situation well into the future ("Pillars of security shaking", *Weekend Australian* 22-23 March 2003: 40). On the same page, Professor Paul Dibb, a respected Australian commentator on defence issues, suggested that a likely outcome of the war was "a world divided and a return to the essentially tragic history of international affairs" ("Loud, and carrying a big stick", *Weekend Australian* 22-23 March 2003a: 11). The Ullman and Dibb pieces represented the extent of the Murdoch press 'balance' in its coverage of the attack on Iraq. Both Ullman and Dibb are closely connected to the military establishment in their countries and have served various administrations as military and intelligence advisers. Their opposition is quite muted and does not adequately represent the strength or diversity of anti-war opinion.

An Australian Interest?

Australian public opinion is sensitive to perceptions that its government might be accused of being a junior partner in America's imperial ambition. This has deep historic and cultural roots in Australia's colonial past and the post-war reliance on America. There is still a memory of Australia's participation in Vietnam, summed up by the famous phrase of an otherwise forgettable Prime Minister, Harold Holt. On the occasion of Johnson's visit to Australia in 1966, Holt told the US President that Australia would go "all the way with LBJ". Holt's political successor, John Howard, did not want to be seen in this

unflattering light. It was therefore important that his government establish an independent rationale for supporting the 2003 war against Iraq. Rather than merely being America's 'loyal deputy', there needed to be some national interest in going to war. The key link was terrorism. It was the argument, particularly in the aftermath of the Bali bombings, that terrorism can touch anyone, so threats to national security are global and require global solutions. This was reflected in the government's foreign policy White Paper, released in early 2003:

The terrorist attacks of September 11 2001 in the United States and 12 October 2002 in Bali have been defining events. They have changed Australia's security environment in significant ways. They starkly demonstrated that threats to Australia's security can be global as well as regional. (*Advancing the National Interest*, 2003: 9)

As we have seen, the *Australian* firmly embraced this sentiment from the first days after the Bali attacks, and Greg Sheridan wasted no opportunity to link the all-pervasive threat of terrorism after Bali to Saddam Hussein's fabled weapons of mass destruction:

Gruesome as these terrorist outrages are, imagine what they would be like if they involved weapons of mass destruction. Iraq remains the most likely source of WMDs for al-Qaeda. ("A threat we ignore at our peril", *Australian* 14 October 2002: 11).

On the first weekend of the 2003 gulf war, national affairs editor Mike Steketee bolstered the *Australian's* pro-war stance by trying to undermine as irrelevant the anti-war argument that Australia was playing 'loyal deputy' to the US. Steketee suggested that Australia was truly independent and, by implication, that support for the war against Iraq was good policy:

Don't accept for one moment the propaganda that Australia is a lickspittle of the US. Sometimes we get quite upset with the Americans. ("Buck the conventions", *Weekend Australian*, 22-23 March 2003: 40).

Covering the Anti-War Rallies: February-March 2003

After the massive international rallies in February and March 2003, public sentiment in Australia was overwhelmingly against the war, with up to 75% opposing it according to opinion polls published in the week before the assault on Baghdad. The anti-war marches were the biggest Australian political mobilisations since Vietnam. Some estimate they were the largest political demonstrations ever in Australia – more people on the streets over a sus-

tained period than during the anti-conscription mobilisations of the First World War, and certainly bigger than the Vietnam moratorium protests of the late 1960s and early 70s. In 2003, the anti-war marchers were a good cross-section of ordinary Australians from every ethnic and religious background. There was a sense of purpose and strength in the crowds, and sentiment was way to the left of the official Labor opposition. In Brisbane, Labor leader Simon Crean was booed when he addressed the crowd of about 80,000. His right-wing position of support for a legitimate UN-backed attack on Iraq was very unpopular.

Throughout February 2003, high school students were mobilising in impressive numbers in all major cities across Australia. Spontaneous walkouts, some supported by parents and the teachers' unions, saw several large student actions. Church groups, green groups and peace groups worked with the various left-wing groups and the unions to build the anti-war rallies. As the war got closer the news media's attitude to the peace movement changed. The NSW police signalled a tough stand against student demonstrations and warned parents not to let their children get involved with anarchists and violent young men of a certain ethnic background. This policing action also sent a strong signal to the media that the gloves were off and the peace movement was no longer a 'good' news story.

There is a formula for covering political demonstrations and if there is no strong violence – usually from the police – then it does not rate much of a mention. This approach was typified by a small piece in the Murdoch-owned *Courier-Mail* in Brisbane about an anti-war rally in Adelaide on 14 March. The story, headlined "Eggs, tomatoes fly in Adelaide protest" (*Courier-Mail* 2003a) took only eight paragraphs and the missiles are mentioned in four of them:

1st par: "...demonstrators threw eggs and tomatoes at...Howard's car";

2nd par: "...one protestor was taken into custody after charging at a Commonwealth vehicle containing Mr Howard";

3rd par: "Earlier...protesters pelted Mr Howard's car with eggs and tomatoes";

4th par: "One egg hit the rear window of the vehicle containing Mr Howard";

5th par: "Demonstrators chanting anti-war slogans and carrying placards were kept about 15m from Mr Howard by South Australian police";

6th par: "...despite the police barrier, protesters pelted three Commonwealth vehicles with eggs and tomatoes";

7th par: "The protesters then left [the scene]";

8th par: "When he left, one protester broke police ranks, charged at the vehicle containing Mr Howard, and appeared to throw something. No charge was laid."

Apart from one mention of anti-war slogans, this item did not say anything about the nature of the rally or the ideas behind it. Instead we got pointless

repetition of two basic incidents: the eggs and tomatoes thrown at the car and one person running at 'the vehicle containing Mr Howard'. This is a typical 'news' report of the anti-war protests. The 'deviant' nature of the smaller actions, such as confronting John Howard in Adelaide, is then applied to the movement as a whole.

This effect was also multiplied by the television coverage of the demonstrations. On the main television bulletins on the first Saturday of the war (22 March), the peace rallies held around the nation and globally got very short shrift. At most, in a 90-minute ABC bulletin, the peace activists got a couple of opportunities to make their point in brief sound bites. However, the effect of these brief anti-war comments was obliterated when they were bracketed with the violence of some protest actions in the Middle East, having the effect of guilt by association. In Brisbane, the Channel 7 reporter sounded disappointed that there had been 'scuffles, but no arrests' at that morning's rally and sit-in. On the other commercial stations the same thing happened. The local peace rallies were always covered by long-distance camera, a few anonymous shots of the crowds, a couple of colourful banners perhaps and, on a slow news day, a comment from one of the speakers. The rallies overseas were most often covered with a reader voice-over that gave bare facts and where possible focused the shots on 'disturbances'. Overall, in media portrayals the anti-war movement was reduced to inarticulate thuggery, obscuring the real issues at stake. Perhaps it is a testament to the power of this and other elements of the pro-war coverage, that by April 2003, Australia's 75% opposition to the war had turned to 57% support.

Shock and Awe: 19-22 March 2003

In the first few days of the war, Australian viewing audiences were subject to plenty of patriotic analysis and novelty footage from embedded reporters perched on tanks. The *Weekend Australian* (Saturday 22 March) blared "PUNCH INTO IRAQ" over front-page stories about the military action and published an opinion poll showing 'support for war growing'.

The *Weekend Australian* reported American concerns that Iraqis would begin setting fire to oil wells ("Fears of a new scorched earth"). It was another opportunity to quote from a briefing by US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, this time to the effect that by setting fire to oil wells Saddam Hussein was 'destroying the riches of the Iraqi people'. This angle puts the blame on the shoulders of the Iraqi regime and deflects attention from the damage being inflicted by coalition forces on these very same 'riches'. On the same page, Hussein is labelled a 'master of propaganda' and a White House briefing paper, "Apparatus of Lies", is summarised without criticism. This piece repeats the standard line from Washington: that Hussein is responsible for diverting food aid into 'weapons programs and luxuries for himself' and lying to the Arab

world. Throughout the military campaign, the *Australian* repeated these justifications almost daily.

While it is beyond the full scope of this chapter, it is worth noting how the Australian television networks approached the war. Immediately the fighting actually got under way (as opposed to 12 years of bombing raids on soft Iraqi targets), broadcast network news presenters set a poor tone for the coverage that followed. On the first Saturday (22 March) the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's weekend newsreader Juanita Phillips appeared to be smiling and almost cheering "our first strike" on Iraqi targets: a bombing mission by an Australian FA18 and some ship-to-shore fire at the Al Faw peninsula. The Nine Network framed its coverage with a rendering of the words "War on Iraq" that showed an uncanny resemblance to the title screen of George Lucas' science fiction classic *Star Wars*. Perhaps unwittingly, Greg Sheridan struck a similar chord when, after the Bali bombings, he wrote: "The terrorist empire has struck back" ("A threat we ignore at our peril", *Australian* 14 October 2002: 11). Episode five in the Lucas epic is called *The Empire Strikes Back* and the *Star Wars* theme is certainly a fitting allegory for the war on terror. Just as Lucas had his valiant Jedi warriors fighting the evil scourge of the 'dark side', the *Australian* cheered the heroics of allied soldiers and used the banner "Operation Iraqi Freedom" to head each page of its early war coverage. The effect on television was even more dramatic, with images of high-tech coalition soldiers 'bravely' approaching the enemy lair. The news narrative here was a clear manifestation of the post-Cold War terror news frame, pitting good against evil and freedom against tyranny. In the second American attack on Iraq, George W. Bush was a 'benevolent liberator' while Saddam Hussein was the 'evil oppressor'.

From very early on in the conflict, Australian reporters complained about the lack of access to and information from their own national military sources. The *Australian's* staffer in Qatar, Rory Callinan complained in print about being "cocooned from reality by the coalition's public relations machine" ("Journalists kept in the dark", *Weekend Australian* 22-23 March 2003: 2). In an obvious shot across the bows of military PR, Callinan is described as "locked into the multimillion dollar press centre..." in Doha, "press conference central" as he calls it. Callinan tells the paper that the press corps is unhappy: "We are a bit like mushrooms here, being drip fed information". In the first few days this was a constant complaint from the media compound at Camp Doha. On that first weekend, the ABC's correspondent in Qatar, Peter Lloyd unwittingly let the cat out of the bag about media control: he told a national television audience that the military was conducting "Operation Mushroom" against the media. On the first Sunday morning, in a frank exchange with *Insiders* host Barry Cassidy, Lloyd told of his frustration and that of the 100s of reporters at the alliance military command centre in Qatar. They were not getting any information, the briefings were sporadic and most of the stuff they were sending out in hourly news updates to the networks had actually been fed to them via fax, email and Internet links from their home bases.

It must, however, be said that the complaints from Qatar and Canberra regarding the lack of Australian information were not the harbinger of some nascent anti-war sentiment among reporters. It was really a plea for more colour and background material to fill out the coverage and encourage a sense of Australian public *ownership* of the conflict. This was key to making the case for war in terms of the national interest. Without a local angle, Iraq looked like somebody else's war. Therefore, from very early on there was coverage of what Australian forces were doing, including frigates "in hunt for fleeing cronies" (*Weekend Australian* 22-23 March 2003: 4). To the relief of Australian journalists stationed in the Gulf, the Australian military PR operation began to allow reporters to visit ships on search missions and mine clearing in the second week. One Australian ABC news crew was allowed to 'embed' with Marines as they entered Baghdad. On the other side, Australian journalists operating behind Iraqi lines were confined to Baghdad and some were expelled. Ian McPhedran and other *News Limited* reporters were confined to a Baghdad hotel. McPhedran was also briefly accused of spying for the allies. Veteran *Sydney Morning Herald* correspondent Paul McGeough provided the best coverage out of Baghdad in the Australian press. His dispatches and war diary are available in book form and space does not permit a full analysis here.

A Brief Comparison: Some Journalists Oppose the War

It would be unfair to characterise the Australian news media as solidly pro-war. Some, like *Canberra Times* editor in chief Jack Waterford, made their opposition clear and so did *Sydney Morning Herald* online political editor Margo Kingston. Others took a similar stand and some held to a diminishing middle ground of critical distance and vague support for something to be done about Saddam Hussein. *Australian* columnist Matt Price typified this latter position, which again set the limits to controversy in the Murdoch press:

Millions of Australians are despairing at this war. We want it to end quickly, even if this elevates Howard to short-term heroism and makes his slavish media cheer squad even more unbearable than usual. ("Bungler of Baghdad digs in for a long war", *Weekend Australian* 22-23 March 2003a: 40)

Lies, propaganda and deliberate misinformation are to be expected in all wars. Douglas Kellner describes the US government's deliberate campaign against diplomacy in the 1990-91 Iraq war as the "big lie" (Kellner, 1992). As British journalist and author Phillip Knightley (1975, 2001) says, the use of public information as a weapon of war is an honoured tactic of presidents and generals. Only rarely do working journalists, particularly senior ones, acknowledge this openly; though many will say so quietly at dinner parties or in the bar after hours. One rare editor in this category is Jack

Waterford of the *Canberra Times*. He wrote a leader on 5 April detailing the countless lies we were told by 'our own' side ("Yes, they would lie to you", *Canberra Times Online*, 5 April 2003). Waterford noted how Western journalists had been lied to about some events – the outcome of battles, the numbers of POWs, how civilian deaths had occurred at checkpoints. Waterford pointed out the deceptions in the Jessica Lynch incident, but pessimistically added that, in propaganda terms, when the truth finally emerged some time later it didn't really matter.

Surely the fact that the truth will usually emerge, often only in a day or so, might make some soldiers and politicians less willing to lie? Not necessarily, it would seem, if it serves some immediate purpose. ("Yes, they would lie to you", *Canberra Times Online*, 5 April 2003)

Conclusions

It is clear, and hardly surprising, that Rupert Murdoch's *Australian* led the patriotic media brigades in Australia during the Iraq war. Murdoch's clear global interests, both economic and political, mean that he clearly aligns his media voices with the interests of the American government. In this instance he was doubly lucky because the interests of the Australian government also clearly dovetailed into his own. On the other side of the ledger the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Canberra Times* both editorialised against Australian involvement in the anti-Saddam coalition. Cutting through what the popular press took to calling the 'fog of war', as if that simple phrase told us everything we needed to know, was very difficult. Just as in the previous conflict, the American military had total control of the air above Iraq and of the airwaves. The strictly controlled military briefings gave us more enhanced images of smart bombs, trucks exploding under bridges and cruise missiles launched dramatically from the safety of the US fleet. The overly militaristic tone of the coverage and reliance on staged military briefings created a pro-war sentiment in the news coverage. The global coherence of this narrative was also maintained and supported by the columnists and leader writers. But thanks to the embedded allied reporters we also saw much more intensive footage of the fighting, and this has had an impact on the language of the war. One Australian television newsreader excitedly reported that "our" fighters had had a "productive" day in the battlefield. The embedded media also showed us some horrible images of the dead and wounded prisoners of war, bombed homes, a firestorm over Baghdad, and civilians dying in hospitals. British journalist John Simpson and his party were strafed by the US air force. An Iraqi civilian was killed and we saw human blood dripping on the camera lens as it was carried along by a wounded journalist. We saw three civilians in Baghdad shot as their car tried to overtake an army truck

in which an ABC crew was embedded. One of the few left-wing voices heard in the Murdoch press, Phillip Adams, described the barrage of gore as “pornographic violence” (“Pornographic violence and the games children play”, *Australian* 9 April 2003: 11). Everything, it seems, was more bloody and extreme in the second assault on Baghdad.

Such violence might have shocked us momentarily, but then the relentless, more subtle language of war took over – ‘friendly fire’, ‘smart bombs’, ‘unfortunate’ civilian deaths; the callous disregard for basic human rights, and outright lies. In the *Australian*, this use of language amounted to a more purposeful, yet less obvious, form of propaganda. The coverage propagated the big lie, by employing what politicians like to call a general common sense approach. In the scramble to make sense out of complex and rapidly moving world events, journalists and editors fall back on simplistic generalisations and stereotypes. During the Iraq war, the enemy was demonised and opponents made deviant in terms of the ‘common sense’ approach that masks a virulent ideological position of support for the war. This helped legitimise the use of force against both Iraqi forces and domestic anti-war protests. In the case of the military enemy, Iraq, Saddam Hussein’s followers were constantly referred to as the ‘Fedayeen’. They were ‘thugs’, vicious and criminal. This approach from the opinion writers and columnists justified the attacks and the killing, even though, according to these same apologists, any death in war is ‘regrettable’. At home, the effect was similar. Peace activists were derided as the loony-left, the peaceniks, or worse, manipulating communist cells operating clandestinely. Young working class students and teenagers from Sydney’s southwest, angry about the war and clearly against it, were stereotyped as hot heads, thugs, and un-Australian. Their Arabness, not their Australian identity was what the pro-war press emphasised. In both cases – the Iraqi regime and Australian protestors – the media tended to fall back onto racist stereotypes, creating moral binaries.

This is exactly what the post-Cold War terrorism news frame is about – reducing complex geopolitical and cultural issues to simple questions of right and wrong, *us* and *them*. Within this frame, the war in Iraq and the so-called war on terror are represented as battles between *good* and *evil*. George W. Bush talks about ‘freedom-loving people’ and ‘evil men’ and the Murdoch press regurgitates it as if this moral dichotomy was a natural category. This essentialises the ‘terrorist problem’ in the same way that biological essentialism is used to justify sexism. If the terrorists are defined as innately evil, then there is no need to look at how policies and practices in the Western world might contribute to the conflict, because innately evil men are beyond redemption. It’s nature. Fighting the war on terror then becomes a matter of rounding up the evil men more than anything else. In Australia, the agenda-setting Murdoch press employs this terror news frame and it sells newspapers. It sells because it is easy to understand. And it sells because it appeals to a sense of patriotic nationalism and an endemic insecurity based on the historical fear of invasion. In a multicultural country struggling to define its

postcolonial identity, the moral certitude of the war on terror has obvious mainstream appeal, even if it somehow does not answer all the lingering questions.

Throughout the period of the fighting, support for war increased in the combatant nations: the USA, the UK and Australia. This was perhaps to be expected for fairly obvious reasons; not least of which is the role of the news media in popularising the war and dulling some sensibilities. There can be no doubt that the Murdoch press played an important role in joining together what support there was for Australia's involvement in the attack on Iraq and the subsequent occupation. On the other hand, in terms of global public opinion, the pro-war group in Australia continues to be relatively small. And it is by no means solidly behind either the war, or the leadership of Prime Minister Howard. Peace and stability in Iraq still seem like a promise rather than the reality. Public opinion in much of Europe and the Middle East is solidly against the American occupation of Iraq. Already we have seen how problematic this can be for the coalition. The fact that several major Australian media organisations did not fall in compliantly with the line of the Australian government points to the possibility of future fractures inside the ruling class and its leadership. This may begin to open up space for oppositional voices, both in the press and on the streets.

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Financialization, Emotionalization, and Other Ugly Concepts

Toby Miller

Former US diplomat George Dempsey identified Robert Fisk, noted foreign correspondent of the British newspaper the *Independent*, as partly to blame for the events of September 11th (International Federation of Journalists 2001: 13), and actor John Malkovich told the Cambridge Union that he ‘would like to shoot’ Fisk. The reporter’s reaction was to say: ‘If we want a quiet life, we will just have to toe the line, stop criticising Israel or America. Or just stop writing altogether’ (Fisk, 2002).

Following the 2003 invasion of Iraq, Andrew Heyward, the President of CBS News, said the chief US TV networks (CBS, ABC, NBC, and Fox) were in a struggle for the ‘survival of the samest’ because they were ‘uncannily similar,’ and had come to regard news as ‘a commodity’ (quoted in Elkin, 2003). Unprecedentedly, CBS and ABC lost viewers at that time of crisis, so quickly did they return to game shows, entertainment news, and other genres (Smith, 2003) for fear of devoting too much time to irregular programming.

These two stories tell us two key things about the contemporary United States. The first tells us that Zionism is a priority for both liberals and conservatives, supported to the hilt unquestioningly. A key plank of US foreign policy is untouchable by critics – even foreign ones like Fisk. The second story tells us that entertainment has taken precedence over news in US TV. This chapter cannot explain the complex twists and turns that see, for example, right-wing Protestants supporting Zionism because they might see its triumph as the beginning of a welcomingly transformative Armageddon. But it can note how that links up with governmental and business decisions to make for an impoverished journalism unworthy of the name.

In the last ten years, the US media have gone from being controlled by fifty competing companies to five (Schechter, 2003). Many of these institutions are corporate conglomerates for which the traditions of journalism are almost incidental to profit-making. News divisions have been fetishised as individual profit-centers, whereas their previous function as loss-leaders had helped to give television networks a character that ‘endorsed’ other genres (Smith, 2003). In search of ‘efficiencies’, owners have closed investigative

sections and most foreign *bureaux* (Chester 2002: 1060 – other than in Israel (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2002). ABC News once maintained seventeen offices overseas. Now it has seven (Higham, 2001). In 2001, CBS had one journalist covering all of Asia, and seven others for the rest of the world.

Numerous academic studies have found that the networks do not pay attention to other countries other than as dysfunctional or as threatening to the United States (Golan and Wanta, 2003). TV coverage of governmental, military, and international affairs dropped from 70% of network news in 1977 to 60% in 1987 and 40% in 1997 (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2002). The ‘big three’ (CBS, NBC, and ABC) devoted 45% of their newscasts to foreign news in the 1970s (‘Did 9/11?’, 2002). In 1988, each network dedicated about 2 000 minutes to international news. A decade later, the figure had halved, with about 9% of the average newscast covering anything foreign (‘Battle Stations’, 2001). In 2000, just three stories from beyond the US (apart from the Olympics) made it into the networks’ twenty most-covered items, and all were directly concerned with domestic issues: the Miami-Cuba custody dispute over Élian Gonzales, the second *Intifada*; and the bombing of the USS Cole off Yemen. Médecins sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) issued a list of ten humanitarian disasters that barely rated a mention on these programmes, including the famine in Angola, civil wars in Somalia, Liberia, and Sudan, and expansion of the conflict in Colombia (Lobe, 2003a). Nicolas de Torrente, director of the US branch of the Médecins, put it this way: “Silence is the best ally of violence, impunity and contempt ... these enormous catastrophes don’t seem to exist for most Americans” (quoted in Rotzer, 2003).

Did this change with the shocks of 2001? Fox News executive Roger Ailes describes its new method of covering global stories in this helpful way: “We basically sent hit teams overseas from out of here”, while Leslie Moonves of CBS explains that entertainment now dominates news: “As you get further away from September 11th, that will revert back to normal” (quoted in “Battle Stations,” 2001). And, sure enough, the Project for Excellence in Journalism (2002) revealed that TV news coverage of national and international issues fell by 33% from October 2001 to March 2002, as celebrity and lifestyle issues took over from discussion of the various parts of the world that the United States directly and indirectly rules and controls. Discussion of entertainment itself was not undertaken critically; for instance, Michael Eisner, chief executive officer of its corporate owner, Disney, has announced that “I would prefer ABC not to cover Disney” because “I think it’s inappropriate”. And a third of local TV news directors surveyed in 2000 indicated that they were under pressure not to portray key station advertisers negatively (Eisner quoted in Alterman 2003: 24).

How did this extraordinary state of affairs come to pass in a media environment of hugely wealthy and massively differentiated media audiences, and equally gigantic and diverse niche programming? The answer is available in the seemingly arid world of political economy, for, at times of crisis

above all, one must return to structures, and to the conditions of possibility, for explanations.

But enough culturalist reductionism; time for some grubby talk, for this deracination derives from ownership and content deregulation and the subsequent dominant influences on US current-affairs TV: 'financialisation' and 'emotionalisation'. These tendencies typify the consumer-culture, genre-driven nature of television in a deregulated era.

Finance, Feelings, and Entertainment

The neo-liberal agenda was the only element of the Clinton administration's policies that was uncritically accepted, and even applauded, by the mainstream media. Contemporary coverage of the market is beloved by the conglomerates. Its specialised 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 of a neo-liberal discourse. So, in 2000, finance was the principal topic on ABC, NBC, and CBS nightly news programs, and it was second only to terrorism in 2002 (Lobe, 2003a). News stories are evaluated in terms of their monetary significance to viewers. Neo-classical economic theory is deemed palatable in a way that theory is not accepted elsewhere (other than the weather). Business advisors dominate discussion on dedicated finance cable stations like CNBC and Bloomberg, and are granted something akin to the status of seers when they appear on cable news channels MSNBC and CNN or the networks. The focus is on stock markets in Asia, Europe, and New York; reports on company earnings, profits, and stocks; and portfolio management. Economic and labour news has become corporate news, and politics is measured in terms of its reception by business (Alterman 2003: 118-38). The doubling of time dedicated by TV news to the market across the 1990s was in part responsible for the way in which fawning journalists turned business executives into heroes. Along the way, labour fell into irrelevance, other than as so-called 'X-Factor inefficiency', while promoting stocks where one had a personal financial interest became *de rigueur* for anchors and pundits (Alterman 2003: 123-24, 127, 133). There is a sense of markets' stalking everyday security and politics, ready to punish all anxieties, uncertainties, or collective political action to restrain capital. The veneration, surveillance, and reportage of the market is ever-ready to point to infractions of this anthropomorphised, yet oddly subject-free sphere, as a means of constructing moral panics around the conduct of whoever raises its ire. That's the 'financialisation' side – knowing and furthering the discourse of money and its methods of representing everyday life, substituting for politics and history.

Then there is 'emotionalisation'. It is validated by some as an expansion of the public sphere to include issues hitherto excluded from view, such as

the sexual politics revealed on television talk shows, but I would rather see it as the tendency to substitute analysis of US politics and economics with a stress on feelings – in the case of Iraq, the feelings of serving military and their families, viewers, media mavens, politicians, and state-of-the-nation pundits. The latter in particular produced a shortage of knowledge and a surfeit of opinion, a surplus of bluster filling in for an absence of skill. It can be no accident that Fox News Channel, which employs few journalists and staffs just four foreign *bureaux*, has the most pundits on its payroll of any US network – over fifty in 2003 (Tugend, 2003). Margaret Carlson, a correspondent for *Time* and one of CNN's pundits, explained the key qualifications for her television work in these damning words: "The less you know about something, the better off you are ... sound learned without confusing the matter with too much knowledge" (quoted in Alterman 2003: 32).

Powerful emotions are of course engaged by war, and there is value in addressing them and letting out the pain. But as with 'financialisation', this exclusivity helped to shore up a mendacious Administration and a teetering economy in the name of raw, apolitical, emotional truth. The point is to work through inchoate feelings to generate an apparatus that makes sense of them – especially given that so many in the audience will simply not share particular forms of identification, knowledge or ignorance. The organisational and textual norms of US journalism need to be understood as time- and space-bounded norms of a particular period, nation and profession. Consider the personalisation that is a standard means of starting newspaper stories. Lengthy paragraphs are produced about one family or one person, prior to establishing the nature of a social problem. This is profoundly irritating to readers reared on something beyond personal worries as the centre of news, especially as the individual is inevitably forced to recede by the weight of the actual story sooner or later (frequently some pages on, with the space between covered with advertisements), and so the devotion of space to establishing a solitary situation is wasted on us. But this unfortunate tendency is encouraged by large-scale studies by the Readership Institute indicating that coveted young-adult readers in the US want 'stories ABOUT ordinary people' (Fitzgerald, 2003). The Institute's gloss on this is an imperative: 'More stories ABOUT ordinary people' (Lavine and Readership Institute, 2003). That is fine – ordinary people are those most affected by grandiloquent policy designs and imperialist programs – but of course the ordinariness referred to here is about the feelings of fraternity boys and sorority girls when the price of fuel increases. Even when potentially radicalising news is reported, it gets trivialised. 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 was on rescue, emotion and God, to the absolute exclusion of the disaster's causes: the Republican Administration's rolling back of occupational health and safety regulations

and systems of compliance, and its support of anti-union employers using antiquated, dangerous systems of exploration (Sherman and Vann, 2002).

The search for positive stories by ‘Yanqui’ journalists, once their heroes were not greeted with universal acclaim upon invading Iraq, reached its regrettable acme with the case of Jessica Lynch, an enlisted woman who was injured and captured during the war. While she was in an unguarded Iraqi hospital receiving treatment, US forces violently entered this site of healing, modestly videotaping their heroic mission for instant release. Numerous stories were immediately concocted to make the emotions run still higher – she had fought off her attackers in the desert; she had been knifed; the US military had conquered serious opposition to lift her out – all fabrications, none subject to first-hand knowledge or back-up sources, all reported without problem by CNN, Fox, NBC, ABC, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times* – and all just as instantaneously regarded as dubious if not spurious by media from other countries, including the BBC. US journalists who questioned the story were derided as unpatriotic on Fox (Eviatar, 2003), even though the soldier herself subsequently testified that her story had been embellished and turned into propaganda by the Pentagon. How people *felt* mattered most, not the military reality – after all, the mission of the US media is to offer therapy at times of national risk. And not maintain too many foreign *bureaux*. In the next section, we shall see the result of this *ad hoc* emotionalism.

US Television and the Iraq Invasion

Seventy per cent of the US public obtained ‘information’ about the 2003 invasion of Iraq from television rather than from newspapers (Fitzgerald, 2003; Sharkey, 2003) and whilst all media increased their audiences during the crisis, the largest growth was achieved by cable (Lavine and Readership Institute, 2003).¹ And studies of the two major cable news channels, Fox and CNN, reveal that despite the former’s claim that it is less liberal, each delivers a pro-Bush position on foreign policy as if they were organs of the Pentagon (Pew Charitable, 2002). During the invasion of Iraq, both MSNBC and Fox adopted the Pentagon’s *cliché* ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’ as the title of their coverage. MSNBC used, as its slogan to accompany stories of US troops, ‘God bless America. Our hearts go with you’ (quoted in Sharkey, 2003). Its President, Erik Sorenson, said that “[t]his may be one time where the sequel is more compelling than the original” (quoted in Lowry, 2003). The American flag was a constant backdrop in coverage, correspondents identified with the killer units they travelled with, and jingoistic self-membership was almost universal (Sharkey, 2003; Folkenflik, 2003). The proliferation of US flag pins on reporters, and the repeated use of such membership categorization devices as ‘we,’ is simply not permitted by major global newsgatherers, whether they are regionally or nationally based or funded. British viewers

were so taken aback by the partisanship of Fox, which was rebroadcast there via satellite, that they protested against it through the local regulator, the Independent Television Commission, which calls for impartiality (Wells, 2003).

As the invasion of Iraq loomed, Rupert Murdoch said “there is going to be collateral damage ... if you really want to be brutal about it, better we get it done now” (quoted in Pilger, 2003). The Project for Excellence in Journalism’s analysis of ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN and Fox found that in the opening stanza of the Iraq invasion, 50% of reports from journalists embedded with the invaders depicted combat, but none depicted injuries. As the war progressed, there were deeply sanitised images of the wounded from afar (Sharkey, 2003). Coverage of the invaders’ impact on the Iraqi people was dismissed by PBS *News Hour* Executive Producer Lester Crystal as not ‘central at the moment’ (quoted in Sharkey, 2003). NBC correspondent David Bloom astonishingly offered that the media were so keen to become adjuncts of the military that they were “doing anything and everything that ... [the armed forces] can ask of us” (quoted in Carr, 2003). Marcy McGinnis, senior vice-president of news at CBS, claimed that the networks brought this war “...into the living rooms of Americans...the first time you can actually see what’s happening” (quoted in Sharkey, 2003) and Paul Steiger, Managing Editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, divined that US media coverage of the invasion of Iraq was “pretty darned good” (quoted in Friedman, 2003). What counted as ‘happening’ and ‘darned good’ was extraordinarily misshaped, unbalanced – in fact systematically distorted – by American media. As military manoeuvres took second place to civilian suffering in the rest of the world’s media coverage of the Afghan and Iraqi crises, invasions, and occupations, this contrasted drastically with what other nations received (della Cava, 2003; Greenberg, 2003).

No wonder Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s thought-disordered remark about Baghdad, that it “...looks like it’s a bombing of a city, but it isn’t” received much uncritical US coverage. Statements by the International Red Cross and many, many other notable non-Pentagon sources detailing Iraqi civilian casualties from the bombing-of-a-city-that-wasn’t received virtually none (Wilkinson, 2003; FAIR, 2003c), just like the memorable Congressional speeches against this bloodthirsty militarism by Senators Robert Byrd and Ted Kennedy (Schlesinger, 2003). First-hand accounts of an unarmed family in a car being shot by US soldiers were overridden by the desire to promote the Pentagon’s strenuous insistence that the protocols for shooting an unarmed family in a car were followed (FAIR, 2003d). There was no mention, on any network, of the US military’s use of depleted uranium, and virtually no consideration of the impact of cluster bombs – both major stories everywhere else and subject to serious complaints by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. The US claim to have dropped just 26 cluster bombs was belied by the thousands and thousands that had to be ‘cleaned up’, but this information was not available through domestic media outlets (FAIR, 2003e). Even wounded US soldiers were left unnoticed by the main-

stream media, with no bedside interviews from hospitals, and a prohibition on images of coffins. Fallen men and women had become the 'disappeared' (Berkowitz, 2003). After the invasion, 82% of US residents believed that serious efforts had been made to spare civilians – much higher numbers than in any other country, including those whose forces were involved (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2003).

When it was decided to coopt journalists for the Iraq invasion through the quasi-homonym of 'embedding' them with the military, reporters were required to sign a contract agreeing with Pentagon instructions on coverage, including no off-the-record interviews, which had been crucial in Vietnam (Taiara, 2003; Thussu and Freedman 2003: 6). This was widely condemned in the international media as a deathblow to independent war reporting (Jones, 2003), and it had a chilling impact on gender balance amongst the media (Huff, 2003). When added to the speeded-up routines of twenty-four hour news channels, it also led to disgraces like the day when nine separate announcements were made that Umm Qasr had fallen to the invaders, none of which was accurate (Tryhorn, 2003) and a Fox news producer saying "Even if we never get a story out of an embed, you need someone there to watch the missiles fly and the planes taking off. It's great television". No wonder Bernard Shaw, the former CNN anchor, saw these journalists as 'hostages of the military' (quoted in Bushell and Cunningham, 2003). But on the dominant side of the debate lay hacks like Marvin Kalb, for whom the events of September 11 2001 mean 'the rules have now changed,' and anxieties over patriotism are misplaced (2003).

Domestically, more than half the TV studio guests talking about the impending action in Iraq in 2003 were US military or governmental personnel (FAIR, 2003a). TV news effectively transformed the available discourse on the impending struggle to one of technical efficiency or state propaganda. A study conducted through the life of the Iraq invasion reveals that US broadcast and cable news virtually excluded anti-war or internationalist points of view: 64% of all pundits were pro-war, while 71% of US 'experts' favoured the war. Anti-war voices comprised 10% of all sources, but just 6% of non-Iraqi sources, and 3% of US speakers. Viewers were more than six times as likely to see a pro-war than an anti-war source, and amongst US guests, the ratio increased to 25 to 1 (Rendall and Broughel, 2003). When the vast majority of outside experts represent official opinion, how is this different from a state-controlled media (Johnson, 2003)? The *New York Times* refers to these journalists as "[p]art experts and part reporters, they're marketing tools, as well" – and they are paid for their services, something quite shocking given the traditions of independent critique (Jensen, 2003). CNN's gleeful coverage of the invasion of Iraq was typified by one superannuated military officer who rejoiced with "Slam, bam, bye-bye Saddam" as missiles struck Baghdad (quoted in Goldstein, 2003). Any links to arms-trading are rarely divulged, and never discussed as relevant. Retired Lieutenant General Barry McCaffrey, employed in this capacity by NBC News, points to the *cadre's* 'lifetime of

experience and objectivity.’ In his case, this involves membership of the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq, a lobby group dedicated to influencing the media, and the boards of three munitions companies that make ordnance he proceeded to praise on MSNBC. Could these ties constitute conflicts of interest (Benaïm *at al.*, 2003)? Perhaps not when NBC itself is owned by one of the world’s biggest arms suppliers, General Electric.

This says something about US journalistic practice more generally. Emad Adeeb, the Chair of *Al Alam Al Youm* and host of *On the Air!* in Egypt, summed up US foreign-correspondent techniques like this:

you come and visit us in what I call the American Express Tour – 72 hours. ... You stay at the same hotel where the 150,000 colleagues before you have stayed. You eat at the same restaurant because you’ve been given its name. You have the same short list of people who have been interviewed ... you buy the same presents for your wives or girlfriends or mistresses, because you have the same address from your friends before you. You don’t do anything out of the norm, and you come writing the same story with the same slogan – a minute-and-a-half bite, or a 500-word story – and you think that you know the Middle East. ... And then when a crisis happens, you are interviewed as an expert (Pew Fellowships in International Journalism, 2002)

In editor Fuad Nahdi’s (2003) words, dumping ‘young, inexperienced and excitable’ journalists in the Middle East who are functionally illiterate and historically ignorant means that the US media depends on ‘clippings and weekend visits’ of dubious professional integrity. No wonder that CNN’s Jerusalem Bureau chief, Walter Rodgers insensitively proclaims that ‘[f]or a journalist, Israel is the best country in the world to work in ... [o]n the Palestinian side, as is the case in the rest of the Arab world, there is always that deep divide between Islam and the West’ (quoted in Ibrahim 2003: 96). He seems to think there are no Israeli Arabs and no Christian Palestinians. CNN reached what might be termed its Middle Eastern *nadir*, and lost viewers to al-Jazeera and others, when one of its reporters stated that some nomads would be thunderstruck by seeing ‘camels of steel’ (cars) for the first time (MacFarquhar, 2003). This makes CNN’s rejection of Ted Turner as a war correspondent because of his inexperience entirely laughable (Auletta and Turner, 2003).

Attempts to provide a different story met swift rebukes. The noted CNN foreign correspondent Christiane Amanpour told CNBC after the war:

I think the press was muzzled, and I think the press self-muzzled ... I’m sorry to say, but certainly television and, perhaps, to a certain extent, my station was intimidated by the administration and its foot soldiers at Fox News. And it did, in fact, put a climate of fear and self-censorship, in my view, in terms of the kind of broadcast work we did

She was immediately derided by Fox as 'a spokeswoman for Al Qaeda' (quoted in Zerbisias, 2003). And because MSNBC's Ashleigh Banfield occasionally reported Arab perspectives during the 2003 conflict, Michael Savage, then a talkshow host on her network, called her a 'slut,' a 'porn star,' and an 'accessory to the murder of Jewish children' on air, for which he was rewarded by NBC's executives by being named as their 'showman' (quoted in Lieberman, 2003). Banfield told a Kansas State University audience during the Iraq invasion that 'horrors were completely left out of this war. So was this journalism? ... I was ostracised just for going on television and saying, 'Here's what the leaders of Hezbollah, a radical Moslem group, are telling me about what is needed to bring peace to Israel' (quoted in Schechter, 2003). She was immediately demoted and disciplined by NBC for criticising journalistic standards.

Alternatives?

So what of other news sources available to US residents, such as foreign television, domestic newspapers, the Internet, and radio? In the first week of the 2003 invasion, the top three terms searched for on the key engine <Google.com> were 'CNN,' 'Iraq,' and 'al-Jazeera,' the Qatar-based satellite news service which only launched an Anglo site in late March (Cox, 2003). On the Lycos engine, al-Jazeera outranked 'Pamela Anderson,' 'POWs,' and 'Dixie Chicks' (Suellentrop, 2003). Al-Jazeera doubled its European subscribers during the invasion – 4 million new viewers in one week (Cozens, 2003) – and was said to command 70% of Arab cable-news viewers worldwide (Fine, 2003). This came as no surprise, given that its personnel recruitment encourages such diversity, with secular, Muslim, Christian, feminist, Marxist, Baathist, and liberal workers (Miladi 2003: 152). But the New York Stock Exchange expelled al-Jazeera during the invasion of Iraq following US Governmental criticisms of it for televising prisoners of war and Arab criticisms of the attack. The official explanation was that for 'security reasons,' the number of broadcasters allowed at the Exchange had to be limited to those offering 'responsible business coverage' (Agovino, 2003; "Al-Jazeera Banned," 2003). The NASDAQ exchange refused to grant al-Jazeera press credentials at the same time, for the same reason (FAIR, 2003b). The Index on Censorship proceeded to honor the network with its free-expression prize (Byrne, 2003; Lobe, 2003b).

Lest we imagine that the print media offer anything better than US television, we should note that whereas 10% of newspaper coverage in 1983 addressed foreign news, this had fallen to 2% by 1998. Covers of *Time* magazine dedicated to international relations dropped from 11 in 1987 to none a decade later, and that period saw its foreign reportage diminish from 24% to

12%. These institutions were adopting the just-in-time techniques of post-Fordism to current affairs (Magder 2003: 33)².

Late in 2003, after Dick Cheney encouraged the unsubstantiated belief among the US public that Iraq was behind the World Trade Center's destruction, even Bush felt obliged to correct this lie. But there was virtually no attempt by the mainstream media to publicise this to the 70% of the population that had believed the original canard. Bush's admission was not deemed newsworthy. Of the country's twelve largest-circulation daily papers, only the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Dallas Morning News* mentioned it on their front pages. The *New York Times* ran it on page 22, *USA Today* on page 16, the *Houston Chronicle* on page 3, the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *New York Daily News* on page 14, the *Washington Post* on page 18, and *Newsday* on page 41. There were not enough pages available for the *New York Post* and the *Wall Street Journal* to mention the revelation at all (Porges, 2003).

A 2002 survey of 218 US-newspaper editors found two-thirds admitting that their coverage of foreign news was 'fair to poor' and showed no real engagement with the multicultural and immigrant populations they were serving. This was a stark contrast with the satisfaction expressed over their coverage of commerce. The reason for this neglect of international news was not demand, but supply – their readers were interested, but their owners sought to keep costs down, and their employees lacked the necessary skills (Pew Fellowships in International Journalism, 2002; Pew International Journalism Program, 2002). Meanwhile, the Arab-American media fell into disarray after September 11. Always neglected by large state advertising campaigns, such as public-health initiatives, they instantly lost corporate support (Roy, 2003).

Internet use showed some preparedness amongst US residents to transcend their country's biased media offerings. In the weeks leading up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, 49% of people visiting *The Guardian's* web site and 25% of visitors to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's service were from the Americas. Alternative news web sites in the US reported a 300% increase in readers after the bombing of Afghanistan, while CNN's site visitors declined. Google's popular news page draws on the *Hindustan Times*, the *People's Daily*, the *Toronto Star*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Chosun Ilbo*, the BBC, and Deutsche Welle, *inter alia*. Its methods of selection are not public, but are driven by readers' interests – and the war on terrorism has driven this constituency away from amateur-hour local coverage. The *Independent's* site visits increased by 15% between September 11 and the invasion of Iraq, with a third of the increase coming from the US (Kahney, 2003; Sousa, 2002; Nichols, 2003; Matthews, 2003; Goldberg, 2003). Web logs created by individuals as clearing houses of information from reliable media systems grew in popularity very strikingly.

Was there relief on the radio dial? The Pacifica Radio Network, the only cosmopolitan English-language news outlet in the United States, had a record

fund drive in early 2003, as war loomed. But WABC radio's NJ Burkett compared the Americans preparing their weapons to 'an orchestra on an opening night' (quoted in Rutenberg, 2003). Clear Channel Worldwide, the dominant force in US radio and concert promotion with over 1200 stations, had banned 150 songs after September 11, including "Bridge over Troubled Water." For its Iraq campaign, the company refused permission for protest groups to disseminate literature at an Ani DiFranco concert and organised pro-war rallies and boycotts of anti-war performers, just as it was lobbying for new ownership regulations from Federal Communications Commission Chair Michael Powell, the son of Secretary of State Colin Powell. Another concentration beneficiary, Cumulus Media, rented a 33,000-pound tractor to destroy Dixie Chicks music and memorabilia because the band dared to question Bush. Further, Clear Channel's Board included a Republican activist who had paid Bush vast sums for his failed baseball team, and had handed over public investment money to Bush and his advisers to manage (Grieve, 2003; Krugman, 2003; Kellner 2003: 68; Jones, 2003).

Conclusion

Domestic ignorance is not the only cost associated with these tendencies. A study by the International Federation of Journalists in October 2001 found blanket global coverage of the September 11 attacks, with very favorable discussion of the United States and its travails – even in nations that had suffered terribly from US aggression. But the advertising firm McCann-Erickson's evaluation of 37 states saw a huge increase in cynicism about the US media's manipulation of the events (Cozens, 2001), and the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press' (2002) study of 42 countries in 2002 found a dramatic fall from favour for the US since that time, while a 2003 follow-up (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press 2003) encountered even lower opinions of the US nation, population, and policies worldwide than the year before, with specifically diminished support for anti-terrorism, and faith in the UN essentially demolished by US unilateralism and distrust of Bush. 'Which country poses the greatest danger to world peace in 2003?', asked *Time* magazine of 250,000 people across Europe, offering them a choice between Iraq, North Korea, and the United States. Eight per cent selected Iraq, 9% chose North Korea, and ... but you have already done the calculation about the most feared country of all (Pilger, 2003). A BBC poll in eleven countries in mid-2003 confirmed this and found sizeable majorities everywhere disapproving of Bush and the invasion of Iraq, especially over civilian casualties ("Poll," 2003).

The challenge is to right the ignorance of the US public – to ensure that the quality of coverage and comment from the *Washington Post*, CBS, ABC, NBC, CNN and the *New York Times* can begin to approximate what is avail-

able via *La Jornada*, *The Independent*, al-Jazeera, CBC, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, All-India Radio, or *El País*. For now, those of us who live in the US must rely on such outside truth-telling and political pressure. The places that provide the US with bases, *matériel*, personnel and ideological support, must change their tune. There must be pressure within the UN, NATO, OAS, the African Union, ASEAN, the Arab League, and the EU against the US and specifically *contra* Israel's position on territory claimed since 1967 and its anti-Arabism. There must be pressure on totalitarian US allies, such as Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Pakistan, to become genuinely democratic. There must be pressure to open up the US media system to retrain journalists in keeping with best democratic practice and to require internationalist content on the air. We need fewer ugly concepts and more cosmopolitan words: less finance, less emotion, more knowledge.

Notes

1. Despite the rhetoric of divinity surrounding the event, just 10% of US residents relied on churches to learn about the war (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2003b).
2. The *New York Times*, for example, was intellectually unprepared to report on terrorism. Because terrorism occurred mostly outside the US prior to 2001, it was not rated as newsworthy. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, reportage of overseas terror took up less than 0.5% of the paper.

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The Authors

Seref Ates, Ph.D., Professor, Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey

Jörg Becker, Professor Dr, Innsbruck University, Austria

Richard Brunhart, Student of Political Science, Innsbruck University, Austria

Angelica Carfora, Student of Political Science, Innsbruck University, Austria

Hüseyin Cicek, Student of Political Science, Innsbruck University, Austria

Margie Comrie, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Communication and Journalism, Massey University, New Zealand

Abmed El-Gody, Senior Lecturer, Director of New Media Lab, Modern Sciences and Arts University, Cairo, Egypt

Mohamed El-Bendary, Former Lecturer, Massey University, New Zealand

Karmen Erjavec, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Tine Ustad Figenschou, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Journalism, Library and Information Science, Oslo University College, Norway

Christian Flatz, Mag. Dr, Political Scientist, Innsbruck, Austria

Christos Frangonikolopoulos, Ph.D., Lecturer, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece

Susan Fountaine, Ph.D., Lecturer, Department of Communication and Journalism, Massey University, New Zealand

Johan Gunnarsson, Journalist, Teacher in Spanish, Uppsala, Sweden

Martin Hartlieb, Student of Political Sciences and Economics, Innsbruck University, Austria

Martin Hirst, Ph.D., Author, Brisbane, Australia

Nathalie Hyde-Clarke, Ph.D., Lecturer, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Sophia Kaitatzi-Whitlock, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece

Tawana Kupe, Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Armin Lanzinger, Student of Political Sciences, Innsbruck University, Austria

Berit von der Lippe, Associate Professor, Department of Communication, Culture and Language, Norwegian School of Management, Oslo, Norway

Lars Lundsten, Ph.D., Research Director, Arcada University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland

Toby Miller, Ph.D., Professor, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences University of California, U.S.A.

Brigitte Mral, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Humanities, Örebro University, Sweden

Julius Mucunguzi, Journalist, Senior Communication Officer with World Vision Uganda, Kampala, Uganda

Stig A. Nobrstedt, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Humanities, Örebro University, Sweden

Thomas Oberhofer, Student of Political Science, Innsbruck University, Austria

Arzu Onay-Ok, Student of Political Science, Innsbruck University, Austria

Rune Ottosen, Professor, Faculty of Journalism, Library and Information Science, Oslo University College, Norway

Sean Phelan, Ph.D., Lecturer, Department of Communication and Journalism, Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand

Robert Schütze, Freelance Journalist, Perth, Australia

Matteo Stocchetti, Ph.D., Research Fellow, Arcada University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland

Gülşel Taskara, Student of Economics, Innsbruck University, Austria

Four Books from Nordicom about *Journalism and the New World Order*

Stig A. Nohrstedt & Rune Ottosen (eds.) *Journalism and the New World Order Vol.1. Gulf War; National News Discourses and Globalization*. Göteborg, Nordicom, 2001, 282 p., ISBN 91-89471-06-7. Price: € 25.

The New World Order, proclaimed by President Bush in connection with the Persian Gulf War 1990-91, is a challenge for research on war journalism, propaganda and international opinion making. This comparative study of media coverage of the conflict in five countries, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the USA, offers a unique empirical study with a multi-methodological approach.

Wilhelm Kempf & Heikki Luostarinen (eds.) *Journalism and the New World Order Vol.2. Studying War and the Media*. Göteborg, Nordicom, 2002, 296 p., ISBN 91-89471-10-5. Price: € 25.

The first part of the book deals with the media's role in conflicts and provides conceptual and theoretical tools for the analysis of conflict coverage and war reporting. The second part provides the historical background needed to understand the present situation of journalism in war. The third part presents different methodological approaches to the study of war and the media. The fourth part is dedicated to studies of the Gulf War and the conflict in Bosnia and demonstrates application of the previously described theoretical models and methodological approaches. Finally, the closing part of the volume, summarizes the implications of this kind of research in terms of practical journalism.

Stig A. Nohrstedt & Rune Ottosen (eds.) *U.S. and the Others. Global Media Images on "The War on Terror"*. Göteborg, Nordicom, 2004, 316 p., ISBN 91-89471-24-5. Price: € 28.

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. 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.

Stig A. Nohrstedt & Rune Ottosen (eds.) *Global War – Local Views. Media Images of the Iraq War*. Göteborg, Nordicom, 2005, 278 p., ISBN 91-89471-33-4. Price: € 30.

In this book, media scholars from a number of countries and cultures provide a more global view of the 2003 Iraq War and the War on Terror than is usually present in the news media. This book will assist journalists and media workers to reflect upon their own tradecraft, to make improvements when motivated and to contribute to increased reflexivity by rich insights into how the Iraq War was related to national policies and local conditions. The authors have also studied whether or not the media elaborate on their own role. Self-criticism on the part of the media and journalists is a virtue of utmost importance in war reporting, not least from a democratic and professional point of view.

