ARE CHANGES IN MEANING NATIONAL?
COMPARING THE MEANING OF CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRACY AS IN RELATION TO THE WAR ON TERROR. AN EXPLORATIVE CASE STUDY BASED ON AUSTRIAN AND US NEWSPAPER.

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Abstract

Different groups bestow different meaning to the same events. From the obvious cases that include the winners and losers of the same game up the interpretation of historic events. The following article explores this concept by tracing how the war on terror is framed in the US New York Times and the Austrian Die Presse, trying to gain an understanding at which points the meaning attributed to constructs like democracy and citizenship align and at which they do not. This is done by employing a Durkheimian approach, using his concepts from the elementary forms of religious life to explain the results from the content analysis that spans the years 2001 to 2011.

Keywords

Durkheimian sociology; Content Analysis; Case study research,; Democracy in the Media,; 9/11; War on Terror.

Introduction

During the 1990ties Howard V. Perlmutter (1994: 104) argued that our technological and societal advancements made it possible to build a global society marked by global events. A thesis that is seemingly supported by today's media. There we see the instantaneous as well as simultaneous broadcasting, publishing and discussing of 'major news events' around the globe (Katz/Liebes, 2010: 33), building global awareness regarding relevant issues, no matter where. This should strengthen societal interdependencies as the mass media provide transnational content, to what was before thought of a strictly national societies (Robins/Aksoy, 2001). Yet when taking a look at exactly these seemingly global events that are broadcasted

and published all around the world it becomes evident that uncertainty, changes in explanations, as well as outright contradictions are increasingly common (Beck, 2004: 15p). Taking a look at current news coverage shows easy to find examples for this: One may be the question regarding the reasons of the war in the Ukraine. Is the Russian government to blame? The inner turmoil in the Ukraine? Another case would be the economic struggles of the European Union. Is it the duty of the Greece population to abide the biddings of the other nations in the EU regarding their economic and financial crisis? Or raising a last example: Is the fight against the terrorist organization known as the Islamic State (IS) a war against a religion? How are the nations around the world to act in the face of an enemy that brutally beheads and burns its prisoners?

Taking a look at the reports provided by the news outlets around the globe shows different ideas, origins and solutions to the economic crisis, armed conflicts and man-made catastrophes shape the political landscape of the still young 21st century. . Or if one want's to say so: They attribute different meanings to those developments, which are based on the binding forces of culture, loyalty and identity (Beck, 2004: 15). Thus the media are not only helping societies to access information that may come from a place physically distant, but they are also depicting events in specific ways resulting from their own predispositions (Schudson, 2011a: 3pp).

Thus it is understandable that societies are confronted with multiple and competing depictions of the events that have happened or are happening, despite their need to reference to the same situation. There are those involved, those who are present as a situation unfolds, those affected and those that may only have *heard* – not witnessed or participated in any form – about something (Berger/ Luckmann, 2002: 31). And this is true for individuals as well as for communities, societies or even nations. Obviously this observation is neither new, nor hasn't it been discussed in the social sciences before. Indeed it has been part of the discussion on how meaning emerges since Hegel formulated the idea that there are indeed multiple, competing and disagreeing versions of events in (co-)existence once they happened (Hegel, 1986). And it has been argued that those depictions are depending on a nearly immeasurable set of variables found in the heterogenic fields of the public- as well as non-public-spheres, including the media scape (Alexander, 2006: 71pp). Those variables and their interdependencies are more or less hard to define and explore. They are part of a constant bargaining processes that have to reflect all the different fault lines in societies (Amman, 2010), making impossible to find one singular narrative associated with events that have unfolded or are still unfolding

(Berger/Luckmann, 2002: 31pp).

Yet the past one and a half decades have made it painfully evident that there is large and growing number of competing narratives that affect societies (e.g.: Alexander, 2006; 2011; Alexander *et al,* 2004; Couldry *et al.*(eds), 2010; Langenbacher/ Shain (eds.), 2010; Zelizer/ Allan (eds.), 2011). Many of those are indeed tied to the 'major news events' (Katz/Liebes, 2010: 36pp), that have to be embedded into many potentially affected societies. Coming back to examples at this point we see narratives that tell the stories of enlightened democratic nations in the west that are under siege from fundamentalist terrorists, while others tell stories about profit seeking, capitalistic war-mongers that destabilize entire regions. We see the story of the hard working Germans that have to finance the weaker economies of the EU members compete with narratives where the German's are punishing those that do not share their strict views on economic success.

As those are tied to spatial as well as temporal changes of power (Elias, 1988: 71) it comes to no one's surprise these kind of competing narratives led to a return of prominence of the term *nation* (Calhoun, 2007). While still a heavily contested concept with multiple ideas associated to it, it provides both a historic – thus temporal – as well as territorial – thus spatial - component (Calhoun, 2007), and is thus one of the strongest differentiators available, when comparing macro developments of societies (Bachleiter et al., 2013: 179pp). Therefore the return of the discussion of nation and nation state happened in both, the broader political as well as the social scientific debate, after it had been confined to the disciples of the political sciences and history since the end of the cold war, and thus can't be ignored and has to be research again (Calhoun 2007). At the same time the interest in international reporting and news rose again and the field re-gained it's prominence in large parts of the world, after those type of news reports were largely marginalized during the 90ties and the period of the so called "Pax Americana" (Obijiofor/Hanusch, 2011; Edy 2006). This was necessary as previously stable political communities were confronted by disparate economic and societal needs that journalism had to address (Obijiofor/ Hanusch, 2011 or Zelizer/Allan, 2011).

So up to this point we see that there are various issues colliding:

- Firstly, technological and societal advances made it possible to access information about events happening around the world in real-time.

- Secondly there are obvious differences in the meaning that is attributed to those events and so the political realities made it necessary to take another look at the idea of political entities in the form of nation and how they are affected by those developments.

In many ways all of this can be tied to the events of September 11th 2001. The infamous day in world history when terrorist attacks destroyed the World Trade Center and damaged the Pentagon building in the United States (Edy, 2006; Volkmer, 2011: 309). A single attack that destroyed a mighty nation's iconic symbols of economic and military power on live television on a worldwide stage, making it the *first truly global media event* (Langenbacher/Shain, 2010 or Grusin, 2010). At this point the nations of the world rallied behind the wounded superpower that retaliated against the perceived enemies. The US started their fight against other nations that may harbor or support the responsible terrorist groups in a quest that should – at least in accordance to official statements – protect the democratic societies of the world. But soon the global initiative that was born from the intent to help the international community endure, crumbled part by part as the war on terror proved to affect things on a national level and the related ideologies (Bartov, 2011, 145). Even now - 14 years later - the war on terror still rages as the middle-east is finding itself under assault from IS. It is the nations of the world that have to embed those developments into their ongoing depictions of the new current societal circumstances, while economic crisis, political conflicts and natural disasters unfold. And there are very different forms of interpretations of the war on terror to be found around the globe, especially in the news coverage concerning it.

Thus the need to discuss societies, their ideas to create a group as well as distinguish themselves from 'the others' and communicating this within the societies is currently from uttermost importance. It is a remarkable feature of collectives to cultivate concepts of belonging and cohesion which transcend the needs and ideas of the individual in favor of the group at large, thereby creating meaning that is collective rather than individual (Durkheim, 2001), but how are seemingly universal concepts like democracy or citizenship affected by such developments, when taking a look at events that had such strong ties to the idea of nations? To tackle this question this article follows the proposition of Michael Schudson (2011a:XVIII pp) that the news media are an ideal research object as they are societies trusted agents that should provide information on what really happens.

Meaning and Society

As stated in the introduction, discussions of societal meaning have a long tradition in the social sciences. In this tradition the sociological work of Emile Durkheim (2001) and his explorations of collectively shared ideas and values, is one of the central pillars for discussion (Alexander (ed.), 1988). It was with his early 20th century work on the complexities of religious beliefs and moral feelings within communities – using the example of Australian Aborigines – that included the argument that social groups, individuals who could gather in physical proximity, do not only share an understanding that they are different from outsides, in regards to their physical position, but also when taking values and believes into account (Durkheim, 2001: 210). Those come to prominence when acts of 'collective effervescence' happen in a community, brought forward through a shared event that places individuals together. This was the concept later on used by Durkheim's nephew Maurice Halbwachs (1992) to develop the theory of 'collective memories', a group's capacity for conserving certain information including the meaning tied to it (Le Goff, 1992: 51)

Despite those ideas being developed by researching small, close-knit groups, Durkheim suggested that it is indeed possible to apply them to nations as well (Durkheim, 2001: 221). Here the shared values and believes take the form of national symbols, that have affective meaning for societies – they are loved, feared and worshipped just as the religious totems that are described in the elementary forms of the religious life (Durkheim, 2001 and Alexander, 1988). Again these sentiments are shared and refined by later theoreticians like Hobsbawm (1990), who argued in that symbols of a nation help manifest the idea that they are more than imagined communities, as Benedict Anderson (2006: 187) wrote in his seminal work on nationalism.

In the post 9/11 landscape these ideas of belonging and proximity have been well researched topics (e.g.: Alexander, 2006 & 2012; Calhoun, 2007; Kazin, 2010; Langenbacher/Shain, 2010; Smeleser, 2004; Warburg, 2010). Further, empirical work has been done in the different fields of the social sciences as well. There has been a discussion about how the media tackled the issues of changes in values after 9/11 (Schudson, 2011b) as well as studies on the consequences on nationalism, like the one completed by Kemmelmeier and Winter (2008). They measured higher scores on nationalism when the test subjects were answering questions aware that a national flag was present. In these regards most findings seem to align with

Durkheim's concepts, but there are concepts that are pushing the boundaries of Durkheimian theory, by applying them to cultural tools like literature, monuments or rituals themselves instead of the associated societal processes (Carrier/Kabalek, 2014: 41).

The reasons for this problematic application can arguably be found in the situation that in contemporary modern societies, the rituals that Durkheim described are not only rare, but also very hard to trace and anticipate (ibid.), and those are hard to analyze form an empirical point of view.

Using this as a foundation the following thought emerges regarding the events of September 11th 2001. The terrorist attacks led to an act of collective effervescence around the world, as the symbolic pillars of the US military and economic might crumbled (Langenbacher/Shain, 2010: 6). Because of this it was an emotional event, which led to a strong reaction (Kazin, 2010). Yet this 'effervescence' is not to be found in media coverage. It may be the topic of media coverage and the media may position it for a longer discussion, but the effervescence in itself it is not transferable to media products when following the descriptions provided by Durkheim in his work. Further the media coverage is not to be understood as the collective memory associated with the events, as discussed by Halbwachs (Carrier/Kabalek, 2014). But journalists are a carrier group of societally relevant information that is deemed important enough for other members in the given societies to at least consider it, if one follows the diction Jeffrey Alexander (2012: 16), that is in turn borrowed by Max Weber's work on the sociology of religion (Weber, 2010: 335pp). Thus when taking a look at the media reports discussing the events, this published work has to be understood as a form of *cultural tools* that are available to us as social scientists, as James Wertsch (2002: 13) puts it, which are assembled by the specific agents tasked to do so – e.g.: journalists (Schudson, 2011a).

With this we can move forward and get closer to the central question of this article. As discussed before the events of 9/11 brought the idea of nation state once again forward in the societal discussion. Further we know that different societies were differently affected by the events and the fall out of them. As written in the introduction the different nations of the world are not able to participate on all the developments of affecting the international stage of politics in the same way as others. There are affected countries as well as those that use military or economic power to act on situations, while others are only able to observe developments and try to sensibly include them into the ongoing political and societal debates

within their respective borders. This needs to lead to different interpretations of meaning bestowed upon the events of this day. But those interpretations tie with other ideas as well. Ideas like citizenship and democracy, which have re-entered the discussion in the public sphere (Calhoun 2007). Ideas that are both central issues in the aftermath of an attack, which saw both the ongoing dismantlement of civil liberties and personal freedoms, as well as questions of belonging and being together. And while it is impossible to trace the collective memory or even the collective effervescence of those developments through the lenses of the media it becomes possible to take a look at the media depictions of those events. These available cultural tools make it possible to gain insights into how the cultural surroundings may affect the meaning that can be attributed towards certain developments. While not fully realized collective representations or memories they allow for a systematized comparison and discussion of possible differences in meaning. Ideas like democracy like citizenship are to be understood as symbolic totems in the Durkheimian sense (Durkheim, 2001: 88pp) that give societies ideas to rally under, yet charged with different ideas that are realized *by the school of collective life that the individual(s)* (Durkheim, 2001: 318) in a given society have experienced.

Austria and the War on Terror

It was September 20th 2001, a bit more than a week after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 when then US-President George W. Bush Jr. addressed the US congress. It was not the first time since the attacks that the President of the United States held a public speech, but it was this speech that made the coming war on terror a fully realized construct with defined values to be defended and villains to be hunted.

A binary storytelling of heroes and villains emerged as the story demanded it for the societal construct of 9/11 to emerge (Alexander, 2012). He called for a global war on terror in a runaway world, which was thought to be post-national (Giddens, 1999; Calhoun, 2007). A war on terror, that would influence and shape politics around the world for more than ten years. In this speech he said:

> *Our war on terror begins with Al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated. Americans are asking "Why do they hate us?" They hate what they see right here in this chamber: a democratically elected government. Their*

leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other. They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. – George W. Bush Jr., 20th of September 2001 (see Endnote 1).

Indeed the President Bush was proven right in his claims, the fight for what he called democracy in this speech is still ongoing. A fight that began with the death of approximately 3000 persons, most of them citizens of the US, but since then laid waste to several countries, cost the lives of uncounted combatants as well as civilians and is a seemingly endless battle to secure the freedom of democracy as understood and defined by the persons in power in the USA.

But – as explored before – democracy is not a value that is only treasured in the USA, citizenship and belonging not only a questions for those that were addressed in the speech of Bush. In the language of Durkheim, we find strong symbols that are called upon, that have a totemic meaning attached to them outside if the attacked nation of the USA and the statements of Bush, which were heard around the world, as well as their consequences in the form of the war on terror. And just like the last chapter argued many nations of the world found themselves at the periphery of those announcements and the ideas found in those regions had to be aligned with the developments that came to be because of the war on terror.

One such country is Austria, a small well-off democratic republic that was not only an empire just 100 years ago but was also occupied after the Second World War, gaining both political independence and the right to be a democratic state in its own right only in 1955. Afterwards it was necessary for the political actors to deal with the fact that their country was at the border region between eastern and western power blocks and had been involved in one of the gravest genocides of human history (Rathkolb, 2005: 5pp). Thus the political powers within the country tried to build the identity of an uncompromising neutral state that had a strong democratic legacy that was strictly against war and distanced it from the nationalistic ideas that led to the rise of National Socialism in the 1930ties (ibid.: 9). Because of this complex situation the idea of citizenship in Austria finds itself at the strange spot that it has to include both, the values found in human rights, democratic participation and non-violence, as well as strong right wing tendencies – and include law and order policies as well as sentiments against people that are not from Austrian

heritage. Thus the idea of citizenship is a strong inclusion mechanism that is used mark people (ibid.).

This situation creates a dilemma in regards the War on Terror. While Austria indeed is a country that cherishes democratic values which it struggled to gain and has a tradition to uphold its political independence in supranational conflicts its political leaders had to take action as the War on Terror started, but they have been at the periphery of the political struggles of the 21st century. Nevertheless stories about the events that followed must be embedded into the ongoing process of societal sense making within the nation, as it finds itself at the periphery of geopolitical developments, but not unaffected by them as e.g. economic and political surroundings change.

Taking the concept of sociologist Edward Shills (1981) into account, Austria as a political entity is a peripheral actor in the global stage, with limited chances to define on how the reaction attributed to certain developments should be. It has to observe and discuss the consequences after the fact. And the media in the country have to do so as well when they formulate the news stories that concern international developments, like the war on terror.

Using this assessment the article will attempt to answer the following research question:

(RQ1) Is the debate regarding democracy & citizenship manifesting itself differently in a leading US and Austrian media over the course of the first 10 years of the war on terror?

Specifically the focus will be on (1) national politics, (2) international relationships, (3) the effects on democracy in the broader world, (4) the changed values of democracy and citizenship, and (5) the role of patriotism.

Building a case study and the used methodology

This research question makes it necessary to address several fields of action regarding the methodological design of the study. Firstly there has to be the acknowledgement that how meaning is bestowed is neigh untraceable, as the involved actors, symbols, interactions and all the associated variables especially when taking a longitudinal research design into account. But what is possible is to trace the cultural artifacts that are brought forward in societies associated with a topic. Artifacts like newspaper, books, television and radio broadcasting and all other forms of archived materials that can be tied to an event. Taking a look at the

events of 9/11 and the war on terror it is easy to do so. The sheer amount of material available is rich for research and it has been researched in a multitude of ways (cf. Schudson, 2011b). Yet when taking a look at the material that was published and discussed in the USA – the nation hit by the attacks – it becomes obvious that the New York Times (NYT) did indeed provide an extraordinary look on the issues that emerged as Michael Schudson argues (Schudson, 2011b: 46pp). They provided in deep reports on nearly every facet of developments that followed and covered both national as well as international consequences of the attacks with uttermost care (ibid.). With this the Times could prove themselves as a central carrier for meaning attributed to 9/11 in the USA.

As comparison object for Austria the quality newspaper Die Presse was chosen. While it may be a more conservative orientated publication, it is the one Austrian representative of the media scape that matches the international standards for a quality publication best (Plasser/Lengauer 2010), and thus is to be understood as functionally equivalent to the NYT (Bachleiter et al., 2013).

Data collection

As explained, the project aimed to analyze data gained through content analysis of newspaper reports in two newspapers. The newspapers are published in two nations, with very different levels of involvement in the war on terror, but are both from importance towards their relative audience. The NYT, is not only an opinion leader but it set the stage on the discussion of the war on terror for years and is commonly identified as one of the premiere newspapers worldwide. Die Presse is the one quality newspaper that is most commonly identified in Austria and has a huge impact on elite discussion in the country, as well as the attention from other national newspapers regarding reports on national and international politics (Kaltenbrunner et al., 2010; Magin/Stark, 2011; Plasser/Lengauer, 2010).

With this a base level comparison can be arranged as functional equivalence can be argued (Bachleiter et al., 2013), regarding the societal function for the respective settings. Using this is starting point it was decided individual articles as units of analysis foxing forward, with the decision to do a complete analysis of the material published during 5 especially relevant sampling points, which all consisted of fourteen days of newspaper issues. This makes 28 issues per sampling point, which results in exactly 140 newspaper issues. The first sampling point was chosen to be the two weeks immediately following the terrorist attacks, as the event that

set the discussion as well as the political developments in motion. Afterwards the decision was made to take the two weeks surrounding the first, fifth and tenth anniversary of the attacks as three additional sampling points as an online archive research of the respective publications showed that these weeks had an higher level of reporting on the issue of 9/11 and its ties to the war on terror then the rest of period in the research window. This also matches the idea of journalists putting a special emphasis on round anniversaries of relevant events (Edy, 2006). The final sampling point as decided on the two weeks following the liquidation of terrorist leader Osama Bin Laden in early May 2011, as this event marked a potential point of closure for the story of 9/11 and the war on terror, as it was interpreted as a symbolic act that finally eliminated the central actor of the attacks that may have shattered the cosmopolitan dream (Alexander, 2012: 162).

The choice to limit the research on ten weeks spread over five sampling points that cover ten years made it possible to do complete analysis of the newspapers in questions. Each and every printed issue was thoroughly looked upon and each and every piece of news tied to 9/11 and/or the war on terror in this period was included in the sample. As such a very diverse corpus could be built, including not only news reports but also theater play and book critiques, sports coverage that had to address the developments, traffic information or even TV schedules on programming concerning itself with the topic. As the research question contains ideas lite citizenship and democracy this was especially important, because questions of belonging and political involvement are also questions that can be raised in contributions, like e.g. theater critiques or sports reports. Because of this this choice a broad view on the topic could be reconstructed that could trace all the different nuances of the stories that were tied to the research topic. This corpus included in its final form n=653 pieces of text from Die Presse and n=1973 from the New York Times. This discrepancy is easily explained with the fact that the NYT was both very close to the attacks themselves and later on based in the nation that is the main actor in the war on terror, while Austria remained on the sidelines as explained before. Yet the data collected was more than substantial enough to do a specific analysis for both newspaper and compare it.

Analysis

This material was used as the foundation for a content analysis based on the model proposed by German social scientist Philipp Mayring (2008), which was

adopted to the particular needs of this project. Firstly it the text material was screened and short synopsis for each and every piece of text was written. Those were deconstructed into individual story threads afterwards and those threads were classified as main and secondary story threads and given content based descriptions. At the end of the analysis of the text material 53 different threads were found in the material that told the story of 9/11 and the war on terror in the 10 years that followed the attacks. Of these 53 threads only five were considered relevant for the questions discussed within this paper. They were called "politics" (1), "international relations" (2), "broader world" (3), "changed world" (4) and "patriotism" (5). The topic of politics were all the discussions about how politics at a national level were affected by 9/11 and the war on terror in the corresponding country. Here the discussions about the repercussions of 9/11 on democracy found their main expression, as questions about civil rights, security and safety were discussed on a national level. The second thread, addressed all story threads that concerned the effect of 9/11 and the war on terror on the international stage, once again putting more of an emphasis on the ideas of democracy and how the construct of nations. The third strand – broader world –was the one that included political issues that emerged in the different countries around the world after 9/11, while the fourth concerned itself with the changes that happened around the world in the 10 years after the attacks. The final one – patriotism – was the one that concerned discussions about the relation between good and bad nationalism, and how one can or even needs to be a patriot in times of crisis. With this the main issues that will be tied to movement of the story and the importance could be traced and followed. One published piece could follow several of those issues but for the analysis the strands were interpreted on their own.

Results

In the present study the NYT and Die Presse were researched during the first decade following 9/11 in regards how the ideas of democracy and citizenship are discussed and which meaning is bestowed upon those story threads following the attacks while the war on terror rages.

Because the aim of this article is to provide insight into which meaning is found in the cultural tools that are available for research in a deeply involved nation compared to a nation that is in periphery of the developments the next chapter will break the results into three parts. The discussion of the depiction of events in the

Times, followed by the depiction in Die Presse, before a comparison is made of the results found in the reporting by both newspapers during the discussion of the findings. This is further divided into the different threads that were analyzed and with which intensity they were presented at which point in time.

The Discussion in the New York Times

While the discussion in the NYT had a large focus on the developments in New York and the USA in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, the relevant story threads for this article starts out with a large emphasis on the issues that may now affect the broader world (8.29% of the coverage) and especially the international relations (13.59%) going forward. One year later the emphasis had already shifted and the coverage focused more on national politics and the changed reality of the post-9/11 world. This trend continued from this point on through all sampling points, but the death of Bin Laden, as national politics were interestingly not that intensively discussed in detail as this closing event unfolded.

Table 1— Quantitative analysis of strands in the NYT (own analysis, n = 1973).

Story strands in the NYT		9/11 - Terror Attacks	First Anniv.	Fifth Anniv.	Death of Bin Laden	Tenth Anniv.	Sum
Broader World	Yes	0.92%	4.26%	2.81%	13.53%	4.49%	3.95%
	Yes, Main	12.67%	1.68%	0.00%	0.00%	0.32%	3.50%
	Sum	13.59%	5.94%	2.81%	13.53%	4.81%	7.45%
Changed World	Yes	1.84%	5.68%	8.44%	12.78%	10.90%	6.59%
	Yes, Main	2.53%	3.49%	2.19%	6.02%	6.09%	3.65%
	Sum	4.38%	9.17%	10.63%	18.80%	16.99%	10.24%
International Relations	Yes	8.29%	3.62%	2.19%	2.26%	1.28%	3.95%
	Yes, Main	0.00%	0.39%	1.88%	8.27%	0.64%	1.12%
	Sum	8.29%	4.01%	4.06%	10.53%	1.92%	5.07%
Politics (Nationalized)	Yes	2.53%	5.17%	10.63%	1.50%	4.49%	5.12%
	Yes, Main	3.23%	4.78%	7.19%	3.01%	3.53%	4.51%
	Sum	5.76%	9.95%	17.81%	4.51%	8.01%	9.63%
Patriotism	Yes	0.23%	0.39%	0.00%	0.00%	0.32%	0.25%
	Yes, Main	2.07%	0.78%	0.00%	0.75%	0.96%	0.96%
	Sum	2.30%	1.16%	0.00%	0.75%	1.28%	1.22%
Sum	n=	434	774	320	133	312	1973
Yes = story strand was part of an article; Yes, Main = story strand was primary topic of the article							

   With the details to those developments can be found in table 1, the actual content that is associate with this macro threads of the story will be described in the following. Both democracy and citizenship begin as latent issues in 2001. Democracy itself is reaffirmed as a strong and important issue that has come under attack and the citizens of the USA are the victims of the attacks. These story threads continue into 2002, as democracy has become a contested ideal as the war on terror has begun in all earnest and questions are asked if ethnicity and citizenship are related in any way. As tensions against Arabs and Muslims continue the questions are raised, why there is the tendency to relate good citizens with a specific ethnicity. At the fifth anniversary of the attacks the topic has taken a turn for the worse, the ideal of democracy seems to be lost according to the material published, as the terrorists seemingly managed to the US and its allies to abandon their ideals as war crimes, torture and imperialism are discussed. The story strands associated with citizenship depicture the Muslim American communities that try to fight for their rights to be recognized as citizens. Moving forward to 2011 it is argued that democracy and its importance has endured, despite the war on terror, which nearly led the US as a nation to forget the values associated with democracy and its importance. But the death of Bin Laden and the political uprisings in large parts of the Middle East reaffirmed the strength of democracy as a symbol for an enlightened society. Citizenship meanwhile has lost once again its importance in the discussion and is replaced by a new vigor of the US to reposition itself in the international community. Interestingly the construct of patriotism and democracy do not align in this discussion very often and patriotism stays well in the background of the discussion.

   The discussions that are relevant are mainly tying in with predominate story threads concerning the changed world and international relations in the post-9/11 world. This is especially interesting as those threads were not always the most prominent ones regarding their percentage as seen in table 1.

Die Presse and the Austrian view on the issue

The Austrian newspaper Die Presse has far less published material for analysis. Expectedly so as it is in the periphery of both the events of 9/11 as well as being a witness of and not a participant in the war on terror. The most interesting observation is the one that the topic of the broader world and the effects 9/11 and the war on

terror had on the world start out as the most important part of the discussion and is only put into the second most discussed spot during the coverage of the 10th anniversary of 9/11. For the detailed results on this look at Table 2. Which includes the percentage of each item.

Table 1 – Quantitative analysis of strands in Die Presse (own analysis, n=653).

Story strands in Die Presse		9/11 – Terror Attacks	First Anniv.	Fifth Anniv.	Death of Bin Laden	Tenth Anniv.	Sum
Broader World	Yes	16.98%	18.18%	11.69%	11.11%	13.04%	15.62%
	Yes, Main	3.77%	1.65%	0.00%	4.44%	4.35%	3.06%
	Sum	20.75%	19.83%	11.69%	15.56%	17.39%	18.68%
Changed World	Yes	6.92%	8.26%	9.09%	4.44%	14.13%	8.27%
	Yes, Main	4.40%	5.79%	3.90%	4.44%	21.74%	7.04%
	Sum	11.32%	14.05%	12.99%	8.89%	35.87%	15.31%
International Relations	Yes	7.86%	10.74%	6.49%	6.67%	4.35%	7.66%
	Yes, Main	2.83%	4.96%	1.30%	6.67%	0.00%	2.91%
	Sum	10.69%	15.70%	7.79%	13.33%	4.35%	10.57%
Politics (Nationalized)	Yes	6.92%	6.61%	6.49%	4.44%	8.70%	6.89%
	Yes, Main	1.26%	3.31%	3.90%	0.00%	1.09%	1.84%
	Sum	8.18%	9.92%	10.39%	4.44%	9.78%	8.73%
Patriotism	Yes	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	Yes, Main	0.00%	0.83%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.15%
	Sum	0.00%	0.83%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.15%
Sum	n=	318	121	77	45	92	653

Yes = story strand was part of an article; Yes, Main = story strand was primary topic of the article

On a content level the story threads start out in 2001 with the idea that the ideal of democracy – understood as symbol for the modern world – as well as the citizens of the world under attack. This basic claim that the ideal of democracy is under attack continues in 2002, but the question is asked if it is possible to defend the ideal with a capitalistic war. Interestingly citizenship is not an issue this point, as the focus is on macro political structures and the disappearance of cosmopolitanism. In 2006 the story threads of democracy and citizenship are discussed most vehemently. The problem of the increasingly difficult relations between the US and the western European nations as well as Muslim citizens in all the discussed countries are

coming to the forefront. From this bleak situation a turnaround seems to be realized 5 years later as both the death of Bin Laden as well as the 10th anniversary of the are used to argue that democracy is societies true calling, despite all the crisis it has to endure and that the ideas of citizenship and responsible citizenship were reclaimed during the uprisings in the middle east which provides the chance for closure in the first time since 2001.

The most interesting fact in this part is, that citizenship was not an issue as the war on terror started to gain traction during 2002 and that patriotism was again never an issue that was discussed with any stronger connotations.

Comparison and Discussion

The meaning that is attributed towards the war on terror following 9/11 is different between the two research newspaper and it shows strong national differences. At first it has to be noted that in both media it is obvious that the idea of democracy is a sacred concept – a totem – in the sense of Durkheim. The events reported on are perceived and depicted as an attack on this ideal. And there is a group – the citizens of the west or the USA, depending on the newspaper – that are the worshippers of democracy that have to suffer as the conflict unfolds. The ideas that are discussed match each other in certain regards on the level of fact based storytelling and this is obvious in the cultural tools researched. But the meaning derived manifests itself differently in the two compared newspapers. The first part of the discussion matches very well, as shortly after the attacks the concept of democracy seems under threat and the idea that there are citizens that are victims can be traced easily in both publications. But already at this point the story in the NYT is much more nationalized and embedded into the idea of a national conflict than it will ever be in Die Presse. In the following year this gap expands. The sacred construct of democracy is under pressure is the key issue in both nations. But the difference is the following: The NYT presents democracy as a contested national ideal that may be shared when fighting for enlightenment in other nations with military power. In Die Presse democracy is presented as a universal value that needs to be claimed by insight and not force and that force will always destroy democracy, internal and externally. This also matches the idea presented in the research of Durkheim that the groups may share a holy totem, yet not the meaning and ideas tied to it. This becomes especially vivid as the

discussion about the consequences for national citizenship is already a fully formed construct in the Times by 2002. In the conducted research the 2006 window becomes the final braking point, the transatlantic tensions between Europe and the US on how to wage a war on terror are at their height and in both newspaper it is affirmed that the ideal of democracy is lost. But while in the Times the terrorists are used a frame of reference, as winners in this conflict this thought is not the primary one in the discussion in Die Presse. Here the idea that the USA sacrificed values and ideals like freedom of expression, the right for privacy and the dignity of the individual for an endless war that seems to serve capitalistic interest prevails. It takes till 2011 for the story threads and their meaning to realign once again. This can be seen in the coverage as the discussion about the still ongoing economic crisis and the then still new president of the United States in person of Barrack Obama provide strong topical links in the researched media. Both the evaluation of the political situation as well as the meaning for democracy align at this point.

In many regards the reporting is influenced by the involvement and the national problems that are experienced in an event, but because of the strength of the underlying totem it becomes possible for the stories that are derived from specific events – like 9/11 and the war on terror – to split up in their meaning regarding the society they have to be embedded into and they prove flexible enough to realign later on when the circumstances demand it once again.

Conclusion

The goal of this research was to try to find if out the discussion of democracy & citizenship in a leading US and Austrian media over the course of the first 10 years of the war on terror is matching or not. And if so, if differences may be explained by the national background of the media. The answer is quite simple: There are differences and they are indeed tied to the national debates and how the nations can position themselves at a given point of time because of further developments – be they the raging war on terror or even later on the election of new officials like Barrack Obama, who was endorsed by the Austrian media, or even the shared burden of the economic crisis. National issues are debated stronger in the US, as was to be expected because of its role in the war on terror and as well as being the nation that lost its symbols of economic and military might in the initial terrorist attacks.

Democracy was a highly discussed item in both media but it became evident that the meaning attributed towards changed regarding the supranational situation and how this supranational situation had to be framed from a nationalized point of view. Citizenship itself is a more problematic construct as it is used to discuss the role of belonging in the world that thought that a cosmopolitan dream can be realized, as Ulrich Beck (2004) put it. It is the construct that shows that becomes increasingly referenced when the problems escalate and both an in- as well as an out-group need to be defined.

While this article is based on what is ultimately a content analysis it offers the chance to see how different meanings are attributed to what can be understood as shared holy symbols or totems in the words of Durkheim (2001), like democracy. This provides the chance to think about differences in how different communities around the world try to embed different events, as it is seemingly necessary to reference the idea of nation state to provide a differentiating factor to do so.

But further research should try to move away from the nation construct and employ other concepts of belonging and do research on different kinds of material – from traditional media to (social) web based content as well. This would in turn mean that any kind of content analysis needs to be supported by interviews or surveys, which should generate a large amount of data to understand why events are embedded in specific ways and identify key mechanisms about this.

Endnotes

1 - This quote was taken from the he 21st of September 2001 edition of the New York Times, which included the transcript of the speech bush held in front of the US congress. The transcript was filed under the series "A NATION CHALLENGED".

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