



ImagiNation: news discourse, nationhood and civil society

Paul Frosh

HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

Gadi Wolfsfeld

HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

Ever since Benedict Anderson introduced the idea, it has become a commonplace of social theory, communications and cultural studies that 'the nation' is an 'imagined community', and that the mass media are primary though by no means exclusive agents of its imagining (Anderson famously emphasized the novel, the newspaper and 'print-capitalism' [1991: 24–46]). The phrase 'imagined community' has become hard to avoid, either in one's reading or one's writing about the ways in which individuals experience their relationships to social, cultural, political and economic collectivities. As Schudson puts it: 'All societies are fictive. Personal identification with any grouping of people beyond those one encounters face to face in daily life (and perhaps, even there, too) depends on an imaginative leap' (1994: 24).

The question remains, however, as to the character of the imagining at work in these imagined relationships, and the mechanisms by which different communications media, in various contexts, facilitate and constrain its performance. Key factors in these imagined social relations obviously include the shaping of temporal and spatial experiences by media output and consumption. The ways in which, for instance, broadcast television and radio schedules reflect and give shared coherence to daily, weekly and seasonal routines (Ellis, 2000; Scannell, 1996; Silverstone, 1994), and how universal access to broadcasting produces a temporally and discursively unified public out of a geographically dispersed populace (Morley, 2004; Thompson, 1995). Such attributes of spatial, temporal and communicative (usually linguistic) connectedness through mass media clearly contribute to the sense of belonging to a larger collectivity.

In addition to these, however, no one would deny the importance of representational issues (Berlant, 1991), especially the construction of cumulative media representations of societies which are implicitly national: images and narratives of bounded social and territorial wholes in possession of distinctive characteristics. Such cumulative media representations provide individuals with a version of what their societies look like as a whole, imparting a seemingly natural sense of how society 'is' and how one is located within it (including the sense that society forms an enveloping space 'within which' one is located) – what Charles Taylor has called 'the social imaginary': 'the ways in which people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows' (2002: 106). Among these representations' central motifs is the individual's relation to the social totality, expressed via connections to apparently intermediate sub-units such as social classes, ethnic groups, and geographical, occupational and cultural communities. And among their central effects is the sense that the nation or national society has an ongoing existence, independent of – or even prior to – the institutions of the nation-state. Thus these representations contribute both to a process of 'narrative accrual' whereby nationhood is constituted over time (Attwood, quoted in Hartley, 2004: 20), and also to a sense 'of "the people" and of civil society as self-organizing entities with existence distinctive from particular rulers' (Calhoun, 1999: 218).

Perhaps the clearest point of reference for accrued, taken-for-granted, media representations of implicitly national societies is Michael Billig's concept of 'banal nationalism'. Billig uses this term to refer to the fact that 'in the established nations, there is a continual "flagging", or reminding, of nationhood' (1995: 8). The chief paradox of such flagging is that it is routine and unnoticed:

In so many little ways, the citizenry are daily reminded of their national place in a world of nations. However, this reminding is so familiar, so continual, that it is not consciously registered as reminding. The metonymic image of banal nationalism is not a flag which is consciously waved with fervent passion; it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building. (1995: 8)

Billig suggests that banal nationalism is central to the reproduction of nationhood in the established countries of the West, which – aside from times of crisis (such as wars) – depend less upon the 'hot' flag-waving, consciously mobilizing forms of nationalism and patriotism to which he contrasts it. What happens, however, when *national crisis is itself the norm*, when lack of confidence in individual and collective continuity is the context and horizon of everyday life? What happens when one's physical, legal, social and emotional situation within a nation, and the latter's 'place within a world of nations', is felt to be chronically insecure? Is such a situation – one faced by populations in some of the less 'established' nations (among them liberal democracies), as well as arguably among the more established ones in the wake of

9/11 – actually met primarily by hot nationalist fervour? Does it not also require a representational response by which individuals can perceive how their society works as a whole, can find an image of their society's coherence and its potential continuity even when under threat, thereby confirming their relationship to their social environment and maintaining a sense of security? And would not such a representational response, and the image of social coherence it produces, reaffirm the integrity and durability of 'the nation' as an everyday experiential and symbolic environment – a totality – which precedes and supersedes the political institutions of the nation-state?

Mediated civil nationhood

Adapting and extending Billig's ideas, we would like to postulate that nations undergoing severe, protracted political and often military crisis do not forgo banal nationalism for flag-waving patriotism, which is not to say that the latter has no role to play. Rather, we would propose that in such societies the conspicuous display of seemingly autonomous, grassroots social affinities, independent of state initiative and control, is of paramount importance. In crisis conditions, media representations of affinity 'from below' can turn the everyday resilience of social life itself into a demonstrative national value, and ultimately into a myth of national character.

We call this more demonstrative version of banal nationalism, 'mediated civil nationhood'. It is 'civil' since it appears to be embedded in the everyday interactions of the citizenry rather than the state or organized politics and culture, contributing to the production of the nation's 'civil society'. The latter term is employed in the modern sense of a self-organizing domain of social life, based upon (non-family) interpersonal relationships and more abstract forms of interaction (such as economic activity), which is largely autonomous of and even opposed to the state (see Cohen and Arato, 1992).

There are two key problems in using the term 'civil' in conjunction with 'nationhood', however. The first is that it can tend to disguise the *ethnic* character of nationhood. While the debate among historians and social theorists on the precise nature, origins, development and characteristics of nations and nationalism – and their relationship to ethnic and other forms of identity and affinity – is far too vast and intricate to reproduce here, the relevance of ethnicity to definitions of nationhood cannot be ignored. Hence, for instance, Smith's (1986) distinction between a 'Western' model of nationhood, which defines the nation as a territorial community of citizens bound by laws, and an East European or 'German' model in which statehood is based on '*ethnie*', as well as Ignatieff's (1993) similar but not identical opposition between 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalism.

The second problem, related to the first, results from the semantic and morphological proximity between the words 'civic' and 'civil' (a consequence of

their shared Latin roots and their common concern with the citizen). This proximity can elide an important distinction between the use of 'civic' to refer to definitions of nationhood as applying to a community of citizens resident in the same territory, and the use of 'civil', in its association with civil society, to designate a domain of social interaction (the 'ordinary' lives of citizens). This terminological resemblance might imply that representations of nationhood which foreground civil society are also likely to promote a non-ethnic sense of the nation as a territorial community of citizens.

We would resist any a priori acceptance of this implication. Our interest is more particularly in the ways in which civil representations of nationhood in times of crisis are inflected in ways that are *both* 'civic-nationalist' and 'ethnic-nationalist'. While the interactions between these inflections of nationhood can take many forms, it is our intuition – based upon Billig's analysis of banal nationalism – that the ethnic inflections will tend to remain in the background while the civic inflections will be given prominence: that nationhood under crisis is represented as explicitly inclusive of all citizens because it foregrounds the everyday social resilience of ordinary people, but that such resilience and solidarity is implicitly underpinned, and very occasionally undermined, by the exclusive ethnic affinities between depicted social actors. In a sense, we are arguing that the conflation between definitions of civic nationalism and the notion of civil society is not simply a terminological accident. Rather, it reflects an actual convergence in understandings of social and national space, one that tends to overlook or disguise the issue of ethnicity.

If representations of social affinity 'from below' in times of crisis produce 'mediated civil nationhood', what exactly do we mean by the word 'mediated'? First, and most obviously, that although nationhood is represented, constructed and imagined through a variety of institutions and symbolic systems, the mass media, especially radio and television, have taken on an increasingly important role. However, nationhood is also mediated because 'the nation' is a large abstract collectivity that cannot be photographed or interviewed directly. Nations can be represented audio-visually through the use of overt symbols (flags, state symbols, figureheads, national colours and anthems), but they can also be portrayed through the assembly of their constituent parts (families, communities, physical locales), via a collage of everyday social domains, populations and activities. The media, in other words, put together the represented components of the nation's civil society as a kind of *aggregation of social sub-units*.

In order to appreciate the nature of this aggregation it is useful to bear in mind Calhoun's (1999) distinction between three main forms of social belonging: communities, categories and publics. Communities are 'relatively small groups that are not primarily constituted through formal political-legal institutions but through informal, directly interpersonal relationships'. Categories, in contrast, are 'based on the putative cultural similarity or jural equivalence of persons, and commonly comprised of large numbers of people with a low

density of directly interpersonal ties'. Finally, echoing Habermas, publics are 'quasi-groups constituted by mutual engagement in discourse aimed at determining the nature of social institutions including states' (Calhoun, 1999: 220). Physical scale is crucial to these distinctions:

At the local and small-scale level, communities, cultural categories and public discourse easily overlap. But on a larger scale, community in the sense of dense, multiplex networks of interpersonal relationships becomes impossible. We are left with similarities – a very different matter – or publics. (1999: 222)

The nation is clearly a category; so, according to Calhoun, are large sub-units within national societies that are based upon cultural similarity, including ethnic groups. Moreover, as more abstract entities based upon similarities imputed to people rather than direct interaction or physical proximity between them, categories are much harder to film than communities – as we have already suggested. Physical scale imposes constraints upon audio-visual representation: filming the nation, civil society and even ethnic groups involves putting them together primarily from representations of community. It is the nature of that 'putting together' in times of crisis, of what it entails and what kind of nationhood it can produce, that we will address more concretely in what follows.

Crisis and nationhood in Israeli television news

How does mediated civil nationhood operate? In particular, what kinds of discursive work do mass media need to perform in order to construct representations of nationhood 'from below' under conditions of perpetual crisis? Obviously, given the cumulative nature of the representations involved, answering this question would require the close textual analysis of a broad range of media output over time for any given society. Given the limits of space, therefore, we will attempt only a preliminary sketch of some of the mechanisms of mediated civil nationhood by closely examining news discourse in one extreme example. The case in question is the coverage of a Palestinian suicide bombing of a bus in Jerusalem by Israeli Channel Two News during their main 8 p.m. evening broadcast.¹ We think that the investigation of such a case can be useful for a number of reasons.

First, among all media genres, news broadcasts are perhaps the most central to the production of national social imaginaries, to the collage of images we have of the social totality and our relationship with it. In particular, the news broadcast exemplifies two facets of what Couldry (2003) calls the 'myth of the mediated centre': (1) the news broadcast purportedly reports those events that are of key interest to the society *as a society* (and not just to this or that group within a society) – it therefore appears to be coextensive with 'society' as a collective entity; (2) the news is gathered together by a specialist organization

which is privy to the information *prior* to its presentation to the general public – the news broadcast therefore seems to be delivered from a privileged core of operations where all the socially ‘important’ things are already known. Furthermore, broadcast news (first radio, later television) – augmenting but also transforming the role of newspapers – has increasingly been seen as central to the creation of a cohesive, national ‘universe of discourse’ and to the maintenance of social integration.²

Yet news organizations, in Israel and elsewhere, have traditionally privileged the activities of political leaders and the operations of the political system as subjects worth reporting, as newsworthy (Wolfsfeld, 1997). This preoccupation with the political system, and in particular with the national government, is somewhat at odds with our claim that, in conditions of perpetual national crisis, the conspicuous display of civic affinities, independent of the state and organized politics, becomes important. Thus the extreme case of an attack upon an everyday social space provides us with an opportunity to look more closely at how the relationship between the political system and civil society is represented, and its relevance for the construction of nationhood.

Second, Israel is founded upon an unresolved tension between the ‘civic’ and ‘ethnic’ nationalisms mentioned above (Sznajder, 2000). On the one hand it is defined as the state of all those who permanently reside within its territorial boundaries, irrespective of their ethnic or religious identity: for example, voting rights – along with other citizenship rights – apply equally to the country’s Jewish and to its non-Jewish (largely Palestinian Arab) citizens. On the other hand, Israel is defined as the state of the entire Jewish people, and a number of basic laws – as well as state symbols, flags and the national anthem – enshrine this privileging of ethnicity over residence as the basis for citizenship, perhaps most famously the Law of Return, which grants immediate citizenship to any Jew who wishes to claim it and live in Israel. While this tension between civic and ethnic nationalism is not confined to Israel, the perpetual conflict with the Palestinians has made the conflation of ethnic (Jewish) and national (Israeli) identity, and the routine performance of an ethnic ‘we’ which appears to be identical to nationhood, a paramount theme and problematic within Israeli media discourse (Wolfsfeld, 2004).

The particular context here is instructive. Terrorism in Israel has made the individual’s everyday relationship to the nation a matter of life and death. Suicide bombings are based upon the notion of *metonymic embodiment*: all Israelis as individuals – irrespective of their political views on the conflict with the Palestinians – can be substituted for the (national) whole of which they are a part: that is the rationale behind their being targeted. In consequence, the conflict with the Palestinians seems to place both collective and individual survival at risk simultaneously, since the bodies of the latter stand in for the existence of the former. Moreover, suicide bombings, rather than targeting the institutions and symbols of the state and the political system, have primarily been directed at those spaces associated with autonomous civil

society. Attacks occur in public places, both on the street and civic enclosures such as malls, cafes and restaurants, pool halls, banqueting halls and public transport (especially buses). The prevalence of security guards at the porous borders of these civic enclosures has become one of the primary markers of the relationship between collective national crisis and everyday individual risk: it represents a performance, in ordinary civilian life, of the border-anxiety that afflicts the state of Israel as a geopolitical entity (and, one could add, 'the Jewish People' as an ethnic-religious one). Hence individual Israelis daily experience, in microcosm, a routinized suspicion of the outside that afflicts the social totality. This existential parallel between daily civilian life and the geopolitical status of the nation-state makes the question of how the media represents that relationship even more pressing.

Israel, of course, provides an extreme example of a nation undergoing prolonged political and military crisis. So, notwithstanding the preceding points, how can it offer a useful test-case for other societies with highly developed mass media systems but far less intense levels of crisis? We would argue that, while the extent of violence suffered by civilian populations in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, plus the extensive coverage of the conflict in local and international media, are extreme, they are not necessarily exceptional. In particular, the perceived international spread of terrorism and military responses to it, plus the central role that the media, especially television, play in this perception, mean that it is important to understand better the types of civic 'lessons' being passed on to viewing publics about the nature of their own national societies in traumatic times. This is especially pertinent given that news stories of terrorist attacks are likely to be widely watched by television audiences. Understanding the mechanisms by which the Israeli news media represent and perform nationhood in reports of suicide bombings should therefore prove to be valuable more generally.

We approach the television news broadcast as both a sequence and a structure. It is a sequence because it consists of an ordered series of news 'stories' – narratives about events which share many, though not all, of the same attributes as other kinds of narratives (Bell, 1991; Van Dijk, 1988) – and because, like television programming in general, it is produced and viewed as a flow of segments (Ellis, 1982; Williams, 1974). It is also a structure, however, because its stories cohere into a larger generic format (the news broadcast), which is understood by producers and viewers to be separate and different in kind from the flow of programmes around it, and because its constituent parts are interrelated in ways other than that of temporal sequence, for instance through theme or spatial location. Moreover, since we are concerned with the relationship between mediated representations of civil society and modes of belonging to that society, we are interested in the explicit and implicit *positioning of the viewer* in relation to the news stories, whether through overt forms of direct address, deixis or other mechanisms. In the analysis that follows we explore both the *interactional* and *narrative* dimensions of the some of the main stories of the broadcast, and the interrelationships between them.

Three areas, then, are particularly significant in our analysis: (1) the means by which virtual and depicted relations between the narrators, characters and viewers elicit forms of social acquaintance and affinity; (2) the representational connections made between different social units and interpersonal networks (such as categories and communities); (3) thematic interconnections between the various stories and their development across the broadcast. In other words, we look for the ways in which television news assembles the represented components of national civil society while putting itself together as a type of discourse.

The attack at Pat Intersection

Early in the morning of 18 June 2002, a Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up on a bus at the Pat Intersection near the neighbourhood of Gilo in Jerusalem. Nineteen Israelis were killed, many of them children on their way to school.³ The attack and its repercussions dominated the day's news reports, including the main 8 p.m. Channel Two news broadcast.⁴ Indeed, the news broadcast was specially extended from the usual 30 minutes to 44 minutes (an increasingly standard practice after suicide bombings) and, aside from the weather report and updates from the financial markets, was almost completely devoted to the attack.

The broadcast is primarily organized around a sequence of lengthy, inter-linked news reports. One of the most obvious implications of this sequence is its thematic development. Starting with the report of the actual attack (Story 1), it proceeds to a main block of stories on the effects of the bombing which together provide a virtual tour of the key frameworks of civil society: a report about a grieving family and the 'neighbourhood' of Gilo (S2), about the workplace (bus drivers) (S3), health and higher education (hospitals and a local teaching college) (S4) and local schools (S5). It is only once these civic spaces have been explored that the Israeli political leadership is given its turn (S6), with the question of the political motivation for the attack (and those responsible for it) relegated almost to the end of the broadcast (S7). This sequence alone therefore suggests the primacy of everyday social life under duress as the key topic of the news broadcast, produced through a tour of the principal social spaces of the nation's daily interactions.

'Concatenation' and 'convening': producing the collective 'we'

These main stories are preceded, however, by the headlines and an opening statement read by one of the two anchors (Gadi Sukeinik), which provides details about the dead. The statement is important because it establishes a framework for the representation and emulation of forms of civil social life later

on in the broadcast. This 'roll-call' of the dead is standardized through the use of visual and verbal formulae. The screen consists of a black background in the centre of which still photographs of the victims are placed; their names are written in text below this, accompanied by the Hebrew initials for the phrase 'of blessed memory', their place of residence and any particulars of funeral times. The anchor's accompanying voice-over adds other information, as in:

Rahamin Sidkiyahu, 51 years old from Jerusalem, who was the bus driver. Leaves a wife and four children.

Leah Baruch, 59 years old from Jerusalem. Has worked at the Presidents' House for these last 23 years. Leaves two daughters.

All of these details help to position both victims and viewers in relation to one another, and within the social totality. The standardized visual and verbal formats balance the official equality of the victims (they are all treated in the same way; their deaths are equally tragic) with their individuality (they are named and photographed; they are all different). At the same time, the details of the victims' places of residence, ages and families, along with information about funeral times, serves to insert them within a more finely delineated social landscape, one that doesn't just specify geographical locations but also intersects with practices of civic solidarity: the announcement of funeral times so that mourners – especially those beyond the immediate circle of the family (who would presumably already know the details) – can attend. Hence both victims and viewers are implicitly positioned within local frameworks of *non-intimate interpersonal affinity*, and this is further augmented by the seemingly unsystematized category of additional details supplied by the voice-over (why do we need to know how long someone worked in the President's office?).

Such details work as *triggers of social affiliation*. They emulate and activate the ways in which individuals locate themselves within the 'dense, multiplex networks of interpersonal relationships' that Calhoun defines as communities (1999: 222), inviting viewers to try to 'place' victims within their own networks or empathetically to situate them within the networks of others. They don't just draw upon extant cultural knowledge: they enact ways of knowing and of situating oneself and others common to everyday civic intercourse. They therefore construct the audience of viewers as a community of mourners-in-potential, not directly through their participation in 'the nation' as a unifying principle or an abstract collectivity, but by resonating with viewers' lived experience within interpersonal networks of acquaintance and identification, within *actual* extended communities. We will call this emulation of communal networks '*concatenation*' (from the linking of elements together in a chain). It is a recurring textual mechanism of mediated civil nationhood.

A complementary textual strategy is deployed immediately following this roll-call, in the opening report of the suicide bombing (S1) by police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum. The first words of the report show how

news discourse can produce the sense of an 'us', not by triggering networks of social acquaintance, nor through the conventional use of direct address, but by situating or 'convening' journalists, audiences and those represented in the same experiential space.

After a brief respite Jerusalem returns to these sights to which it is impossible to become accustomed.

This opening statement follows 20 seconds of seemingly 'raw' footage of the immediate aftermath of the bomb (people running, screams, sirens, rows of body bags, burnt-out shell of the bus) and three seconds of silent visuals. The deictic phrase 'these sights' (our emphasis), as well as the use of the present tense and seemingly live footage, positions 'Jerusalem', the reporter and the audience together as co-spectators in a shared space of experience (the reporter, like us, is now seeing 'these sights'). But that space itself *is also* Jerusalem: this is one of the meanings of the opening statement – that 'these sights' (of trauma and horror) have returned to the streets of Jerusalem. Jerusalem both observes this horror and constitutes its location: seeing and suffering are experienced together.

Much of the power of this opening statement derives from the treatment of Jerusalem not just as a physical place but as an embodied entity, a personage. This treatment invokes the poetic personification of the city in the Jewish liturgy (for instance, the Book of Lamentations), where Jerusalem is portrayed as suffering and witnessing the pain of its inhabitants.⁵ It adds a temporal and even historical dimension to 'convening', which alludes to the fact that this attack is just one more that 'we' have gone through together: Jerusalem, along with the viewers, 'returns' to these sights 'after a brief respite' (our emphasis). Such traditional liturgical associations and temporal markers link this event to the other traumatic events 'we' have suffered through as a people. 'Convening', then, creates a shared virtual space of experience (seeing and feeling) that is also extended in time to the recent and distant past. It implies a common spatial location embedded within a shared history.

Both 'concatenation' and 'convening' interweave the communicative relationship between addresser (news organization, journalist) and audience with the depiction of events and people in the news report. 'Concatenation' has a *sequential, chain-like* structure, leading from person to person, creating identifications by inviting audiences to locate themselves and those depicted in relationships of non-intimate association, in extended communities. It emulates civil ties by suggesting that we are acquainted with other people and by replicating how we know them. 'Convening' is more event-oriented, creating a virtual space of *contiguity and proximity* that is populated by addresser, audience and depicted characters, and linking that shared space to previous events and a common history. It creates commonality by suggesting that we jointly inhabit locales and share experiences of them. Although distinct, therefore, 'concatenation' and 'convening' are also complementary discursive devices, expressing two key dimensions of civil society: communities

of interpersonal networks and the spaces and events through which they are woven in time.

'Nesting': community as family

Thus far the textual mechanisms of mediated civil nationhood involve the discursive performance of an 'us', which concatenates and convenes audiences, journalists and those people and objects represented in the news stories. Beyond the construction of this 'us', however, the news stories also put together a particular picture of how civil society is and works. They do so, as we have already suggested, chiefly by focusing on communities.

The first 'community' to be represented is the bereaved family shown in the broadcast's second main story (S2). Strictly speaking, the family is not a community located within civil society at all, since the latter traditionally describes social interactions which occur at a level situated *between* the family and the state. However, the family as a primary realm of interpersonal relationships acts as both model and contrast for less intimate forms of community and social category, and – as Lakoff has pointed out – provides a powerful metaphor underpinning conceptions of nationhood: the Nation-as-Family metaphor (1995). The family is also intimately entwined with nationhood by virtue of national broadcasting's penetration of the domestic sphere, resulting in 'both the nationalisation of the domestic and the domestication of the national' (Morley, 2004: 419). While not, therefore, a part of civil society strictly defined, it is in many ways ideologically and systemically vital to civic and national social relationships.

The bereaved family in question is shown at home sitting on a sofa – the victim's mother, brother (dressed in a soldier's uniform) and sister (no father is seen or mentioned). The journalist's voice-over describes the victim, 22-year-old Shiri Nagari, thus:

At home the bedroom she planned to paint, she began to take care of the garden, then she registered to study dentistry, 22 years old with the longest ponytail in the world, and with a thousand plans.

This verbal description of domestic locations, specified and unspecified plans for the future, and unique physical features is accompanied by a 'slideshow' of domestic snapshots of Shiri, timed to coincide with the rhythm of the voice-over (such that we see the ponytail at the same moment it is mentioned). Such a presentation not only suggests the freezing or foreclosure of individual life-plans but evokes the personal experience that viewers have of family photographs as a cultural form, and the sense of meaningfulness, singularity, intimacy and memorialization that they impart (Frosh, 2001). As a whole, this report creates – quite predictably – a sense of tragic personal loss, of a life cut short, as experienced within the most intimate interpersonal sphere (the home), and a feeling that the journalist and viewers participate virtually in this loss.⁶

The connection between this bereaved family and wider forms of community is, however, entirely constructed by the news broadcast. For the family report is only one section of a longer story put together by a single journalist and introduced by the anchor as being about the Gilo neighbourhood. This is how the reporter makes the transition from family to neighbourhood community:

When Maurice in the Gilo community centre heard that Shiri had died of her wounds, he added another candle to the memorial corner. Fourteen killed in this afflicted [literally: hit, beaten] neighbourhood.

The movement is almost seamless, an effect primarily of the use of first names, but also of the evocation of an interpersonal network of communication, a local grapevine, a way for Maurice to 'hear' of Shiri's death. The primary suggestion of intimacy is indeed between the main subjects of the first sentence: Maurice knows Shiri *as* 'Shiri'. But so too does the journalist, whose discourse utters and performs these intimacies, and so too do we, the viewers, who, in hearing the discourse, are put on first-name terms with 'Maurice' as well (in fact, we are not offered any other way of naming or knowing him). A network of informal relationships is created that weaves together referential and interactional strands, shaping the latter according to the former: the referential strand of 'real', locally situated, interpersonal acquaintance between Maurice and Shiri implied by the discourse, and the interactional strand of virtual relations between journalist and viewer who are seemingly brought together by their mutual acquaintance with Maurice and Shiri. Moreover, the viewer's sudden acquaintance with Maurice is influenced by the narrative sequence of the report: Maurice has to be placed for us (we haven't 'met' him yet) 'in the Gilo community centre', whereas Shiri needs no introduction, for we have already met her family, seen her photographs and heard tell of her life. In effect, Maurice and we are connected by our mutual acquaintance with the dead Shiri. As in the opening roll-call of the dead, social affinity is evoked through the way that the discourse performs and enacts the *'concatenation'* of virtual and real relations within networks of everyday interpersonal association and extended community. Significantly, it depicts the less intense types of contact characterizing neighbourhood sociality as an extension of the more intimate relationships of the family.

This model of everyday community relations is made explicit in the scene that follows, which takes place in an office in the Gilo community centre, which has been turned into an emergency centre of operations. The Deputy Director of the Neighbourhood Administration and a colleague deal with phone calls from worried relatives and try to gather information from the emergency services about the dead, wounded and missing. The Deputy Director is tear-stricken as she describes the dashed hopes of the residents that things had quietened down after the mortar attacks earlier in the year: 'Our community is a family,' she says. 'We know almost every one personally.' She then answers the phone: the body of another victim has been identified. 'Has

the time of the funeral been announced?' she asks.⁷ The reporter's voice-over continues:

[They] preserve their strength. Get to every family. Ensure that children who were taken to nursery in the morning and now have no one to collect them will be picked up. See to it that the children's after-school activities take place as usual.

The neighbourhood community 'is a family', both because it is like a family and because it is an actual extension of the families which comprise it. Yet, by being a family the community is also *more* than a family: it is what contains, watches over and safeguards families, fulfilling their duties in times of need. In its conspicuous concern for the everyday welfare of children, in particular, it constitutes the next level of institutional social relations committed to the reproduction of society, including the values of care and duty that derive from the family model. And while these communal concerns and activities are ordinarily organized into unremarkable routines (the children's activities will be held 'as usual'), in their sudden newsworthiness when the community comes under attack they achieve heroic stature. Everyday civil life and experience – picking the children up from nursery, filling their leisure time – become a demonstration of the resilience of society under direct threat.

This representation of the relationship between family and community is characteristic of the third mechanism of mediated civil nationhood that we will touch upon: the '*nesting*' of civic spaces. 'Nesting' occurs in a representation when a smaller social unit is both emulated and contained by a larger unit, itself emulated and contained within a yet larger unit. It is a 'Russian doll' model of social structure: families nest inside and are contained by communities, which nest inside and are contained by national civil societies – all the while maintaining a familial nature with respect to their contents (their 'children'). Borrowed from Alexander and Jacobs' argument that recent theorizations of civil society 'suggest a multitude of public spheres, communities, and associations *nested* within one another, and also within a putative larger "national sphere" of civil society' (1998: 29, our emphasis), 'nesting' describes the apparent insertion and arrangement of 'insides' within a container (national society) whose character and values are determined by those insides and which also acts as their home, their place of security and growth.

The nest thus expresses the simultaneously metaphorical and metonymic functioning of national civil society as a *category* with respect to its *communal* 'parts', as noted earlier: civil society is similar to (metaphor) a family, a neighbourhood, an occupational community, but it is also made up of these components (metonymy). Nesting conveys the power of civil society as holding both qualitative/semantic (metaphorical) and material/positional (metonymic) bonds with its sub-units.⁸ Its chief spiritual values – for instance, solidarity, caring, empathy, resoluteness – permeate from the smaller to the larger units, while engaging the larger units in their guardianship of the smaller ones. In this interweaving of metaphorical and material connections between

smaller and larger units, nesting provides a potent tool for blurring the distinction between communities and categories as Calhoun defines them, shaping our understanding of large social categories (such as the nation) according to the values of face-to-face communities, while making communities functionally dependent for their durability upon the categories in which they nest.

Communities of fate, politics of fatalism

The main block of stories, S2 through to S5 (Gilo, Bus Drivers, Hospital and College, Three Schools) all depict anxious and potentially grieving social institutions whose civil nature is characterized through interpersonal relationships. The values emerging from these interpersonal relationships are chiefly based on the family-community model described above: intimacy, empathy, care. The story of the bus drivers (S3), however, emphasizes another theme which is implicit in the overall structure of the broadcast; a theme that relates less to questions of civil solidarity than to issues of existential control, and which has directly political implications.

The theme is that whether one lives or dies is a matter of luck. The driver of the destroyed bus was the first to be killed in such an attack since 1994 – despite the large number of bombs on buses – but the fateful irony of the story is that he was not meant to be on that particular bus at all. The scheduled driver was five minutes late for work and, rather than delay the journey, the next driver on the roster volunteered to take his place. The branch manager describes what happened:

He insisted on making the journey because there was a game at 9.30. He was impatient [literally: on thorns] to gain those six minutes so that he could watch the football. And those were the six minutes that decided things for him.

Fate is intertwined with the most ordinary of occurrences (a driver is late for work) and the most banal of motives (a driver wants to finish his shift early so that he can watch a football match). Additionally, it was not the bomb or the bomber or, in a more attenuated sense, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, which ‘decided things’ for him: it the driver’s own ‘insistence’ and ‘impatience’, and especially the crucial six minutes in which he switched places with the driver who was *supposed to be* the bomb’s victim. As the story progresses the interviewees and the reporter constantly reiterate these motifs of destiny and luck, the notion that life is a game of chance, the drivers’ sense of helplessness, and the deadly fatefulness of the everyday. Some of the drivers admit to deliberately carrying lucky charms and religious talismans as the best means of protection. God’s name, used in phrases such as ‘God willing’, ‘with God’s help’, is frequently invoked, even though none of the drivers show any overt signs of being religiously observant (none wear a skullcap, for

example). The routine nature of risk and the helplessness, fatalism and faith which accompany it are clearly articulated in the closing words of the bus driver who has been 'saved' by his colleague's fatal enthusiasm:

Tomorrow morning, with God's help, we'll return to the same passengers, on the same route, at the same time, who will continue to travel with us without fear.

This closing statement links the drivers' routines, and the devastating occupational risks of this particular community of fate, with the public – the passengers – and their similarly routine exposure to the whims of fate. The extension to social groups beyond the occupational community echoes the fatalism implied in other stories. For example, in the Gilo story (S2), Shiri Nagari's sister says that despite our medical and technological capacities, in the face of death 'we are nothing' and one never knows when death will strike. Similarly, the report on the schools (S5) describes the anxious waiting of staff and pupils at three different schools for news of missing colleagues and classmates, and the relative good fortune of one school to have been spared fatalities as compared to the misfortune of the two other schools that do ultimately suffer losses (and not for the first time).

The emphasis on luck and destiny signals the emergence of a somewhat bleaker representational mechanism that works both *within* and *against* mediated civil nationhood. That mechanism is '*fatalization*' (from both 'fate' and 'fatal'): the representation of connections between people of the same nationality established not through interpersonal relationships but by virtue of the shared existential situation that they each face. Here people are not united by social ties to one another but by their subjection to an indiscriminate and immanent threat, a threat that individuates them by introducing an element of deadly competition between them. One driver's life is taken, another's is spared. Two schools mourn, a third is saved. Whose turn will it be next time? Fatalization possesses a sacrificial dimension, which treats people not as social beings or even as unique individuals but as exchangeable tokens in an unfathomable cosmic calculus. To a certain extent, it complements the terrorist logic of metonymic embodiment, which treats all Israelis, irrespective of their social power or political views, as tokens of the national whole and hence as potential targets. Yet, despite its apparently dysfunctional implications for social solidarity, fatalization invites in response an ideology of civic stoicism, one that – in the words of the spared bus driver – asks individuals to return to their routines and their bus routes, despite their awareness of the risks. This ideology of civic stoicism stresses the heroic futility of everyday existence. Translated into the terms of nationhood and national character, it makes a virtue of necessity, transforming the ordinary routines of individuals into signs of collective national resilience.

However, perhaps surprisingly, fatalization also works *against* nationhood. It possesses the kind of qualities dwelt upon by existentialist writers and in

the literature of the absurd. Its theme is that we are ultimately united not by civic, communal or ethnic ties, but by the shared fact of mortality and by the sudden and unpredictable intervention of death. Although the expressions of this theme *are* ethnically inflected (the talismans and prayers are Jewish), they gesture towards the supervening category of 'humanity' in general, and to the various genres of news stories about sudden disasters and tragedies (and lucky escapes) that have little to do with national conflict. This gesture beyond nationhood is important because it reappears in the representation of Palestinian victims later in the broadcast.

An important consequence of fatalization is the depoliticization of violent national conflict. As soon as victims begin to speak of human powerlessness and the frivolity of fate as a primary lesson learned from their loss of a loved one, as soon as bystanders and those in risky occupations (like bus drivers) emphasize the role of fate, chance and lucky charms in deciding who will and will not die today (but there's always tomorrow), then suicide bombings begin to seem not just liveable with, but permanent – almost natural – features of the social landscape. Tragedies certainly, but part of life's great lottery, a little like airplane crashes or even earthquakes in terms of their uncontrollability. Violent politically motivated attacks become both naturalized and mystified: they are represented as a given (rather than an anomaly) of the everyday context of civil society and civic spaces, and at the same time as part of a supernatural cosmic order whose appropriate response is religious and mystical (prayer and talismans) rather than political. Such a representation disconnects the experience of civil society from the viability of political action, which is why the valorization of the everyday becomes so important to the construction of civil nationhood: there is no other way in which civil society can express its national character except by heroically 'going on' as normal. In fact, of the three types of social belonging delineated by Calhoun, it is communities and categories which predominate in this news programme: 'publics', those quasi-groups established through mutual discourse about social institutions (and hence consciously political in character), are conspicuous by their absence.

This depoliticization is further emphasized by the story of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's response to the attack (S6). The first point to make is that this is the only actual story about the Israeli political system's response to the attack. Although the political correspondent does make some very brief to-camera comments at different moments in the broadcast, they largely preview or reiterate the content of this report. Second, it appears after the main block of stories concerned with the various spaces of civil society. Hence the two most obvious characteristics of the Israeli political leadership implied by the placement of the story within the whole broadcast are its relative silence and its reactive character. It is civil society that takes the lead as both the main subject of the broadcast and as the principal agent developing a response to the attack (which is limited, however, to heroically going on as usual).

In the report, Sharon is shown surrounded by police, security personnel and journalists in front of a row of body bags.

The decision of Ariel Sharon *to come* and see the horror with his own eyes, for the first time since becoming Prime Minister, *to stand* and be photographed *at the location* of an act of mass terrorism, *beside* the blood-stained bodies, was taken this morning *at Havat Shikmim* [Sharon's family farm]. (our emphasis)

Sharon is then quoted as saying 'They want a Palestinian state. What are they taking about?', which the reporter interprets as a political message to US President George Bush on the eve of a major US policy speech widely expected to endorse Palestinian demands for statehood. Finally, the reporter closes with the following voice-over as Sharon is pictured once again surveying the body bags: Sharon is:

... *standing before* the cameras, *beside* the black bags, *inside* each of which is a corpse, a victim, the fallen of a family in Israel. (our emphasis).⁹

This closing statement, and the opening voice-over which it echoes, deal extensively with spatial relations (see the terms in italic): they are concerned to *situate* Sharon's physical presence, and rhetorically to guide the viewer through the scene's spatial forms – even though we can also see almost everything that is described. In fact, the closing statement's three main spatial terms describe three types of spatial relationship that are semantically aligned with modes of *social* relationship: 'before' (sequence/priority), 'beside' (adjacency/solidarity), 'inside' (interiority/empathy). These markers not only situate Sharon physically, they also steer the viewer from less to more proximate – and more intimate – connections with the dead. Together, these markers serve to connect Sharon, the political leadership and the viewer to the victims through forms of 'nearness'.

Furthermore, the three terms used to describe the dead towards the end of the closing voice-over guide us from the physical and corporeal fact of death ('corpse'), via its causal and social designation ('victim'), to its ultimate national significance and memorialization ('fallen'). The informational redundancy of 'in Israel' (the audience is well aware of the event's location) is central to its symbolic and emotional intensity. No less important, however, is the mention of family as the dead's primary domain of belonging. The statement itself performs a kind of nesting, with the dead belonging to the families which in turn are 'in Israel', contained within the family of families that is the nation, and with Sharon, leader of the nation, standing with his entourage like a guard of honour for the fallen.

The visuals of Sharon at the scene, plus the above-quoted voice-over, connect the political system to civil society in a particular way. The political leadership appears to emerge from civil society as its natural organic extension: the symbolic and ceremonial modes of official 'state' nationalism seem to materialize intact from the ordinary frameworks of civil intercourse and

community suffering. Just as there is something heroic in the resilience of ordinary communities and their everyday routines, so there is something heroic in Sharon's decision to come *in person* to the scene of the attack, to 'see the horror with his own eyes', despite fears for his security. And it is most obviously in his *person*, as national leader, that Sharon unites the situated experience, horror and sympathy of an ordinary individual bystander with the ceremonial presence of the nation. Mediated civil nationhood – individuals, families and victims situated together in the same experiential space of affinity – feeds into honorific nationalism – leaders, guards of honour, the nation's fallen – with the latter appearing as the natural expression of the former. Civil society and political leadership are thus joined in a way that bypasses Calhoun's level of 'publics', substituting the political ceremonialization of civic space for the development of civic experience into public discourse about the political causes and ramifications of the bombing.

The ethnic boundaries of mediated civil nationhood

'Concatenation', 'convening', 'nesting' and 'fatalization': all are concerned, in their different ways, with the creation of connections among individuals (including journalists and viewers), or within and between social units of various sizes and characters. They describe discursive modes of building up and putting together national civil society under extreme conditions. Another report, however, brings to the fore the ways in which national civil society is represented not only by being *put together* metaphorically and metonymically as an aggregation of communities, but also by being *set apart* and differentiated from other units – persons and groups – who are on the borders of civil society, largely because of their ethnic identity. The report that we will discuss (S4) concerns the 'Arab' students in the hospital and at David Yellin Teachers' Training College.¹⁰

The narrative structure of the story is very edifying. It begins as a survey of the injured in hospital, emphasizing that both Jews and Arabs were among the wounded and their visitors. After a brief eye-witness statement from a Jewish victim, the report then describes the efforts of the police to extract as much information as possible from the injured:

One person who could shed some light on the activities of the terrorist in the minutes before he boarded the bus is Susannah Abed El Rahman, a student teacher at David Yellin College. They got on the bus together at Bet Tsafafa, but she is having trouble remembering.

Filmed lying in her hospital bed, Susannah describes how she went to the back section of the bus while speaking on her mobile phone, and didn't notice who boarded after her. Then she heard an explosion and was thrown clear of the bus.

The report next moves outside the hospital to 'friends of Susannah', who are trying to locate another student at David Yellin College who lives in Bet Tsafafa and with whom they have lost contact (they are shown speaking on mobile phones). A medium shot then shows one of them crying and being consoled by a friend. Obaida Kahane, a relative of the victim, is quoted saying:

Everyone is scared. It's part of our lives. He was also scared like any human being who is scared of death.

The story then shifts to images of Arab students (identifiable through the traditional head-covering of the women students) sitting on the steps of David Yellin College. The reporter's voice-over notes that there are several hundred Arab students at the college, and then adds that a few months previously a protest/ceremony ('*atzeret*') was held at the college for the '*shahidim*' (Palestinian martyrs), which caused a severe reaction from Jewish students, who demanded the expulsion of those participating in the protest. 'Now everyone is trying to forget this episode and unite around their common grief.' The story closes with the words of another student from David Yellin College, Said Hasnan, filmed while visiting the hospital. Describing the students' reaction to this suicide bombing he says:

We observed a minute's silence. This minute was not intended just for Arabs. It was intended for all regular human beings, without regard for his identity, Jewish or Arab.

The story is striking for a number of reasons. The first is the way in which it exposes the normative Jewish ethnicity of Israeli civil society as represented in the other stories and the broadcast as a whole. News about conflict is inherently ethnocentric, even when journalists attempt to provide sympathy for others (Wolfsfeld, 2004). While the Arab interviewees are not treated any differently from Jewish interviewees – they are each identified by name, the textual descriptions which accompany their images ('victim of the attack', 'wounded in the attack', 'relative of a victim') are the same as those used for Jewish interviewees – their 'Arabness' is nevertheless marked. The marking is sometimes implicit, as in their recognizably Arab names and Arab accents, and is also explicitly mentioned by the reporter. In contrast, the Jewishness of Shiri Nagari or her family, or of the Gilo residents, or of the bus drivers, is never mentioned and remains unmarked. It is a normative given, always already understood by the audience as part of the nature of things: the people depicted are always Jewish *unless otherwise specified*. Jewishness, then, displays the kind of logic discerned by Richard Dyer (1988) in his analysis of 'whiteness': it constitutes an unmarked norm so deeply entrenched as the foundation of other categories of identity (such as social class, or the various sub-ethnicities among the Jewish population) that it usually disappears from view (see also Morley, 2004: 428–9).

This marking is ambiguous, however. To begin with, as already noted, it is sometimes implicit in the cultural knowledge shared by journalists and audiences about what Arab names look like, or how Arab accents sound: it is not itself necessarily produced by the news discourse (although Israeli Jews do gain much of their knowledge of Palestinians and Arabs in general through the mass media). Moreover, the Arab students are all interviewed in Hebrew and, with the exception of the shot of the students on the college steps, they dress in the same ways as their Jewish counterparts (for the most part, jeans and t-shirts). Finally, they are all situated within recognizably Israeli institutions, the hospital and the college. They therefore appear to be simultaneously a part of normative Israeliness and yet outside of it.

This borderline status is also echoed in the narrative structure of the story. Two main strands can be traced out, which are roughly aligned with the two main models of nationhood mentioned earlier: a 'Western' civic model and an 'Eastern' ethnic model. The first narrative strand follows a trajectory from Susannah to her friends, to their missing friend (victim), to the victim's relative, to the students at David Yellin College, and finally back to the closing statement at the hospital. It enacts a tour of interpersonal relationships which strongly echoes the kind of networks of acquaintance and community among victims that appeared in the 'roll-call' of the dead and the story about Gilo. The Arab students are involved in exactly the same practices of everyday sociality which characterize mainstream (normatively Jewish) Israeli civil society, and which put them equally at risk from suicide bombers. According to this narrative strand, therefore, ethnicity seems to be irrelevant to the creation of civil ties, since these are based on everyday routines and residence within the same public spaces.

However, another narrative strand is interwoven with this that effectively inhibits the 'concatenation' of the (normatively Jewish) viewer within the social networks depicted, and which establishes ethnicity as the basis for social affiliation. This strand is initially performed by the word-choice and tone of the reporter's opening description of Susannah quoted above: the description of Susannah getting on the bus 'together with' the suicide bomber (rather than, for example, 'at the same time as'), the use of the conditional in the statement that 'she *could* shed light' on what happened – suggesting the importance and unreliability of her own willingness to do so, and the potential irony of the final statement that she 'is *having trouble* remembering' what happened (rather than the more definitive 'she cannot remember'). Such intimations of complicity, or at least of sympathy, between a Palestinian victim of the bomb and the bomber himself, are made more explicit later when the reporter describes the protest of the students in honour of the '*shahidim*' (Susannah is a student). Thus this narrative strand implies a different network of acquaintance, not between victims, other victims and the community of grievers, but between perpetrators, their accomplices and supporters. In this second narrative strand, then, social ties follow ethnic and political (national)

lines. A discursive device such as 'concatenation' can only position the viewer within depicted interpersonal networks if they share the same ethnicity or if the community is ethnically neutral; and the communities represented in this broadcast are all ethnically inflected.

In terms of their social affiliations, therefore, the Arab students are represented both *alongside* and *against* Israeli civil society. They act as an ethnic double of Jewish Israel and at the same time as its antithesis. They elicit and are denied the kinds of social ties out of which civil nationhood can be constructed, since while they are depicted as a part of civil society they are not – or not willingly at any rate – a part of the nation.

This representation provides a way of dealing with the challenge that ethnic otherness poses to the *civic* basis and *civil* representation of Israeli nationhood. For Jewish viewers, the Arab students are shown being treated in 'our' hospitals, studying at 'our' colleges, speaking 'our' language. They may not like 'us' (hence the support for the *shahidim*), but in crucial ways they *are* like us (even to the extent of becoming victims). One concomitant of such incorporation is that 'our' cultural symbols, practices and institutions are glorified for displaying such benevolence and inclusiveness. Another is that their *communal* networks of interpersonal connections are given legitimacy (they are what make them like us), while their *category* identity (ethnicity, Palestinian nationhood) is not.

In fact, the Arab interviewees themselves provide a response to this tension between ethnic and civic principles of nationhood, one that reiterates the emphasis on luck and mortality in the story of the bus drivers (S3). Both the relative of the victim, and the student Said Hasnan, invoke the species-category of 'human beings' as a way of bypassing the central issue of ethnicity in their relationship to Israeli civil society and Israeli national identity. Their troubled, non-normative ethnic status *vis-a-vis* Israeli nationhood means that these students are able – *or compelled* – to universalize their experience of suffering in order to make claims upon the viewer's understanding and solidarity. This is the closest the broadcast comes to suggesting that any civil framework has political agency, for the legitimate 'communal' status of the Arab students acts as a platform for the expansion of such communality more generally. It is a potentially utopian moment in which the ethnic boundaries of mediated civil nationhood are temporarily suspended, not in the name of another nationality or ethnicity, but in the name of a supervening category whose legitimacy is anchored in interpersonal connections. It is a moment tragically only made possible by the shared experience of prolonged violent national conflict and the universal reality of death: as with 'fatalization', the victim is like any other human being because he was 'scared of dying'. It is a moment in which viewers can perhaps see how the resilient, routine ties of civil society are *not necessarily* aspects of their own national character, but far more widespread forms of 'going on' in exceptional circumstances by ordinary people across ethnic and national divides.

Conclusion

In this article we have attempted to explore the representation of civil society in television news and its relation to the construction of nationhood in times of crisis. We have focused upon what we have called 'mediated civil nationhood' – the 'putting together' of cumulative pictures of the social totality by the media in which the existence of the nation seems conspicuously to emerge from and be embedded in everyday social ties and activities rather than organized politics or the state.

Our brief and by no means exhaustive analysis of a particular example has led us to propose a number of discursive strategies by which mediated civil nationhood operates: (1) concatenation, (2) convening, (3) nesting and (4) fatalization. The first two interweave the interactional and referential dimensions of news discourse to place viewers and journalists within the interpersonal networks of civil society, and to situate viewers, journalists, depicted characters and even social-geographical entities (such as cities) within a shared experiential space and common history. The second two work primarily in the referential dimension (i.e. among depicted characters/entities) through the ordering of social sub-units (communities) as a series of insides in ever larger containers, and by describing the common predicament of individuals in relation to a shared, random, uncontrollable external fate. Finally we identified one particular way in which our example constructed Israeli civil society as an ethnic entity by setting it apart from an alternative 'Arab' civil framework on the margins of the nation.

We are not claiming that these mechanisms will always be used to produce representations of civil society in news discourse, or that they must always be used together, or that civil society cannot be represented without their use – whether in situations of prolonged crisis or of relative calm. The researcher's artfully self-protective call for more study of the issue is clearly applicable here. What we hope we have done, however, is provide a preliminary map of some of the ways in which civil society and civic and ethnic nationalisms are intertwined in news discourse that can be of use in such further studies. At a time when the seeming security and identity of some of the 'established nations' is widely perceived and represented as under threat, while both more and less established nations are in danger of dealing with perceived crises by following the path of ethnic intolerance, it behoves us to chart the ways in which our own nations represent and perform themselves as everyday, lived social totalities.

Notes

The authors would like to thank Tamar Liebes and Zohar Kampf for their comments on an earlier version of this article.

1. Israel's Channel Two is a commercial, advertising-funded, publicly broadcast national channel. Its nightly news broadcast is the most popular in Israel.

2. The history of broadcasting in general, especially the history of public service broadcasting, is also frequently a history of how mass communication systems came to be conceived of as primarily national, in terms of their cultural character, their socially integrative function, their political and institutional status and their geographical reach (Scannell, 1996; Schudson, 1995).

3. The Islamic group Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack, which was condemned (though not to the satisfaction of Israeli leaders) by the Palestinian Authority. Gilo is a 'new' neighbourhood of Jerusalem, built on land occupied by Israel since the 1967 war. Under international law and in Palestinian eyes it is considered a 'settlement', though for most Israelis it is geographically and politically a part of Jerusalem and is not regarded by them as a settlement. In the months leading up to this attack Gilo had been exposed to regular – at times daily – small arms and mortar attacks emanating from areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority.

4. Suicide bombings and attacks on Israeli citizens had become regular occurrences in the period since the beginning of new Intifada – or the Al-Aqsa Intifada as it's sometimes called – in September 2000. Responses to these attacks were quickly routinized (based on experiences with similar attacks in the 1980s and 1990s) by news organizations, broadcasters, and to a greater or lesser degree by audiences (Liebes, 1998). Nevertheless they were rarely, if ever, treated as anything other than major news stories (frequently as the *only* important story of the day) and as events of great social and political magnitude.

5. This personification can be appreciated even more if one recalls that in Hebrew there is no neuter and all objects and subjects are gendered. Jerusalem is female.

6. This mode of reporting bereavement on Israel television news is very familiar to viewers because it is frequently used in the immediate aftermath of suicide attacks and military engagements, and is a chief genre of television programming on Memorial Day.

7. Given the format and content of the roll-call of the dead described earlier, this concern for the announcement of funeral times creates a parallel between the community centre and the national news broadcast.

8. The notion of semantic and positional aspects of metaphor and metonymy is borrowed from Jakobson (1971).

9. The Hebrew word '*chalal*' which appears after '*korban*' (victim) in this sentence is not easy to translate into English. Its nearest equivalent is probably the word 'fallen', as in 'fallen soldier' or 'the fallen' of the Battle of the Somme: it has the same ceremonial and memorial qualities. In the Hebrew there is no connection or contrast between the word 'fallen' (*chalal*) and the description of Sharon as 'standing'.

10. We use 'Arab' here because that is the term used within the news broadcast: the ideological implications of its use (rather than 'Palestinian') are to *denationalize* through the attribution of a more general 'Arab' ethnicity. The term 'Palestinian' is not used to describe any of the people seen or interviewed in the story, even though that may be how some or all of them define themselves.

References

- Alexander, J.C. and R. Jacobs (1998) 'Mass Communication, Ritual and Civil Society', pp. 23–41 in T. Liebes and J. Curran (eds) *Media, Ritual and Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Anderson, B. (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Bell, A. (1991) *The Language of News Media*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Berlant, L. (1991) *Anatomy of a National Fantasy*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

- Billig, M. (1995) *Banal Nationalism*. London: Sage.
- Calhoun, C. (1999) 'Nationalism, Political Community and the Representation of Society. Or, Why Feeling at Home is not a Substitute for Public Space', *European Journal of Social Theory* 2(2): 217–31.
- Cohen J. and A. Arato (1992) *The Political Theory of Civil Society*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Couldry, N. (2003) *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach*. London: Routledge.
- Dyer, R. (1988) 'White', *Screen* 29(4): 44–64.
- Ellis, J. (1982) *Visible Fictions: Cinema, Television, Video*. London: Routledge.
- Ellis, J. (2000) *Seeing Things: Television in the Age of Uncertainty*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Frosh, P. (2001) 'The Public Eye and the Citizen Voyeur: Photography as a Performance of Power', *Social Semiotics* 11(1): 43–59.
- Hartley, J. (2004) 'Television, Nation and Indigenous Media', *Television & New Media* 5(1): 7–25.
- Ignatieff, M. (1993) *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Jakobson, R. (1971) 'Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Linguistic Disturbances', pp. 254–9 *Selected Writings II*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Lakoff, G. (1995) 'Metaphor, Morality, and Politics; Or, Why Conservatives Have Left Liberals in the Dust', *Social Research* 62(2).
- Liebes, T. (1998) 'Television's Disaster Marathons: A Danger for Democratic Processes?', pp. 71–84 in T. Liebes and J. Curran (eds) *Media, Ritual and Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Morley, D. (2004) 'Broadcasting and the Construction of the National Family', pp. 418–41 in R.C. Allen and A. Hill (eds) *The Television Studies Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Scannell, P. (1996) *Radio, Television and Modern Life: A Phenomenological Approach*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Schudson, M. (1994) 'Culture and the Integration of National Societies', pp. 21–43 in D. Crane (ed.) *The Sociology of Culture: Emerging Theoretical Perspectives*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Schudson, M. (1995) 'National News Culture and the Informational Citizen', pp. 169–88 in *The Power of News*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Silverstone, R. (1994) *Television and Everyday Life*. London: Routledge.
- Smith, A. (1986) *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Sznaider, N. (2000) 'Consumerism as a Civilizing Process: Israel and Judaism in the Second Age of Modernity', *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 14(2): 297–314.
- Taylor, C. (2002) 'Modern Social Imaginaries', *Public Culture* 14(1): 91–124.
- Thompson, J. (1995) *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Van Dijk, T.A. (1988) *News as Discourse*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Williams, R. (1974) *Television, Technology and Cultural Form*. London: Routledge.
- Wolfsfeld, G. (1997) *Media and Political Conflict: News From the Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wolfsfeld, G. (2004) *Media and the Path to Peace*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Paul Frosh is a lecturer in communication at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His main research interests include visual communication,

consumer culture and the imaginative dimensions of mass media. His book *The Image Factory: Photography, Consumer Culture and the Visual Content Industry* is published by Berg. Address: Department of Communication and Journalism, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mount Scopus, Jerusalem 91905, Israel. [email:msfrosh@mscc.huji.ac.il]

Gadi Wolfsfeld is a professor of political science and communication at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His major research interest concerns the role of the news media in conflicts and attempts to bring peace. Gadi Wolfsfeld's most recent book is entitled *Media and the Path to Peace* and was published by Cambridge University Press. Address: Department of Communication and Journalism, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mount Scopus, Jerusalem 91905, Israel. [email:msgadi@huji.ac.il]