

Global Texts, Narrativity and the Construction of Local and Global Meanings in Television News

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This article discusses the relevance of narrative analysis to the study of media globalization by presenting results of an ongoing study of television news in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. It discusses issues of local and global meanings by focusing on a number of elements of narrative structure (time, valence, story/discourse, themes, drama, genre, and myths) and argues that each element presents ways to track particularistic and universalistic meanings in television news. A concluding section emphasizes the importance of narrative analysis to the study of globalization with a discussion of live global television events. (*Journalism and Mass Communication*)

The notion of globalization is increasingly becoming one of the primary descriptors for a mass-mediated world. At the same time it has also triggered some bothersome questions regarding the currency the term holds for the "meanings" disseminated by globalized communication. Although theories and models of the sociopolitical dynamics of globalization abound, ranging from cultural imperialism theories to political economy theories to postmodern revisionism, little in the way of analyzing the narrative constructs of globality has been attempted. We do not attempt to present such a theoretical frame here. Rather, we present some examples of narrative analysis and insights, drawn from an ongoing project on the comparative analysis of televi-

sion news texts. The result is a partial analytic of the globalization of meanings. It also illustrates the complicated nature of the comparative analysis of meanings in particular and of globalization more generally.

The material for our crosscultural analysis of television news comes from a number of European countries, the United States, and two Middle Eastern countries (Israel and Jordan). The purpose of the analysis has been to examine the dynamics of the process of globalization of electronic journalism. Theoretically, our analytic has been both comparative and cultural. Rather than focusing on the institutional determinants of the contents of television news, we have approached television news stories as texts—that is, as social products amenable to cultural decoding. We view television news as storytelling rather than as merely the provision of information (Pietila, 1992; Roeh, 1982; Sperry, 1981). Television's storytelling or narrativizing function is one of the most crucial ways in which "meanings" are mutated, spread, and globalized.

We have studied the globalization of meanings by focusing on a range of structural, stylistic, and content features that frame and shape the meanings embedded in stories disseminated around the world. For our purposes we use the term *globalization* to refer to the "dynamic tension between the global and the local and the shifting terrain they encompass" (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1991, p. 122), rather than to the omniscient spread of one culture around the world (as envisaged, for example, by "cultural imperialism" theorists).

We see this dynamic tension as constituted by the continuum of cultural particularism and cultural universalism. We studied this continuum by first looking at their narrative construction and then searching for comparative narrative features. Particular elements of narrative structure turned out to be especially useful in exploring the continuum of particularistic/universalistic meanings. We consider elements of structure to be manifest at the microanalytic and macroanalytic level of narrative. The rest of this article consists of a presentation (with examples) of some of these features. The detailing of these features shows that there are no neat distinctions between the particular and the universal, or the local and the global. Rather, the meanings these terms carry are a function of the narrative details examined. Thus we aim to offer a perspective on the technique of comparative analysis of meanings in television news.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE: MACROANALYTIC ASPECTS

Story Order/Discourse Order: Time and Valence

In analyzing news stories, we drew on the difference between what has been termed the story order and the discourse order of narrative. A *story order* is a chain of events, whereas the *discourse order* is the specific way in which that

story order is presented. Drawn from structuralist theory, this two-leveled model of narrative argues that a narrative has two parts: a story, or content; and a discourse that is the expression, the means by which the content is communicated (Rimmon-Kenan, 1990; Smith, 1981, p. 209).

How does such a distinction help in understanding particularized and universalized meanings? It is especially useful, we would argue, in comparative work, when different versions of the same story are presented to different national audiences. By studying the uninterrupted scenes and identifying logical connections, one can construct the 'basic' or 'original' chronology of events and then identify the range of variations on the basic story. This variation becomes the key to studying how and to what degree different narratives (or discourses) of the story are similar or different. It then becomes possible to examine which universe of culturally specific meanings becomes universalized.

The distinction between story and discourse order is established via two elements of narrative structure: time and valence. We discuss these notions with an example for each.¹

Our illustration of the element of time is drawn from a comparative study of the coverage of an *intifada* incident reported by our colleagues on this project. The study (Cohen & Roeh, 1990) examined television news reports in three countries (France, the United States and Israel). The time order of the story is as follows: A young Palestinian throws a stone into an alley, from which a jeep arrives. Soldiers jump off the jeep and fire tear gas. They run into an alley and drag out a Palestinian, beating him with a gun and pushing him into the jeep. The soldiers in the jeep then drive down the street.

The narratives of the news stories in the three broadcasts reveal different temporal orders with important implications for causality. For example, in the American story the stone throwing is shown after the Palestinian is beaten by the soldiers, whereas in the French story the stone is thrown prior to the beating. Thus in the French report the stone throwing is established as the trigger to the whole incident, whereas the American story severs that causality. Similarly, the pictures of the soldier firing the tear gas, presented in the French story's uninterrupted flow before the arrest of the Palestinian, are shown on the American broadcast afterwards, as an independent occurrence. On Israeli Television, the time order is further dislocated, with no sequences showing the arrest, the firing of tear gas, or the beating. Here the main character is the jeep, shown driving down the street without incident (Cohen & Roeh, 1990, pp. 10-11).

¹We found that close attention to some structural features is especially useful for the comparative analysis of meanings. These features include those of time (when the narrative creates a different time order than that of the story), duration (when parts of a speech or event are taken and foregrounded or used otherwise), frequency (the number of times a reference or visual is inserted), and telling and showing (when the reporter tells us rather than letting the person in the story speak or describes the scene in visual terms instead of letting it unfold).

In each case, these different time orders create narrative structures that enjoin or embolden specific perspectives. As Smith (1981) pointed out, "The form and features of any version of a narrative will be a function of, among other things, the particular motives that elicited it and the particular interests and functions it was designed to serve" (p. 217). Both the French and the American stories can be seen as part of a universe of meanings that are critical of Israel's handling of the *intifada*. Israeli television's own perspective stands in sharp contrast to the American and French by its desire not to show "their home audience a picture of themselves, which is not at all flattering" (Cohen & Roeh, 1990, p. 11).

We next look at valence (i.e., the relative dominance or strength of specific elements in a story) by examining news stories of an address on nuclear disarmament and world peace given in 1987 by the then-leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev. We examined stories broadcasted on seven stations from four countries (Germany, Spain, England, and the United States). Dominant elements were defined and identified by their frequency of appearance, the duration of presentation, and the valuation of these elements. All the stories focused on Gorbachev's calls for arms reduction and for changing the Soviet Union. The speech was regarded in all the stories as a forum through which he was trying to reach an international audience. Given these general commonalities, we noted some substantial differences. The three American networks created a narrative critical of Gorbachev's efforts. The CBS story, for example, foregrounded their correspondent's and anchor's interpretation of the motives behind the speech, calling it a "charm offensive" and "a master stroke," concluding that this was an "unusual speech, full of flowery language . . . as if he [Gorbachev] wanted to convince the world that he means it, when he says that he wants no nuclear weapons." One of the main themes in the speech, namely Gorbachev's critique of President Reagan's lack of enthusiasm for nuclear disarmament, was mentioned only briefly by the three U.S. networks. However, they devoted a good deal of time to two other protagonists: the Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov (at that time just released from exile) and Joseph Begun, an imprisoned Jewish dissident. The American stories repeatedly compared Gorbachev to Sakharov, with the former suffering from the comparison. The frequency of Sakharov's appearance in the stories was complemented by the insertion of Begun into the narrative. His continued imprisonment and its placement in a story about Gorbachev's "charm offensive" further served to cast doubt on Gorbachev's intentions. Generally speaking, the American reporters produced a narrative that was critical of Gorbachev overall and contextualized his speech within the framework of Cold War rhetoric.

The British, German, and Spanish stories were quite different. To begin with, references to Begun appeared only briefly in the British story and were markedly absent from the German and Spanish stories. At the same time, Sakharov's presence in the conference hall was seen as supportive of Gorba-

chev. The British story referred to Sakharov as the "freed dissident [who] . . . was there to applaud him [Gorbachev]." In the Spanish story, the "presence of academician and Nobel Prize winner, Andrei Sakharov . . . reinforced such a manifestation" (of Gorbachev's plans). In the German story, Sakharov did not appear until the end, and then was mentioned as an approving aside to the main story: "One of the most important pictures of the day is Andrei Sakharov as listener in the Kremlin, for the first time on Soviet television after his return from exile."

What was foregrounded in the narrative of the British, German, and Spanish stories was the opposite of the American stories: a positive evaluation of the conference and of Gorbachev's efforts at reform, and a critique of American attitudes towards Gorbachev and nuclear disarmament. In the British story, the positive evaluation could be seen in the way the main actor was introduced into the narrative ("Even by the standards Mr. Gorbachev has himself set, this was a most extraordinary event"), followed by the introduction of the event ("Five years ago, with Lenin's statue looking on, the idea of Leonid Brezhnev turning up for the same event as Gregory Peck, Kris Kristofferson, and Andrei Sakharov would have been unthinkable. Yet that is precisely what Mikhail Gorbachev chose to do.").

The Spanish story lauded Gorbachev's attempts to promote nuclear disarmament. Gorbachev, it said, has "launched a basic idea that summarizes a whole avalanche of Soviet proposals for nuclear disarmament." If the avalanche of Soviet proposals was not proof enough of its sincerity, the story drove the point home in the next line when it said, "the USSR *wants* and is *ready* to give up being a nuclear power and to reduce . . . its conventional weapons." The desire for arms reduction thus made the Soviet Union an active and positive agent for change.

In contrast to the Soviet initiative, America's role in nuclear disarmament was seen as retreatist and inert. The Spanish story referred to the Reagan administration as "intransigent"; the British story contrasted the two positions on nuclear disarmament and said that the Soviets "continue to make the running."

To sum up, in both examples we find commonalities and differences in the narratives. The commonalities, as suggested earlier, constitute elements of universalization; the differences suggest particularistic meanings. Thus the local or particular on the one hand and the global or universal on the other hand lie essentially in the divergent versus shared narratives.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE: MACROANALYTIC ASPECTS

Although attention to elements of time and valence offers one entry point to understanding the dynamics of cultural particularism and universalism, it is less useful in revealing another dimension of local and global meanings: their

hybrid nature. Most news narratives combine elements of both cultural particularism and universalism. More useful in teasing out that relationship are some macroanalytic features of narrative, such as themes, drama, myths, and genres. We discuss the use of themes and drama by way of a detailed comparative analysis of the story of John Demjanjuk, who was tried in Israel as a Nazi prison guard.

Thematic Analysis and the Dramaturgical Mode: Extended Analysis of the John Demjanjuk Story

As suggested beforehand, macroanalytic elements such as themes and drama are useful in understanding the relation between particularistic and universalistic meanings in stories in which these elements are not easily distinguishable. Stories such as the Gorbachev speech and the *intifada* incident were more readily analyzable by means of the microanalytic notions of time and valence. Moreover, their universality was established through their shared narratives across cultures. The Demjanjuk story also approximates such a model of universalization. However, the relationship between locality and globality is mediated by the texts' hybridity. Macroanalytic details of narrative allow us to draw from the strength of this hybridity even as it presents patterns of particularism and universalism. We now present a detailed analysis of the Demjanjuk story, both to make this general theoretical point and to provide (we hope) a methodological program for conducting such an analysis.

We examined the story of Demjanjuk's trial on a total of 10 stations: 3 American, 2 British, 2 Belgian, 1 French, 1 German, and 1 Israeli. It was quickly apparent that the most dominant element of the narratives was the element of drama that framed the narratives. In all the stories examined, the narratives were strongly influenced by the fact that this was a public trial—in other words, a dramatic performance. Four sociodramas seemed to dominate: We labeled them *historical*, *human*, *personal*, and *political* dramas. These sociodramas generated narratives that in some cases were culturally specific but in others exemplified culturally universalized themes. We now present some of these universal themes and go on to discuss specific cultural differences between the stories.

Man's Inhumanity to Man. One of the dominant universal, historical, and cultural themes was that of "man's inhumanity to man." The significance of the Holocaust as one of history's most horrifying cases of mass genocide provided a powerful, manifest theme that ran through all the narratives of the Demjanjuk trial. The story was, for many of the stations, first and foremost a reminder of a historical event. The framework for reporting the trial was thus primarily historical. It recalled the Jewish experience. It recalled man's inhumanity to man as never seen before. It reiterated the lessons of history. It was a historical drama.

Historical referents were present in a number of ways in the different stories. The Belgian story began with a description of the crime: "the murdering and gassing of hundreds of thousands of Jews during World War II." The significant points of historical reference were quickly put into place and were easily recognized by the viewer: World War II and the persecution of the Jews. The French story began with a description of the day's events in the trial but then moved on to the real significance of this event: "After these preliminary proceedings, the trial got into the heart of the matter with the reading of the bill of indictment. John Demjanjuk is held responsible for murdering hundreds of thousands of Jews during World War II." Similarly, the German story said the trial was about "criminal acts against the human race and the Jewish people," reiterating not only the historical nature of the crime but its magnitude. Man's inhumanity to man was clearly aligned here with German inhumanity to Jews.

The historical referents were also present in the American stories, but here they were illustrated with visual clips of the concentration camps. These black-and-white clips depicting piles of corpses are familiar to audiences in all these countries and are instantly identified with the horrors of Nazi Germany. The American and British stories also tied this trial to the trials at the end of World War II with the use of the term *war crimes*. That phrase tied it also to another historical referent, the Eichmann trial in Israel. The Belgian story referred to the trial as the "greatest trial of a war criminal since Adolf Eichmann." Both the British and American stories then drew on this context to compare the two situations. A British story said that "Eichmann was a greater criminal"; an American story said that "if Adolf Eichmann was the Holocaust bureaucrat, John Demjanjuk is accused of being a killer."

Recalling images of World War II, the Holocaust, and the Eichmann trial, the Demjanjuk story was firmly anchored historically and, as events unfolded, made for a formidable historical drama. As a British story concluded, "The Demjanjuk trial, whatever its outcome, will remind the world once again of the horrors of Nazism." Similarly, an American story said the trial will "remind the world of the Holocaust."

The Israeli story also emphasized the "horrors of the Holocaust" and "Ivan the Terrible's" war crimes against the Jewish people. But it also talked pointedly of the importance of the "educational value of a Holocaust trial" and added that "there are some who think this trial is not enough."

Good versus evil. "Man's inhumanity to man" ran through the coverage of Demjanjuk trial as a manifest historical theme. Underlying the facts of brutality are their moral consequences. One such implicit or latent theme was the conflict between good and evil and the eventual triumph of good over evil. Because that conflict can be seen in the lives of people, we have labeled it a human moral drama.

The underlying morality (or lack thereof) in the Demjanjuk story was

manifested at two levels: the collective/historical and the personal. At the collective/historical level the immorality of Nazi Germany was contrasted with the morally correct Allied forces. The immorality of racist Nazism was juxtaposed with the morality of western democracies.

But in addition to these specific historical circumstances summoned by the trial, the story was presented as a moral fable with a personal face—the face of the agent of evil meeting its deserved end. The theme “the evil that men do comes back to haunt them” ran throughout the narratives. Interesting, no such direct accusation could be made in Demjanjuk’s case because it was legally impossible to declare him “guilty as accused” before the trial even began. In addition, there were constant doubts engendered by the defense argument that this was a case of “mistaken identity.” Nevertheless, references to “Ivan the Terrible” created a general scenario of a man having to face his terrible past. The story then became not so much about Demjanjuk as about Ivan the Terrible, his crimes, and now his retribution. Demjanjuk and Ivan the Terrible coalesced in this general moral narrative (but not in the legal aspects of the narrative). Thus, as the evil past of the evil man came back to haunt him, there unfolded an intensely personal drama.

This theme was reflected in a number of ways. For example, the high degree of security that surrounded the prisoner, described in a majority of the stories, implied his evil nature and his guilt. Additional emotional drama was contributed by the appearance in the French, American, and British stories of a concentration camp survivor who railed at Demjanjuk in the courtroom. One expected Demjanjuk to break down or appear frightened by this ghost from his past, but he did not.

The theme of a guilty man paying for his past crimes was also reinforced by the British story’s extensive description of Demjanjuk’s jail cell. We were told that “the electricity supply [in the cell] was at 24 volts . . . to prevent a suicide attempt.” The reporter added that “security is tight to prevent possible attacks on the defendant—a defendant Israel has gone to great lengths to protect . . . not only from Israelis but also from himself.”

This form of indirect finger pointing was, of course, aimed at Demjanjuk, but more significantly it fit the general narrative of what befalls evil men. The visual structure of the stories supported this reading in other ways: for example, in the implicitly attributive visual switches from concentration camp to the defendant. Although no explicit verbal connection was made, the associative link was made visually.

Last, the descriptions of Demjanjuk’s behavior on the day of the trial was curiously ambivalent. Most of the stories focused on the deliberateness of Demjanjuk’s good humor as he entered the courtroom. The French story, for example, said that Demjanjuk “feigned a cheerful mood as he entered the courtroom.” The story then described the trial, the crimes, and the accusations of the survivors, and concluded with the line: “Tonight John Demjanjuk was

not smiling anymore." The rather explicit message was that no amount of pretense and putting on a smiling face was going to eradicate the crimes or to exonerate the perpetrator.

An innocent abroad. The theme of "the fate of evil men" is only one aspect of the personal drama. Other explicit themes may be incorporated under that heading. One of these was the legal focus of the story, which revolved around the defendant's guilt or innocence. Although the legal doubts persisted, nobody was really supportive of him. There was a feeling in the stories that something was not right about this man. But without sufficient evidence, the possibility of his innocence was emphasized in the legal description of the case, its past history, and its possible future.

The British reporter began his story by positioning the possible innocence of Demjanjuk as one of the primary elements of the story. He referred to Demjanjuk as "cruel sadistic monster or innocent victim of a hideous case of mistaken identity?" All the stories referred to the fact that the legal aspects of this case revolved around the establishment of Demjanjuk's identity. Except for one American story, the others were not very impressed by Demjanjuk's credentials. The American story raised doubts about the authenticity of the photo ID provided by the Soviets, thereby confirming Demjanjuk's innocence.

Further support for the possibility of Demjanjuk's innocence was provided by references in the non-American stories to America's extradition and stripping of Demjanjuk's citizenship and the amount of air time given to his defense by his son. In the British story, Demjanjuk, Junior, said that "unfortunately we have not received justice in the United States." In the French story he reiterated, "My father is innocent, I trust the Israeli justice system, and after the trial I will be able to bring my father back to the United States."

Demjanjuk's innocence was also implied by stressing the political nature of the trial. Israel's moral duty to bring Nazi criminals to book may mean that Demjanjuk, even if a victim of mistaken identity, may not get a fair trial. We now view that aspect of the story.

Lest we forget. Israel's political motivations in holding the trial constituted another major theme in the stories. The Demjanjuk trial made for political drama in the way it became a showcase for the evils of the past. One American story featured Shalom Rosenfeld (a prominent Israeli journalist who also covered the Eichmann trial) saying that "if it happened once, it can happen again." Similar sentiments were aired by a leading rabbi and a Holocaust researcher on other American broadcasts. The German story spelled this out even more clearly. It said that "the state of Israel is responsible for safeguarding the interests of Israelis who endured the criminal acts of the Holocaust." Israel's responsibility to its citizens and to its historical legacy was thus linked to the universal themes of remembrance and forgetting.

The Israeli story foregrounded this theme in the most explicit way. It emphasized that the trial was a "reminder—and an important one—of the horrors of the Holocaust, particularly at a moment when there is a growing movement that denies the Holocaust ever took place." The story closed with a reference to the "hundreds, if not more, of Nazi war criminals living in Western countries" and the importance of not forgetting the past even as "the murderers get older and die [and] the survivors get older and die."

Particularistic aspects. Although the narratives of the Demjanjuk story were based on largely universalistic themes, they also had important culturally specific orientations. The differences between them focused on the preponderance of one or another of the sociodramas in their thematic structure. The German story, for example, focused on the personal and political drama. Like the others, the German story began with a historical reference, but it did not detail the historical background as did the American and British stories in their leads. Rather, it dealt with the proceedings of the trial, emphasizing that the trial will decide whether the Ukrainian will live or die. It pointed out the political motivations of Israel in putting Demjanjuk on trial, and Israel's legal jurisdiction over the case. Overall, the story was less historical in tone than the others.

The lead in one of the British stories oriented the audience to the historical circumstance, but the rest of the story was structured largely as a personal drama with elements of political drama woven in. The main elements were Demjanjuk's condition, his security, the possibility of his suicide, his cheerful demeanor. As the story put it, "Demjanjuk is center stage in proceedings that could cost him his life."

Similarly, in another British story the focus stayed on the personal drama of Demjanjuk's fate. The historical drama was used largely as a catalyst for moving the story through its primary personal mode. The emphasis on the historical in conjunction with the personal was also apparent in the French and Belgian stories. The Belgian story heralded the "opening of a sensational trial." Demjanjuk's behavior and guilt were the primary focus of the story. The historical background referred to was both the larger historical circumstance of the Holocaust and the specific crimes of "Ivan the Terrible," and the story used Eichmann as yet another reference point. The French story too was heavily structured as personal drama. It began with a cheerful Demjanjuk and ended with a cryptic reference to his "not smiling anymore."

In the American stories, elements of the personal drama were present but were subordinated to aspects of historical and political drama. Some references, however, were quintessentially American. Thus the ABC story referred to Demjanjuk as the "former Cleveland auto worker." The CBS and NBC stories also referred to him as the "auto worker from Cleveland, Ohio." There was mention of the fact that Demjanjuk shouted, "Hello Cleveland!" as he

entered the courtroom. Interestingly, the French story reported Demjanjuk greeting people in Hebrew but left out his English greeting.

The American stories focused intensively on the historical background to the trial. They used archival footage to frame the story, and the text also provided a great deal of material to help the audience relate to this story as the latest unfolding of a historical tale. The personal drama in the American stories was oriented, like the others, to the question of Demjanjuk's guilt or innocence, but here the historical and personal dramas took on a political twist. The CBS story "digressed" into a discussion of changes in Israeli society, and the NBC story mentioned that even within Israel questions were being raised about the motives behind the trial.

Although the American stories seemed to be skeptical about some of the political motivations behind the trial, they did not necessarily regard Demjanjuk as an innocent man. Rather, they treated him with a great deal of ambivalence. This was also reflected in Demjanjuk, Junior's absence from the stories, even though his statements were given a fair amount of exposure in the European stories. This was somewhat surprising because his son's appearance and his call for his father to be released in order to return home and reunite the family would have easily fit into a narrative of personal drama—usually a staple of American television.

What accounts for the differences between the Europeans' greater emphasis on the personal drama compared to the American stories' focus on the historical and political aspects? The explanation clearly has to do with the Europeans' historical involvement in the issues behind the trial and the Americans' distance from them. The story is a reminder that after all these years, Demjanjuk and the Holocaust were products of European, not American, experience.

In many ways, the Israeli story was the least universalized. Although the historical dimension was there, the human, personal drama of the defendant was obviously absent. Instead, the story was framed largely as a case *non pareil* for the Israeli legal system. Following some initial references to the trial, the reporter was identified as a "legal correspondent," thereby further framing the story in legal language. The reporter recounted the "difficult legal struggles" faced by the Israeli authorities to extradite Demjanjuk and the bureaucratic woes of the Israeli Office of Special Investigations, and then emphasized that the trial would "demonstrate once again Israel's highly regarded judicial system, not to be underestimated at a time like this."

The Hybridity of Meanings

The rather detailed analysis of the Demjanjuk stories demonstrates how, through the use of dramaturgical analysis, one can identify both the culturally universalistic (in this case the dominant) meanings and their particularistic counterparts. We thus point to the interconnectedness of both sets of mean-

ings. This interconnectedness, or hybridity, varies of course from story to story. To illustrate this hybridity we briefly discuss a story from South Africa concerning a massacre of Black train passengers by a rival Black faction. The cultural universalism of the story was established by the story's graphic visuals, which displayed pictures of the dead and dying, scattered in stark poses of death. The impress of blood, gore, and brutality inevitably triggers a universal response: the horror of death and of the inhumanity inflicted on the innocent.

Although these visual elements universalized the stories, the verbal framing of these stories oriented them in culturally particularistic ways. In the American case, for example—and to a lesser extent in the others—the story was framed in terms of Black-on-Black violence, a frame sadly familiar to American audiences. This raises the issue of the transition of meanings between universalistic and particularistic referents. In some cases there is transition from a culturally particularistic to a culturally universalistic frame (e.g., in the story of the explosion of the *Challenger*, which changed from being framed as an "American achievement" to being framed as a "tragic loss of life"). In other cases we find transition in the opposite direction, from a culturally universalistic to a culturally particularistic frame. An example of that can be seen in a story of the three whales trapped under the ice in Alaska in 1988. In the beginning the story was told in terms of the universal theme of "the plight of the innocent." The frame changed, however, when the Russian navy moved in to rescue the whales. At that point the whales became another motif in a longstanding culturally specific story (at least for American audiences): that of the Cold War and superpower competition.

Mythic Texts and the Open-Closed Question

In addition to the microanalytic features of themes and drama, we found that the overall mythic or generic impress of a story was important in determining the extent to which the story became particular or universal. We argue that the more rhetorically balanced, current/factual, and neutral/standardized the story (i.e., the more it approximates the prescriptions of objectivity, factuality and balance embedded in the professional ideology of Western journalism), the more open it would be, and therefore the more amenable to universal consumption. Conversely, the more poetic/mythological and loaded/stylized the story, the more closed and hence culturally specific it would be (Roeh & Cohen, 1992).

To illustrate, we examined comparatively a number of stories about student protests in South Korea in 1987. The stories on Israeli and American television offered polar opposite examples. The Israeli station, dependent as it was on materials supplied by the global television news agencies (Visnews and WTN) and the news exchange system of the European Broadcasting Union, carried a generic-universalistic story devoid of any point of view and stylistic markers

and presented as a bulletin with anchor voiceover. A "tell story" (i.e., a story narrated by an anchor or a news reader) from start to finish, it conformed as closely as possible to the rhetoric of objectivity. In that sense it was an open story, in the terms defined above. Its openness and neutrality rendered it culturally universal. There was nothing specifically Israeli about the story, and it could have been shown in the same form everywhere else. (Indeed, we assume that a similar generic story was probably carried by other television services similarly dependent for their visual materials on the global news agencies.)

In contrast, the American coverage of this story was framed in mythic terms. It framed the students' actions as a democratic revolution. Student violence was legitimized as an agent of political change. The story offered compelling television drama: It began with footage of rioting students, tear gassed and chased by policemen wearing gas masks and brandishing batons. This was followed by an account of the day's events, in which students who had been holed up in a cathedral were allowed by the authorities to leave without harm. Their departure in buses, waving flags and fists, was followed by a nighttime candlelight procession. At each stage in the narrative, the story constructed the students as agents of democratic reform.

These mythic elements often "domesticate" foreign stories for different national audiences. Thus, for example, a story on elections in Ireland, carried by CBS, emphasized themes of hopelessness and despair for that country. Heavily loaded with poetic and timeless elements, it took the shape of a eulogy. In contrast, an Israeli story on the release by the Moscow authorities of the Jewish "refusenik" Joseph Begun was filled with mythic elements of a celebratory nature. It took the form of an elegy.

CONCLUSION

To summarize: in the examples previously detailed, we found that:

1. Some elements of narrative structure (time, valence, story/discourse order) created one set of relations between particular and universal meanings. Through a process of tracing the similarities and the differences between different narratives, a picture of what becomes universalized and what stays particularized emerges.
2. Overall features of narrative structure (drama, themes) reveal continuities along the particularistic/universalistic spectrum, and through their hybridity tilt the story in either direction.
3. Other overall features of narrative structure (mythic and generical elements) may close off universalistic possibilities, whereas adherence to neutral, standardized journalistic techniques may make news texts more open or global.

These issues seem to be of special significance in view of one of the main forces that is contributing to the accelerating move toward the globalization of meanings in television news, namely the global broadcast of live television events. We would argue that yet another dimension of the cultural particularism/cultural universalism relationship is present in this relatively new genre.

How does global live television impact on issues of cultural particularism and universalism? It does so in the disjunctions it creates, first between locality and globality, and second between television narrators and television consumers.

One of the most obvious consequences of live television is its compression of space. Global live transmission of events, as Dayan and Katz (1992) pointed out, offers identical views of these events to audiences worldwide. That was the case, for example, in Cable News Network's (CNN) reporting of the Gulf War. Although this was an essentially American production (and hence culturally particularistic), the live transmission created a universalistic dimension. Viewers around the world listened for hours to Peter Arnett or Bernard Shaw dashing from window to window describing the first night attack on Baghdad. In the days that followed, reporters for the American networks reported live as events unfolded. In Israel, for example, ABC's reporter Dean Reynolds was shown sitting in his Tel Aviv office, the camera peering into the darkness outside, waiting for Iraqi chemical bomb attacks. Viewers saw him put on his gas mask and continue to describe the scene as it unfolded before both him and the audience. In another live broadcast, audiences saw NBC's Arthur Kent describing a Scud attack. He would dramatically duck as each Scud would pass over his head or behind him and then be destroyed by American Patriot missiles.

Live television does a number of things. First of all, it presents reality as *self-revelatory*—that is, it appears as reality rather than as a construction. As Chatman (1981) puts it:

The implications of the camera eye style is that no one recounts the events, they are just revealed, as if some instrument—some cross between a video tape recorder and speech synthesizer—had recorded visually and then translated those visuals into the most neutral kind of language. (p. 124)

Whether it is CNN, C-Span, or Court TV, the Gulf War or the coverage of major television events such as elections or the launching of the space shuttle, live television affects the narrative by presenting events in this camera eye style. In the terms we have discussed, live broadcasting is, then, open ended. It lacks a perspective or point of view. Unlike the usual television news product (over which journalists typically have complete editorial control), live broadcasting

hardly lends itself to rhetorical manipulation. Consequently, the relation between the event, the reporter, and the audience is drastically changed. The audience is, as it were, positioned inside the event. The act of textualization (Manoff, 1989) that is usually journalist's imperative is taken away. The event becomes an invitation for interpretation for the audience to take part in. There is little that Reynolds knew that the audience could not see for themselves. Thus one of the key ways in which narratives are controlled (complication-resolution) becomes moot. Any suspense is no longer generated by the narrative and resides solely in the inherent suspense of the unfolding event. The absence of a "knowledge gap" between narrator and listener also limits the interpretations and the commentary that journalists can offer. The role of the journalist as storyteller and the media's control over their stories are thus substantially altered.

Last, whereas live television compresses space, it simultaneously elongates time. In live broadcasting the length of the event is the length of narrative. Because in almost all narratives, time is compressed into "discourse time," the inability to compress time in live broadcasting implies meaningfully elongated narratives. Thus the first night bombing of Baghdad could eventually be compressed into stories of varying length, but it took quite a few hours to unfold in "real time."

By impacting news narratives in these significant ways, live broadcasting renders news stories open to all audiences. In doing so it creates hybrid media products that, while obviously culturally determined, at the same time assume a more universalistic character. The result is a process of universalization of meanings.

We have presented some ways to understand issues of local/global meanings in television news by examining some elements of narrative structures at the micro and macro level. Obviously, this is only a part of the broader process of the globalization of meanings, which necessarily also involves institutions, economies, and technologies. Narrative analysis, such as the one attempted, does, however, provide a glimpse of the complexity of the globalization of television news at the semantic and structural levels.

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