VIEW

GREAT ESCAPES FROM THE PAST

MEMORY AND IDENTITY IN EUROPEAN TRANSNATIONAL TELEVISION NEWS

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Abstract: Over the last couple of decades, Europe has undergone fundamental political transformations that have challenged old stereotypes about the 'essence' of the European identity. This article analyses televisual narratives of the 2004 enlargement of the European Union, turning the analytical spotlight on two of Europe's largest news broadcasters: BBC World News and Euronews. The article focuses on how Europe is remembered in the news, but also how references to the past are used to explain what Europe is today and what it might look like in the future.

Keywords: transnational television, memory, identity, European identity, EU enlargement

1 Televisual Memories Of Europe

In 2004, the European Union (EU) celebrated its biggest enlargement so far, marking a powerful symbolic shift in the European political landscape. As argued by a long row of researchers, the enlargement involved new challenges to Europe's borders as a political construct, as many of the new countries had previously been positioned as 'Europe's others'.[1] Prior to 1989, for example, the established idea of a European identity had been quite easily demarcated through references to metaphors such as the 'Iron curtain', the 'Cold War' or not least to the Berlin Wall. During that time, 'us' was simply the same thing as 'Western Europe' while 'the other' was found in the communist East, in the 'Orient' or perhaps in the 'Third World'. When this border paradigm began to change, imagining Europe from these old binaries became harder and harder to make a case for. However, not all researchers have supported the notion that the significance of the East is about to dissolve. In his influential work 'uses of the other', Iver B. Neumann argues that the discursive concept of the East has been cut loose from its geographical point of reference, establishing a more generalized social marker in European identity formation. He writes that:

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1 Michal Kryzanowski, 'On the "Europeanisation" of Identity Constructions in Polish Political Discourse after 1989' in Aleksandra Galasinska and Michał Krzyżanowski, eds, *Discourse and Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008

…there is no use talking about an end of an East/West divide in European history after the end of the cold war. The question is not *whether* the East will be used in the forging of new European identities, but *how* this is being done. [italics in original][2]

Within the context of transnational television news, this article argues that the question of 'how', in Neumann's words, depends to a large extent on how the spatial construction of the East/West divide is connected to certain temporal representational arrangements. That is, to put it differently, how Europe is *remembered* in the news through references to the past, but also how such references are used to explain what Europe is today and what it might look like in the future. The period around the 2004 enlargement was chosen because it can open up new and interesting insights into how television news contributes to processes of defining and re-defining Europe's identity during times of significant political transformations.

BBC World News and **Euronews**, which are under investigation here, add a further transnational dimension to this complexity, since they are both distributed and watched in a large array of countries across Europe and the globe.[3] Euronews, which was launched by the EBU in 1993, presents news in 11 different languages simultaneously (this study examines the English version). As such, it has established itself as a broadcaster accentuating news from 'a European perspective'. The channel receives funding from the European Commission, which means that EU related issues are guaranteed a certain amount of airtime. BBC World News, on the other hand, belongs to the BBC's 'commercial arm', and it is organized according to a global purpose summarized by the corporation as 'bringing the UK to the world' when it comes to worldwide broadcasting, and 'bringing the world to the UK' regarding news presented for the domestic audience.[4] Euronews as well as BBC World News can be taken as prominent examples of an increasingly global news system, but they also give evidence to the fact that transnational news channels are embedded within ideological frameworks that can be both national and international in character.[5] Euronews' European agenda, reflected in its **Editorial charter** is thus an important factor to take into consideration, and so is the official **public purpose** of the BBC.

Drawing on results of a larger study of news coverage on the two channels,[6] the article identifies three news contexts in which memories of Europe's past served as central discursive resources. First, news broadcasts portraying the many celebrations of the 'New Europe' that were held in connection with the enlargement; second, news items focusing on obstacles for political and social change; and third, reportages depicting political nostalgia. The analysis focuses on a 'themed period'[7] of journalism and includes six news reports (two from Euronews and four from BBC World) selected on the basis of how they expressed different ways of remembering Europe's history.[8] The chosen examples also reflect the central ideological differences between the channels. While Euronews historical coverage was focused on celebratory features (identified as the first context above), BBC World offered a somewhat broader picture, not least as the channel also included countries outside the Union (exemplified by the two latter news contexts). This also explains the uneven number of selected items for each channel. Methodologically, the analysis is based on critical discourse analysis (CDA) with a particular focus on communicative events, historical narratives and the way their interrelationships impinge on how European identity is articulated discursively in the news through temporal and spatial constructions inherent to televisual texts.[9]

2 Iver B Neumann, *Uses of the Other: The East in European Identity Formation*, Manchester University Press, 1999, p. 207
3 See for example Myria Georgiou, 'Seeking Ontological Security beyond the Nation: The Role of Transnational Television', *New Media and Society,* 19 November 2012, DOI: 10.1177/1527476412463448
4 The BBC's public purpose is available online at: **http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/whoweare/publicpurposes/**, 17 May 2013
5 Jean K Chalaby, *Transnational Television in Europe: Reconfiguring Global Communications Networks*, I.B Tauris, 2009
6 Andreas Widholm, *Europe in Transition: Transnational Television News and European Identity,* Stockholm University/JMK, 2011
7 Paul Brighton & Dennis Foy, *News Values*, Sage, 2007. The authors discuss 'themed periods' such as election campaigns and military conflicts and argue that especially planned events impact on news values as well as on news selection processes. The enlargement of the EU can be seen as a themed period in which interrelated issues pertaining to Europe and European identity were particularly prioritised, especially by BBC World News (the fact that Euronews chose to report extensively on these issues is, of course, less surprising).
8 Needless to say, the sample should thus not be seen as representative of the two channels' total news coverage of the EU enlargement period.
9 The analysis is inspired by the methodological approach presented by Norman Fairclough in *Media Discourse,* Edward Arnold, 1995.

2 Memory, Identity, Media

Every day, the media take part in processes of defining and redefining collective feelings of community and belonging. Whether centred on cultural representations pertaining to the nation state or to broader spatial entities such as 'Europe', contemporary media play a key role in forming the cultural building blocks of identity that people draw upon on a daily basis. Senses of belonging originate in considerable respects from conceptions of a shared history and a common destiny.[10] Our sense of the past, John B Thompson argues, has gradually become more and more shaped by and dependent on 'an ever expanding reservoir of mediated symbolic forms' provided by the media industry.[11] Philip Schlesinger writes in a similar fashion that journalism can contribute to 'what we as members of collectives socially forget and what we remember – and why'.[12]

Gary R. Edgerton has referred to the term collective memory as 'the full sweep of historical consciousness, understanding, and expression that a culture has to offer'.[13] Undoubtedly, the media, and especially television can contribute to the formation of such a consciousness. According to Edgerton, TV producers – and audiences – are preoccupied with creating a 'useful past' where narratives serve as vehicles for understanding the present as well as the future. This makes television journalism a key site to study, not only because it is a viable collective information resource, but also because journalistic processes are situated within social, cultural and political frameworks that impinge on the way the information is constructed and restored. Riegert and Åker write that 'collective memory gives meaning to traditions, social and cultural institutions, and certain "ways of life", but memory can also serve as a justification for political decisions and courses of action'.[14] In media studies, the relation between memory and identity is often connected to a narrative understanding of identity and focuses on how media provide readers with senses of cultural stability and continuity through historical storytelling.[15] Looking at television as a site for historical narratives is, to cite Kevin Robins and David Morley, a question of 'recognising the role of the stories we tell ourselves about our past in constructing our identities in the present'.[16] That is not to say, however, that narratives necessarily are repeated over and over again. On the contrary, they are constantly re-arranged and adapted to fit specific situations and spatial contexts. The power of historical narratives, Peter Van Ham argues, is in their capacity to place 'one foot in the history and one in fiction' where the self becomes a 'character in a plot that can be reread and changed, if possible or if needed'.[17] The old dichotomy between 'Eastern' and 'Western' Europe is an interesting example. Although its significance for international relations has changed over the latest decades, it is still a frequently used marker of difference, in political and cultural as well as spatial and temporal terms. The core of this reasoning is that places like the Berlin wall or the 'Red Square' are not always depicted in news stories because of their geographical or territorial relevance, but because they signify a temporal meaning that rehearses or transforms a historical narrative.[18] Likewise, places without established temporal associations have often attached certain meanings, either through spatial or temporal references. Especially within the foreign news genre, such processes often lean on orientalist stereotypes that turn 'space into time', constructed through multi-temporal representations where 'they' as opposed to 'us' are placed in the past and the present at the same time.[19] A central task for any analyst interested in the relationship between memory and identity is therefore to unveil to what extent memories serve integrative or disintegrative functions. That is to show how references to the past are used to depict certain people as different from others, or conversely to show how the same references entail some sort of social or cultural similarity.

10 Stuart Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity', in Stuart Hall & David Huberts, eds., *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*, Blackwell, 1996

11 John B. Thompson, *The media and modernity: a social theory of the media*, Polity Press, 1995.

12 Philip Schlesinger, *Media, State and Nation,* Sage, 1991, p. 181

13 Gary Richard Edgerton, 'Introduction' in Gary Richard Edgerton & Peter C. Rollins, eds, *Television histories: shaping collective memory in the media age,* University Press of Kentucky, 2003

14 Kristina Riegert & Patrik Åker, 'Knowing me, knowing you. Mediated identities in the Baltic Sea Region, in Kristina Riegert, eds, *News of the Other: Tracing Identity in Scandinavian Constructions of the Eastern Baltic Sea Region*, Nordicom, 2004, p. 78

15 Alexa Robertson, *Mediated Cosmopolitanism*, Polity, 2010

16 David Morley & Kevin Robins, *Spaces of identity: global media, electronic landscapes and cultural boundaries*, Routledge, 1995

17 Peter Van Ham, *European Integration and the Postmodern Condition,* Routledge, 2001, p. 193.

18 Jan Ekecrantz, 'In other Worlds: Mainstream Imagery of Eastern neighbours', in Kristina Riegert, eds, *News of the Other: Tracing Identity Constructions in Scandinavian Constructions of the Eastern Baltic Sea Region*, Nordicom, 2004

19 Anna Roosvall, *Utrikesjournalistikens antropologi: Nationalitet, etnicitet och kön i svenska tidningar*, Stockholm University, 2005, p. 294.

3 Celebrating The 'New Europe'

Let us now take a look at some examples of how Europe and European identity is constructed in terms of history and memory in transnational television news. The first context I want to highlight here is constituted by news reports from planned celebrations of the 'New Europe'.[20] When only a few hours remained until the first of May, ceremonies were held across all new member countries. BBC World opened the evening newscast with the headline 'Countdown in Europe: Ten new members get ready to join the European Union', followed by the subsequent anchor introduction:

> Now Europe is right now counting down to a historic moment. In about two hours time the biggest ever expansion of the European Union will take place. (...) The historic move will shift the borders of the EU Eastwards and will include 10 new states. Celebrations taking place in all of them, from the smallest, Malta, in the Mediterranean, to Poland, the largest with nearly forty million people.

This was the start of a long series of live reports from Poland, the Czech Republic and Ireland, constructed as a dialogue between the anchor and reporters stationed in the respective capitals of these countries. Already in the lead, it is noticeable that the central argument about the situation was centred on what we can call the moment of transition, articulated by key words such as a 'historic moment' and a 'historic move' that will 'shift the borders' of the Union to the East. The power of this narrative lies in its argument of change, practically meaning that bringing people 'under the European Union flag' involves an instantly recognizable symbolic transformation. In order to anchor this change visually, a map illuminated the geographical expansion of the European Union during this important phase in history. James Coomerasamy, on location in Poland, gave the subsequent report:

> …this is an incredibly important moment for a country, which over the centuries has been carved up various European Empires, which has seen the dominance of the Soviets and occupation by the Germans during the 2nd World War. I think people are now saying this is the time when Poland is back in the European family and it's a moment really to reflect on history (…).

The reporter used a common metaphor of the EU, namely that of the 'family', constructing an idea of Europe as a historical entity, now returning to its natural form.[21] The family metaphor is also a good example of discursive equivalence, which illustrates the double-sided function of time and history in the news item: the enlargement was both a time for *reflection* about the past, and a time for Poland to *leave* the past as people prepared for the 'new chapter' in the country's history.

My second BBC example[22] was broadcast on May 1, the first day of the new Europe. One of the many official celebrations was hosted by Ireland, which also held the European Union presidency at the time. The channel showed a long series of news reports, from Dublin, via Bratislava, Warsaw, Vilnius and finally back to Dublin again. The introductory voice-over sequence emphasized that the ceremony 'marked the final eradication of the old communist block and the unification of Eastern and Western Europe'. The Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern who inaugurated the ceremony, talked about 'cooperation', 'common ends' and the success of the European Union. The subsequent narrative was accompanied by a grand march, music, rolling images of a military horse parade, mixed national and EU banners, followed by pictures of people celebrating the country's entry into the cooperation:

> **Voice-over:** Thousands have converged on the city centre to celebrate Hungary's long journey from Soviet satellite to European partner. To mark the occasion one of the bridges over the river Danube was turned into a grassy picnic area, a change as radical as that which Hungary has undergone over the past decade. Its people are still getting used to their new status.
> **Man on the street:** For my son, being a European will be quite natural, he says, but for us it still seems strange.

20 BBC World News, April 30, 2004
21 See for example Beyza Ç. Tekin, *Representations and Othering in Discourse: The Construction of Turkey in the EU Context*, John Benjamin's Publishing Co., 2010.
22 BBC World News, April 30, 2004

In the excerpt we can see that 'the long journey from Soviet satellite to European partner' represented what we can call a successful escape from the ideologies of the past. According to the man on the street cited in the item, the change was vast and almost impossible to grasp: 'Being a European' was something for future generations, but for him, it still felt strange. This is a telling example of how the EU was constructed as a changing political entity, whereas the cultural identity of some its inhabitants was ascribed more stable features, rooted for example in personal and not least *national* experiences of the past. Together, the two examples illustrate Paul Ricœur's argument that we live in a 'triple present'.[23] If the BBC's live coverage before and after the enlargement emphasized, in Ricœur's words, 'the present of the present', the latter examples underlined how the newscasts located the enlargement within the context of 'the present of the past' as well as the 'present of the future'.[24]

A great deal of Euronews' reporting from the celebrations on May 1 was rather similar to the narratives presented by the BBC. An obvious reason for this was the fact that the two shared many audiovisual resources from the celebrations. Accompanied by pictures of the national flags of the 25 EU countries, the channel cited Irish president Mary McAleese, saying that 'the past was laid to rest, the future anticipated with great hope'.[25] As illustrated in the two quotes below, however, Euronews also included memories of World War II into the picture:

> **Voice-over:** Among the countries who joined the EU at midnight was Cyprus and Malta, the rest of former communist states and their addition comes just fifteen years after most of them emerged from decades of Soviet domination.

> **(..)** Tensions have simmered for nearly 60 years since the Czech's expulsion of ethnic Germans and Hungarians, in retaliation for annexations during World War 2. And of course, full-blown hostilities began with Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939. Now, most agree that finally burying the hatchet is an effective basis for building future good relations (…)

The escape from the past seemed to be the most overarching idea of the enlarged Europe, and the metaphor of the buried hatchet reminded the viewers of the horrors of Europe's political history. The demarcation between the past and present Europe couldn't be clearer than in the report[26] from a Hungarian bus station which was hosting an exhibition entitled: 'What we don't take with us to the European Union'. The reporter explained:

> With Kalashnikov rifles, the complete works of Lenin, and even East-German household appliances, Hungarians say they are drawing a line under their country's memories of domination by Moscow.

Along with rolling images of Stalin and Lenin, the news report put emphasis on, and symbolically verified, the final end of Soviet domination and the clash between East and West that had marked the country for so long. Although this was a way of drawing former antagonists together in regional European terms, the narrative also pointed to the importance of national experiences. Thus, the analysed coverage accentuates that mediated experiences of history pertain to common European memories, but also to the particular national experiences that these memories embrace.[27]

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23 Paul Ricoeur, 'Narrated Time', in Mario J. Valdés, eds., *A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991, p. 338-354

24 Due to its multilingual character, Euronews seldom broadcasts news live. When they do, it is most often produced within the "No Comment" section, which lacks commentary. Besides its Europeanised news agenda, this is one of the key differences between the channel and other transnational broadcasters operating in Europe.

25 Euronews, May 1, 2004

26 Euronews, May 1, 2004. The newscast was introduced by the headline 'Good-bye Lenin: Hungarians draw a line under their communist past'

27 It is also possible to see this as one-sided processes of 'Westernization' in which some parts of the East attained Western characteristics rather than the other way.

Figure 1

Figure 2

4 Obstacles For Change: A Report From The Donkey Age

As it should be clear by now, *change* was at the heart of the reporting during the period. However, not all countries in Europe were part of this process, which was emphasized not least by the BBC's reporters, who also chose to focus on the consequences for those countries that stayed outside the cooperation. Ideas of modernity have been a core feature of the identity politics of the European Union[28] and the collision between the modern European project and the pre-modern condition of the 'soon to be Europeans' couldn't be clearer than in the BBC's reportage[29] from a farm in the Bulgarian countryside:

> *Anchor:* Bulgaria is making frantic efforts to rebuild its farming sector after it fell into decline, following the collapse of communism. Sofia hopes to join the European Union in three years, and agriculture is a mainstay of its economy, but as Malcolm Brabant reports, some Bulgarian produce doesn't meet EU standards.
> *Reporter:* The agriculture ministry says it wants Bulgaria to be a farming powerhouse when it enters the European Union. At the moment, though, it resembles a poor country cousin, and this field provides a snapshot of the nation's problems. It was once part of a highly mechanized and productive collective farm, but the land is now divided into inefficient private smallholdings, which can just about support the owner, his wife and their children.

The sequence above could be taken as typical for several of the items aired at the time as they focused on political changes from Eastern to Western values, and from communism to Western capitalism. Yet, as Bulgaria belonged to those countries that still waited for EU membership, it was not connected to the ideas of unity that I referred to in the earlier examples. Instead, the country was represented in terms of post-communism, a position characterized by slow progress and hard political and economic struggles. The item was clearly centred on differences between Bulgaria and the EU – the metaphor of 'the cousin' conveyed a picture of the country as a distant relative in contrast to the 'family' mentioned earlier.

I want to argue that these constructions contribute to a very specific understanding of post-communist states as immovable and discursively fixed. First by connecting history to the present, and second by focusing on obstacles for change, such as structures that impede and hold back social and economic development. The former was accentuated by references to the paradoxes relating to the post-communist condition (Bulgaria was *once* a breadbasket, but *now* it resembles a poor country cousin), while the latter was articulated by the quote of a poor farm worker living on the Bulgarian countryside:

> It's really difficult to make a decent living, because we do everything with our hands. We need modern farming practices because we have no tractors, no technology. (…) There's nothing we can do to change the situation.

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28 Peo Hansen, *Europeans Only? Essays on Identity Politics and the European Union*, Umeå University, 2000.
29 BBC World News, May 2, 2004

Figure 3.

Figure 4.

The farm worker gave evidence of a country that was stuck in the past during times of political and cultural changes. With no progressive technology, the farmer had no chance to 'change the situation', strengthening the idea of Bulgaria as fundamentally different from the modern and highly transformative countries of the new Europe. Suddenly, however, the story took a new direction. According to the reporter, there were exceptions to the pre-modern farming practices in the country, and one example was a young female entrepreneur. Thanks to foreign investments and new technology, her business had grown like few similar farming projects in the country. Thus, the solution to Bulgaria's crises was to be found outside the country, but the young entrepreneur feared that people were not ready yet: 'There are some people afraid of the foreign investments but my personal view is that we should not be afraid of it'. What we see here is thus a country isolated both in time (Bulgaria was stuck in the past) and in space (the 'foreign' or in fact Europe as something dangerous). When it was time for the final round off by the reporter, the news item returned to its starting position. Along with images of a donkey driven cab, steering toward the horizon, the reporter concluded that this was not the time for socialist yearning and hostilities against foreigners:

> Amongst those nostalgic for communist collectives, there is resistance to plans to amend the constitution to enable foreigners to buy land here. But if they want to get out of the donkey age, they may have no alternative.

The legacy of the East is a heavy symbolic burden to carry for many countries, and so are memories of the Second World War for former Nazi and Fascist countries. With the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the enlargement period was first of all a time for journalistic reflections about the horrors of communism. According to the BBC, Bulgaria had not yet reached the ideological status of modernity, a 'news burden' that took the country – and the viewers – all the way to the odious 'donkey-age'. We can therefore conclude that the EU membership works as an incredibly strong marker of both spatial and temporal difference. The representational conventions of the reportage genre, with its low tempo and anthropological gaze, strengthened the image of Bulgaria as still being one of the EU's 'others'.

5 Nostalgia And Fond Memories Of The Past

In the previous example we saw that the spatio-temporal organization of news stories meets new challenges during times of political and economic transitions. A further example of this could be seen in a BBC reportage from Serbia during the period.[30] The item did not deal with the enlargement specifically, but can be seen as a typical story of a themed period, where certain issues and perspectives (in this case the question of changing identities in Europe) are given a more prominent position in the news. Similar to the story from Bulgaria, the item provided insights into a process of conservation. However, the temporal logic was now inverted:

> **Anchor:** Well the name Yugoslavia finally disappeared from maps last year when what remained of marshal Tito's Slav federation was renamed Serbia and Montenegro. But for those with fond memories of the past, there's now a theme park specializing in Yugo-nostalgia. From Yugo-land, here's Matt Roger.
> **Voice-over:** Welcome to Yugoland, a tiny corner of Serbia that is forever Yugoslavia. The uniforms are old, the faces even older. These people have come to relive their past. They're signing up to a country that no longer exists. Instead, a tiny replica, created in a village garden. The guest of honour is Tito. Not the original ruler of Yugoslavia, but his grandson.

30 BBC World News, May 9, 2004

Figure 5.

Figure 6.

The theme park of Yugoland can be seen as a symbolic and spatial reincarnation of a 'real' Yugoslavia. Through the park, the people of Yugoland could awake memories of the past through which they re-imagined the good life of the home that no longer exists. Even Tito, the greatest of all Yugoslavian political symbols, was reincarnated in the body of his grand son, Josip Broz. The voice-over was accompanied by images of waved Yugoslavian flags and folk music played by a small ensemble on a tiny stage. In front of it, people were dancing and clapping their hands whilst others queued in front of a reception desk where they fetched their formal authorization to the imagined country from officials dressed in authentic uniforms. Some, like an old lady wearing a red star adorned soldier's cap, calmly sat down and enjoyed the music from a long bench. Beside her, an old man was wiping his tears in remembrance of good old times. The reportage continued:

> **Voice-over:** Today the people of Yugoslavia are dancing to a new tune. Under Tito they had free health care, free education, a good life. Now many have very little. (…)
> **Reporter:** What they are trying to do is to compress the whole of former Yugoslavia into just three and a half hectares of land, which means that that pile of dirt there is Mount Triglav [the reporter points to the pile], Yugoslavia's biggest mountain. (…) For visitors to Yugoland, it can be an overwhelming experience. A day when, just briefly, they can forget the present and perhaps share the tear in remembrance of Yugoslavia's past.

For several weeks, the BBC had reported on changes on the European continent, which is important to consider when looking at this particular news story. Generally, change was attributed to integrative processes, but as illustrated above, local deviations gave a further dimension to Europe as a geographical entity. The whole idea of Yugoland constitutes an interesting example of how authenticity sometimes becomes fuzzy. According to the park owner, nothing was fake or imagined about his identity. Serbia and Montenegro on the other hand, were 'artificial', which illustrates how identities are constantly in motion in television news.

6 Concluding Remarks On Memory, Change And Permanence

As should be clear by now, a central feature that has been identified in the studied newscasts was how they reflected the idea that the EU enlargement could be taken as an example of the end of history. As Irish president Mary McAleese expressed it, 'the past was laid to rest', which suggests that historical divides are transformed into common memories of sameness when the EU constructs its own identity. In a more general sense, the newscasts bear evidence of how identities are reconstructed in terms of reflexivity, what Anthony Giddens and others have conceptualized as the constant revision of biographical stories; processes where history is reinterpreted in the light of present circumstances.[31]

A common argument in identity studies of the media is that *national* identities are often constructed within a 'framework of rapture with the past', meaning that cultural representations of nationhood are based on narratives that stage and re-enact well known periods in the nation's history.[32] Over time, the way we remember changes, something that has been widely visible in the examples I have discussed in this article. However, what we saw in many of the newscasts of the EU enlargement was not nostalgia, but euphoria over a journey that had finally come to an end. The end of history and the end of difference are thereby discursive resources that look quite different from the primordial articulations of identity that are often attributed to nation-building processes.[33]

The EU has partly been formed on the basis of common historical experiences of antagonism, seen for example in the **Declaration on European identity** formulated in Copenhagen in 1973. The Enlargement put a symbolic end

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31 Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Stanford University Press, 1991

32 Britta Timm Knudsen, 'The Nation as Media Event', in Anna Roosvall & Inka Salovaara-Moring, eds., *Communicating the Nation. National Topographies of Global Media Landscapes*, Nordicom, 2010, p. 41

33 Susannah Verney, 'Justifying the second enlargement: promoting interests, consolidating democracy or returning to the roots?', in Helene Sjursen, eds., *Questioning EU Enlargement: Europe in Search of identity,* Routledge, 2006

to this antagonism but not to difference as a marker of European identity. For some, notably those living outside the EU sphere, the situation looked quite different. Ideological nostalgia and mourning of past times was one way of articulating remaining differences in Europe. Another way was to construct countries outside the EU as 'stuck in the past'. Thus, the televisual representations analysed here, remind us of Paul Ricœur's argument that identity constructions are complex and contradictory processes that involve several temporal dimensions at the same time.[34] Whether understood in national, international, historical or contemporary terms, the search for Europe's identity involves a distancing from painful memories of the past, but it is also deeply associated with uncertainty. Zygmunt Bauman's claim that Europe can be understood in terms of an 'unfinished adventure', clearly points out that Europe's 'essence' has been subject to contestation and negotiation within different periods in history.[35]

Since collective memories are formed socially and culturally, they are always fragile, changeable, and selective. The present article has demonstrated that transnational news channels' relationship with history and memory must be related to the goals and ambitions of each broadcaster. That is not to say, however, that ideological frameworks imposed the selection of stories and news angles on all levels. Euronews and BBC World showed a similar interest in the celebratory dimension of the EU enlargement where 'the end of history' discourse came into the foreground. The same coverage also revealed that EU membership is a powerful marker of discursive inclusion, and thus a key resource that forms the basis of the European identity in historical and contemporary terms. However, while Euronews saw the enlargement period solely as a break with the past, BBC World provided a more complex coverage where the bright future of the EU was contrasted against a historical imagination that was constituted by fond memories of a Europe that no longer exists. Despite these differences, the general coverage embraces a discursive understanding of European identity as constituted by change rather than permanence. Following this view, nothing is worse than standing still in a time characterized by constant transformations.

Biography

Andreas Widholm is a lecturer and researcher at the Department of Media Studies, Stockholm University. His research focuses on issues relating to media globalisation, collective identities, social and political transformations. He is currently active within 'Changing Places', a research project exploring local and global events as mediated through screen practices in public space, financed by the Swedish Research Council. Andreas Widholm has also conducted research on the development of online news. In 2012, he was Researcher in Residence at the Swedish Public Service Radio (Sveriges Radio).

34 Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, University of Chicago Press, 2004
35 Zygmunt Bauman, *Europe: an unfinished Adventure*, Polity, 2004