The myth of European identity

Representation and construction of regional, national and European identities in German, French and international television news broadcasts

Anna Wiehl

Some preliminary remarks on Europe, Europeanness and the old medium of television

Even though several media theorists have repeatedly argued that new media, especially the Internet, are challenging traditional broadcasting, television—and above all television news—can still be considered one of the key media of our time.[1]

Although we are witnessing a kind of paradigm shift, television still fulfills two fundamental functions—one of a cognitive nature, the other more sociopsychological:

- First of all, television serves as one of our major sources of information—a window to the world that brings the outside world into our homes.

- At the same time, the practice of television viewing—e.g. the ritual which still exists of gathering at 8 o'clock in front of the TV set to

---

1 Quantitative as well as qualitative studies prove that television still plays a major if not the chief role as source of information and entertainment—especially with regard to such respected formats as television news. See, for example, »Habitualisierte Nutzung von Fernsehsendungen über das Internet noch gering,« ARD-ZDF-Online-Studie 2012, accessed January 10, 2013, http://www.ard-zdf-onlinestudie.de/fileadmin/Online12/0708 -2012_Eimeren_Frees.pdf; »Media in life 2012—Les médias ›classiques‹ maintiennent leur intensité,« Médiamétrie: 6–10, accessed March 7, 2013, http://www.upf.edu/pcstacademy/_docs/MediaInLife.pdf.

watch the news—fulfils indispensable sociopsychological functions:
It structures our daily lives, offers a fix anchor point, creates a feel-
ing of stability and provides emotional security in our fast-moving
world.

But above all, TV unites those who are (simultaneously) watching
the same (live) program (and know that many of their neighbors are
doing so as well). Members of a community of communication thus
not only share the same background knowledge—which they could
also gain via other media such as newspapers, the radio or the inter-
net—they also know that they share habits and rites, which knits
them even more closely together.[2]

Hence, television drives the construction of »imagined communities«
(see Anderson 2006)—in our case a virtual, mediated community. The
nightly news plays a particularly decisive role; not only because it is rou-
tinely and widely shared by a great part of the population—it also sets a
sociopolitical agenda and functions as an anchor for everyday
communication. This aspect—combined with the fact that television can
be considered as the imaginary place where »the global meets the local,«
to cite David Morley's famous catchphrase (Morley 1997)—television
profoundly influences our notion of who we are, who the others are—
and how we relate to them. Therefore, televised news programs in

---

2   It may be true that new media have taken over some of these functions—
     that for example video on demand is replacing live TV or that blogs
     contribute to the formation of even more closely knit, interactive
     communities; yet quantitative research as well as qualitative studies (such
     as the ARD-ZDF-Online-Studie, see note 1) have recently proven that at
     least some traditional television formats still rank high in attractiveness
     and importance. These empirical findings are analyzed comprehensively
     and interpreted theoretically by Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin (1999) in
     Remediation: Understanding New Media. They argue that all media
     refashion other media—newer media older ones and vice versa—and that
     these may be altered in form and be given new functions, but they are not
     likely to become extinct.

particular contribute to the development and maintenance of collective identities.[3]

Keeping this in mind helps us to understand why and to what extent communicative spaces and mediated images of selfness and otherness play such an important role in the construction of otherwise highly theoretical constructs such as Europeanness, national identity and regional rootedness or—even more abstract—the globalized world.

Europe—A cognitive construct

Although the continent of Europe as a cultural space has a long history with various myths of bondage,[4] it has never been sharply delineated—neither geographically, nor politically, nor economically—as the current so-called European crisis proves. Thus, when talking about Europe (and the same is true for the concept of nation), I always refer to the cognitive construction on a mental map; I refer to the myth and imagination of Europe—or, more concisely, the idea of Europe.[5]

However, Europe as a mental concept (see Beck) in which »historically and socially specific sets of meanings stretch out a field of polarities and polysemic interpretations and identifications« (Fornäs 2012, 265) can

---

3   In this context, Price (1995) gives an astute reinterpretation of television's decisive role and impact on democratic societies in a time of increased media globalization, particularly as to their unifying function. See for further analysis and case studies—especially concerning the formation of national identities—Drummond et al. (1993); Nossek (2004); Peter (2004).

4   In his book *Signifying Europe*, Johan Fornäs (2012) presents an extensive and illuminating survey of various founding myths of Europe.

5   This paper does not focus on the European crisis which, in my opinion, is mainly an economic (and thus possibly political) crisis that will—hopefully—soon be overcome. Although one cannot deny that the discourse of crisis has entered almost every discussion of Europe and, consequently, also encroaches upon our idea of Europeanness, I will deal with this aspect only as one momentary facet of the many facets of Europe as an imaginary space and cultural concept. Thus I would rather focus on the more persistent and consistent myths of European identity.

also change. Europe does not just exist as a phenomenon in people's imaginations, but, among other things, materializes—»organised into various forms of artefacts, texts, works, genres and discourses« (Fornäs 2012, 43)—in new narratives and related audiovisual manifestations.

But what kinds of (audio-)visions of Europeanness, of belonging to an us and differentiated from others, are currently circulating? What stories and images does television offer us every evening? To what extent does an arguably factual format such as television news contribute to the creation of highly imaginary constructs such as regional, national or supranational collective identities? Where can we find traces of significant regional, national or supranational specificities? Which symbols, narratives and discourses are recurrently referred to? Which historical contexts do they stem from—and how are they remediated in (new) frameworks?

These are only some of the questions that will serve as a guideline on our exploration of the myth of European identity.

Procedure or How we will advance on our exploration of the myth of European identity?

In order to find some answers to these questions, I propose an exploration in three stages:

- Before starting this *tour d'horizon*, it is certainly advisable to lay a theoretical and methodological foundation. I will thus take a short look at some key concepts for talking about this topic—i.e. identity, myth and television news.

- Secondly, I will try to obtain an overview of central artefacts or mythic elements that are fundamental to the (re)presentation and construction of European, national and regional identities in/via television news.[6]

---

6   I will focus on French and German public broadcasters as well as the supranational European, German-French cooperative broadcaster ARTE.

- Last but not least, I will cast a glance at a prototypical example—a paradigmatic case that gives an outlook and that serves as a starting point for discussing the main challenges and prospects for future (social-)TV programs to promote Europeanness as multifaceted, flexible pluri-identities.

Theoretical foundation, methodological toolbox and key concepts

In order to answer our initial questions without getting lost on our journey through the vast and still mostly uncharted cognitive spaces of European identities, I suggest following a pluri-disciplinary research axis—namely a combination of a semiological (or, respectively, semio-historical and semio-pragmatic)[7] approach together with essential instruments from the methodological toolbox of cultural studies. Proceeding in this way offers two advantages:

- Firstly, this research-axis will allow us to consider all kinds of identity-forming Cultures. Starting from a broad understanding of Culture with a capital »C« (as proclaimed by Raymond Williams, David Morley and others), we bridge the (presumed) gap between high, popular and everyday culture.

  This is not only essential as to our corpus—even something that is at first glance as trivial as television news—it also allows us to analyze and to contextualize the vast spectrum of completely diverse topics covered by TV news broadcasts. As we will see later, these range from political summits to the battle for the *real* French camembert (as a cultural exception), and from remembrance of the birth of the European Union to folkloristic Bavarian *Trachtler-Treffen*—a get-together of members of traditional regional costume associations.

---

7   As to the semio-historical approach, I mainly base my argumentation on Müller (1989) and Schmid (2000); for semio-pragmatic aspects of analysis, I refer to Odin's elaborate model of the interdependent relationship between text immanent, semiological aspects and how the reader/viewer cognitively emotionally and affectively produces meaning within a given context. See Odin (2011).

- Secondly, the semio-historical component allows us to take into account the material, social, cognitive and emotional reality of imaginations[8] of (European) identity (e.g. as manifested in televised audiovisions) as to their synchronic and diachronic circulation in society. This allows us to gain deeper insights into these phenomena: We will be able to interpret topical cultural phenomena and their expressions in (mass) media as socioculturally embedded imprints of collective memory and imaginations in their larger context of meanings.

All in all, the combination of this semio-historical view and the broad meaning of Culture embraced by cultural studies enables us to read these mediated manifestation of myths of belonging in their complex, versatile and dynamic relationship to each other; and it helps us to understand them as highly signifying sign systems.

Collective identity

These preliminary remarks directly take us to our first core concept—identity—or more precisely: collective identities. As the notion of *who we are* essentially exists on the basis that there are others from whom we try to distinguish ourselves, collective identity fundamentally depends on the interaction with those others.

Thus conceptions of identity are highly dynamic and situational: With each new contact, they are refashioned within the new context. However, it is important to note that some basic elements nevertheless exist

---

8   When I talk about reality, it ought to be understood as shorthand for a more complex idea: A more comprehensive yet less felicitous way to express it would be socially constructed and collectively shared assumptions on what is real. In this I follow Berger's and Luckmann's argument that reality (which they also refer to as »social order«) »exists *only* as a product of human activity. Both its genesis ([as a] result of past human activity) and its existence in any instant of time ([it] exists only and insofar as human activity continues to produce it) is a human product.« (Berger and Luckmann 1966, 53).

that are relatively timeless and stable, thus guaranteeing a deeper and more reliable feeling of selfhood and belonging.[9]

The coexistence of these two seemingly opposed features of collective identities—their situational dynamic and their relative stability—is possible because of a third essential characteristic of collective identities: Due to the diversity of contacts with others and due to the manifold alternatives of belonging, it is possible to be part of different groups at the same time. Some of these self-identifications might overlap or complement one another (one can, for example, identify as a fan of the national football team and as a dedicated Bavarian environmentalist at the same time), but they can also stand in rivalry to each other in some areas (as might, for example, be the case for a dedicated scientist and promoter of scientific progress who is simultaneously opposed to stricter hygiene rules in the food industry if traditional French recipes are endangered).

The concept of myth

This leads us to a second major concept that will guide us on our search for (audio-)visions of European identity—namely myth. When talking about myth and mythologies, it is essential to keep in mind that I will use this term in a broad sense. In my understanding, myth does not only refer to the brave deeds of ancient Greek heroes such as Ulysses or Heracles. Following Roland Barthes' assumptions that myth is more

---

9   In this context, Paul Ricoeur sums up the problematic interrelated with the critical hermeneutic analysis of identity as a conglomerate of three issues: »1. the indirect approach of reflection through the detour of analysis; 2. the first determination of selfhood by way of its contrast with sameness; 3. the second determination of selfhood by way of its dialectic with otherness« (Ricoeur 1992, 297). Therefore, if we want to understand European identity and identities, 1) We cannot approach the issue directly, but have to rely on the analysis of its expressions in (mediated) texts and symbols; 2) Furthermore, we cannot define identities if we do not try to trace the narratives, (communicative) practices and symbols in which they are embodied; and 3) We have to keep in mind that the formation and expression of identity always unfolds in a complex interaction with others. See also Fornäs (2012).

form than content (Barthes 1964),[10] anything and any topic can become myth—even profane television programs.

Referring to de Saussure's work, in his famous book *Mythologies*, first published in 1957, Barthes characterizes myth as a »second order semiological system« or a semiological chain: The sign of the first order/chain becomes the signified of the second chain. Myth—as any semiological system—is socially constructed, and when speaking of the process of mythologization, Barthes refers to the fact that such social assumptions, ideas, concepts and practices have a tendency to become naturalized when they circulate within a particular culture.[11]

Or as Roger Silverstone puts it: »Myth is a form of speech, distinct in its character, marked by the definable narratives, familiar, acceptable, reassuring to their host culture« (Silverstone 1988).

Moreover, myth is usually accompanied by rituals; it is at the same time rational and emotional, and—most importantly—persists throughout time. Myths may slightly change in form, but nevertheless stay reassuringly the same in their basic characteristics.

This point reminds us of the double nature of television as content and practice. And this is not the only congruence: When defining myth, we re-encounter several basic features and functions that we have already come upon when talking about television and its important double function:

> Both television and myth are necessarily participatory. […] Both television and myth define and reinforce the society that generates and receives them, in essential categories: the moral, aesthetic, and cognitive structures […]. Myth and mythic narratives are […] constantly at work translating and reassuring at the boundaries be-

---

10   When referring to Barthes' notion of myth, I leave out his ideological assumptions.

11   There are several parallels and points of contact between Barthes' concept of myth and Fornäs' definition of symbols. See footnote 14.

tween the familiar secure world […] and the unfamiliar, insecure world beyond it. (Silverstone 2006, 37)

Television as contemporary expression of myth—The corpus examined

Let us take this assumption that »television is the contemporary expression of myth« as our point of departure and embark on an exploration of European media spaces—a search for traces of the interdependencies of European, national and regional identities in television news.

In order to keep the enormous spectrum of material down to a manageable quantity, it will be necessary to concentrate on a corpus of comparable programs—namely the respectable format of public broadcasters' daily TV evening news.[12]

As to the radius on our mental map of Europe, we can think of concentric (and/or overlapping) circles: Our exploratory tour of European mediascapes will take us to TV news reaching from

- regional channels (Bavarian/Alsatian broadcasters, i.e. the Bayerischer Rundfunk and France 3 Alsace),

- national channels (German/French broadcasters, i.e. ARD/ZDF and TF1/France 2),

- and one supranational, European public broadcaster (ARTE).

This selection is based on the fact that France and Germany can be regarded as two nations that are prototypical of Europe—at least

---

12   An analysis of the news programs of private German TV stations shows that the representation and construction of cultural identities is almost nonexistent due to their lack of interest in serious political or cultural issues of significance. Although the two French broadcasters TF1 and France 2 are, strictly speaking, not public stations, they were nevertheless included in the corpus for two reasons: firstly, they are still thought of by the majority of the French audience as *the* two national TV providers; and secondly, they actually enjoy a special status as *Généralistes Nationales Publiques* which makes them equivalent to the German *Öffentlich-Rechtliche Rundfunkanstalten.*

contemporary Europe. Not only have they formed the core or engine of what was to become the (political as well as cultural or mythical) European Union; even more relevant (with regard to my semio-historical axis of research) is the fact that France and Germany look back on an intertwined history of cultural encounters and exchanges and thus a shared history—even if a rather different history depending on the (national) perspective.

One of the decisive reasons to choose Bavaria and Alsace as representatives on the regional level is that both of them can (or perhaps might?—my analysis will shed some light on this issue) be considered to have developed strong regional identities. This, again, is mainly due to sociopolitical and sociocultural historical reasons. Think, for example, of Bavaria's status as *Freistaat* or Alsace as one of the few regions with a distinct language and cultural heritage in the otherwise homogenized *Grande Nation* of France.

The period of analysis stretches from January 2007 to February 2013 with a special focus on periods with significant events on the European as well as national scale—above all events that encompass both political as well as cultural issues; e.g. the 50th anniversary of the (later) European Union (May 2007), the Nobel Peace Prize Award (October 2012) or the 50th anniversary of the Franco-German friendship treaty and its impact on the further development of the European Union (2013).[13]

When considering these programs on both

- **the macro-level**
  (e.g. the habitual practices of television viewing, slot, news format, studio design, role of the presenter/anchor/host/pundit…)

---

13   A list at the end of this essay provides a survey of the programs analyzed in depth and the date of the periods of broadcast most closely examined.

- **and the micro-level**
  (narrative structures, persistent myths or audiovisual signs, media-tion of symbols,[14] dramaturgic elements, the use of music, camera-angle and point of view in single sequences…)[15]

we noticed a number of similarities—and surprisingly many differences as to the representation and construction of regional, national and supranational European identities—depending on the broadcasters and their assumed community of communication.

Overview of central items or mythic elements[16]

Myths of European identity or: The myth of something bigger than us?

When dealing with the representation and construction of European identity in/via the media, we can distinguish two complementary tendencies:

- On the one hand, Europe can be seen as an enormous challenge (at least with regard to the current political/economic crisis).

- On the other hand, it is represented as a (hi)story of success and of hope for the future.

---

14   On the important role played by symbols in this context see Fornäs (2012), especially chapter 2. Although Fornäs does not refer directly to Barthes, his concept of »triple meanings« (Fornäs 2012, 53) is very close to Barthes' interpretation of myth as a many-chained semiotic system, see p. 8.

15   I hereby rely on my research axes based on semio-pragmatics/semio-history and cultural studies. Thus, I conduct a (qualitative) structural analysis, a semiotic/iconic analysis as well as content analysis. Decisive sections of material—for example the title sequence—are examined shot-by-shot—paying special attention to the interplay of visual and audio effects as well as the items mentioned above.

16   The following examples are a summary of extended research conducted between January 2007 and February 2013. This longer period of research allowed us to abstract from ephemeral issues and instead concentrate on more persistent myths of European identity.

This ambiguity becomes obvious when considering such events as the 50th anniversary of the (later) European Union (May 2007), the Nobel Peace Prize Award (October 2012) or the 60th anniversary of the Franco-German friendship and its impact on the further development of the European Union (2013). More than ever, archetypical myths loaded with various historical associations are evoked and refashioned when (re)mediating such decisive moments.

Europeanness as a (hi)story of success

This begins with the myth of Europe as a guarantor of democracy and peace—with Europe and Europeanness as the Prometheus-like bringers of freedom and democracy, e.g. metaphorically tearing down the Iron Curtain. In many news narratives that recapitulate the history of what they call the European Dream, the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification are presented as the result of Europe having previously grown together.

As to the interdependence of European and national identities (in this case: French identity), it is significant that almost all French news programs (including ARTE) explicitly underscore the leading role of the French Nation in this process. In most cases they construct a direct link between the longing for democracy, the ideals of the French Revolution and the *Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme*, and the Reunification of the two Germanys. A paradigmatic manifestation of this phenomenon is the iconographic parallelism in *arte info* as well as in *les 20 heures*, the main evening news on France 2: Both news programs underscore the textual argumentation with the montage of the assault of the Berlin Wall and Eugène Delacroix's famous painting *La Liberté guidant le peuple*—one of *the* emblematic paintings that represent the insurrection of 1830 and which is deeply rooted in our collective imagination.

Fig. 1: Audiovisual parallel drawn between the French Revolution of 1830 and its ideals and the fall of the Berlin Wall. Source: Eugène Delacroix, *La Liberté guidant le peuple*. (Source: Screenshot from *arte info*, ARTE, March 24, 2007)

Both the audiovisual and textual rhetoric underscore the tremendous contribution and decisive role of the *civilisation française* in the process of European unification. This national myth becomes entangled with the European dream not only in the introductory remarks of the presenter and the explicit arguments in the voiceover, but continues in the selection of interviews featured in this reportage. French media thus attempt to assimilate the myth of Europe as a guarantor of democracy into their own cultural/historical repertoire of national myths.

In contrast, German television news prefer to evoke the idea of the universality of the *Europäischer Traum*—the European dream—as the anchor of ZDF's *heute journal* puts it; and, in the special broadcast directly following the regular news program, he characterizes the unification of Europe as »das Wunder von Europa«[17]—the European miracle—a catch phrase that is not only the key idea of this program, but also the title of the whole evening's special program.

A related myth is that of the European family. This central idea is repeatedly evoked both in German news programs and in *arte info* (less often in French media)—sometimes explicitly on the textual level, sometimes more subtly on a pictorial level. In this context, a common strategy is a collage or slide show of images from the European »family album« as

---

17   *Das Wunder von Europa*, ZDF, March 25, 2007.

well as the direct montage of emblematic images of archival footage into the contemporary material.

In an extended report by *arte info* (March 21, 2007), for instance, the viewer virtually visits a former French diplomat who, as a young attaché, had prepared the signature of the Treaties of Rome.[18] In a very quietly and softly unfolding reportage, the (meanwhile) old man shows the reporters his photo album. Together with his guests, he is leafing through the book and, metaphorically, through his memories of this influential day, which he describes in a highly emotional way. As the camera literally looks over his shoulder, television viewers at home become virtual accomplices to the situation and, via the lively description, almost get the impression of being eyewitnesses to these past events.

This remediation (see Bolter and Grusin) immerses the audience in the elderly man's narration and enhances the feeling of really belonging to this big European Family.

---

18   These documents—signed in 1957—are regarded as the cornerstone of what was later to become the European Union.

Fig. 2: Audiovisual reenactment of the myth of the European family
The camera looks over the protagonist's shoulder when he is leafing through his
family album—thus immersing viewers in the reportage and enhancing a feeling
of being part of the community of communication and of the European Family.
(Source: Screenshot from *arte info*, ARTE, March 21, 2007)

When dealing with the idea of the European Family, one cannot help but mention a further decisive myth in this context: the Franco-German friendship as engine and heart of the European dream. In nearly all reports—even in those covering difficult political consultations between the two states—the current friendship (or marriage) after centuries of war and conflict is more or less explicitly mentioned. In this context, there are a number of iconic images that are part of our collective European memory and which are almost automatically sampled on television—including the image of former Chancellor Helmut Kohl and President François Mitterand holding hands at the Douaumont ossuary in Verdun.

Fig. 3: German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and French President François Mitterand holding hands at the Douaumont ossuary in Verdun. (Source: Screenshot from *arte info*, ARTE, March 25, 2007)

But when representing Europe as a success story, the media do not only look back, nor do they exclusively try to retrace historically crucial moments in order to represent and construct European identity. Especially in times of crisis, which necessitate the reaffirmation of what it means to belong to the European Family—i.e. when it is time to foster European solidarity and team spirit—media in both Germany and France attempt to associate European history with our present situation. Thus, the trope of tradition *and* innovation becomes repeatedly mediated—i.e. the idea that Europe looks back on a long, culturally rich history combined with the hope of a prosperous, peaceful, inspiring future. Here, once again, we encounter the integrative potential of myth as reassuringly stable on the one hand and highly versatile and adaptable on the other hand—as faithfully preserving time-honored ideals and simultaneously capable of incorporating the idea of renewal and perpetual change.

In this context, the idea of European identity as a concept that is in constant flux is often personalized via new narratives describing young people as the promising next generations of native Europeans.

An extensive reportage presented within the ZDF *heute journal* (ZDF, March 25, 2007) covering the festivities of the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome features such a group of native Europeans: Five young women from different European nations have come to Berlin to celebrate »Europe's birthday« together. Although they first have to overcome various problems (they do not find their hostel, they get lost in Berlin, …), they have »a great time together« as each of them repeatedly exclaims in her native language.[19] This all occurs not *despite* their initial problems or *despite* their different cultural backgrounds but *due* to them. As the comment suggests, on a meta level the protagonists' situation perfectly mirrors the not always easy process of Europe growing together; and the fact that they simply enjoy the enriching multicultural atmosphere of Berlin on the occasion of this »gigantic birthday party« suggests that one of the decisive qualities of Europeanness consists in the enriching experience of belonging to a multifaceted community.

Thus, European identity as represented in such news narratives can be characterized by the formula »diversity and unity«—a paradox that is resolved via integrative potential of myth. This overall optimistic view is also expressed on the audiovisual level—e.g. by means of point of view, framing and the movement of the mobile camera that literally dances with the young women. The protagonists are repeatedly filmed using low-angle shots in front of a light blue sky—a visual allusion to the color of the European flag that also underscores their heroic importance as the next generation of Europeans.

Moreover, the energetic, vivacious but nevertheless harmonic camera movement visually translates the young generation's willingness to move—both literally and metaphorically. The young Belgian girl, for instance, speaks wholeheartedly about her dream of visiting as many other European nations as possible, and the German protagonist expresses her wish to be politically and socially active and to contribute to the further unification of a European (cultural) community.

---

19   All translations by the author.

This all-in-all lively and—if one considers the format, a German news program—highly immersive and emotionalizing reportage invites the viewer to identify with the euro-enthusiastic protagonists and to adopt their points of view. Thus, we are dealing here with a complex myth-based connotative system that not only represents a certain view of Europe, but also contributes to the construction of this (positive) notion of Europeanness; in this case, the myth of innovation and tradition, of diversity and unity is vividly mediated. Due to the intertwined audiovisuals and texts, based upon shared and widely incorporated, naturalized myths, the final statement of the commentary does not seem exaggerated when it concludes that »[O]ne thing can be taken for granted: This [i.e. a shared European cultural identity] is our opportunity for the future.«

Europeanness as a challenge

Despite this vast spectrum of positive myths of Europe and Europeanness, we must not forget that in everyday (political) news coverage, euro-skeptical narratives have been prevailing, especially in previous months. The monetary crisis and the fear of a financial breakdown are among the top news and thus dominate our (short term?) mental representation of what it means to be European. Thus the idea of a cultural European identity has been superimposed by a more political-economic (negatively connoted) image of Europeanness—the myth of Europe as a bringer of crises.

In the same vein, the persisting fear of a faceless, bureaucratic Europe has become predominant again—the horror of a domineering, regulatory super-state that decimates national and regional sovereignty and extinguishes cultural specificities. The heavily mediated French protest against a set of European laws limiting the production and distribution of the real camembert made of raw milk is just one symptomatic example of the deeply rooted fear of the loss of cultural heritage.

This David versus Goliath-esque fight is elaborately mediated in a TF1 news narrative. By presenting a *fromagère* who is absolutely certain that her raw-milk, handmade cheeses are light years ahead of sterile industrial

products, the reportage recycles the myth of Europe as a cold, bureaucratic super state.

Already the textual level plays with the contrast of the myth bad, sterile bureaucratic Europe vs. good *exception française.* Almost all passages presenting production that conforms to European norms employ factual and dry language, overloaded with technical terms (e.g. *éliminer tout germe therminogème, microfiltrer, risque d'infection* or *crise sanitaire […] fatal[e]*) that are reminiscent of complicated chemical processes; the passages situated in the *fromagerie*, in contrast, are kept in a familiar, affectionate style.

This verbal presentation of the arguments in favor of the French *exception culturelle* and *la bonne tradition* is supported by quite a number of audiovisual rhetorical strategies. Especially the point of view and the shot sizes (i.e. close ups vs. literally distancing long shots) contribute to the generally dualistic atmosphere of the reportage. The same goes for the deliberate use of the alignment of perspective, especially the many visual parallelisms. As consecutive sequences in the cheese factory and the *fromagerie* are composed of parallel shots, the gap between these two locations becomes even more obvious. This opposition is additionally underscored by the chart of color ranges (that were probably manipulated during the shooting or in post-production): The cold, bluish and metallic palette when showing the industrial site as well as the synthetically flashy colors of the supermarket are contrasted by the natural, warm, earthly colors that dominate the scenes in the small shop.

Fig. 4: Visual strategies used to present the clash of two opposing myths: the deliberate employment of point of view, shot sizes, alignment and color range to underscore the contrast of bad, sterile bureaucratic Europe vs. good *exception française*. (Source: Screenshots from *les 20 heures*, TF1, March 23, 2007)

Although this paradigmatic example shows that the representation of Europeanness is far from being only sunshine and roses, the basic tenor of most of the voices we encounter on our tour through European mediascapes is realistically optimistic on the whole. And especially with regard to the last case—the excerpt from the national (French) news program—one thing should be kept in mind: There are strong interdependencies between the community fostering (re)presentation of myths of national identity and the (re)presentation of European identity.

European Identity and its interdependency with national identities

France: Vive la France, vive la France, vive la France! …and maybe Europe!

As I already suggested with regard to the struggle for an *exception française* for real French camembert, the French are above all French—and they are proud of this. Even a first glance at the macro-level of the news program confirms this common stereotype.

This myth of *La Grande Nation* begins with the corporate design of the two major broadcasters, TF1 and France 2: From the logo, the color gradation of the title sequence and bumpers down to the studio design—*bleu, blanc, rouge,* the national colors, prevail; and in many cases, emblematic national symbols—for example the *tricolore,* the *hexagone*[20] or the silhouette of *Marianne*—serve as mythically connoted visual shortcuts to activate collective identity fostering mechanisms.
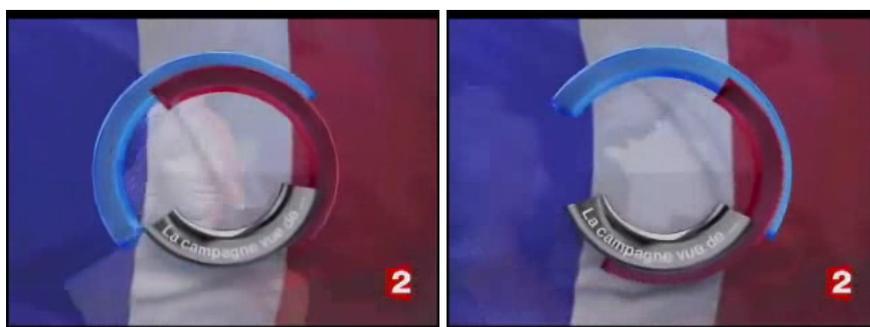
Fig. 5: Animated collage of the *tricolore*, the *hexagone* and the profile of *Marianne* as mythically connotated visual shortcuts to foster the idea of national pride and *francité*. (Source: Screenshots from the title sequence of *La campagne vue de…*, a series of special reports within the *les 20 heures* news program France 2)

This focus on *francité* is not only apparent in the pictorial means of communication. It is also reflected in the content of the program. Although the national evening news—la *grand-messe* as the daily media ritual is called in otherwise secular France—present a rather mixed bag of stories, nearly all topics are somehow related to *La Grande Nation*: This concern with reassuring the community of communication about their collective national identity—to present *francité* and thus construct a feeling of national unity—can also be strongly felt on the micro-level of

---

20   The *hexagone* representing the geographical extensions of France in a stylized form is a well-established visual shortcut in the collective French imagination. The six-sided figure not only represents the (geo)political entity or the national state; it is also connoted with the myth of France as *la Grande Nation* and the idea of *la civilization française.*

nearly any reportage. One of the core elements of identification is a patriotic pride in French history—above all in the achievements of the French Revolution, *La déclaration des droits de l'homme* and the often-copied *Code Civil*; but also more recent history—e.g. patriotism and heroism within *la Résistance* during the occupation of France by Nazi Germany—is continually evoked.

A further trope that we encounter repeatedly is the myth of true, good old rural France with its picturesque villages and time-honored, down-to-earth country life—sometimes depicted in an almost kitschy way as in movies such as *Chocolat* (2000) or *Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis* (2008). This trope of traditional France represents the complementary side to the myth of France as a leading global player in scientific and technological progress and innovation. In this context, emblematic high-tech ventures, as e.g. the high-speed TGV train, repeatedly figure as the heroes of news narratives promoting national pride. The visual presentation of this myth of progress and (scientific) trendsetting seizes most often on the core connotation of what it portrays: digital animation and (additionally emotionalizing) special effects can be found in almost any news narrative dealing with this topic.

One of the core identity-forming myths is the already axiomatic *exception française*—i.e. the unique, outstanding national French cultural specificity—whereby culture is (once again) to be understood in its broadest sense. Thus the myths of *savoir vivre* and *la cuisine française* count among core items (think of the abovementioned crusade for original French camembert as *emblème national* as it is literally called). And, last but not least, we encounter the myth of the *nation des lettres,* proud of its rich literary tradition and fine arts, *la langue française* and *la civilisation française* exported all over the world.

All in all, these myths of national identity seem to be compatible with the myth of a supranational European identity. However, as to the interdependencies of *francité* and Europeanness, one point is crucial: The whole harmonic system of coexisting identification only works as long as all forms of identification that differ from the primary identification (being French) are subordinated to the idea of being French.

Germany: The myth of Europeanness…but what about German
identity?

When we move to the other side of the Rhine and come to Germany,
one thing can be stated right from the beginning: German national iden-
tity is significantly less prominently represented than its overconfidently
pronounced French counterpart. We hardly find any direct attempts to
construct a feeling of national belonging. The general credo seems to be
information, facts and objectivity.

This concern is also reflected in the attempt to always be absolutely
politically correct—an anxiety that can be accounted for by the bad
experiences of nationalistic political propaganda during the Third Reich
and the SED regime in the German Democratic Republic. In order to
never succumb to such catastrophes again, the emotionalizing mediation
of myths of national identity is almost nonexistent, and if mythic ele-
ments are used at all, these are based on rather factual and functional
aspects of public life[21]—e.g. the ideal of equal opportunities and social
justice or the idea of ecological awareness, etc. In very few cases do news
narratives become a bit more emotive and deal with what I earlier called
myths. This is mainly true in cases where democratic ideals, tolerance
and Germany's (new?) multi-/pluri-cultural identities are involved; or

---

21   In fact, (modern) Germany lacks strong myths of national foundation—
      in contrast to France, as will be explained later. Moreover, one must not
      forget that the Federal Republic of Germany is a political construct built
      upon a federation of 16 *Bundesländer,* some of which are rather proud of
      their regional specificities, cultural heritage and identity. The fact that
      Germany is not a more or less homogeneous state as, for example,
      France, is not only of political and administrational importance; it also
      affects German cultural life. As to the German public media sector, the
      »First German national broadcaster« (*Das Erste* respectively the ARD,
      *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik
      Deutschland*) is based on an association of regional broadcasters (more or
      less equivalent with the *Bundesländer*). As these respectively produce the
      content of the ARD program, or contribute material from their own
      regional productions to the shared stock of footage and shows, many
      programs bear traces of regional identity.

when the combination of myths of national identity and myths of European identity are concerned—whereby German national identity is almost always subordinate to or even partly subsumed by its supranational complementary.

One significant example of this phenomenon can be found in the national evening news about October 3—the German national holiday. On this *Tag der Deutschen Einheit* (the day of German reunification), the news coverage of the festivities in Munich and Berlin (as the two focal sites in 2012) hardly ever mediate the idea of Germany as a homogeneous national union—on the contrary! The programs of both ARD and ZDF underscore the idea of the federation, praising the richness of regional diversities and (cultural) specificities (represented e.g. in a report about the joyful get together of folkloristic dance groups from all over Germany).

This aspect of mediated identity formation is complemented by the emphasis on German Europeanness: The *tagesthemen* (ARD), for example, suggests that the reunification of the two German states was only possible within the larger context of Europe growing together; and they argue that all future economic as well as social and cultural prosperity depends on what becomes of the European dream. In this reading, the myth of Europe is of a Europe of regions. It is only within this framework that the preservation of the diversity of cultural heritage and the unconstrained development of further cultural particularities are possible.

Such a clear yet unusually outspoken viewpoint does not only unfold in the form of fairly emotive (background) stories and reportages. The otherwise factual news programs also present this idea of multidimensional pluri-identities as a substitute for one uniform German national identity by means of a humorous illustration: The insert, which serves as topic-setting studio background, shows the stylized contours of Germany framed and protected by the ring of the European stars—and based upon regional traditions (represented by a traditional Bavarian hat).

Fig. 6: Visual representation of the interdependence of German national identity and European and regional identity. (Source: Screenshot from *tagesthemen*, ARD, October 3, 2012)

What could be the reasons for these significant differences between French national pride and the rather self-conscious German unease with national identity?

One explanation may be found in the very different historical backgrounds of the two nations: France looks back on a long, rather glorious past as a nation; throughout its history, the consolidation of its outer borders as well as homogenization and centralization were important goals.

Germany, however, did not become a modern national state until the late 19th century. Before that time it was a patchwork of small independent kingdoms, dukedoms, ecclesial territories, fiefdoms, etc. In addition to that the memory of the Nazi period and of the later division of Germany into two states, still gives Germans feelings of uneasiness. That is why Germany still lacks (positive) emotionally connoted myths that could foster feelings of national identity.

This difficult past is probably the main reason why it seems easier for Germans to identify themselves as Europeans: in this respect, supranational identity compensates for the lack of national identification options—and bridges the gap between strongly developed feelings of

regional belonging and a more embracing option of being at home in Europe (and in a globalized word).

European Identity and its interdependency with regional identities

Bavaria: »*Mia san Mia*«—and a European Free State!

As to the representation of identity in the program of the major Bavarian broadcaster Bayerischer Rundfunk, both the geographic and the emotive focus lie on the *Freistaat* (free state) as the nucleus for the construction of a feeling of *Heimat* (homeland). The news narratives draw from a rich pool of identity fostering themes: Above all, one finds tradition and folklore—often connected with the myth of countryside, agriculture and a refashioned, modernized version of ecology. At the same time, technology, scientific progress and entrepreneurship are important elements in the self-image represented (and thus constructed and promoted). In fact, the myth of *Laptop und Lederhose* (notebook and leather trousers), often mentioned ironically, seems to play an important role after all. All in all, the seemingly contradictory combination of tradition and innovation seems to be programmatic and program forming.

The leitmotif of almost all reports seems to be the proverbial *Mia san Mia* (*we are we* with a Bavarian accent)—a self-confident self-assertion of a kind of Bavarian *exception culturelle*: the (sometime slightly self-ironic) stereotype of »the Bavarian« being Bavarian first and then maybe European. The identification as German, as mentioned above, is almost nonexistent.[22]

---

22   Regional differences within the Bavarian *Freistaat*—such as the existence of rich Franconian or Swabian cultures—are neglected, if not dismantled. In this regard, the configuration of Bavarian identity with its tendencies towards homogenization of the *Freistaat* has much in common with the attempts of national homogenization and the annihilation of regional diversity in France.

Alsace: Alsatian *francité* … and the dream of a Europe of Regions

In Alsace, the counterpart of Bavaria across the Rhine—analyzed here as an example—things are completely different. Alsatian identity as seen in its (re)presentation and construction in television news can hardly be found; on the contrary, regional Alsatian cultural identity is instead annihilated or dismantled.

This begins with the institutional organization of programming: The slots for very specific regional issues are quite scarce and/or marginal. The majority of the news program reportages and reports are taken from the national broadcasters. Consequently, regional station programs have to mediate centralized and homogenized material and thus represents and fosters feelings of national identity rather than of regional belonging.

Even the few parts of the program that are of regional character can hardly develop any identity-forming potential because they are absolutely heterogeneous, sometimes amateur-esque mixed bags of disparate elements. Many of them are more of local, ephemeral interest (such as tips for events).

In some cases, regional specificities such as traditions, folklore or the Alsatian language are neglected if not ridiculed; the cultural heritage is degraded to kitsch and décor. This tendency of rather biased attitudes toward regionalism becomes obvious in many reportages on TF1 and France 2. Yet even regional stations (e.g. France 3 Alsace) join in this chorus.

One reportage, for example, accompanies the actors of an Alsatian amateur folk theatre company. Although the story is set in the context of the *Printemps du Dialecte*—an annual festivity which is dedicated to the preservation of the regional dialects—collective identity on a regional level is dismantled, not fostered. The introductory characterization of the festival as »*une manifestation [qui] le met à l'honneur*« (a manifestation that honors [regional dialects]) already puts the Alsatian language and its literary production into the context of something lifeless or even obsolete. Thus, a (potentially) powerful factor for the process of identity formation and affirmation is represented as an antiquated, almost extinct

relict of former times—the very opposite of a lively, present-day cultural identity fostering practice.[23]

This attitude is sustained in the news story itself. The general atmosphere oscillates between a mock requiem of a vanishing peculiarity and an ironic tone, slightly ridiculing those who hold fast to this linguistic relict— the elderly women in the theatre group presented in the report, for example. In one scene (which is set back stage), a costumed amateur actress tries to welcome a friend with a familiar *bise*—the French cheek kiss of greeting—but she seems to have forgotten that she is already wearing the traditional bonnet as part of her costume. The bonnet pushes aside her friend's glasses, similar to a scene in a slapstick comedy.

Fig. 7: Dismantling of regional identity fostering myths: Representation of regional cultural specificities as ridicule; obsolete artifacts rather than living examples of collective identity. (Source: Screenshot from *les 20 heures*, TF1; also in *19/20*, France 3 Alsace, November 3, 2012)

As this paradigmatic case study shows, the remaining myths of regional Alsatian identity seem to get systematically dismantled in French televi-

---

23   As an aside, the Alsatian language is not a French dialect from a strictly linguistic point of view. It is a special variety of Alemannic—part of the Germanic language group—and, as such, an autonomous language within France. This important piece of information is omitted in this (often simplifying and emotionalizing) news story.

sion news. Yet the opposite development can be seen as regards the presence of regional Alsatian identity on the internet. On the website of France 3 Alsace, slightly abridged versions of regional television news are available in the regional language.

What is more—as a kind of bonus material—short news bits presenting the »latest and most important news of our region« can be watched online. In these (rather short) stories, some myths of regional identity are presented—such as »traditions in modern times« or »folklore refashioned.« And, even more importantly—probably due to the great interest in these online supplements, the lively feedback, and the many comments in blogs and on the website—some light entertainment TV shows have been developed that are dedicated to the representation of these specific regional features.[24] Most significantly, almost all these programs underscore that they are situated in the cultural *transfrontalier* (crossborder) context.

In this context, once again, the interdependence of concepts of regional identity and the idea of European identity—or rather multifaceted identities—as an alternative to submission to a strong national identity becomes decisive: A considerable number of these Alsatian identity fostering (news) stories promote the myth of a Europe of regions. Europeanness thus features as a savior of cultural heritage.

Findings and some (preliminary) conclusions

Arriving at the end of this exploration of Franco-German European mediascapes, it is time to reassess the main findings of our *tour d'horizon* and to develop some perspectives or an audiovisual vision of representing and constructing pluri-vocal, multifaceted European identities.

1. Concerning the representation and construction of regional identities, case studies from two example regions have brought up two

---

24   Examples include *A'Gueter*, a cooking show and *émission culinaire itinérante* in the Alsatian dialect with French subtitles, or *Pourquoi chercher plus loin*, a show that recommends locations for weekend excursions such as places of historic or natural interest.

diametrically opposed tendencies: Bavarian TV is eager to mediate myths that contribute to a self-confident affirmation of regional cultural identity while the news program of France 3 Alsace tend to be a manifestation of the annihilation or even dismantling of regional belonging. Yet, especially due to the convergence of television and the internet in form of augmented televisual footage, we also recognized first timid attempts of a more pronounced Alsatian voice within the framework of a Europe of regions.

2. As to national identity, we came to similar conclusions: French news narratives proved to be persistently reaffirming of the dominant cultural identity of the *Grande Nation*; German news programs, in contrast, are symptomatic of the German lack of a pronounced collective national identity. This »deficiency« is at least partly substituted by the medial presentation of alternative versions of belonging, e.g. by (audio-)visions of European identity or of regional identity in the case of Bavaria.

3. This European identity, however, as it is mediated in both French and German television news, still seems to be rather a vague idea: Although manifold myths of Europeanness are constantly mediated again as well as remediated, the main news narratives still oscillate between a vision of Europeanness as an opportunity and Europeanness as a challenge.

Challenges and perspectives—An audiovisual vision of representing and constructing pluri-vocal, multifaceted European identities

Despite or maybe even due to the elusiveness of what we called European identity, it is worth considering how television can contribute to enhancing a »vision« of what it means to be European. In this respect, the program of the supranational TV broadcaster ARTE can be regarded as trailblazing—not only with regard to its pan-European institutional organization, but also as to its participatory presence on the Internet, which is closely interrelated with the traditional television program;

and—above all—ARTE hazards using experimental styles and dares to experiment with new formats, even in factual (news) programs.

This general attitude is revealed in condensed form in the title sequence of *arte journal* (version 2011):[25] As can be seen in the actions presented in the spot, the program promises to cast a curious glance at European Culture and its pluri-vocal, multifaceted nature; all Europeans are invited to join the discourse—regardless of age, race, sociocultural background, nationality, and so on.

---

25   Although the material analyzed is not identical with the actual news show as a whole, it nevertheless can be regarded as a kind of essence or summary of it: »The trailer is a simulation of full length filmic experience« (Wythoff 2007). Furthermore, it presents a rather unchanging element of the otherwise manifold and sometimes stylistically diverse contributions in the program. Hence, the title sequences should be taken into consideration as much as the content shown afterwards.
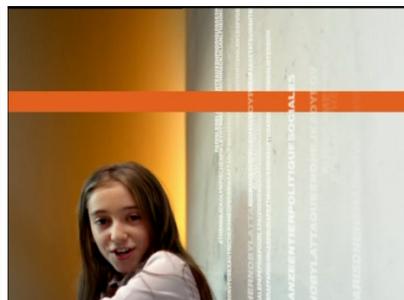
Fig. 8: Visualization of the maxim of the pan-European broadcaster ARTE promoting (audio-)visions of a pluri-vocal, multi-dimensional European Culture within a lively community of communication. (Source: Screenshots from the title sequence of *arte info*, ARTE, 2011)

The program promises to promote dialogue and discussion—here represented by very different people, most of them engaged in lively discussion. Although they are shot in individual sets, the dynamic soundtrack of a lively background hum of many voices, all talking in different languages, unites the different scenes and connects the protagonists. Thus, the idea of a pluri-vocal Europeanness can be taken literally.

Apart from that, the title sequence of *arte info* establishes an atmosphere that also inspires thorough analysis of controversial topical issues. It shows a man who is obviously pondering upon a topic (second row, at the left), but who also—after having reached a conclusion—turns around and springs into action. This embrace of autonomous consideration and active participation in the individual as well as the collective process of creating meaning is further encouraged by means of diverse ancillary texts, additional interviews and statements on arte.tv. The website explicitly invites the audience to join the discussion via blogs or to chat with the journalists, guest-experts or protagonists of the news narratives. In some cases, even user-generated (audio-visual) content is integrated to explore the issues in depth—and to add new perspectives; sometimes complementary, sometimes even contradictory to the main program's position. Thus, *arte info* (especially when taken as a multi-platform format) contributes to the representation of the multiplicity of

social realities and to the construction of Europeanness as a pluri-vocal, dynamic entity.[26]

Most important with regard to the exploration of the myth of European identity, the program dares to question established positions, e.g. by critically yet respectfully endorsing traditions in order to refashion them in our modern ways of life and to integrate them into the larger context of our globalized world. Not only does the title sequence feature protagonists who do not look like typical »Europeans« (e.g. the Asian boy, second row at the right); frequently the main news program also accompanies people from foreign countries or protagonists who are deeply rooted in their regional traditional settings—and who nevertheless express their cultural identities within the European framework and identify as, for example, Maghrebi, but also as Alsatian, French and European.

Thus ARTE proposes a concept of pluri-identities in which simultaneous, dialogically open regional, national and supranational Europeanness is successfully put forward—without any of the individual elements losing their specific uniqueness.

Maybe, this position can serve as a point of departure for further visions of Europeanness.

---

26   Without doubt, other broadcasters and media networks also try to reinforce their brands on the internet. Yet ARTE sets new standards for courage and readiness to experiment with new trans-medial concepts including social TV and audience participation that go beyond mere commercial interests.

References

ARD-ZDF-Online-Studie 2012: »Habitualisierte Nutzung von Fernsehsendungen über das Internet noch gering«. Accessed January 10, 2013. http://www.ard-zdf-onlinestudie.de/fileadmin/Online12/0708-2012 _Eimeren_Frees.pdf.

Anderson, Benedict. 2006. *Imagined Communities*. London.

Assmann, Jan. 1988. »Kollektives Gedächtnis und kulturelle Identität.« In *Kultur und Gedächtnis*, edited by Jan Assmann and Tonio Hölscher, 9–19. Frankfurt am Main.

Barthes, Roland. 1964. *Mythen des Alltags*. Frankfurt am Main.

Beck, Ulrich, and Edgard Grande. 2006. *Das kosmopolitische Europa*. Frankfurt am Main.

Berger, Peter, and Thomas Luckmann. 1966. *The Social Construction of Reality*. New York.

Bird, Elizabeth. 1988. »Myth, Chronicle, and Story: Exploring the Narrative Qualities of News.« In *Media, Myths, and Narratives*, edited by James Carey, 76–86. London.

Bizeul, Yves. 2000. *Theorien der politischen Mythen und Rituale*. Berlin.

Bolter, Jay, and Richard Grusin. 1999. *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. Cambridge.

Carey, James. 1988. *Media, Myths and Narratives*. Newsbury Park.

Drummond, Phillip, Richard Paterson, and Jane Willis. 1993. *National Identity and Europe: The Television Revolution*. London.

Fiske, John. 1987. *Television Culture*. London.

Fornäs, Johan. 2012. *Signifying Europe*. Chicago.

Galtung, Johan, and Mari Ruge. 1965. »The Structure of Foreign News.« *Journal of Peace Research* 2: 64–91.

Greiner-Kemptner, Ulrike, and Robert F. Riesinger. 1998. *Neue Mythographien— Gegenwartsmythen in der interdisziplinären Debatte*. Vienna.

Hall, Stuart. 1996. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London.

Hepp, Andreas. 2004. *Cultural Studies und Medienanalyse*. Wiesbaden.

Hickethier, Knut. 1995. »Dispositiv Fernsehen: Skizze eines Modells.« *montage/av* 4 (1): 63–83.

Kitchin, Robert. 1994. »Cognitive Maps: What Are They and Why Study Them.« *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 14: 1–9.

Médiamétrie. »Media in Life 2012—Les médias ›classiques‹ maintiennent leur intensité.« Accessed March 7, 2013. http://www.upf.edu/pcstacademy /_docs/MediaInLife.pdf.

Meyrowitz, Joshua. 1987. *Die Fernseh-Gesellschaft: Wirklichkeit und Identität im Medienzeitalter.* Weinheim.

Morley, David. 1997. »Where the Global Meets the Local.« *montage/av* 6 (1): 5– 33.

Morley, David, and Johannes von Moltke. 1997. »Radikale Verpflichtung zur Interdisziplinarität: Ein Gespräch mit David Morley über Cultural Studies.« *montage/av* 6 (1): 37–66.

Müller, Jürgen E. 2000. »Geschichte im Kino—Perspektiven einer Semiohistorie der Audiovisionen.« *Medienwissenschaft* 4: 406–23.

Nossek, Hillel. 2004. »Our News and Their News: The Role of National Identity in the Coverage of Foreign News.« *journalism* 5 (3): 343–68.

Odin, Roger. 2011. *Les espaces de communication: Introduction à la sémio-pragmatique.* Grenoble.

Peter, Jochen. 2004. »In Search of Europe: A Cross-National Comparative Study of the European Union in National Television News.« *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 9 (4): 3–24.

Price, Monroe E. 1995. *Television, the Public Sphere, and National Identity.* Oxford.

Ricoeur, Paul. 1992. *Oneself as Another.* Chicago.

Sauerwein, Karl-Heinz. 1999. »Die Konstruktion kollektiver Identitäten und die Realität der Konstruktion.« In *Gebrochene Identitäten*, edited by Werner Gerphart and Karl-Heinz Sauerwein, 9–28. Opladen.

Schmid, Georg. 2000. *Die Geschichtsfalle.* Vienna.

Silverstone, Roger. 1988. »Television, Myth and Culture.« In *Media, Myths and Narratives*, edited by James Carey, 20–47. London.

Viehoff, Reinhold, and Rien Segers. 1999. *Kultur, Identität, Europa—Über die Schwierigkeiten und Möglichkeiten einer Konstruktion.* Frankfurt am Main.

Williams, Raymond. 1990. *Television: Technology and Cultural Form.* 2nd ed. London.

Wythoff, Grant. 2007. *Becoming-Film: A Brief Poetics of Trailers.* Accessed April 10, 2013. http://wythoff.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/Becoming -Film-A-Brief-Poetics-of-Trailers-cc-licensed.pdf.

Survey of explicitly cited news programs:

ARD —*tagesschau* and *tagesthemen*

ZDF—*heute* and *heute journal*

Bayerischer Rundfunk—*rundschau* and *rundschau magazin*

TF 1—*les 20 heures*

France 2—*les 20 heures*

France 3 Alsace—*19/20*: *édition régionale*, *édition locale*, and *journal national*

ARTE—arte info

Periods of broadcasts analyzed in detail:

March 20–27, 2007

October 1–7, 2012

July 20–27, 2012

December 5–12, 2012

January 14–21, 2013

February 10–17, 2013

***

Dr. Anna Wiehl, Research Fellow, Department of Media Science, University of Bayreuth: anna.wiehl@uni-bayreuth.de.