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# Global News, Global Challenges

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“Important dimensions of journalism are emerging that demand our attention. We need to be creative in identifying new case study sites, concepts, empirical strategies, and relationships that are appropriate to the global era.”

Reese (2008: 251)

“I’ve stopped pretty much making that division in my head between so-called ‘foreign news’ and UK-based news because, more often than not, one has a direct influence on the other so it’s just international news, it’s a globalisation in the newsroom if you like.”

David Mannion, Editor-in-Chief, ITV News  
(cited in Padania, Coleman and Georgiou 2007: 10)

Over the last couple of decades globalisation has been transforming journalism profoundly. The emphasis both in academia and within the profession has been on the impact of technology, especially given the meteoric rise of social media and citizen journalism and the complex crisis facing traditional news organisations. New gadgets and applications have been emerging that can be easily used for news gathering and dissemination. The authority and power of major news providers has been challenged e.g. by the appearance of citizen reporters and alternative voices. These trends have perhaps overshadowed some of the other challenges and opportunities facing journalists in the global era.

Globalisation, i.e. increased international integration and interconnectedness, is notoriously hard to define. It’s everywhere and nowhere, in the sense that almost all aspects of our life and activity have been affected, yet that impact is rarely

physically tangible or material. Globalisation is not an isolated, clearly delineated or evenly distributed phenomenon with neatly distinguished causes and effects. It is both a cause and an effect itself – a messy reality that to various extents permeates all aspects of human activity. The news media have been one of the most fundamental agents – or causes – of global change: they inform us about developments across the global and create a space in which people cross boundaries and interact. At the same time today's global, multiplatform, converged but also fragmented and interest-oriented media landscape is perhaps the single most visible symptom of globalisation: in addition to the concentration of ownership amongst a few global media conglomerates and the development of sophisticated tools of global news coverage, news itself is changing because of globalisation.

The literature on the globalisation of news is a relatively recent one. Two interlinked questions are particularly interesting: (a) whether the emergence of global news merely signifies the extension of news journalism across national borders or whether it signifies a fundamental shift to a different type of news and (b) whether by “global news” we are empirically describing something which is currently produced or putting forward an ideal model that journalists should subscribe to. Reese (2007) notes that news journalism has already become increasingly global in its scope, whereas Berglez (2008) identifies a mismatch between issues which are genuinely global – and should only be interpreted through a global prism – and reportage which is still stubbornly ethnocentric, focusing on our national communities.

This chapter examines some of the key challenges that this global interconnectedness poses for the profession: How do global current affairs differ from familiar news genres? What are the main responsibilities and difficulties facing journalists in the global public sphere? Are audiences engaging with global issues in the news and why is that important? Do these developments mark the emergence of global news as a paradigm of journalism that is distinct from traditional notions of “international news” or “foreign reporting”? Livingston and Asmolov note that “time and space once defined the meaning of foreign correspondence; with the alteration of both, for better or worse, the meaning of the profession has changed. Indeed,

the very idea of foreign - not to mention corresponding - has been altered, almost beyond recognition” (2010: 756, emphasis in the original).

The first section outlines the impact of globalisation on news through the transformation of the space and context within journalism operates – the 21st century global public sphere. The concept of global news is defined with reference to recent scholarship and relevant examples. We then outline some of the main challenges – old and new – facing professional journalists within this global environment, including the role of empowered audiences and of the 24/7 news cycle. Finally, the chapter looks forward to tangible measures that can be taken at different levels in order for quality journalism to survive in the global era.

Journalism, interdependence and the emergence of global news

Journalists play a critical role in contemporary democracies which, due to their size, are not founded on direct participation of all citizens, but on the mediation of messages and the public choice of elected representatives. On the one hand the media constitute the most important public sphere – the space within which citizens come together to discuss public affairs; on the other hand, journalists act as the Fourth Estate with the responsibility of scrutinising those in power (the three formal “estates” or contemporary branches of government). This model has traditionally been applied to the mass media within national contexts with the printing press and later radio and television being pivotal tools in the construction of national audiences and publics. Franklin D. Roosevelt’s series of radio broadcasts in the 1930s known as the ‘fireside chats’ and Winston Churchill’s speeches during the 2nd World War created a sense of national unity, shared values and common purpose.

Yet, globalisation has been blurring the importance of state boundaries and has extended the reach and power of the media:

- It transforms the spatial framework, i.e. the spaces to which news stories refer as well as the spaces across which the news travels
- It changes the relations and dynamics of power by challenging the authority of traditional political actors, such as elected representatives and favouring power networks

which are much more decentralised and a lot less transparent or accountable

- It challenges set formulations of nation-centric identities; that is to say, individuals are increasingly empowered to create their own global or post-national identities through their own consumer choices, mobility and social or professional networking.

These three aspects of globalisation (space, power, identity) are the core of Berglez's model of global news as they help us understand the full impact of global interdependence on the news:

*“The national outlook puts the nation-state at the centre of things when framing social reality, while the global outlook instead seeks to understand and explain how economic, political, social and ecological practices, processes and problems in different parts of the world affect each other, are interlocked, or share commonalities.”* (2008: 847)

The relevance of space and power may seem somewhat remote when talking about something as supposedly straightforward as news. Yet, both the content of news itself and the process through which it is gathered, packaged and relayed are directly affected by the spatial and political context within which journalists operate. As noted earlier, print media such as newspapers and books were instrumental in creating and maintaining the audience, public sphere and system of governance of the nation-state, as well as in constructing identities and representations of ‘us’ and ‘the other’.

Interestingly, the concept of foreign corresponding implies not only a spatial relationship or distance between us and the foreign, but also a relationship of authority or dependence in which we the audience depend on the correspondent for our information. These features of traditional international journalism are in direct contrast with the reality of the global, dynamic, virtual cyberspace in which we now operate (Livingston and Asmolov 2010: 745).

In an age of global interconnectedness and mobility the boundaries between our local realities and the global level are increasingly blurred, in turn challenging our established categories and genres of news and current affairs. Understand-

ing how that interdependence works, i.e. how global stories have local importance and how local actions can have global implications – is absolutely essential and requires a change in the narratives and practices we use to describe and produce news. The agenda of the 21st century features a series of multi-faceted issues of international or global scale that are impossible to tackle at the local or national level. Their complexity and interconnectedness requires a paradigm shift both in terms of global governance or citizenship and in those of journalism. This can be best illustrated through a couple of brief examples.

As journalists have a responsibility to inform citizens about decisions that affect them, the new paradigm of global news must be able to relate the global to the national to the local. Similar examples can be found all over the world, from US politics – the intricacies and complexities of which (separation of powers, checks and balances and even the obscure but key congressional practice of the filibuster) are instrumental in explaining the failure of the US administration to ratify and implement a global treaty on carbon emissions; to ongoing piracy and the kidnapping of hostages in the Somali coast – a regional phenomenon with global implications for trade, ecology, security and diplomacy, due to a multitude of root causes, including failure of governance and global intervention as well as the systematic dumping of toxic waste by Western countries in the 1990s.

Case Study: global crime and security.

One example of interconnectedness is the links between transnational organised crime, international terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). In countries such as Angola, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, illegal networks are exploiting mineral and other resources (known as “conflict diamonds”) in exchange for weapons mainly from countries of the former Soviet Union. These weapons are then used for terrorist purposes (e.g. through Al Qaeda’s penetration in Northern Africa) or civil conflicts. Hence, poverty and instability in the global south, the activity of international crime

organisations and that of terrorist networks cannot be understood or interpreted in isolation. Educating audiences about these issues requires an in-depth appreciation of the links amongst issues, countries and people, as well as the editorial resources to conduct large-scale investigations.

Similarly, the emergence of cybercrime poses a monumental challenge for governments and citizens alike. Online and offline piracy and transnational crime, such as identity theft, fraud and hacking, have been causing significant damage to the global financial and trust systems (banking, stock markets, credit cards) shaking the foundations of the global economy. Industries as diverse as fashion, pharmaceuticals, computing, finance, entertainment (music, films, TV) and publishing are directly affected. With approximately 20% of the global GDP being produced in the so-called “shadow economy” of (drug, weapon, body, organ) trafficking, in turn funding terrorism and the spread of WMDs (Glenny 2008), it is difficult if not impossible to understand, let alone describe, the global realities of the 21st century through purely national narratives of reportage.

#### Case Study: The race for the Arctic

Another striking example of the complexity, interdependence and relevance of global issues to various aspects of our daily lives is the race for the Arctic. During the last few years a new race for the North Pole has been taking place amongst countries making territorial claims or having vested interests in the region, including Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States. The Arctic is thought to be a major reserve of energy resources, containing billions of tonnes of oil and an estimated 25% of the world’s reserves in natural gas. Highly complex and politically charged issues such as the territorial status of the Lomonosov Ridge and the establishment

of 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zones by neighbouring states are at the heart of an ongoing diplomatic battle. In the summer of 2007, Russia launched the Arktika expedition which culminated in the planting of a flag on the seabed of the ocean. One year after that, in August 2008, the United States sent its Coast Guard Cutter Healy to map the area and establish its own territorial claim. While these developments may appear remote from the average news consumer, they will have monumental effects on all aspects of our life in the 21st century.

In addition to energy, there is also a major environmental aspect to this issue. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, global warming and ice-melting will lead to an intense race for diamonds, fish and exploitation of the shipping routes in the Arctic. The unprecedented simultaneous opening of both the North-East and the North-West passages in 2008, due to the melting of the ice, signifies a new era in global trade. In August 2009, the German-owned Beluga Fraternity and Beluga Foresight became the first commercial vessels of the Western world to pass the Northern Sea Route in what Tony Paterson called “a journey that represents both a huge commercial boon and a dark milestone on the route to environmental catastrophe...” (2009). In fact, that catastrophe has already started unfolding due to widespread pollution in the area. The French NGO Robin des Bois found 2,750 areas of pollution in the Arctic, due to the presence of military bases, mines and plants, the energy exploitation expeditions, drilling and fuel storage and the many house-waste collection points in the region.

The ecologic, economic and geostrategic importance of the Arctic means that it is bound to become a more newsworthy region: what happens there will have direct effects on our economy, environment, trade and quality of life.

Global current affairs matter and journalists have a duty to identify and report on such issues informing the public not only about action at the top level of international politics or the

reality in remote lands, but also about the relevance of these issues to their own lives and the implications of people's own political, social, cultural, technological and consumer choices. In countries governed by authoritarian regimes across the world, journalists are not just passive reporters of facts, but symbolise fundamental values of freedom of expression, pluralism and democracy. Their reports can be critical in exposing corruption and highlighting human rights abuses, allowing the global public opinion to mobilise and intervene. Yet, for a number of reasons outlined below, and despite the proliferation of media platforms, channels and applications, conducting quality global journalism is not only more important but also, perhaps, harder than ever.

#### Challenges to global reportage

Covering global current affairs presents a multitude of challenges old and new – obstacles traditionally faced by foreign correspondents as well as emerging issues due to shifts in audiences' interests, media industry structures and the unique nature of the stories covered. One would have thought that, in today's era of greater transparency and visibility due to media and information saturation, being a journalist would be safer and easier. In fact, in his recent report on the protection of journalists from violence, Council of Europe Commission for Human Rights Thomas Hammarberg documents the threats facing journalists – including threats to their own physical safety – due to the tight control over the media that many regimes have imposed:

*“Today, in the 21st century, it is dangerous to be a journalist, a photographer, a member of the media. It is dangerous to be a journalist and to have lunch with your source in a restaurant. It is dangerous to be a friend or neighbour of a journalist. It is dangerous to write about corruption. It is dangerous to investigate stories. In many parts of the world it is dangerous to be a monitor of our times and it is dangerous to be a human being who speaks his or her mind freely.”*

[Hammarberg, 2011: 9]

Covering international developments has never been an easy job. Foreign correspondents and journalists working in regions



of war, conflict or repression have always had to negotiate their own safety, welfare and professional practice in order to survive. Yet, despite the recent outbreak of civil uprisings throughout Northern Africa and the Middle East, partly facilitated by the availability of technological applications empowering citizens and journalists, it seems that the pressure against global reporters is only tightening.

According to Reporters Without Borders, crackdown was “the word of the year” in 2011: “Never has freedom of information been so closely associated with democracy. Never have journalists, through their reporting, vexed the enemies of freedom so much. Never have acts of censorship and physical attacks on journalists seemed so numerous” (2012: 1). The organisation’s 2011-2012 World Press Freedom Index identifies a series of challenges and threats facing journalists across the globe – from censorship, injunctions, phone taps, judicial harassment and the threat of arrest to outright persecution, injury and death. The recent assassinations of high-profile journalists and human rights activists in Russia, such as Anna Politkovskaya, Stanislav Markelov, Anastasia Baburova and Natalia Estemirova, are only the visible tip of the iceberg in the ongoing global battle for informed news reporting.

Yet, the pressures facing global reporters are not only physical – they can also be mental, emotional and ethical. In addition to experiencing injury or traumatic situations which can have long-term effects (such as anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress disorder / PTSD), journalists may also face professional challenges that can often have an even greater impact upon their work and quality of life. Such “occupational stressors” (Greenberg et al 2007) include the lack of editorial control, the lack of recognition from line managers or the chase for the exclusive and the breaking story in an age of increasing competition and pressure. Secondary traumatic stress (STS) is a stress response to witnessing violent events or receiving graphic descriptions of such events experienced by others. The particular organisational and professional cultures within which journalists operate often make it difficult to report or even acknowledge STS (Keats and Buchanan 2009).

Hence, the production of global news is highly intensive in terms of the resources, energy and skills it requires. In an age of budget cuts and cost savings, investing in international

reportage can be perceived as a risky and costly strategy for news organisations. Recent research across the United States and Europe shows a significant decline in the number of foreign correspondents and in the quantity of foreign news coverage across print and electronic media (e.g. Carroll 2007). Altmeppen notes the gradual disappearance of foreign news from TV channels both in Germany and internationally and attributes that to the changing economic structures of the news media industry. The steady reduction of resources (time for investigating, space for broadcasting and staff for producing) means that, under the present circumstances, “there exists no future possibility of an increasing component of foreign news, in particular for global news reporting” (2010: 568).

The decline in foreign reporting does not only affect television. The crisis of (paid) newspapers and the rise of so-called “free press” publications means that robust global reportage is being pushed out of print journalism. The correlation between the decline in circulation of paid newspapers across Europe and the meteoric rise of free publications is contested as the latter may attract readers who would not normally pay for news. However, it has been shown that free newspapers offer less news, are produced in smaller formats, offer lower pagination, employ a smaller number of journalists, invest less in original reportage and depend more on news agencies than paid papers (Bakker 2008: 427).

One of the problems with the current mode of global news production in Britain is that even the coverage of global affairs that is there tends to focus on a narrow and stereotypical angle of foreign countries. A series of reports by the International Broadcasting Trust (IBT) has documented both the decline in foreign affairs coverage and its narrow focus (e.g. Scott 2009). According to one such review of foreign reporting on UK television since 1989 (Scott, Rodriguez Rojas and Jenner 2011), “in 2010 the main UK terrestrial channels broadcast fewer hours of new international factual programming than at any other time since IBT’s quantitative study began”; such programming is migrating towards digital channels which tend to have a smaller and more segmented audience share, and declining on every terrestrial channel except Channel 4, with BBC1 replacing ITV as the channel with the least amount of new factual coverage of the developing world.

These trends paint a picture of decline in the coverage of global current affairs that is in direct contrast to the ubiquity and relevance of global news outlined earlier in this chapter. This tension, a real public knowledge gap, becomes particularly visible when important global stories break. One such example is the civil uprisings across Northern Africa and the Middle East in 2011 – the Arab Spring. Scott et al. (2011) found that countries such as Algeria, Bahrain, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Yemen – which were at the heart of this global phenomenon – were not the main subject of any factual programme on UK television during 2010. Hence, when the events of the Arab Spring unfolded, both journalists and audiences were not familiar with the social, economic, political and technological developments in these countries, which constituted the root causes of the uprisings.

Perhaps at the heart of the problem lies the question of whether contemporary audiences are genuinely interested in learning about global issues. A vicious circle seems to be at play with broadcasters making commercially-oriented assumptions about viewers' preferences and thus opting for formulaic and stereotypical "doom and gloom" coverage of developing countries, which in turn produces very negative perceptions, amongst audiences, of the developing world and the conflict and disaster within it (Philo 2002), including feelings of compassion fatigue.

Yet, repeated studies have shown that people are still keen to understand the world around them. However, this should be done in a way that demonstrates the relevance of these issues to people's own lives in a tangible way; a mode of communication that is emotionally engaging and allows audiences to associate with the people and the issues at the heart of global current affairs. This is particularly true for younger people who tend to be more interested in local and national news and only engage with major global events or when international stories have a clear personal or family connection (Padania, Coleman and Georgiou 2007).

The formulaic coverage of development issues appears to be a primary culprit for youth disengagement with global current affairs. As Scott's (2009) study of audience responses to international programming showed, participants expressed a strong desire to see more coverage of stories which lay in between 'squalor and safari' – stories which they described as 'real life', 'normal' and 'everyday lives'. Similarly, the constant negativ-

ity and looming threat of climate change makes young people feel that they cannot do anything to make a difference. This feeling of disempowerment – of being faced with a destructive phenomenon too big to do anything about – ultimately leads to disengagement and denial (Gerodimos 2012a).

In an in-depth examination of television news' long-term prospects, the UK TV regulator Ofcom pinpoints the emerging paradox in global journalism: at a time of unprecedented proliferation of news sources and availability of global stories, "news outlets of all kinds often tell the same stories, from the same perspective, using much the same material" (2007: 3). Thus, it seems that the globalisation of news coverage has so far been quantitative rather than qualitative; that is to say, it has been about speed and volume rather than developing a truly global outlook. In Hafez's terms, while the media may share the same agenda, they still frame it "according to their own home-grown narratives. Today's international exchanges of images and information, it seems, are no guarantee for global intertextuality in news, for growing awareness of 'the other's' stories and perspectives, and for an increased complexity of world views in the mass media and beyond" (2009: 329). Therefore, while the devices and networks through which we communicate are very globalised, the content of media messages is still based on our local and national interpretations of other cultures.

The weakest link in the chain of global news coverage seems to be the lack of context and a narrow focus on the description of events. This may be a by-product of journalists' dedication to core principles of objectivity and impartiality – as well as a direct result of the lack of space and airtime. Yet, the unwillingness to go into more depth about the broader root causes of ongoing stories, and especially the failure to explain or interpret why certain events may be occurring, makes non-specialist audiences struggle and switch off public affairs.

Context is particularly key to global current affairs which tend to be geographically and culturally farther from people's everyday routines and realities. As a result of the declining amount and quality of coverage, as well as its narrow and de-contextual focus, contemporary TV audiences "have in general very little understanding of events in the developing world or of major international institutions or relationships" (Philo 2002: 185).

### Case Study: The global food crisis

The issue of the global food crisis is a good example of how important context is in order to understand and cover global events. While the 1996 World Food Summit set a target of halving the number of undernourished people to no more than 420 million by 2015, more than a billion people are currently undernourished worldwide, making this the biggest number since 1970. Hunger forces people to sell assets and spend less on education and health care, posing further humanitarian and security obstacles to development. During the 2006-2008 global crisis, food prices went up by 80% within three years, with the price of dairy products increasing by 80% in 2007 alone.

The root causes of both the 2006-2008 and the 2010-2011 food crises are diverse, interlinked and include, amongst other factors: the use of agricultural fields for biofuel production; the rise in oil prices; the rise of demand for meat in China; extreme weather phenomena such as drought and floods, probably caused by climate change; the role of multinational corporations in the setting of cereal prices; and changes to dietary patterns with the production of 1 kilo of beef requiring 7 kilos of feed grain. According to the estimates of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, hunger is currently directly affecting stability in 36 countries. While people may tolerate corrupt and oppressive regimes, hunger has always been a catalyst for instability. Rising food prices and high unemployment were two of the main factors for the revolution in Tunisia and the civil unrest across much of Northern Africa and the Middle East. Interpreting these events requires an adequate understanding of ongoing global patterns through reportage that is contextually informed and emotionally engaging.

In conclusion, global reportage requires investing in a process of contextualisation and engagement with the audience in order to provide them with vital pieces of information that are key to understanding current affairs. This process requires us to better understand audiences themselves and to acknowledge

their changing preferences and media habits within a fragmented and brutally competitive 24/7 news cycle.

Engaging and informing audiences in the age of the fragmented, 24/7, global news cycle

In addition to the challenges affecting the production and dissemination of global news mentioned above, it is also important to consider the broader context within journalists operate, namely changing audience habits and the impact of new media on the news cycle. Since the advent of satellite and digital television and particularly since the emergence of online and mobile applications as embedded – occasionally even embodied – parts of our everyday life, people’s media consumption habits have changed dramatically. This is not only true about the amount of time spent on various media, but also about the type of activities carried out with those media, the different gratifications sought and gained, the emergence of new genres and modes of communication that only a few years ago would have been unimaginable, such as the widespread use of Twitter as a tool of social commentary and critique of media programmes as they take place. Citizen reporters using freely accessible platforms and tools have greatly enriched the output of reportage on a global scale, leading to a hybridisation of top-down and bottom-up journalism (Deuze, Bruns and Neuberger 2007).

The central principle of this new age of communication is choice. Today’s users/citizens/consumers are faced with a choice of hundreds of TV channels, radio stations, newspapers, magazines, mobile phone or tablet apps and obviously billions of websites, blogs etc. In this environment of seemingly limitless choice (the actual extent and diversity of that choice can be debated) media consumption is driven almost entirely by the individual’s own perceptions of needs and interests.

Many studies have confirmed what seems to be intuitive common sense, i.e. that when given the freedom to choose how, where and with whom they will spend their time, people tend to opt for activities and interactions that feel entertaining, familiar and comfortable. Users’ natural tendency is to seek convenience and the speedy completion of their set task. Encountering people who are different from us and issues or opinions that challenge us or make us feel uncomfortable is

getting increasingly more difficult (Fenyoe 2010).

In fact, major internet companies such as Google and Facebook have been developing sophisticated algorithms in order to further tailor search engine results and news feeds so as to match them to individual users' background and interests, creating what Eli Pariser calls a "filter bubble" (2011) that is increasingly restricting the information and people with whom we interact online. In this "Darwinian environment of the hyper-relevant news feed", vital information on global current affairs – on the common problems facing us – becomes a commodity, a product that needs to be carefully marketed and sold to an information saturated audience, competing against the chaotic noise of reality TV shows, celebrity culture and cute animal videos.

These trends create a very difficult field for quality global journalism and for the organisations, NGOs, charities and other civil society groups working to advance the discussion of global affairs in the public sphere. The dependency on search engines makes it very difficult for such organisations to emerge as established brands, while internet users usually fall in one of two categories: they are either interested in news or they are internet savvy (Fenyoe 2010: 2) – few have both the civic motivation required to seek quality reporting and the digital literacy required to do that online. Subsequently, aid agencies and other non-governmental actors have been forced to invest a lot more resources and effort on becoming more media-savvy in order to gain access to the 24/7 global news cycle, which is vital for their survival. The adoption of global media-oriented practices, such as branding, celebrity endorsement, media events, crisis communications and risk management, is not only indicative of the brutal and fast-paced realities of the global news cycle; it reshapes and challenges the organisations' own ethical conduct and organisational integrity (Cottle and Nolan 2007). The clash of outlooks between US and UK editors is obviously indicative of fundamentally different journalistic practices across the world, but perhaps it is also indicative of the lack of a common "language" (in journalistic terms) of covering global news. In other words, given the context outlined earlier in the chapter, it is vital to inform news with a global imaginary – a coherent narrative about the global aspects of current affairs and their relevance to the national and the local. That is not to say that news content should be the same across the world or

that the regional, national, professional, organisational or other specialist traits of journalism can or should be overlooked.

#### Case Study: Anderson Cooper in Haiti

Ethical dilemmas and market pressures are also faced by correspondents and editors. Journalism is not immune from broader cultural trends, such as personalisation, emotion and celebrity. In the aftermath of the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the decision of CNN correspondent and celebrity anchor Anderson Cooper to intervene in the scene of a looting in order to rescue a young boy who had been injured by flying debris led to a heated debate about the role and responsibilities of global reporters. Footage of Cooper's intervention was broadcast on his own CNN show (AC 360) and then spread widely online via YouTube and social media.

The ensuing debate highlighted some of the differences in the professional and organisational cultures across American and British newsrooms. It also led to the articulation of important questions about shifting audience attitudes and the need for journalists to adapt: are celebrity correspondents necessary in order to engage audiences with global current affairs? Is this case indicative of a new model of global reportage in which the foreign correspondent's own experiences and emotions become part of the subject matter? Does the showcasing of these emotions add reflexivity and transparency about the news-gathering process or is it an artificial tactic that aims to manipulate viewers' emotions, distracting them from the real issues?

According to Tony Maddox, executive vice president and managing director of CNN international, the Anderson Cooper incident constitutes a watershed moment in TV history: "The audiences are done with straight up and down. They want the entire atmosphere, all the authenticity and humanity from someone out there who can call it right [...] Foreign correspondents are not detached from their humanity. They have a lot of skills, but we



don't expect them to forget to be human beings first" (in Marshall 2010). This notion of interventionist global journalism – reporter involvement that views journalists as story-tellers aiming to emotionally engage audiences – comes in direct contrast to traditional principles of reportage, which dictate that the journalist should never be the story: “Our job is to report, inform, investigate, uncover. That is what we do. We are not aid workers, nor are politicians and we certainly not medics” (ITV Editor-in-chief David Mannion in Marshall 2010).

While the coverage of the same event may differ across countries, as Ojala (2011: 676) points out a global event is conceived as part of broader spaces, powers and identities and developing a global imaginary requires drawing transnational connections between those spaces powers and identities (2011: 684). In the same way that newspapers, radio and TV were instrumental to the creation of national public spheres in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, today's global reporters – whether they are paid by a major news organisation or blogging on their own site – are contributing to the development of debates and identities that will shape the global sphere of the 21st century.

Interestingly, major news organisations such as CNN, Al Jazeera, Sky, Fox News, Bloomberg, Euronews and the BBC have developed markedly different strategies to tackle the challenge of global news. For instance, Bloomberg's news style focuses on facts, official verification and context but avoids culturally specific emotive responses, hence trying to avoid anything that could alienate diverse audiences: “the story does not assume prior knowledge on the part of the reader, even though the target audience is an actual or implied international community of business people and financiers [...] by avoiding qualifiers, adjectives and other emotive devices, the information is delivered simply and concisely in order to cram in as much factual detail as possible in the given space” (Machin and Niblock 2010: 795).

While a factually oriented, “no frills” type of journalism may attract a respectable share of the global audience – especially niche and business audiences – important questions still arise about the capacity of this model of journalism to really fulfil the media's dual role as a fourth estate, scrutinising those in

power, and as a public sphere, engaging citizens in pluralistic dialogue. The success of business-oriented global news platforms, which interpret events “only in terms of the interests of making money” (Machin and Niblock 2010: 797) signify a move away from harder or more challenging, socio-culturally specific accounts of news that challenge and stimulate audiences, while also demonstrating their responsibility as citizens.

In conclusion, the aim of a truly global journalism ought to be to shed light on the interconnectedness of social reality – the ties that unite us with people and communities across borders and the impact that our actions have on them and vice versa: “Is the particular news event narrowly defined as a domestic (local/regional/national) matter (a terror act in Madrid, an HIV catastrophe in southern Africa etc.), solely explained by domestic factors, or is the journalist also bringing in transnational and global aspects?” (Berglez 2008)

Towards a truly global outlook?

In this chapter I have argued that, in addition to its many effects and expressions in the media and elsewhere, globalisation has also led to the emergence of a new paradigm of news – global news. This term describes both issues that are global or international in their scope, complexity or interdependence, as well as a genre of current affairs reporting that corresponds to the unique blend of challenges and opportunities created in the global public sphere.

Still, one should be cautious when heralding the arrival of a new paradigm of global news or of a global public sphere. As the case of the European Union demonstrates, even within politically and economically integrated regions, tensions still exist when trying to put forward a transnational narrative of global news or a set of alternative repertoires of reportage. Preston (2009: 127) conducted an in-depth analysis of journalistic and media practices across 11 European countries and found the “persistent absence of any common, post-national public sphere and the fact that EU issues are still largely framed and viewed via a ‘national prism’”.

Furthermore, the limitations and possible pitfalls of a global approach to journalism should also be considered. Is the aforementioned global outlook actually global, or is it merely Europe’s or the West’s version of global? Many journalism scholars have argued that despite the historic events of the last few decades and

the undeniable impact of globalisation, the dominant paradigm in both journalism practice and scholarship is Anglo-American (Joseph 2005) or Western European (Ojala 2011).

The truth is that, despite the emergence of many isolated cases of great reporting, today's global public sphere does not feature a coherent narrative of global news or a forum for intercultural dialogue that would match and effectively help tackle some of the main challenges facing us, such as climate change, terrorism and organised crime. News narratives are still stubbornly ethnocentric, reflecting the lack of effective political structures and processes for civic participation or governance at the global level. The creation of a transnational public sphere may, indeed, depend upon the development of a new politics that acknowledges geopolitical developments such as the energy crises (Preston 2009).

Still, both journalism education and journalism practice should acknowledge and respond to these challenges by aiming to contextualise global current affairs and encourage a reflective process, for example, regarding the role of journalism students as global citizens (see also Gerodimos 2012b). Quality news should be framed as a public utility; this is also the principle upon which Public Service Broadcasting was founded. Hence, the development of motivation, skills and appropriate literacy for the regular reading of newspapers should be conceptualised as a social – and given the complexity of global affairs facing us – as a global justice issue. As previous studies have shown (e.g. Raeymaeckers et al. 2008) secondary education can also play a vital role in promoting newspaper reading with positive effects on news literacy, especially amongst those who had no or only limited access to newspapers in their home environment, meaning that such projects can also help redistribute access opportunities.

Insofar as journalism practice is concerned, there are plenty of ways in which the challenges outlined above can be tackled. These range from launching training schemes that empower reporters to thrive within a pressing global context (e.g. by helping them deal with trauma or other mental and emotional pressures) to developing new forms of powerful and engaging storytelling that acknowledges audiences' needs and media habits. Building up the quantity and quality of context in global news reports is vital with particular emphasis being placed on the root causes of events, the key relationships explaining these events, as well as how they relate to the audience. As Philo (2002: 186) notes, “these

relationships then need to be referred routinely in news accounts, since it cannot be assumed that audiences will have heard and understood them the first time or indeed that they carefully watch each bulletin”.

Thinking of the world as a “global village” can be a reductive and simplistic process that misses both marked differences of news coverage across cultures, as well as important inequalities in terms of access to opportunities, resources and the media. While the main argument put forward here – i.e. that emerging global current affairs require a globally informed outlook and that journalists are facing a rapidly changing news cycle and global audience – the salience of traditional divisions should not be underestimated. Yet, global journalism is not about producing a unifying de-nationalised outlook, but about facilitating an informed dialogue across cultures on pressing current affairs that affect the world as a whole.

## Challenging Questions

- What are the main responsibilities and challenges facing journalists in the global public sphere?
- Why is the coverage of international news declining in mainstream news outlets?
- How does global news differ from traditional notions of international news or foreign reporting?
- How can we effectively engage audiences with global current affairs?
- What are the key ethical dilemmas and market pressures facing global reporters?

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