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Italian and Canadian Cultural Differences

as Mirrors of History and Society

by

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## **Abstract**

This work analyzes cultural differences between Italy and Canada based on newspaper articles and headlines on three major events of our recent past: the attack at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001; the death of Osama Bin Laden in May 2011; and the most recent massacre in Oslo, Norway, in July 2011. The objective consists, therefore, in demonstrating the possibility of extrapolating the subtext for newspaper articles which can help to investigate a country's cultural parameters. The analysis will be conducted using cultural studies theories with regards to modern and/or contemporary issues, as well as tools related to the field of semiotics.

## Preface

By using cultural studies theories and methodologies related to the field of semiotics, it is possible to analyze and problematize the role of journalism and of journalists in regards to the political dynamics of contemporary culture, and interpret newspapers articles and headlines as signs and sign processes.

In his essay entitled "Journalism without professional journalists" (2010), Stuart Allan underlines how the role journalists cover in our current societies has radically changed in past few decades: "their [journalists'] role was effectively 'de-intellectualized' and simultaneously 'technicalized'. No longer were journalists independent interpreters of events. [...] This 'fetish' of objectivity [...] was promptly becoming rationalized into a canon of professional competence and ideology of professional responsibility" (Steiner & Christians, 2010, p. 147).

Umberto Eco, in his "Trattato di semiotica generale" (1975), underlines the concept of "cultural unit" through the explanation of connotation, intended as the meaning in the context, and of denotation, as the literal meaning, which become tools of investigation. Eco believes that the meaning of a term, that is the object that our given term denotes, represents a cultural unit: in any culture, a unit is precisely defined, and

moreover different from any other. It can refer to a person, a place, a thing, or even a feeling, and an idea. Whether a unit can be defined as “intercultural”, because it always carries the same denotation (as in the example of “cane” and “dog” since both denote the same animal), or it varies from one culture to another (as in the example of the word “snow”, which in the Inuit culture denotes four different physical states), Eco argues that a culture can be analyzed as a phenomenon of communication based on a system of signification. In addition, Eco writes that “only studying it [culture] this way, can it be clarified in its fundamental mechanisms”<sup>1</sup> (Eco, 1975, p. 37).

This work intends to utilize mass media, mainly in the form of newspapers, as vehicle of culture since as Pedemonte writes “the world of information reflects the local culture, it embodies its shared values and its collective drives”<sup>2</sup> (Pedemonte, 2010, p. 201), while offering an original perspective on Italian and Canadian cultures. However, the success of such an analysis ultimately lies upon the ability to abide by Eco’s “limits of interpretation”<sup>3</sup>, and the vast variety of newspapers, whose eventual political alignments and different distribution ratios are made explicit in the chapters devoted to the extrapolation of textual and subtextual elements within newspaper articles.

The introduction is dedicated to the broad concept of “culture”: its significance, its validity, and its constant transformation in our current globalized era. The analysis will expand by discussing and investigating culture through the lens of mass media, specifically of newspapers.

Finally the following chapters focus on Italian and Canadian newspaper articles on the aforementioned historical events. Pictures, illustrations, and translations of headlines (when necessary) will accompany the analysis in order to impact and improve the validity of this research.

All figures and all articles used in this work have been retrieved from either the official review of the papers offered by government websites, or directly from the archives of the newspaper. All the translations from Italian into English have been footnoted and have been completed by the undersigned.

In light of the high number of newspaper articles translations used, this work utilizes endnotes with the sole objective of facilitating the flow of reading.

## Table of Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. 9/11
  - II.I. Overview: the image of 9/11
  - II.II. 9/11 in the Italian press
  - II.III. 9/11 in the Canadian press
- III. Osama Bin Laden's death
  - III.I. Overview: the global announcement and the military operation
  - III.II. Osama Bin Laden's death in the Italian press
  - III.III. Osama Bin Laden's death in the Canadian press
- IV. The Oslo attack
  - IV.I. Overview: who is Breivik?
  - IV.II. The Oslo attack in the Italian press
  - IV.III. The Oslo attack in the Canadian press
- V. Conclusions
- VI. Endnotes
- VII. Bibliography

## List of Figures

*Figure 1, p. 7:* retrieved on June 3, 2011, from [http://zombietime.com/mohammed\\_image\\_archive/jyllands-posten\\_cartoons/PICT1379.jpg](http://zombietime.com/mohammed_image_archive/jyllands-posten_cartoons/PICT1379.jpg)

*Figure 2, p. 15:* retrieved on April 27, 2011, from <http://johanflybringcmp.files.wordpress.com/2009/11/hartfordcourantcorrection.jpg?w=450&h=295>

*Figure 3, p. 17:* retrieved on April 28, 2011, from [http://blog.everythingdinosaur.co.uk/loch\\_ness\\_wilson\\_1934.jpg](http://blog.everythingdinosaur.co.uk/loch_ness_wilson_1934.jpg)

*Figure 4, p. 31:* retrieved on April 18, 2011, from <http://www.senato.it/notizie/RassUffStampa/010912/2qr13p1.tif>

*Figure 5, p. 43:* retrieved on November 1, 2011, from [http://webmedia.newseum.org/newseum-multimedia/tfp\\_archive/2001-09-12/lg/CAN\\_TGAM.jpg](http://webmedia.newseum.org/newseum-multimedia/tfp_archive/2001-09-12/lg/CAN_TGAM.jpg)

*Figure 6, p. 45:* retrieved on September 21, 2011, from <http://199.198.129.206/GetImage/GetImage.asp?ID=8478964&ZyNetId=&text=.pdf>

*Figure 7, p. 50:* retrieved on November 1, 2011, from [http://webmedia.newseum.org/newseum-multimedia/tfp\\_archive/2001-09-12/lg/CAN\\_NP.jpg](http://webmedia.newseum.org/newseum-multimedia/tfp_archive/2001-09-12/lg/CAN_NP.jpg)

*Figure 8, p. 51:* retrieved on November 1, 2011 from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/63671233/The-Post-s-A-section-September-12-2001#archive>

*Figure 9, p. 59:* retrieved on November 2, 2011, from <http://www.senato.it/notizie/RassUffStampa/110503/zj1q4.pdf>

*Figure 10, p. 60:* retrieved on May 2, 2011, from <http://www.nytimes.com/>

*Figure 11, p. 68:* retrieved on May 4, 2011, from <http://www.senato.it/notizie/RassUffStampa/110503/zj214.pdf>

*Figure 12, p. 82:* retrieved on November 1, 2011, from <http://letteraviola.it/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/strge.jpg>

*Figure 13, p. 82:* retrieved on November 1, 2011, from <http://letteraviola.it/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/giornale.jpeg>

*Figure 14, p. 88:* retrieved on November 1, 2011, from [http://webmedia.newseum.org/newseum-multimedia/tfp\\_archive/2011-07-23/lg/CAN\\_TGAM.jpg](http://webmedia.newseum.org/newseum-multimedia/tfp_archive/2011-07-23/lg/CAN_TGAM.jpg)

*Figure 15, p. 90:* retrieved on November 1, 2011, from [http://webmedia.newseum.org/newseum-multimedia/tfp\\_archive/2011-07-23/lg/CAN\\_ES.jpg](http://webmedia.newseum.org/newseum-multimedia/tfp_archive/2011-07-23/lg/CAN_ES.jpg)

# I

## Introduction

“If we are to talk of the relations between peoples or societies, we first need to tackle a difficult question: can we use the same criteria to judge acts that arise within different cultures?” (Todorov, 2010, p. 13). The question Todorov asks his readers, brings to life a major risk: universalizing those values that apply not only to a culture, but to a people. Judging the world through those values is limiting and reductive - an approach which leads to naive ethnocentrism and blind dogmatism. In his cultural analysis, Todorov, however, appraises the opposite approach as well, which turns out to contain an equal danger, since considering all judgments as relative may result in nihilism.

Todorov (2010) stated the following:

The plurality of cultures does not in any way prevent mankind from being a unity, nor does it hamper our ability to judge that the distinction between acts of barbarism and civilized behaviour is real. No culture is barbarian in itself, no people is definitely civilized; all can become either barbarian or civilized. This is what defines the human race. (p. 51)

Several different cultural influences shape one during his or her lifetime, starting from those that are imparted and/or apprehended without being chosen. Childhood, for example, is as a phase when, with no choice, we are socialized into the language(s) we are going to use, using that of our parents' and/or caretakers. Language, in turn is an instrument of power, delineating and structuring thoughts, actions, judgments, amongst other things. Little by little everything dealing with that specific language is eventually absorbed by the child, who, thus, inherits other elements belonging to the same area/circle of reference, such as food, or lifestyles. The circle widens in sharing information with others, when there is engagement on how the same things can be acted in different ways according to different social norms as in traditions from different countries, and different cultures. "We know selected parts and combinations of our world, we have various relations towards them and feelings towards them, and these, like the objects on the world around us, are themselves in constant movement and change" (Poole, 1972, p. 114). Moreover, the possibility to possess a multicultural identity is realizable, since a person from Italy might simultaneously belong to a region and be perfectly bilingual, speaking Italian standard as well as local dialect, might share the same nationality with other Italians, might support the national

soccer team for example, and might identify as a continental European in positioning himself/herself vis a vis particular global situations.

Cultural expressions represent the key to understanding the world, they act as a link between different members of the same community, and can “provide the material and the forms that each individual needs to construct his or her own personality” (Todorov, 2010, p. 62). It follows that a person is a person through other people - Todorov challenges the Cartesian axiom “*Cogito, ergo sum*”, “I think, therefore I am”, since he regards it as not applicable anymore to our current societies. Thus he proposes “I am human because I belong”. In addition, the self-feeling of being alive, as Patricia Clough explains in her introduction of “*The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*” (2007), is also linked to the “capacities to affect and be affected or the augmentation or diminution of a body’s capacity to act, to engage, and to connect” (Clough, 2007, p. 2). The concept of “affect”, Clough continues, assumes even more relevance, when it is theorized in relation to the latest technologies, since they allow us to both “see’ affect and to produce affective bodily capacities beyond the body’s organic-psychological constraints” (Clough, 2007, p. 2).

This sense of belonging has, however, endured multiple shifts and shocks in the last few decades, due mainly to an exponential technological

growth in communications first and foremost and to the consequent hegemonization process indicated by the term globalization in reference to dominant economic processes sustained by developing technologies of communication.

Curran (2010) argues:

The rise of the internet and transnational TV channels is facilitating the development of interconnected webs of communication and dialogue around the world. This is bringing into being a global public sphere in which issues of common concern are being debated globally. [...] Following this premise, the global sphere is empowering world citizenry. (p. 8)

In other words, communication and technology have allowed people to spend more time knowing the other, learning how to communicate through cultures, and getting familiar with different languages and ways of seeing the world. Although the internet is being used by twenty five percent of the world's population<sup>4</sup>, only small numbers of people use the internet as a primary source of news. According to James Curran, in his essay "Communication and Globalization" (2010), TV is still the primary source, and most of the time it deals exclusively with local news. He thus

explains how news media, more nationally oriented rather than internationally, have somehow deflected the trajectory of globalization. A critical reading suggests that “if global communication technology is bringing the world closer together, it remains a world that is fragmented by language, divided by opposed values and interests, and disfigured by inequality” (Allan, 2010, p. 10). Additionally, media messages have also the power to hierarchize issues and concerns, as well as opinions, but as Lance Bennett explains in his essay “The Political Message” (2010), although communicators try to control the message they convey, these are subject to different interpretations - losing control of their message, and becoming the worst nightmare for professional communicators.

“Communication scholars generally agree that, although multiple meanings surround any message, there are conditions that constrain the randomness of interpretation and enhance the likelihood of preferred understanding among target audiences” (Allan, 2010, p. 14). This is easily achievable through precise “agenda-setting functions”, which allow some issues to be eliminated, whereas others are retained and submitted, permitting an opinion that the media presented as largely shared, to eventually become so.

Todorov (2010) states:

Another lesson to be drawn from these events concerns the degree of interconnection between inhabitants of the planet. This is quite unprecedented. A publication in a daily paper in Copenhagen provokes a riot in Nigeria a couple of days later? Who could have ever imagined it? The instantaneous broadcasting of information, with, in particular, the circulation of images on television, is turning our relationship to the world upside down, and having profound influence on the way everyone behaves. (p. 151)

The twelve cartoons (Figure 1) published on September 30, 2005 in the Danish newspaper “Jyllands-Posten” caused, in fact, violence and riots. Approximately 100 people lost their lives around the world<sup>5</sup>. Examining this particular episode can be extremely important to understanding the conditions in which mass media operate and its power to determine consequences. It is however clear that the publication of these drawings arose in a precise climate, and in a specific context. An analysis can thus show the reasons and the roots of such a bold move; it will indicate ways in which the culture of a country can be reflected in the behaviours, beliefs, ideals, choices, and thoughts of an entire people; and it



Figure 1

will portray how mass media mirrors culture through images and language, and that may potentially impact the rest of the planet.

Globalization has exacerbated the impact more than ever; mass media is now riding the wave that people themselves are continuously feeding

through their sometimes macabre need of information, and addiction to compare, and judge, making language, “therefore, as much a marker of social distinction as semantic sense” (Myles, 2010, p.10).

French critic Clément Chéroux underlines how mass media has the capacity to draw attention, and to subtly disseminate channel and impose a definite ideology. He considers terrorists as very capable and smart individuals, that have been using the media, and any other communication system for their purposes. Terrorists have been able to transform these systems into weapons, in fact their success and efficacy derive from the exploitation of mass media (Chéroux, 2010). What happened in Denmark can be read through the same lens, where the authors of the cartoons have tried to communicate their ideology exploiting both the power of the mass media, and the control they had over it, by appealing to freedom of expression.

To better analyze how this occurred, it is necessary to look at the specific context, both socially and politically. Denmark had never had a high number of immigrants: the emerging immigration trend began in the 1970s were simply guest workers, but as immigration numbers arose, so did the influence of parties of the extreme right, which tried to defend the Danish values and thwart any type of integration. Additionally, the official

religion in Denmark, Lutheran Protestantism<sup>6</sup>, is obligatory in state schools. The Arabic community, being a minority and practising a different creed, inevitably stood out, and were immediately indexed as scapegoats for any problematic issue the country had. In addition, the influence of Pia Kjæsgaard, who, leading the Danish People's Party declared once that the people from the South were a cancer for Denmark, played a decisive role (Todorov, 2010). Many politicians were openly against Islam, and this created a problematic atmosphere for any Muslim living in Denmark. In the election following 9/11, immigration laws changed drastically: much was done to complicate and stall immigration processes and rules were tightened so that the number of foreigners did indeed decrease. In Denmark, where the Danish values were increasingly protected, freely expressing one's own thought regarding Islam was seen as darkness and evil. The editor of the newspaper defended his choice to include the politically charged cartoons, proclaiming the right of freedom of expression, backed up by the freedom of mockery and ridicule. Of all the cartoons, certainly the one in which the Prophet is holding a bomb instead of a turban is the most provoking, but the main objection coming from the Muslim community was that any representation of the Prophet is offensive and highly prohibited. The reactions to this unfortunate event

were, to some degree, even more ridiculous. The imam in Denmark requested public apologies, which did not arrive. Consequently they appealed to the OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference), where the demands became more grave and more intense. Throughout Europe government officials and press people expressed their disapproval and distance from what the Danish newspaper and government was doing. With time gone by, and no apology obtained, the protests were consequently growing, as were the risks of riots and violence. The protesters took advantage of the situation to spread their message of disapproval, and to create chaos and disorder. However, it happened that the same image of the Prophet with the bomb was now cherished and the turban was replaced by hundreds of bombs, in order to express both aggression and mockery. From an apparently unfortunate situation, the protesters expressed now their strong resentment towards the arrogant Western powers, seemingly responsible for their misfortunes. Ideologized reactions in the West responded to the violence originated by this general sense of exasperation and outrage with the incitement for freedom of expression<sup>7</sup>: many conservative newspapers, including some from Norway and Sweden, published other illustrations of the Prophet drinking beer, or with a dog's body. 'Freedom of expression is Danish,

‘censorship is not’ was the slogan launched by the Danish People's Party. This unfortunate and tragic event can be seen as an indication that mass media contains the power to influence: twelve illustrations on a Danish newspaper, which is fair to assume, only few people outside of Denmark even knew the name, became the main source of violence and unrests in many other countries around the world in the months following the publication. The illustrations were channeled beyond local and national borders, they were hated and cherished, and moreover their newly globalized value was used and abused in order to influence and persuade.

In light of the expansion of cultural borders and because of globalization and technological development, mass media, in the form of newspapers, internet, radio, and TV, has grown exponentially and reached the farthest boundaries of the planet. Globalization, in fact, involves the divulgement of ideas, practices, and technologies: Anthony Giddens describes it as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa”<sup>8</sup>. The current speed of communication and exchange, together with the complexity and size of the networks nowadays involved, consequently makes globalization a pure force<sup>9</sup>.

Accepting that the medium can reflect and contain one country's ideas, opinions, and more generally perceptions of the world, in accordance to specific contexts, delineated by social and political aspects, it means accepting that it also becomes the unofficial recipient of its dominant culture. The constant flow of information that the media is providing, expanded by globalization, will carry this very same culture beyond national boundaries: Giddens believes that "it is the interaction of extraordinary technological innovation combined with world-wide reach that gives today's change its particular complexion"<sup>10</sup>.

As Todorov argues, cultures are the key to understanding the world, hence, mass media become the depository of this constructed truths. Analyzing history, traditionally intended as a series of linear and causal events, objectively and subjectively reported through the channels of mass media, makes it possible to delineate the main characteristics of one country's culture, and problematize them in relation to others and to different contexts.

The publication of the twelve cartoons in "Jyllands-Posten" represents a fair example of the power mass media has assumed in our current globalized era and simultaneously it allows the acknowledgement of being carriers of ideologies, ideas, and opinions, containing, thus,

elements belonging to a certain societal view (not necessarily the dominant one), with its own thoughts, and contexts.

By reviewing the excerpt from “Jyllands-Posten”, it becomes quite evident that the problem created, which eventually unleashed unfortunate riots, is not only due to a sarcastic language, nor to sharp humour, but to the power of specific images. The twelve illustrations have been able to carry such a strong message that has surpassed the boundaries of language differences, since it is quite fair to assume that not many people in the Middle East, nor in Nigeria, can speak Danish. Images, illustrations, and pictures are nowadays a decisive part of mass media communication, because they integrate, if not make more visible, whatever it is being conveyed. Yet an image needs a context, and more importantly it needs a purpose. Analyzing photographs has been the object of Clément Chéroux’ and Michele Smargiassi’s work. The former looks at them in relation to newspapers, and borrows the intervention of Monica Moses, a teacher at the Poynter Institute, and Jim Naughton, a notorious American journalist, to show how pictures can be, in the media context, divided into two categories: symbolic and documentary. Moses believes that photographs in newspapers have to be audacious, risqué, and tempting; Naughton, instead, feels they should contain information, depth, and perpetuity.

Considering these two positions, it appears evident that, in the specific case of 9/11, (which Chéroux covers) newspapers have been much closer to Moses's hypothesis, because the low documentary value of the pictures has definitely resulted in a symbolic investment (Chéroux, 2010).

Michele Smargiassi, an Italian journalist and an essayist, who has conducted an interesting analysis on pictures used on newspapers, books, and magazines across the global context, attempts, instead, to trace their relationship with reality based on the reader's perception. While the editor of "Jyllands-Posten" defended his choice pleading the right of expression, many newspapers now have adopted harsher rules, according to which it is unethical to manipulate pictures with cropping, or other more sophisticated touches. The aim is, therefore, to publish an "authentic" picture. Smargiassi at this point analyzes the true meaning of "authentic"<sup>11</sup> and questions the very exegesis of the picture itself.

Smargiassi (2009) writes that:

A picture shows us what we could have seen in a given moment, from a given point of view, if our head had been still, and one of our eyes had been closed, and if we could see like through a 140 or 40mm lens, and if we could see in

Agfacolor or in Tri-X developed with a D76, and printed on Kodabromide n.3 paper<sup>12</sup>. (p.53)



Figure 2

Smargiassi writes that the San Francisco Chronicle recently admitted that they do manipulate pictures in order to make them more faithful to reality. On this note, the Italian author shows the readers a picture from the Los Angeles Times portraying an American soldier (Figure 2) in a refugee camp in Iraq. Smargiassi writes how the picture had been taken three times before it could have made the newspaper: the first time the refugee was not looking at the camera, the second time the soldier lost his humanitarian pose, the third take was finally “faithful” to reality.

“Pictures are the trace of something that has been real, plus something that makes it real; or maybe without something”<sup>13</sup> (Smargiassi, 2009, p. 83). Doubtless the source and the context play a key role in the impact the picture will have on its viewers. The final shot the Los Angeles Times published was certainly taken for real, regardless of how much manipulation the photograph went under. Smargiassi explains that pictures carry a persuasive value added by the context and source, and by the recipients. His example is simple and very clear: he tests his audience by showing them a series of pictures and telling them who the subject is. First he shows a picture of a famous man, such as Silvio Berlusconi, and for this reason he is believed to be telling the truth, since Berlusconi’s photograph is readily recognizable. Later, Smargiassi shows a picture of himself when he was three years-old, which most of the audience will believe it to be true, both because there would be no reason why Smargiassi had to lie, and secondly because he is a respectful and serious person. The third picture shows an alleged UFO, and the reaction would be drastically different, as many people would not consider it to be real. But Smargiassi says that if he had showed that same picture at a conference of ufologists, the authenticity of the picture would not have

been challenged. The credibility of a picture lies on the tolerance, on the attitude, and on the willingness of an observer.



Figure 3

One of the most famous pictures of all times is the one portraying the alleged Loch Ness monster (Figure 3), having been extremely controversial and having involved a large number of intellectuals and scientists. Only in 1994, exactly 60 years after Dr. Robert Kenneth Wilson took the picture, the truth came out, revealing that it had simply been a toy submarine to which a dinosaur-like head had been added. Smargiassi writes how this particular picture did not endure any kind of manipulation, any cropping,

or editing. All was set up by the photographer, who, in this case, is the actual manipulator.

“Lies, we have been taught, are strictly a linguistic faculty. Lying is bound to being able to speak. Lies exist, we have been explained, only where exists a language able to contradict”<sup>14</sup> (Smargiassi, 2009, p. 58).

Pictures lie when they are used to influence or to convince the observer; however the lies are not explicit. Instead the truth is denied by claiming falsehood. However, in this high technological era, where digital photography is available to anyone, and has at its disposal a large variety of manipulating tools, truth and reality have little by little slipped away taking with them their old referential points. Typical reactions to observing a picture have radically changed: once we would ask “is this a picture?” Nowadays, instead we would wonder “is this real?”.

The perception has completely shifted, the tolerance, the attitude, and the willingness Smargiassi had mentioned, have endured a massive alteration. Mass media has contributed greatly to this process; it has exploited the technological growth and exasperated the viewers’ reception, as well as expectations. “If it bleeds, it leads” (Smargiassi, 2009, p. 202) is the current slogan of our current societies. Guy Debord has traced the boundaries of this very same society, dominated by the

spectacle, which he defines as representing the social relationship between people mediated by images. It is a distortion of the world as we see it - "In a world that really has been turned on its head, truth is a moment of falsehood" (Debord, 2006, p. 14). The spectacle's object of power is, in fact, the sight which is according to Debord, the most deceivable of the senses. The spectator is therefore enslaved because he never feels at home, since the spectacle appears to be everywhere. The more he contemplates the desired object, the less he really lives, and even if he understands his needs inside the image of needs proposed by the dominating system, the less he understands his existence.

"The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. All that once was directly lived has become mere representation" (Debord, 2006, p. 12). The spectacle becomes, consequently, the outcome and the goal of the mode of production; its language is made of signs, images, and through them produces real activity.

In such a global atmosphere and in light of the elements aforementioned, three of the major historical events that have shaken the balance of our societies, have surely been the attack at the World Trade

Centre in New York on September 11, 2001, the death of Osama bin Laden, and the most recent massacre in Oslo<sup>15</sup>. All three events present the opportunity to be analyzed through the lens of the mass media, and all three work as a critical example, by the way they have been showed to the world, and as a product of a contemporary form of society. Consequently the study of these events, or the study of how the news has been reported on newspapers, TVs, and magazines, through a precise language and through determined pictures and footage, can be useful in understanding not only our societies, but also our cultures. The teachings of semiotics will deepen the textual analyses, by delineating connotative and denotative values inside a precise context, with the obvious intent of unveiling cultural elements.

The body of this essay, that is the analysis of worldwide historical, political, and social events, provides a comparison of the Italian and Canadian mass media, ways in which they reported the same news, the weight they put on the events, and their analytical and critical approaches, as the reflections of two societies and two cultures in a globalized world.

## II

### 9/11

#### II.I

##### **Overview. The image of 9/11.**

Certainly one of the most televised and internet-followed events of the past century has been the attack at the World Trade Center (WTC) in New York City. 9/11 has been mediated through what Grusin calls, a double logic of remediation (Grusin, 2010), whereas both televisual and weblike news were continuously broadcast through split screens, scrolling headlines, radio feeds, cellphones, etc. turning, thus, 9/11 into the “first global media event”<sup>16</sup> (Grusin, 2010, p. 11). The attack, hence, has exploited the power and the full potential of mass media, involving any type of news distributor, and using simultaneously words, videos, pictures, and consequently accomplishing one of the wishes and/or goals the terrorists had planned for. Slavoj Žižek explicates this concept by arguing that beyond the pure material damage, there was certainly the desire “for the spectacular<sup>17</sup> effect of it” (Grusin, 2010, p. 13). Likewise, Mario Pezzella’s position is quite similar: the Italian author recognizes that the more an experience perishes on a material level, the more powerful and seductive it becomes. (Pezzella, 2009).

Pezzella (2009) writes:

To this fundamental inversion, another immediately follows:  
the more potentially threatening a phenomenon is for the  
existing power, the more ephemeral, contingent, and known  
the phenomenon is represented [...] the more a phenomenon  
loses in material quality, the more splendour and luminosity  
its image-ghost acquires<sup>18</sup>. (p. 17)

Historians, critics, and philosophers have commented and written on and about 9/11; hundreds of books haven been published, and thousands of pictures and videos have been shown on TV and online. The catastrophe has been so stretched, expanded and contracted, so used and recycled, that Baudrillard's position and thought on its regard opens up a huge field of discussion, which directs and helps this analysis into the Canadian and Italian mass media world. The French theorist, according to Richard Grusin "found the 9/11 event to be further evidence of the loss of the real in the immateriality of digital mediation. [...] the event 9/11 was 'not real'. In a sense, it [was] worse; it [was] symbolic" (Grusin, 2010, p. 13).

Following and further problematizing Baudrillard's intervention is Italian film critic, Marco Dinoi, (2008), who argues that TV and internet

have produced a rarefaction of the experience, by identifying themselves as a “window on the world”. The world itself is consequently made as an image, through which men orient themselves, and use as representation of the whole. Gradually both TV and internet have become primary models of the world representation, both on a perceptive and a cognitive level. Applying this position to 9/11 means that the image of today’s world has been turned into a spectacle (as explained previously through Guy Debord’s words) and made into an “event”. Dinoi suggests that in current times there is no distinction between images and information, between spectacle and symbolic, between crime and repression; the unleashing of this uncontrolled reversibility has marked the true victory of terrorism. In this process reality has been lost, it has been confused with fiction and with virtuality, while violence and destruction have obtained the status of symbolic values.

Dinoi deepens his analysis by claiming that 9/11 has amplified its power through the live feeds, and to the uncountable TV re-telling of the attack. The relationship between image and reality has been so worn out that the viewers have been tricked into almost believing they are watching a movie. Dinoi thinks that what happened is an adjustment of reality to the screen, which in turn, has produced an excess of reality. The reiteration

of the images of the collapse of the towers has created an impossibility of control, because the event has been collocated into an atemporal dimension (or an everlasting present). The duress of repetition has determined the maximum adherence of the image to the object, as if they were one body. This transformation has therefore created a so-called “total image”, capable of overlapping both the perceptive and the cognitive scene. The key moment of this mutation can be found in our own impression shift when facing a movie and exclaiming “it looks real!” to facing reality and saying “it looks like a movie!”. This transformation has been made possible because today we judge and interpret reality through fiction-creating-agents such as cinema and television that blur illusion and reality.

The general idea of the media portrayal was that the day after the attack, mankind woke up in a different world, however, coherently following what Baudrillard argued, Dinoi (2008), quoting Ken Loach’s “Eleven Minutes, Nine Seconds, One Image: September 11” (2002):

Suggests us that the world we woke up in today is exactly the same, it is our world with its brutal violence, and that it is necessary to not delete the inhumanity of men to face the

event, that it is necessary to not make it a symbol because it is this, what, whoever planned the attack, wants<sup>19</sup>. (p. 67)

In this regard, Allen Feldman fears that the image of the collapse of the towers, through the reiteration used and misused by the mass media, has brought to life a narrative numbness, and this over-dosage has increased the common sensation of “never like before”. Feldman introduces the concept of “collective formations of memory and oblivion”, through which the image has become an archetype, able to capture and seize the temporal dimension of the event. With the impossibility of archiving that terrible symbolic sequence, 9/11 is the only event possessing an irreplaceable image, since no other owns the same power.

The concept of “never like before” can be considered on the same level of “we are all Americans”, because it has become a slogan used multiple times in newspapers and magazine all around the world, a slogan, however, that on some degree played with the terrorists’ intent to manipulate Western public opinion. Jean-Marie Colombani on the issue of September 12, 2001 of “Le Monde” was the first journalist to recycle the quotation of John F. Kennedy “Ich bin ein Berliner” dated 1963 (Grusin, 2010), and it is highly likely that his will was that of expanding the event 9/11 beyond an American perspective. Richard Grusin, quoting Jill

Bennett, explains this concept very clearly: “if the trauma of 9/11 was geographically centred in the United States, it clearly was not contained within national boundaries [...] the nature of one’s affective or empathetic response was not necessarily a function of belonging to a nation” (Grusin, 2010, p. 25).

Despite this global feeling of empathy the rest of world had for the United States and its people, it is what happened in the months following the attack that things started to change. Grusin points out different occasions where mediation and networks on American soil were partially trying to emphasize differences between the US and the rest of the planet. Continuous headlines and scrolling news, even during sport events, carried slogans like “a nation at war”, or “the war on terror”, while mainstream television channels such as CNN and MSNBC even created shows entitled “Countdown to War” and “Showdown with Iraq”. Federico Montanari (2004) supports Grusin’s approach, and more importantly the idea of TV and its images as tools to transform war into a spectacle.

Montanari (2004) writes:

It is evident and obvious that the use of TV and mass media becomes part of the conflict itself: mass media have become

tools of manipulation and counter-manipulation in the hands of political and military entities that plan and lead that given war<sup>20</sup>. (p. 276-277)

In an era characterized by a strong and constant technological development, in which even cellphones and the internet have become programs of action and anticipation able to carry news and information in real time, it has made it difficult to distinguish between civil technologies and military technologies, as well as between truth and propaganda.

Montanari's position gets even closer to Grusin's when he discusses the so-called "speciali", that is those particular TV shows (like the aforementioned "Countdown to War") committed to deepen some of the recent events through field reporters, eyewitness's statements, and exclusive coverage. The Italian writer believes that these portrayals play a double semiotic and communicative role, because they observe, judge, sanction, and finally manipulate and homogenize the news, trying, thus, to make everything that was said on a given news network coherent and less variegated.

Montanari (2004) writes:

We know, through semiotic studies, that the truth -  
communicated, however always expressed through a given

text, a given discourse and never by itself - is the product of disputes, arguments: it is the product 'of a text'. It is produced, it is confirmed, and it is made believable, it is made controverted, or it is even accepted through semiotic-textual procedures. [...] A given truth is proposed, disassembled, discussed, analyzed etc. [...] About the war we know - and this is one of the most worn out commonplace - that 'its first victim is the truth'<sup>21</sup>. (p. 335)

The image of 9/11 has been exploited, manipulated, and made a symbol. "On September 11, 2001 [...] our gaze was consciously aware of being simultaneously analogous to that of all the western citizens not living in New York"<sup>22</sup> (Dinoi, 2008, p. 248). It is like our vision of those images had acquired the same value of a witness's account; it follows that the media have turned it into a simulacrum.

The mass media have, somehow and in some degree, supported the plan of the terrorists, by making those images extremely available, and more importantly, by making them first as symbols, and then as tools of justification for the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. This symbolic halo is also responsible for both the concept of "never like before" and of "we are all Americans", concepts (and slogans) that have been underlined by many

newspapers and magazines, but that have simultaneously created the aggressive dichotomy “we/others”<sup>23</sup>.

In light of this analysis of the event 9/11, intended as “image” reported by TV channels and internet, it can be useful now to focus the attention on how newspapers and magazines have covered the story, and whether they have supported the American ideal and its consequent war on terror, or if they have remained objective, offering a concise and consistent account. Clifford Christians, on this angle, in his essay entitled “Communication ethics in postnarrative terms” (2010) reminds the readers that “journalistic morality became equivalent to unbiased reporting of neutral data. Centred on human rationality and legitimized by the scientific method, the facts in news were said to mirror reality” (Steiner & Christians, 2010, p. 179).

It is further interesting to understand why and how journalistic choices have been made, paying respect to the obvious presence of political agendas and alignments which play a key role in publication choices. It is, however, equally true and noteworthy that the stories are, at the same time, coming from a given society and therefore a given group of cultural elements and influences. The next two sections are dedicated to gathering articles, opinions, and commentaries on the event 9/11 on both

the Italian and the Canadian press, with the intent to trace and delineate their abstract and hidden cultural factors, through tools adherent to the areas of cultural studies and semiotics. Hence the articles and headlines used will be dissected, in order to find their denotative and connotative values, as well as, their reflection on society and culture.

## II.II

### **9/11 in the Italian press.**

Looking at both the main Italian and the Canadian newspapers, it is possible to find consistencies with Grusin's and Dinoi's analyses; and in order to support the idea of mass media capable of swinging an entire country's opinion over such a massive event, I have selected some front pages of the major newspapers in Italy and in Canada, plus a number of articles and editorials explicating feelings and impressions towards the tragedy in Manhattan.

The "Corriere della Sera" is the second most widely read newspaper in Italy<sup>24</sup>, and its political alignment is definable as centrist. In the aftermath of 9/11, it offers a strong headline, that promptly provides a split and supports the dichotomy "we/others" previously mentioned.

"Attacco all'America e alla civiltà"<sup>25,26</sup> (Figure 4) can be read in this way:



spiritual progress reached by mankind or by a given people, but it also refers to education and good manners. This position is very similar to the one Oriana Fallaci vehemently depicts in her book "The rage and the pride" (2002).

The Italian journalist (2002), living in New York at the time of the attack, writes:

When the survival of our civilization is in jeopardy, New York is us. America is us. [...] So, if America collapses, Europe collapses. The whole of the West collapses. We all collapse. [...] Because our civilization dies out and we end up with the minarets in place of the bell-towers, with the burka in place of the miniskirt, with the camel-milk in place of our little drink. (p.87)

By saying that the "civiltà" has been attacked, the newspaper has portrayed a judgement and a position towards firmness and intolerance.

The Italian government, which at the time was led by Silvio Berlusconi, was notoriously pro-American, and it was one, in contrast with other European countries, that was not dragged into the post 9/11 American policies reluctantly, but instead did willingly and independently. This case

also demonstrates how, by some degree, newspapers are subjected to political influences.

It is interesting the choice of the word “civiltà” in the headline, which is later repeated in the side article by Ferruccio de Bortoli, entitled exactly “Siamo tutti americani”<sup>27</sup>, i.e. “we are all Americans”. He underlines how the CNN’s scrolling news “America under attack” should have involved the entire world, and be “È tutta la civiltà sotto attacco”, in other words, all of civilization is under attack. Again, with the word “civilization” denoting both the belonging to a community, and, more importantly, a superior level of lifestyle, intended as more developed, more educated, and more culturally oriented. It appears that the term “civilization” is often used in opposition to “barbarism”, an idea that adheres perfectly with the subdivision of the current world that Todorov offers. The Franco-Bulgarian philosopher argues that this dichotomy, “civilized” / “barbarian”, is not retraceable exclusively to 9/11, but finds roots much deeper in the past, even to the years of the Cold War. Although communism was defeated, contrasts were still visible, and were identifiable through particular feelings and attitudes, the same that have been carried through to our current days. Countries such as the United States and those in Western Europe that are more powerful economically

and socially, are the countries of “fear”, while countries of the middle East, or Latin America, who felt humiliated and mistreated by the most rich and developed, are the countries of “resentment”, as they blame Europe and the U.S. for their poverty and current despair<sup>28</sup>: “the U.S. inhabiting the superpower role means that the discontented and embittered may hold the United States responsible for their poverty, their weakness, their ignorance, and their irrelevance” (Sicakkan, 2006, p. 152). Todorov’s subdivision to critically analyze the mass media’s communication on such a grave and catastrophic event suggests that Italy belongs to the countries of fear. Indeed it appears that fear is becoming the main social aggregator, the driving feeling, and by allowing this transformation, it turns allegedly civilized people into barbarians: “history teaches us this lesson: the cure can be worse than the disease” (Todorov, 2010, p. 6). This transformation of fear into violence can be seen in the disproportionate reaction of the U.S. after 9/11: the war on terror is the consequence of resentment and vengeance. Defending the values of democracy has been completely absent as soon as the American armies started to bomb the Middle East: “how can we rejoice in our victory over a horrendous enemy if, in order to vanquish him, we have to become like him?” (Todorov, 2010, p. 7).

This type of critique is applicable to what is seen in Italian newspaper articles because on one hand there is the political and sometimes exasperated friendship with the U.S., and on the other the feeling of fear witnessed by the will to impose an immediate split: us versus the other. But it is a fear fed, though, by the vivid awareness that the catastrophe occurred far away. On the basis of these elements, the following three articles become extremely symptomatic.

The first is an excerpt from "Panorama", a centre-right magazine, written by Carlo Rossella, an Italian journalist and entrepreneur. The title he has chosen is congruent with others, in fact it delineates his position immediately: "L'occidente unito contro le barbarie"<sup>29,30</sup>, and hints at a possible third world war. Interesting are two opinions he expresses in the article: one is that the terrorists' target has been the World Trade Center for its position and for the potential such a catastrophe had had on the media, on the other, confirming the alliance with the United States, Rossella regrets how the Americans have been left alone fighting the rusts in the Middle East, and consequently have taken a blow "for the team".

More directed towards the concept of "civiltà" is the second article by Rina Gagliardi from "Liberazione", a left wing newspaper, entitled "Quale civiltà?"<sup>31,32</sup>. After an introduction from which she confirms how

the attack has been and will be remembered as a worldwide event that caused dismay and alarm, her position regarding the idea of civilization is noteworthy. Gagliardi does not think that the term, currently, denotes “humanity” any longer, nor the opposite of barbarism, but it carries a model of society and values, traceable in a globalized capitalism characterized by unstoppable individualism. These are the very same values dictated by the American model, the Bush model, the G8, and the powerful western countries’ model. This article can, thus, be seen as endorsing the concept of “countries of resentment” that Todorov introduced, because it seems to confirm how the terrorist movement was born as a protest against a world and a global society where decisions and agreements are made and stipulated by a small group of oligarchs.

Gagliardi posits that capitalist individualism is opposed to the unrecognizable face of terror. After 9/11 people in the Middle East were celebrating the collapse of the towers, and in light of such a devastating, ferocious, and cruel event, the only explanation possible for such a behaviour was retraceable in the crushing humiliation that had spread through the third-world countries. Several other countries later started to feel sympathy for Bin Laden, not because he was a good Muslim, but because he defied the power of the West. “The humiliation that nurses the

resentment of these Muslim populations stems from more than one source. It is not merely the presence on their soil of foreign armies which lies behind this humiliation, or other strong-armed interventions; it is also the necessity of living in a world formed, materially and conceptually, by experiences that are not their own" (Todorov, 2010, p. 165).

The third article, "Lo spirito antico del giorno dopo"<sup>33,34</sup> is another excerpt from "Corriere della Sera" and, again, it seems to be a praise of the United States as carriers of modern values of humanity and civilization. The author underlines the readiness of rescues, aids, and courage of Bush to immediately come back to the White House to talk to his nation. But what stands out in the article is the final part: "The American Way of Life" is made by those immaterial values that feed a democracy: tolerance, sympathy, respect of rules and values of an authentic civil cohabitation, but also the awareness of strength and civilization. These values are, probably, shared by many American citizens of Islamic religion, maybe even originally from those countries that now cover, assisting him, the blind terrorism of Osama Bin Laden's followers. Some of them, most likely, are under the debris of the World Trade Center. And who knows if they will join, in the Muslim hereafter, those suicidal terrorists, whom

their bosses told that will enjoy, along with the graces of 72 virgins, the eternal glory”<sup>35</sup>.

These articles all share high level of empathy and as such, suggest that everyone should feel included in the tragedy: on the one hand this can be interpreted as a consequence of the current globalization, since both the media and the internet, have made it possible worldwide to feel the despair and the incredulity; on the other, however, emphasizing what the articles analyzed so far, makes possible to catch sight of a cultural dependence towards the American Dream. It is clear that the Italian Government, represented at the time by Silvio Berlusconi, has a great influence in how newspapers and magazines, have portrayed 9/11. Berlusconi’s agenda appears full of American-like ideas and propositions, as well as business projects inspired by what happened overseas. At the same time, though, it is fair to mention how this cultural dependence found roots many decades ago, when Italian TVs and broadcast companies were borrowing examples and concepts from American channels.

To support this thesis, critic Paul Ginsborg (2011) writes:

One of his [Berlusconi’s] significant part has been inherited, not created, and derives from the American TV world of the

1980s and from the political economy of Ronald Reagan's and Margaret Thatcher's governments in the United States and Great Britain. (p. xii)<sup>36</sup>

Ginsborg continues also by saying that "Berlusconi has never felt better than when at George W. Bush's court"<sup>37</sup> (Ginsborg, 2011, p. xiii). For these reasons, it can be said, looking at how the news was told and reported in many Italian newspapers, that the cultural atmosphere in Italy was (and still is nowadays) influenced by a strong American cultural attachment and inclination, together with a global emotivity and compassion for an event that affected the entire world.

The next article, entitled "L'orrore che cambia il mondo"<sup>38,39</sup> from "Il Mattino", a centre-left aligned newspaper, has, however, a more politically correct approach because it attempts to avoid formulating any verdict or assigning any fault: the author claims that the enemy is inside and that it has a thousand faces. What strikes as more important is the invitation to eliminate all the causes of inequality, and to analyze the process of globalization, that has inevitably left somebody behind. The author, Paolo Gambescia, foresees and condemns a hypothetical revenge, since death calls for death (once again the reference to Todorov's thoughts

is explicit - one can't respond to barbarism with the same methods), but he doesn't seem to be able to remain optimistic.

Gambescia (2001), in fact, writes:

The terrorists have arrived at the heart of the United States using U.S. commercial aircrafts. They have devoted themselves to the death, as it happens in many other parts of the world, defending a claim, an idea, or, more often, being convinced that they are right in their war against the infidels on the other side. And a war like this can't be won with tankers, nor with barbed wire<sup>40</sup>. (p. 1)

As mentioned in the preface, it is finally necessary to give space to the front pages of other newspapers, in a way of trying to represent as much as possible of the Italian press, with no distinctions made based on political alignment or on distribution ratios.

The front page of "L'Unità", a left wing newspaper, decides to put emphasis on the consequences of the attack, rather than the causes. The title "Stato di guerra in America"<sup>41,42</sup> underlines, in fact, what will happen next, as if it is foreseeing the imminent politics the American government will put in action, hence the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. "La Stampa" and "La Repubblica" are, respectively, the fourth and the second most

read newspaper in Italy<sup>43</sup>, and both are centre-left aligned. They, ironically, offer the same exact title, “Attacco all’ America”<sup>44, 45, 46</sup> and this choice may be due to a simple a denotation: detachment. The catastrophe has happened so far away and therefore there is the urge to define the boundaries of the evil forces that caused it. As if the readers need to know that something so unthinkable, cruel, unfamiliar, something “other” is, yes, happening, but still occurring on the other side of the planet. From the title the “Corriere della Sera” chose<sup>47</sup>, there is in this case a big difference, since (on the other hand) the level of sharing the pain, the empathy of the two newspapers is definitely weaker. The final two front pages, instead, present a stronger empathy, in fact, the titles do not even bear the name “America”, as if saying that whatever happened in Manhattan goes beyond national or continental boundaries. “Il Messaggero”, politically centre-left aligned, and “Il Giornale”, right-wing newspaper, with “Atto di guerra”<sup>48, 49</sup> and “Migliaia di morti”<sup>50</sup> denote a more general feeling of both empathy towards the dead and alliance on what will be going to be the war on terror. The subheads briefly describe the places where the tragedy happened, but it is significative the lack of the synecdoche “America” in “Il Giornale” because the “thousands dead” have in this case no citizenship, no political affiliations, and no race, but they are instead

citizens of the world, whose sudden and tragic departure is affecting everyone around the globe.

## II.III

### **9/11 in the Canadian press.**

The title of the following front page of “The Globe and Mail”, a centrist national newspaper, dated September 12, 2011, “A day of infamy”<sup>51</sup> (Figure 5), focuses mainly on tragedy, on the catastrophe, and on the almost 3000 people that lost their lives. The choice of the word “infamy” is though, very specific and it was used on many other American newspapers<sup>52</sup>. The word, in fact, alludes to the Franklin D. Roosevelt’s speech after the attack on Pearl Harbour, when on the radio he declared “Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy, the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan”<sup>53</sup>. The connection between the two attacks is therefore made explicit, but it didn’t have the same effect, nor the same respect, above all in the United States, where headlines with the word “infamy” or any other Pearl Harbour’s combination were immediately criticized: too many historical, social, political and even symbolical differences (Ch  roux, 2010). The rest of the article does not

Bush promises swift revenge as hijackers strike the world's financial heart, killing thousands and ushering in a chilling new age of terror

# A day of infamy

**INSIDE**  
45 PAGES OF COVERAGE



**THIS SECTION**  
• Mystery envelope smart and confident attackers **A1**  
• An awful day for Americans and their President **A6A**  
• How Canada responded **A6C**  
• Officers' spouses' lives **A6D**  
• Bomb hit hits' jubilant **A6E**  
• Editorial: Let loose the war **A6F**

**SPECIAL SECTION**  
• **UNBURNED** on New York's last normal day **B2**  
• Map and chronology plot a day of terror **B6**  
• **BRANDS DIE** on the awful death of Americans **B8**

**R.O.C.**  
• Central bankers promise to keep economies stable **B7**

**REVIEW**  
• **JOHN LILJENRO** on the anniversary of live TV **B9**

The Sept. 11 attacks were not the deadliest with today's victims of the twin towers. In a series of preliminary human attacks on the United States, Asia, financial markets, and more, in today's **Report On Business** because the 9/11 terrorist attacks did not open possibility or closed early U.S. markets will remain closed today.



A hijacked jetliner explodes as it hits the second tower of the World Trade Center in New York yesterday. Smoke billows from the first tower. An airplane earlier hit another hijacked jet. A third plane slammed into the Pentagon in Washington while a fourth crashed in Pennsylvania. **BY JOHN LILJENRO**

## U.S. will never be the same

every fortune, whose enemies in several, some as horrible as the far off, usually clouds in a blazing blue September day.

A month that yesterday looked infinitely yesterday.

It only took a few more who have known to look to our common and dignified and then there were benefits. It only took a few to run there into America's core power, spirit of financial and military might. America's sense of its work to carry, especially with those terms in a world of order and peace.

Now we will have to carry on as we go. Now will any of the next one, who looked to them in

**INDEX**

Arctic **B6**  
A. 100  
B. 100  
C. 100  
D. 100  
E. 100  
F. 100  
G. 100  
H. 100  
I. 100  
J. 100  
K. 100  
L. 100  
M. 100  
N. 100  
O. 100  
P. 100  
Q. 100  
R. 100  
S. 100  
T. 100  
U. 100  
V. 100  
W. 100  
X. 100  
Y. 100  
Z. 100

## Markets are paralyzed, banks try to ease jitters

The paralysis strike on the United States' financial nerve center has paralyzed markets around the world and forced the spectre of a crisis that could plunge business into a deep recession.

For the first time since the 1929 stock market crash, the New York Stock Exchange will close its doors for the second time in the history of the World Trade Center since closed today on the American

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Figure 5

present room for any distinction between “civilized” and “uncivilized”, and no urge in finding guilty or individualizing the architects of the event. The article is, in fact, a simple recount of the facts with the help of witness statements and concrete evidence, and throughout it remains objective and lucid in its analysis. Interesting is also the choice of the article’s writer in reporting George Bush’s first words “We will make no distinction

between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbour them” as to predict the next moves of the U.S. government and possible future scenarios, leaving no apparent room for hurried judgments. Only a few pages into the newspaper it appears the first article attempting to dig deeper into the causes: “Clues point to Bin Laden”<sup>54</sup> gives a little profile of the leader of Al Qaeda, because it reminds the readers of the “fatwa”, the religious edict, co-signed by Bin Laden himself, claiming that “it was the duty of every Muslim to kill Americans”. The author continues by recounting the precedent attacks at American embassies in Africa, and by mentioning Saddam Hussein as possible accomplice in the planning of 9/11. But at the end of the article there is again the seemingly distant, but objective analysis of what really happened: three different airports (twice in Boston, once in Newark, and once in Washington) failing to stop the plot, the terrorists flying U.S. commercial planes, and the choice of targeting symbolic landmarks, everything planned in detail, and successfully executed.

“The Globe and Mail” seems, therefore, to prefer a more low profile approach, tending exclusively to tell the story, with minimal amount of interpretation and/or opinions, meaning, with the sole aid of witness statements, proven facts, and evidence. Even in the article “World braces

# World braces to combat a deadly, invisible foe

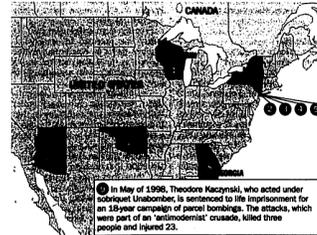
Security forces around globe on high alert

BY TIMOTHY APPELBY

It felt like war. But war against whom? Without a visible foe, all that America and the rest of the world could do was bolster their security forces and brace for further terror amid a profound sense of outrage.

## Terrorist attacks in the United States since 1970

A string of co-ordinated terrorist attacks that struck in New York and Washington yesterday were the latest and most serious to target the United States. Following is a list of bomb attacks carried out inside the United States in recent times:



- 1. **Aug. 24, 1970:** A researcher at a university in Madison is killed by a bomb planted by a pacifist group.
  - 2. **Jan. 24, 1976:** An explosion in a bar leaves four people dead. It is one of a series of 49 bombings between 1974 and 1977 attributed to the Puerto Rican National Liberation Army.
  - 3. **Dec. 29, 1978:** Eleven dead and 75 injured by a bomb planted in the left luggage department at LaGuardia airport.
  - 4. **May 18, 1981:** One dead in an explosion in the washrooms at the Pan Am terminal at JFK airport. The bombing is claimed by the Puerto Rican resistance army.
  - 5. **Feb. 26, 1983:** A bomb planted in an underground garage at the World Trade Center leaves six dead and 1,000 injured.
  - 6. **April 19, 1988:** A truck bomb left outside a federal building in Oklahoma City kills 168 and injures more than 600 others.
  - 7. **Oct. 8, 1988:** A train travelling between Miami and Los Angeles is derailed in Arizona after a bomb explosion claimed by a hitlerite unknown group calling themselves the Sons of the Gestapo. One person was killed and more than 80 injured.
  - 8. **July 27, 1996:** A bomb explodes in Centenary Park in Atlanta during the Olympic Games, killing two people and injuring 110 others.
- Note: On Sept. 16, 1920, a bomb explosion in the Wall Street financial district of New York killed 40 people and injured several hundred others. The blast is blamed by police on anarchists.
- Source: AP

Fear and the sweeping security measures reached far beyond U.S. shores. From Europe to Asia, from the Middle East to Latin America, leaders struggled to face an unseen threat.

The U.S. Navy dispatched aircraft carriers and guided-missile destroyers to New York and Washington; the military was placed on maximum alert; police were out in strength on the streets of every major city, and fighter planes patrolled the skies.

Security was heightened at U.S. installations and airports the world over; many U.S. embassies were evacuated.

In Brussels, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization convened an emergency meeting and urged an intensified war against international terrorism.

Security along the Panama Canal and in other strategic areas was tightened.

Israel closed its borders with Egypt and Jordan; Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres was quoted as saying that "what happened in the United States is equal to an atomic bombing."

In remarks that summarized sentiment in much of the world, Karl Kaiser of the German Council on Foreign Relations said that, when those responsible for yesterday's onslaught in New York and Washington are identified, "then America will strike. And hopefully not alone."

Across the United States yesterday, military vigilance was at a level perhaps never seen in peacetime. Mr. Bush vowed to hunt down the perpetrators of the attacks, describing the attacks as a "national tragedy." Throughout the day, the sense of a nation under siege seemed to mount.

So too did military preparedness. The ultra-secret U.S.-Canadian North American Aerospace Defence Command in Cheyenne Mountain, Colo., which monitors North America's skies for approaching missiles, was ordered to widen its scope and watch for suspicious aircraft within the United States.

"We're looking more intently in the interior," a spokesman said. Elsewhere in the country, every military base was on maximum alert. Extra security was added at the Department of Energy's nuclear



## Leap of desperation

A person falls head-first after jumping from the north tower of New York's World Trade Center yesterday. Witnesses reported seeing many people leaping to their deaths shortly after the twin towers were attacked.

The U.S. Navy vessels dispatched to New York and Washington from the major naval base at Norfolk, Va., included carriers, amphibious ships, guided-missile destroyers and guided-missile destroyers capable of responding to threats from air and sea. The amphibious ships were carrying Marines and sailors to provide security, as well as surgical teams and hospital beds.

A senior defence official said the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise, which had been due to come home from the Persian Gulf, was ordered to remain there indefinitely. A second carrier, the USS Carl Vinson, remained in the area as well, the official said.

U.S. State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said Washington had received offers of security help, including expertise, from several countries, including European allies and Israel.

With reports from Reuters and Associated Press

Figure 6

to combat a deadly, invisible foe<sup>55</sup> (Figure 6), the author does choose one of the most famous pictures, representing the desperation and the lack of defence, but his analysis remains strongly and consistently objective. There is no critique to what might have happened in the past, no search for the minds of the attack; the focus is towards the present and the near future, the concern is for what might happen next. Many airports have raised the level of alert, and Canada had to get ready for the inconceivable. Even in the article "Canada goes on alert"<sup>56</sup> the writer

worries about the Canadian perimeter and almost invites to intensify security checks and procedures. These articles, therefore, appear to be objective and lucid in their analysis, and to prefer an approach based solely on factual facts. At this point, however, it is essential to also recognize the limits of a mode of representation of factual facts.

Anselmi and Gouliamos, in their chapter entitled “Exclusionary representation: a hegemonic mediation” (1994) point out that such a mode of representation:

Turns[ed] to an exclusionary technique based on the fragmentation of reports. The constitutive model is the formation of a narrative text based on dis-connected paradigms. [...] Certain manipulative techniques of the mass media disconnected the political, social, cultural and economic apparatuses, emptying the message of its inter-related and latent meanings. (p. 124-125)

This type of critique seems to be congruent with Stuart Allan’s position on objectivity, which was defined “fetishistic”, but that in the last few decades has also become required in a newly and innovative media world.

The last significant article collected on September 12, 2011, from “The Globe and Mail”, is “Resolute President talks tough on terror”<sup>57</sup>.

What strikes here is the analysis on how the United States and their President have reacted to and judged what happened in Manhattan, but once more, remaining cold and emotionally detached. The writer reports the words pronounced by Bush immediately after the planes hit the towers, and mentions the declarations of Republican Senator Orrin Hatch, who reflected on how nobody yet knows who the war will be led against. Through interviews and facts, the article develops objectively, and only rarely is there a glimpse of raising questions on the vulnerability of the United States and on the invisibility of its enemies.

Days after September 12, 2001, "The Globe and Mail"'s articles focus mainly on the investigation the American government is leading, hoping to find who orchestrated the attack and how to bring justice to the victims. There is also room for grief and mourning<sup>58</sup>, whereas the thousands of people that died, are commemorated and remembered. This seems to show a strong degree of belonging and compassion, maybe derived from an easier way for the Canadians to identify themselves with the Americans.

The rest of the newspaper, as already mentioned, follows the investigation closely, by collecting data, evidence, and digging into the past, trying to understand the whys and hows. It is, however, an objective

collection of military information, and there is, in fact, no attempt in jumping to seemingly easy conclusions, nor the will to neglect any tiny detail. Bush is at the centre of attention, all his moves are reported, all his interviews and declarations are mentioned and taken into consideration. Whenever the President comments on the attack, makes a pledge, or expresses what his entourage and military are planning to do, it is documented and explicated.

It is, thus, fair to say that the “The Globe and Mail”, in comparison with the Italian newspapers analyzed, has documented, followed, and reported the 9/11 event with more objectivity<sup>59</sup> and distance. Most of the articles focused on an analysis solely based on evidence and pure facts, garnished with plenty of room dedicated to the commemoration and memory of those who lost their lives. In the days following the attack “The Globe and Mail” followed every single move the U.S. government made, in particular Bush’s words and his intention of pursuing a war in the Middle East with the objective of bringing justice to all the Americans.

Many Italian newspapers have, instead, since the beginning, tried to draw a line between the architects of the attack and the rest of the world, represented by the “civilized” West. A much more cultural dependence (although Canada and the U.S. are adjacent) has, probably,

played a key role in how Italian newspapers have decided to handle the 9/11 event: it is, in fact, evident, a frantic search for whoever masterminded the hijack of the commercial planes to destroy the World Trade Center, the symbol of economic power of the West. The approach seen in many articles from the “Corriere della Sera” has been harsh, cold, and sometimes judgmental<sup>60</sup>, but while it tried to show solidarity and compassion with the U.S., it has also amplified those differences at the base of the conflict, fomenting old frictions, and fuelling discrimination towards the “others”.

In order to produce a more thorough analysis on the Canadian press, it is essential to present other newspapers’ front pages, starting with the other major one, which is the conservative “National Post”. The picture (Figure 7) chosen is one of the most shocking, since it illustrates the second plane before hitting the tower, as to underline the helplessness and to paralyze the consciousness of the readers facing such a surreal event. The title<sup>61</sup>, although apparently different from the one seen on “The Globe and Mail”, bears the same meaning, whereas the shadow of a war has become nearer and almost palpable.

# ATTACK, VICTIMS, SUSPECTS: 4 SECTIONS

# NATIONAL POST

VOL. 2 NO. 99 WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2001 www.nationalpost.com

'No distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harboured them'

## AMERICA VOWS REVENGE AS TERROR CLAIMS THOUSANDS

ATTACKS UNPRECEDENTED IN U.S. HISTORY

Planes heavy with fuel chosen for maximum damage

People are alive under the rubble, rescuers say

By CHRIS WATERS

After the most catastrophic terrorist attack in history, the United States vowed last night to seek vengeance on those responsible for thousands of deaths and the destruction of the most visible symbols of U.S. financial and political power.

Shocked world leaders called the attacks a crime on New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon's Washington headquarters.

George Bush, the U.S. President, said the United States will "hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts."

The attack is evidence for those who were behind these cowardly acts in a historical speech to the nation last night. "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harboured them."

No one took responsibility for the attacks, but reports quickly fell upon Osama bin Laden, an al-Qaida leader, and his followers were responsible for the attacks, according to the U.S. Justice Department.

Bin Laden, the top Republican on the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, said the attacks were a "wake-up call to the American people."

The World Trade Center and the Pentagon were the main targets of the attacks. The World Trade Center was hit by two planes, and the Pentagon was hit by one.

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At 9:03 a.m. Eastern time, a commercial airliner that had been scheduled to fly from Boston to Los Angeles crashed into the south tower of the World Trade Center. Eighteen minutes earlier, the north tower had been struck.

### Terror paralyzes financial markets - 'global recession is highly likely'

ECONOMY ALREADY FRAGILE

By JACQUELINE TRUMP AND SYLVIE MARSH

The devastating terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon have sent shockwaves through the global financial markets.

Stock markets around the world fell into panic selling yesterday, and a steady uptick trading

in Europe and North America, however, failed to stem the panic. Investors fled into safe havens such as the Swiss franc and the Japanese yen.

Fears of a severe economic recession, or even war, prompted analysts to warn of an initial sharp drop in growth, lower interest rates and a loss of confidence.

"I think we have entered for all practical purposes a recession as a result of this, with the market being as fragile as it is," said

Robert M. Anderson, director of Credit Suisse Asset Management in New York.

"A full-blown global recession is highly likely," said Hong Wai Ip, chief economist at Wells Fargo in New York.

Financial markets in New York, Chicago, Brazil and Mexico were closed shortly after the attacks.

In Tokyo, share prices fell by the most in a decade, with the Nikkei 225 index down 200 points to 9,588.34 points.

At the New York Stock Exchange, officials suspended trading indefinitely. It will be the first time since the 1929 crash that the exchange closed for two full days since the Great Depression.

"Stocks are going to be even more volatile," said David Rosenberg, chief U.S. economist at Merrill Lynch in Toronto. "It could be tomorrow, it could be next week. The financial industry for all intents and purposes has been shutdown."

"Think of the talent that was in that building," he added.

### West's moral failure at root of tragedy

Our holiday from history's unmetem has come to an end

By MARK STEVENS

You can understand why they're jumping and how in the streets of London and Dublin, Dublin in the streets.

They have struck a mighty blow against the terrorists who would destroy them.

They have struck a blow against the terrorists who would destroy them.

They have struck a blow against the terrorists who would destroy them.

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Figure 7

The article on the second page of the same issue is entitled "We will pass the test"<sup>62</sup> and recounts everything that happened from President Bush's perspective. The author, therefore, describes his day starting from the visit at a school in Florida, recreates the moment when Andrew Card, Bush's

# 'WE WILL PASS THIS TEST'

BUSH VOWS RETRIBUTION

U.S. President's routine day turns into a state of high alert.

By Jan Cunniff

WASHINGTON — With his nation's shock and a pull of smoke rising about the commercial and political capitals of the United States, a grim-faced President George W. Bush vowed to punish those responsible for the terrorist attacks that killed thousands of people.

Speaking from the White House, he said the "despicable" terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon had failed to "hate-terrorize" American people.

The United States would be open, in business, today, he vowed. He also promised to hit back at the terrorists and those who had helped them.

"We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these attacks and those who harbored them," he said.

The President had begun his day in Florida, taking part in his routine visit that includes the lot of the nation's education, reading to Florida school children during a trip to the state to push his legislative package to reform U.S. education.

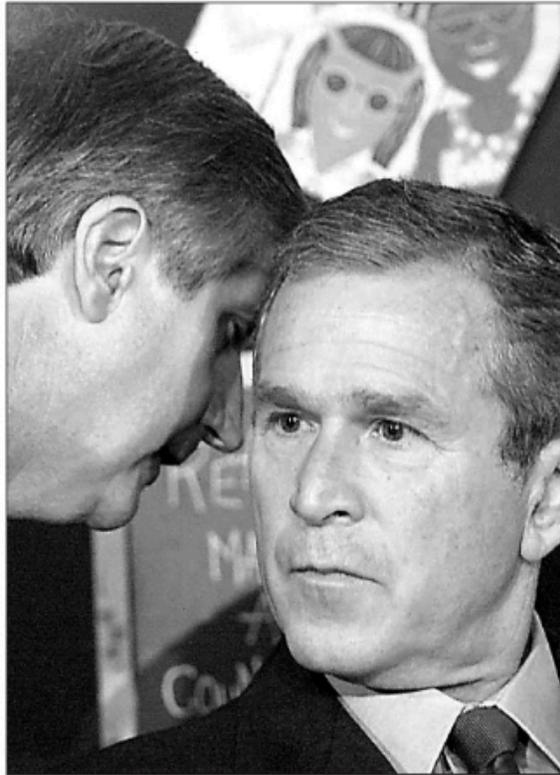
But three minutes after he stepped into the Sarasota, Fla., classroom for a demonstration of second-graders' reading skills, Andrew Card, his chief of staff, burst in and whispered in his ear. Mr. Bush's expression hardened, but at that early hour, U.S. authorities thought the crash into New York's World Trade Center was a horrible accident.

The President continued with the reading session until word came that the United States was under attack.

He cut short the visit and television stations interrupted their programs to carry his remarks.

"Today, we've had a national tragedy," Mr. Bush said.

"We declared that the full resources of the federal govern-



George W. Bush, the President of the United States, receives word of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center from Andrew Card, his chief of staff, during a visit to an elementary school in Sarasota, Fla., yesterday.

will pass this test."

There are reports the fourth hijacked plane, which crashed in western Pennsylvania, was being aimed at Camp David, the president's summer retreat in rural Maryland, about 100 kilometers from Washington.

ship clattered over the Mall, the ceremonial lawn of Washington.

On the ground below, grim Secret Service agents using submachine guns closed with swaths of angry schoolchildren.

And for the first time, several members of Congress to safety in

"He understands that at a time like this, caution must be taken," said Ari Fleischer, the White House spokesman.

"We're in the process of maintaining the security environment that the President has been in and will continue to maintain."

Figure 8

Chief of Staff, whispers in his ear that a plane hit the World Trade Center, transforming the entire atmosphere into an actual state of war. The exact moment President Bush realizes that something extremely grave had just happened in New York is emblematically recognizable in his facial expression (Figure 8), masterfully caught by the photographers and promptly added on several newspapers. Although what happened in

Bush's mind is not known, his reaction has been targeted by many movies<sup>63</sup> and documentaries, interesting though, is what Bush himself had to say about it in an interview that aired on September 8, 2011 on National Geographic<sup>64</sup> in which he says that his intention was to transmit calm rather than a frantic and confused reaction. But the author of the article on the "National Post" emphasizes Bush's words rather than his emotions and receptions of the news Andrew Card just communicated to him: "we [the Americans] will past the test" shows a high level of empathy because it underlines the unity and the future common effort in fighting terror, and moreover the complete absence of terms like "Americans" or "United States" is synonym of rapport, compassion, and understanding.

The commentary<sup>65</sup> on page 5 of the National Post published on September 12, 2001 analyzes what could happen next and invites to calmness, reflection, and thinking long term. Indirectly using the headline of "The Globe and Mail" and of many other North American newspapers<sup>66</sup>, which emphasized the idea of "infamy" reminding the readers of Pearl Harbour, the author believes that "the United States must rise above the red mist of its anger and not act prematurely"<sup>67</sup>, because after 1941 there was a clear enemy to battle, but there is no clear enemy at work now. This concept can also be connected with what Daveed

Gartenstein-Ross writes years later analyzing the mistakes the United States committed in its war on terror: the author underlines the importance of the inefficiency of the American military and government in organizing a strategic fight against Al Qaeda. On one hand the enormous amounts of money inadequately spent in national security, and secondly underestimating Al Qaeda after having dismantled their own cell in Afghanistan and forced them out to Pakistan. Gartenstein-Ross stresses how Bin Laden's main target has always been weakening the U.S. economy by making them spend more and more (Gartenstein-Ross, 2011).

Somewhat significant is also the front page of the populist conservative daily tabloid newspaper "Sun", whose usual politically conservative alignments, are visible in the headline. "Bastards"<sup>68</sup> is definitely an eloquent word, whose denotation leaves small room for interpretation, and thus immediately sets boundaries and goes over any type of political correctness. In this case also, the absence of terms like "United States" or "America" denotes empathy and participation: the attack at the World Trade Center, being of world proportions, eliminates any possible definition of borders, and therefore affects the entire global population<sup>69</sup>. The title, however, comes across as harsh, feisty, and able, to some degree, to incite violence and vengeance. It appears that the choice

of publishing such a strong, effective title, derives from a sense of pure frustration and shock, which, simultaneously, plays actually against the offended and in favour of the offenders. For this very reason both “The Globe and Mail” and the “National Post” have appeared to have chosen a more delicate unbiased, and impersonal approach, focusing mainly on what happened in Manhattan, rather than drawing a firm line between offended and offender.

In order to come to a temporary conclusion on how Canadian and Italian press represent worldwide events and how they analyze and see them, it is essential to broaden the research and look at other recent happenings. The death of Osama Bin Laden is a good example, both because it affects again the U.S., and because it is the consequence of what happened on September 11, 2001 in Manhattan.

### III

## Osama Bin Laden's death

### III.I

#### **Overview. The global announcement and the military operation.**

On May 2, 2011, U.S. President Barack Obama announced the death of Osama Bin Laden. A press conference had been set up at the White House as soon as it became official that the corpse in a compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, was actually Bin Laden's body. The news that the leader of Al Qaeda had been killed in an operation led by the special corp Navy Seals occupied, in a matter of minutes, every media source. TV channels pressed with scrolling headlines of his killing, internet feeds and social networks spreading the news in every possible way, Facebook friends, celebrities' Tweets, emails. Millions of people were drawn to their couches and their chairs waiting, impatiently, to see Obama announcing Bin Laden's death. CNN organized (again, in a matter of minutes) special communications, sending reporters on the fields, Ground Zero, the White House, Pakistan. People all over America were jubilant in their macabre celebrations, chanting "U-S-A! U-S-A!", showing their approval through home made signs (Obama 1 - Osama 0), screaming of joy, patting each other's shoulders, smiling, and crying.

Shortly after midnight Barack Obama held his speech<sup>70</sup>: he remembered the victims of 9/11, and praised the efforts of his military and counterterrorism teams. He renewed his compassion towards the ones who lost family members and friends, and moreover he underlined the importance of the operation for both America and world history. Obama eulogized the spirit of unity and brotherhood that came from the ashes and dust of Ground Zero, and he awarded it with the killing of the most wanted person in the world. His exact words were “And on nights like this one, we can say to those families who have lost loved ones to Al Qaeda’s terror: justice has been done”<sup>71</sup>.

The speech also contained behind-the-scenes facts, like the decision of the President to make the killing or capture of Bin Laden the top priority of the war against Al Qaeda, followed by years of intense work inside the CIA office and the intelligence teams in Afghanistan until the decisive break in August 2010 and the possible lead on Bin Laden’s whereabouts: one of his couriers’ identity had been revealed to the military, and this brought them directly to the compound in Abbottabad. After several weeks of observation, registering the presence of someone certainly important and protected, who, also, didn’t want to be seen outside, raised more than one suspect that this person could actually be

Bin Laden himself. Finally on May 2nd the final decision to break into the compound was made by Obama himself, despite still a few doubts. The success of the operation was then immediately communicated to Washington, and shortly after to the media. Gatherings of people outside the White House happened in a matter of hours.

For a few days live coverage continued endlessly, on-field reporters intensified their work in order to reveal more and new details, while TV news, ceaselessly, gathered interviews, statements and witness reports, in an attempt to rebuild the entire operation and the last hours of Osama Bin Laden. In such a frantic and sometimes chaotic atmosphere, Italian and Canadian press have centred their attention on what they believed was key in this world wide military operation. Where the focus was, and what the media emphasized, will reveal once more different strategies of representation, and firm cultural differences between Italy and Canada. The analysis will be conducted, once more, through processes related to the study of semiotics and cultural studies, and it will consequently investigate newspaper articles as signs, and approach them from a literary and critical perspective.

### III.II

#### **Osama Bin Laden's death in the Italian press.**

While Barack Obama was addressing his speech to the American audience, it was already morning in Italy. Therefore it was up to anchormen and news channels to divulge what happened in Pakistan a few hours earlier. For this reason, the first Italian newspapers reporting the death of Bin Laden only appeared on May 3rd, and they somewhat lost the shock effect they could have carried out, had it all happened at a different hour.

The front page of "Corriere della Sera" (Figure 9) carries an allusive meaning, not for the headline, but mainly for the picture chosen which portrays a group of jubilant New York firemen in front of a live ticker carrying the news of the death of Osama Bin Laden. One of them, as the side article<sup>72,73</sup> reveals, "levò le braccia al cielo", "raised his arms to the sky", supposedly in a sign of joy and liberation. The force and the passion in this picture<sup>74</sup> are extremely compelling because they contain the efforts of those individuals that still today are considered the heroes of 9/11. The American people tries to remember the tragedy by looking at how strong they have become through it, how united and focused the entire catastrophe has actually made them. And the symbol of this rebirth is

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**Attacco all'America e alla civiltà**  
L'attacco del 11 settembre e le sue conseguenze  
di **Paolo Valentini**  
a pagina 17

**Lo speciale / 2001-2011**

Cosa significa per l'America  
aver eliminato il fantasma  
di **Paolo Valentini**  
a pagina 17

Guerre, avversari, intelligence  
Il racconto di come è andata  
di **Davide Frattini**  
a pagina 18

Ma ora la battaglia è vinta?  
Cinque domande sul futuro  
di **Guido Olimpio**  
alle pagine 20 e 21

**CHIAMATE  
IL LIMITATE  
TRA COLLEGGI**  
GRANDE  
MIRACOLOSITÀ



**New York**

**E il pompiere  
levò le braccia  
verso il cielo**

di ALESSANDRA FARKAS

Braccia alzate al cielo. New York  
in festa. Cade il regno del  
terrore. Osama Bin Laden è  
morto. I pompieri, gli eroi di quel  
tragico 11 settembre, e con loro  
tutti gli Stati Uniti, possono  
esultare. È la fine del Grande  
Incubo iniziato dieci anni fa, dopo  
l'attentato alle Torri gemelle  
e l'attacco all'America e alla  
civiltà, come titolò in prima  
pagina il Corriere della Sera di  
allora (in alto, a sinistra).

A PAGINA 10

L'annuncio della Casa Bianca: dieci anni dopo l'orrore dell'11 Settembre giustizia è fatta, ora il mondo è un posto migliore

## Gli ultimi 40 minuti di Bin Laden

*L'attacco di 14 uomini delle forze speciali Usa al suo fortino in Pakistan. Non s'arrende, due colpi in testa. Una delle mogli usata come scudo durante lo scontro. Il cadavere identificato dal Dna e seppellito in mare*

Figure 9

without doubt the figure of the fireman, courageous and relentless in his attempt to save as many people as he could. The recent 10th year anniversary of 9/11 has been characterized by a large number of new short documentaries<sup>75</sup> filming and telling the stories of many individuals that were either trapped in the towers and saved by firemen, or were in the radius hit by debris and flames. All these documentaries focus exactly on the strength and resoluteness of the American people faced with the worst attack in their history: therefore the choice of this picture on the front page of "Corriere della Sera" seems to reward the spirit and inner force of those who had apparently lost everything, but found eventually

something even more precious. It is fair to say that the “Corriere della Sera” is showing a clear support, sustaining, and justifying the American way of life via its connection to a living icon, that of the New York



Figure 10

Fireman. The picture, besides, also recalls another one that appeared on the New York Times’s website on May 2nd (Figure 10), which portrays a man in a suit holding an American flag and shaking the hand of a New York policeman. To an average eye, the civilian could represent the victims of 9/11, since his attire is directly connectable with the World Trade Center, symbol of the economic and business power of the West. The policeman, on the other hand, like the fireman, is the symbol of unity, determination, and reliance, and he is, thus, thanked and admired. Once more the power of a picture seems to be able to go beyond words and language barriers, and, above all, appears to be more convincing and

efficacious to the average reader, who had been previously exposed to the trans-cultural construction of the iconic Fireman and/or Policeman, and who once again submits to the power of the 'uniform' as the actual container of the real message: the power of the President of the United States to dispense with life and death.

"La Repubblica" also chose to give space to jubilant people on its front page, and describes Osama Bin Laden as a nightmare that is no more. In the article "Il simbolo abbattuto"<sup>76,77</sup> Ezio Mauro explains how "we Europeans" would have preferred to have Osama Bin Laden captured and able to have a fair trial, but somehow he justifies the means of the Americans and the consequent killing of the leader of Al Qaeda. This point is extremely interesting for two reasons: first, Ezio Mauro condemns the death penalty reclaiming his European way of life and refusal of any mortal punishment, even by saying that "it repels our culture", but immediately after he justifies the Americans almost contradicting his own beliefs, by saying this time that they "needed to hit who so hardly hit them". Secondly, he is openly assuming that Osama Bin Laden has been killed by choice and not as a result of a convoluted military operation.

The trend of supporting the American campaign, already seen in the articles after 9/11, seems to continue now as well, whereas the killing

of a man (plus the wives and children that died in the same military operation) and whatever brought the Special Forces in Abbottabad, are decisively legitimized and absolved.

On May 3rd there appeared on the right-wing newspaper “Il Foglio”, an article entitled “Apologia all’America che celebra un atto di giustizia”<sup>78,79</sup>. The author defends till the end, and entirely, the decisions made by President Obama, and the military that broke into the compound to kill Bin Laden. Reading the article it seems as it had been written by an American journalist, so flattering the words are: the United States are described as the backbone of the planet, as the country everyone should look up to, because it possesses the potential to teach the rest of the world how to live, how to grow, and how to improve. As any other recount of a victory, it needs to be made grandiose and superb, like the ancient Romans did when they wrote about the battles against Hannibal, whose strategic decisions were actually far from being astute (Brizzi, 2003). This author praises, in perfect imperial style, the enemy, in this case Bin Laden, underlining his intelligence and cunning. In this way the author prepares the terrain for his next move, where he emphasizes the capture and the execution of Bin Laden: once again there is the impression that the killing had been planned, and no attempt of actually bringing him to the United

States had been fairly made. The last part of the article “Apologia all’America che celebra un atto di giustizia” even justifies the excessive expressions of joy all around America, and the author writes that the celebrations were not for the shootout, but for an act of justice.

There are, however, newspapers that published articles a little less bombastic. Both “Due colpi caccia chiusa”<sup>80,81</sup> and “Ascesa e caduta del principe del terrore”<sup>82,83</sup> remain objective throughout and offer a detailed description of what really happened in Abbottabad. The first of the two articles is a precise analysis, step by step, of the entire military operation, starting from the first leads on Bin Laden’s whereabouts obtained in 2007, thanks to the water-boarding against Khaled Sheikh Mohammed and Abu Faraj al Libi in the prison of Guantanamo. The recount continues with the first observations of the compound in Abbottabad, the first suspicions (whoever lived there was extremely reserved and preoccupied about being seen or heard), and finally the actual preparation of the blitz. The final part describes the ambush, but reveals how the information is still fragmented: whether Bin Laden was armed, or the wives protected him with their own bodies, is yet to be defined with certainty. The article states that his body is buried at sea, a sample of his DNA has been analyzed, and the news has been reported to Obama at 19.01 Washington D.C. time.

The second article of the two starts, instead, from the beginning of Bin Laden's life, from the war in Afghanistan against the Soviets, to the essential friendship with Abdallah Azzam in Pakistan until he became the leader of Al Qaeda in 1989. There are references to the attacks at the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, and his newest alliance with Ayman al Zawahiri. The focus remains, however, on his death: the author believes that Bin Laden's spiritual death already took place during the Arab Spring, when thousands of people in the streets of Cairo, Tunis, and Damascus, rebelled against fanatic regimes, and invoked democracy and freedom. The choice to bury him at sea lies on the awareness that his tomb could have easily become a shrine for pilgrims and fanatics: for this reason Bin Laden's legacy is still alive, and the war on terror still going. On this note it would be relevant to cite again Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, author of "Bin Laden's Legacy" (2011), who emphasizes exactly on how the death of Bin Laden does not signify the end of Al Qaeda, let alone terrorism. Gartenstein-Ross reminds the readers that as early as December 2001 when Bin Laden and his followers were hunted down in Tora Bora, many believed that the war on terror was ending, underestimating the capabilities of a group of soldiers able to re-organize, and re-adapt their cells and their plans. Believing that the Arab Spring signed the "death" of

Al Qaeda means committing the same mistake. Gartenstein-Ross adds that Al Qaeda most likely had the chance to re-group once more, to take advantage of the chaos in Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria, even to make operational gains. Besides, with the expectations of the Arab world suddenly become sky high and unlikely to be met, problems and issues must be calculated (Gartenstein-Ross, 2011).

Gartenstein-Ross (2011) states:

The revolts that comprise the Arab spring were not just about democracy. They were also about material needs, unemployment and food price inflation, poverty and empty stomachs [...] When expectations are so high, disappointment might also be enormous, even if things go relatively well. And when society's lofty expectations are dashed, extremist ideologies have historically been able to flourish. Thus, we absolutely and unequivocally cannot say that Al Qaeda died even before Bin Laden did. (p.187-188)

On a different note, Enzo Bianchi from "La Stampa", wrote an interesting article<sup>84,85</sup> on the celebrations in the streets in the United States for the death of Bin Laden, that seems to face a new aspect of the "death-event". The author uses President Obama's words "justice has been

done”<sup>86,87</sup>, remembering how the entire military operation had been very similar to a death penalty. Celebrating over somebody’s death, regardless how ruthless, cruel, and evil the other was, is not justifiable by any means. Bianchi’ last words are, on this note, very significant: “maybe it is a source of fulfillment of that desire of vengeance that we are ashamed to confess, but that we rush to ennoble with the term justice”<sup>88</sup>.

The front page of “Il Messaggero” also carries President Obama’s words, but the emphasis is not on the concept of justice any longer, but rather on the idea of what is good and what is evil. “Ora il mondo è migliore”<sup>89,90</sup> is the headline chosen by the newspaper, and it is an excerpt taken from one of Obama’s speeches given the day after the actual death of Bin Laden. Obama says that “it is a good day for America. [...] now the world is a better place”<sup>91</sup>. Similarly, but somewhat on a different level is the front page of “Il Giornale”, which carries a huge American flag and a straightforward title supporting the United States, their military campaign, and the final blow to Al Qaeda. “Festeggiamo anche noi”<sup>92,93</sup> can be read as a clear approval of Bin Laden’s death, as a liberation, and a fundamental accomplishment in regard of world safety and harmony.

Many Italian newspapers have adopted an approach similar to the one seen for 9/11: compassion, support, and trust towards the United

States, its military operations, and its consequent aftermath, including the decision of burying the corpse of Bin Laden at sea, and the celebrations for a symbolic victory against terrorism. Most of the articles have depicted Bin Laden as the “Prince of Terror”, the architect of the attack at the World Trade Center, the mastermind behind the spread of fear that involved Europe as well. Bin Laden was the man to capture in order to give meaning to all those years the military spent in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran; he had to be apprehended in order to give closure to the victims of his actions, and reward for the efforts of those who fought dust, ash, and flames, in the hell of Manhattan.

Although the death penalty is not present in most of the European governments and democracies<sup>94</sup>, several Italian journalists have somewhat justified the execution in this case. It is, thus, evident that there are still cases of a renewed cultural dependence towards the American way of life: there are fragments in Italian newspapers of undisputed support, a no-matter-what mental alliance, readiness to approve and legitimize any move, because this constant looking up to the United States is still too powerful to be eliminated, not even when a man, for as much guilty he could have been, has been assassinated in front of his family. On this note, the newspaper “L’Unità”, left wing oriented, produced a front page that



Figure 11

carries the very same message: the picture of Bin Laden's face is in flame, and the writing below reads "Game Over"<sup>95</sup> (Figure 11) keeping the wording in English, so as to sarcastically comment on the death of a man compared, in this case, to a video game. The choice to use English words symbolizes the support aforementioned, and maybe the praise for a military move that has apparently put and end to something or someone

terrible. The lack of details is perplexing: many Italian newspapers have not wondered whether Bin Laden really put up a fight in the compound, was armed, or gave himself up. His execution was the last resort for the Navy Seals in Abbottabad, as if all attempts to bring him to justice, i.e. a trial, had been made. However, considering how the U.S. Special Forces entered in his house, and conducted the entire operation, it can be seen as surprising that no one has spoken of assassination. "Bin Laden has been assassinated" sounds extreme and condemning, something that the Taliban, or Afghans would say, but that it would be rejected in the West. The only Italian article that barely touches this topic appeared on "La Repubblica" on May 3rd: Federico Rampini entitles it "L'ordine era giustiziatelo"<sup>96,97</sup> and reminds the readers that already back in 2008 when Barack Obama was still a candidate for the presidency, he announced that the U.S. would kill Bin Laden. Despite the fact that during his term he did give the impression to have put aside the notorious War on Terror, he kept Guantanamo alive, and allowed the CIA to torture the prisoners with the hope to have a break, a lead, that in fact, eventually, brought them to Abbottabad.

In conclusion it can be said that for the most part, the Italian press has shown a similar approach and similar methods of communication

when both handling 9/11 a decade earlier, and Bin Laden's death at this point as if bringing to conclusion a narrative arc. It has often responded, in fact, with understanding and support showing repeatedly, a sort of cultural dependence (e.g. the front pages of "L'Unità" and "Il Giornale") towards the United States. A country still able to influence our perceptions of the world in a matter that it even partially changed beliefs and core values defending and supporting, for example, the decision of executing Bin Laden in his compound, rather than trying to bring him to face a fair trial; although the chain of events in Abbottabad has been, at times, confusing and distorted<sup>98</sup> the vast majority of Italian newspapers have, in fact, not contemplated the hypothesis that the military operation's main goal was to capture him alive.

### **III.III**

#### **The death of Bin Laden in the Canadian press**

The beginning of May 2011 in Canada was characterized by a federal election. Candidates' speeches, their promises, partial result percentages, and political propaganda were quite visible in newspapers and magazines. But on May 2nd the headline that was on all front pages of every Canadian newspaper was dedicated to the death of Osama Bin

Laden. Even in this case the two major national newspapers, “The Globe and Mail” and the “National Post” behaved exactly as they did after 9/11: reporting what happened, omitting interpretations, and being as accurate as possible, using hard evidence, as well as interviews, witness statements, and maintaining throughout a politically correct style avoiding personal involvement and rushed opinions.

“The Globe and Mail” front page presents a simple and direct title, bearing the face of Bin Laden, and limiting itself to announce “Osama Bin Laden is dead”<sup>99</sup>. The articles offered on May 2nd and on May 3rd are mainly dedicated to reconstruct the entire operation and its initial project, by citing both Hillary Clinton’s and Barack Obama’s statements after the killing. It recounts all the steps of the Navy Seals, mentioning the issue with one of the helicopters and even the non-collaboration of the ISI, the Pakistani Secret Service. The author tries to foresee what could happen to Al Qaeda after Bin Laden, and whether repercussions and acts of vendetta are to be expected. Only at the end, but still with objectivity and evidence, the article reports a few sentences and celebratory chants heard in the many crowds that gathered in the streets. Amongst many of them, the most relevant were: “this is Judgement Day and we’re winning”<sup>100</sup> and “It’s huge. It’s a great day to be an American”<sup>101</sup>. The choice of giving

room to such deliberate joyful reactions, could have been based upon the conviction that too was news, and part of Bin Laden's death. The author does not venture in any opinion, nor does he try to explain why the killing of a man is celebrated in such a macabre way. It is also arguable, though, how the choice of reporting such a strong quotes from the jubilant crowd, could, on some degree, constitute a subtle narrative through which the author may attempt to show his support for America. However, once again, there appears to be a strong feeling of tolerance and respect, as well as political correctness towards any other thought or, as in this case, reaction.

The "National Post"'s front page<sup>102</sup> appears to be very similar to the one showed by "The Globe and Mail", however in this case it is more evident how the attention of the country is addressed towards the upcoming political election. Despite the "Time for Canada to decide", the main title bears the announcement of Bin Laden's death, without pictures or details. The "National Post" offered articles that touched the same topics "The Globe and Mail" did, therefore wondering both if the death of Bin Laden will weaken Al Qaeda, and how it is possible that the ISI did not know of the compound in Abbottabad. But there is here a stronger feeling of liberation in the article written by Alex Wilner<sup>103</sup>, who starts

with the sentence “Mark the day; things may be different from now on”. He seems to believe that the balances in the war on terror will change for many reasons: the death of the leader of Al Qaeda may cause new attacks and riots; at the same time, it might even lethally wound the network of terrorists<sup>104</sup>, who, without a strong guide, could collapse; and finally the relationship between the U.S. and Pakistan forever damaged by the lack of cooperation of the ISI and the decision of the CIA to lead the operation without letting the Pakistani know.

In all the articles in the “National Post” there seems to be a constant opinion among the journalists and their reports that there had never been the desire to capture Bin Laden alive. This is a sensation that was recurrent in Italian newspapers as well, since the hypothesis of bringing him to justice and giving him a fair trial had never even been contemplated.

The tabloid “Sun”, as it already occurred after 9/11, offers, instead, a stronger headline in comparison to both “The Globe and Mail” and the “National Post”. “Burn in hell!”<sup>105</sup>, again, is an eloquent message that, in fact, coherently follows the title “Bastards” presented on September 12, 2001. The lack of any term related to the U.S., in fact, reinforces once more the sense of empathy, but the decision of using words such as “burn” and

“hell” signify a firm position toward a man (or a “bastard”), whose death brings harmony and relief.

In conclusion, all the Canadian newspapers analyzed in this chapter have maintained the same strategies and adopted the same approach already seen in the aftermath of 9/11: “The Globe and Mail” and the “National Post” have focused on recounting the event as truthfully as possible, therefore using objective data (for example witness statements) and official documents; the “Sun”, on the contrary, although remaining consistent in its approach, has preferred a more direct and certainly more biased strategy.

## IV

### The Oslo attack

#### IV.I

##### Overview. Who is Breivik?

On July 22, 2011, worldwide TV channels and news broadcasts announced the explosion of a car bomb in downtown Oslo. The episode occurred in the early afternoon just outside the office of Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg, therefore in the political and government core of Norway's capital city. The 17 story building suffered major damage, and more importantly, the explosion caused eight casualties and several wounded, amongst them ten were immediately brought to the hospital because they were in critical condition.

Only two hours later news started to recount a severe shootout on the little island of Utøya, at about 40km from Oslo, where a youth Labour party convention was taking place. A man wearing a police officer uniform, allegedly, started shooting at random, at whomever was in his path. His actions caused the death of 69 people and wounded 66 more.

News coming from Norway was, at times, confusing and inconsistent, since they were mainly built on allegations, and were initially

solely based on witness statements whose recollections of the facts were clearly foggy and incomplete.

Finally, hours later, the man, guilty of the shootout in Utøya, was apprehended by the police and brought to headquarters for interrogation. His identity was immediately unveiled: Anders Behring Breivik, a 32-year-old Norwegian. Speculations started to circulate: was he behind the car bomb explosion in downtown Oslo? Did he belong to a terrorist cell? Was his devastating plan complete? Or did he have more up his sleeve?

Newscasts gathered as much as they could on Breivik, trying to build, in a matter of hours, a profile of the killer of Oslo. What turned out from the research, and from whatever was coming from the police and the Norwegian reporters in Oslo shocked the entire Scandinavian country. Breivik is a Norwegian man, actually an anti-Islamist, and belonging to the far-right European political movement. He is a Zionist, a conservative, and a Christian fundamentalist; his mission consists of liberating Europe from multiculturalists, marxists, immigrants, and muslims<sup>106</sup>.

20-year-old Norwegian woman Hanne Remmen said "It's worse because it was a Norwegian boy who killed all of those people"<sup>107</sup>. The interesting point in this excerpt is the assumption that something so horrific can only be committed by someone distant, a monster, something

“other”. The missing point, instead, is that violence has no face, no home, and no language.

Anders Breivik claimed to have planned the whole attack, from the car bomb, to the shooting in Utøya. With the police he reenacted both the scenes and explained how he used a fake ID to gain access on the island. He pretended to be a police officer, he approached a group of people and gathered them in the main house with the excuse to discuss what had just happened in Oslo. After urging them all in, he shot them, and methodically chased them wherever they were trying to flee, if it was by boat, or by swimming, on the shores, or in the nearby woods.

Under arrest he finally showed the police his Manifesto: a huge manuscript, 1518 pages long, that required 9 years of his life to be perfected. His whole plan had the sole aim of “marketing” his manifesto, his ideas, and his credo of saving Europe from Muslim colonization, and from its imminent future as Eurabia<sup>108</sup>.

The “Corriere della Sera” published an article entitled “Nove anni e 1500 pagine per architettare la strage”<sup>109, 110</sup>, where the author briefly summarizes the main points of Breivik’s manifesto. The Norwegian man vents, analyzes, ponders, he even cites other manifestos, and seems to give importance to multiple topics: he mentions promiscuous women, for

instance, guilty of having too many partners (among them his sister and his mother); he accuses the Pope for being corrupt and illegitimate; he even attacks the Italian government, which has been cradling Marxist political parties and globalist capitalists. He continues by citing 16 oil refineries in Italy that have attracted Arab investors, as well as, “terrorist”, feeding, thus, the advancement of Breivik himself’s worst nightmare, Eurabia. Finally he mentions the Unabomber, Theodore Kaczinsky, whose manifesto is here adapted to new goals and intentions, whereas Breivik is attempting to wake up, or even punish, the openness of the current Christian youth, too inclined in accepting multiculturalism, and islamizing Marxism. For this reason Breivik is, desperately trying to reanimate “la nuova milizia dei Poveri commilitoni di Cristo e del Tempio di Salomone”<sup>111</sup>.

To some degree, Breivik’s macabre attempt of “waking up” the Christian youth, and moreover of marketing his manifesto in order to underline the wrong politics of the current European governments<sup>112</sup>, has been partially successful. His attack is, in fact, the bloodiest non-Muslim terrorist attack since Oklahoma City<sup>113</sup>, and despite his hatred for Muslims, and despite the fact that he actually killed non-Muslims and non-immigrants, his act will be always remembered in history in

comparison to extremist Muslim terrorist attacks. In part this is what Breivik wanted, i.e. discredit and defame the world Muslim community.

Breivik's notion and perception of Norway, the Norway of the far right, is not the same moderate country that provided homes for half of all the refugees in the E.U.. Its politics are not based any longer on an ethic of inclusion and support for the vulnerable. It is, instead, a nation, whose hard economical recession has caused deep wounds and job losses, for which the easy scapegoat has been represented by the immigrants. On this note Hakan Sicakkan's "What happens when a society is diverse?" (2006) offers direct accounts of Muslim inclusion in Norway in the chapter written by Mette Andersson. "Many Norwegian women tend to think 'poor women from Asia, poor them. Poor women, they are oppressed, they are not allowed to do anything like that' we are not what they think we are" (Sicakkan, 2006, p. 40). Unni Wikan is a Norwegian writer, author of "Towards a Norwegian underclass", and she argues that if non-Western immigrants do not fully and efficaciously integrate, they will form a secondary class, and become, thus, secondary citizens. With the Norwegian population moving forward, Wikan continues, those who are too rooted in fundamental values, will enter the future backwards. The only way, in the specific case of Muslim women (that Andersson

introduced), for immigrants to adapt, consists in renouncing the ethnic and religious group identities, becoming therefore, free and autonomous individuals, whose new values would collimate with the Western<sup>114</sup> (Sicakkan, 2006). More than pure racism, defined as a discriminatory behaviour consisting in “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin” (Macedo, 2006, p. 112), what Andersson seems to tend to, is “the concept of social race, in the sense of the time-, place- and culture-specific association of certain behavioural, moral and intellectual traits with physical phenotypes” (Boxill, 2001, p. 101).

In light of this perspective, it is certainly possible that Anders Breivik was moved by principles of social race. His hatred for Muslims, guilty of invading a territory belonging to Norwegians and/or Europeans, has, in fact, been made clear in his manifesto<sup>115</sup>, however, did he actually commit a hate crime since most of his targets were non-Muslims and non-immigrants? When called in court, months after the attack, Breivik defined himself, in front of a judge, as a “military commander in the Norwegian resistance movement”<sup>116</sup>; he admitted to the shooting, but “denied criminal guilt, saying that he was in a state of war to protect Europe from

being taken over by Muslim immigrants”<sup>117</sup>. Breivik’s political agenda becomes, therefore, more relevant and deeper than it was initially estimated. This constitutes a framework by which his actions can be interpreted according to a rational vision, rather than the ‘crazy’ mask with which he was initially portrayed by the media.

Considering all these elements, taking a look at what the major Italian and Canadian newspapers have emphasized, at their semiological and literary value, will help delineate further, some of their social and cultural aspects.

## **IV.II**

### **The Oslo attack in the Italian press.**

As seen for what happened in Abbottabad with the killing of Bin Laden, many newspapers have partially assumed that the operation led by the Navy Seals had, as sole objective, the one of eliminating the leader of Al Qaeda, not considering, therefore, any effort in capturing him alive. The attack in Oslo has, similarly, endured the same process, meaning that assumptions have been made, before anything could have been analyzed. The proof of this ideologized reading is visible in the double printing of “Il Giornale”<sup>118</sup>’s front page (Figures 12 and 13): initially the title bore the



Figure 12



Figure 13

writing “Sono sempre loro. Ci attaccano”<sup>119</sup>, assuming the attack came from either Al Qaeda, or any other Muslim organization. The subtitle, in fact, reads “la prima vendetta di Al Qaeda dopo la morte di Bin Laden?”<sup>120</sup>. Once the truth was revealed, i.e. no Muslim was involved in the car bomb, nor in the massacre in Utøya, “il Giornale” immediately changed the front page, with the softer and more sympathetic title “Attacco sanguinoso. Strage in Norvegia”<sup>121</sup>.

The other major Italian newspapers used very similar titles, emphasizing the apparent insensate slaughter of many young men and women, and the coldblooded actions of Anders Breivik, whose strategy

and movements were, on July 23rd, still a mystery to be explained. The “Corriere della Sera”, in its front page, “Norvegia, il giorno del terrore”<sup>122,123</sup>, uses a safer approach, because it explicits how Al Qaeda might be involved in the attack, but reveals also the presence of a “cecchino biondo”<sup>124</sup>, identified as the author of the shooting in Utøya. “La Repubblica”, “Il Messaggero”, and “La Stampa”<sup>125</sup> focus of the victims, and on the re-appearance of terrorism, interpreted solely as bloodshed and mass murder. “L’Unità”, instead, prints a more poignant title, “Terrore in Europa”<sup>126,127</sup>, and still keeps the suspicion of a jihadist lead alive, and moreover tends, with the word Europe, to send a silent alarm.

The first article that analyzes more thoroughly what really happened in Oslo, appeared on “Il Foglio”<sup>128,129</sup> a couple of days later. Enrico Tiozzo, the author, describes Breivik as a Christian fundamentalist, whose small agricultural company in the outskirts of Oslo, had given him the easy opportunity to gather chemical products without raising any suspicion. After offering a timeline of Breivik’s movement on July 22nd, Tiozzo briefly recounts Norway’s most recent political background. He starts by saying that the choice of not adhering to the E.U., may reside on the pride the Norwegian people feel towards their nation and their

diversity, as if there was a common will in refraining from belonging to any socio-political link involving the entire continent. Although the immigrants only count for 10% of the population of Norway, Tiozzo continues, labourers and conservatives have recently clashed when negotiating on concessions to offer to the Islamic minorities. The reaction of the current government has been sporadic and, at times, even inconsistent, whereas the defence of secular values has collided with the acceptance of diverse cultures. Tiozzo even explains how intolerance and unease towards the “other” and the diverse have been more and more evident. Neo-nazi groups have, thus, acquired confidence and courage, and have concocted “an explosion that has shocked Oslo [...] an act to destabilize the government and to spread fear. The following attack entrusted to a ‘blonde’ killer is pure terror”<sup>130, 131</sup>. The presence of a “blond killer” recalls both the subtitle offered on the front page of the “Corriere della Sera”, and the statement of the young Norwegian woman Hanne Remmen, who claimed that “it’s worse because it was a Norwegian boy who killed all of those people”<sup>132</sup>: hence, it is easier to think of a mass murderer, capable of cruel and ruthless actions, as someone far, distant, different, not like us. The image of a blond person recalls both someone that could be closer to the Norwegian culture and society, but moreover it

represents the antithesis of a Muslim person in the collective imagination, and simultaneously blond seems to equal good. Organizing a terrible massacre, whose execution has been led by a blond person, means disrupting the dichotomy good/evil, making the collective values and certainties collapse, making people disbelieve what they were used to think was safe, harmonious, and serene. Depriving people of their balance and their stability is the perfect mixture if the purpose is spreading terror and uncanniness.

During the mass to commemorate the victims held in Oslo a couple of days after the attack, a woman approached the priest, whispering “quell’animale, uno di noi”<sup>133</sup>, as reported in an article<sup>134,135</sup> appeared on “La Stampa” written by Andrea Malaguti. The idea of terror and contempt is growing stronger and stronger, together with the awareness of the complete lack of safety: Malaguti hints at how Breivik’s actions are opposite of a candid world based on acceptance and freedom, which has been suddenly transformed into “un avamposto feroce della guerra all’Islam”<sup>136,137</sup>.

As seen, the major Italian newspapers have interpreted the attack in Oslo as a new shape of terrorism, whereas the author of the massacre does not comply with how terrorism has so far been represented. Even the

target has been emphasized as a surprising choice, since Norway had been described as a haven of tolerance and warm welcomes. Although the reasons behind Breivik's apparent madness have been explicated, i.e. marketing his manifesto, spreading the ideology of the nordic superiority, and sharing the idea of necessity in liberating Europe from the Islamic invasion, his political background has been omitted. Only months after the attack, and only through the process of the trial, more details of Breivik's political ideas have been shown in newspapers. On December 3, 2011, on the centre-left aligned newspaper "Il Fatto Quotidiano"'s website appeared an article entitled "Oslo, Breivik contesta la perizia psichiatrica 'Non sono né schizofrenico né pazzo'"<sup>138,139</sup> where it is reported how Breivik himself is rejecting the attempt of his lawyers of using the mental instability as a defensive strategic weapon in the trial. Breivik contests the psychiatrics' diagnosis by claiming that they do not know what political ideologies are: confusing and diminishing his actions, the author continues, is the proof that our current society is not able, or not ready, to comprehend his message, which has been deeply pondered and scrupulously written.

In light of the major Italian newspapers' headlines and front pages analyzed, it appeared that this portion of the media has tackled the Oslo

attack emphasizing the drama and the catastrophe, losing at times, the necessary distance to objectively judge and evaluate the reasons behind it. Opinions have been, in many instances, rushed, as it has been clearly shown with the case of "Il Giornale", whose double front page demonstrates the limits of our current society, still immersed in the slogan "if it bleeds it leads". On the same note, the idea of being able to identify our nightmares and our monsters has caressed us and the newspapers, which have pointed the finger at the "other", comfortably recognizable, once again, in the Muslim. Very few articles have centred their attention on the political aspect of Breivik's actions, and many, instead, have rapidly dismissed his ideology by labelling it insane. For as much as a fanatic, and unstable Anders Breivik might be, the Italian newspapers have decided to not focus on the gaps in our current society that have cradled for over fifteen years a mind such as his. They have rather given voice to the drama, fomenting the misunderstandings that still linger today when we are faced with our worst fears, represented not anymore by the "other", but by the fact the "other" is ourselves.

### IV.III

## The Oslo attack in the Canadian press.

**THE GLOBE AND MAIL**  
WEEKEND  
CANADA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER  
SATURDAY, JULY 23, 2011

**GREAT ONES**  
As former Blue Jay Roberto Alomar enters baseball's Hall of Fame, John Allemang looks at the makings of idols, leaders, moguls and monsters  
**FOCUS**

**A NATION OF PEACE SHATTERED**  
Norway, home of the Nobel Peace Prize, faces the aftermath of a day from hell. Scores of its young are dead, killed in the random bomb and gun attacks. **NEWS, PAGES 3-4**  
Follow Doug Saunders in Oslo all weekend on Twitter and [TGAM.CA](#)

**'DONE'**  
The last command team from the last Canadian Forces fighting mission in Afghanistan returns home. **NEWS, PAGE 9**

**CRACKING OTTAWA'S CASE**  
RCMP close in on 'central figure' in long-running scandal. A story that could not be told until today. **NEWS, PAGE 12**

**APPED-UP READING**  
New book apps are packed with video, sound and interactivity (think Kerouac, in map form). Is this the start of a reading revolution? **ARTS**

**MICHAEL WOLFF**  
It's the jewel **SPORTS**  
Murdoch's biographer explains what makes the wounded tycoon tick. **FOCUS**

**ELISABETH MURDOCH**  
What's next for the News Corp. heiress untouched by scandal? **FOCUS**

**BEATING THE HEAT**  
As demand on the energy system soars nationwide, The Globe looks at how Canada's largest electricity grid keeps up (hint: planning, planning and planning) – and why the country should be paying attention. **NEWS, PAGE 15**  
Jacob Richter explains why you should stop sweating it and learn to love the heat roars  
Alberta is reviving a controversial plan to irrigate its parched prairie – setting the stage for a new water battle in one of Canada's driest provinces. **NEWS, PAGE 19**

ONTARIO EDITION  
Toronto: High 26, Low 22  
Complete Forecast: Page A8

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Figure 14

“The Globe and Mail”’s front page on July 23rd bears a rather small title and offers instead a wide picture with the most probable goal of symbolizing the powerlessness of a country in front of such a catastrophic event. The choice of the title “A nation of peace shattered”<sup>140</sup> (Figure 14) and, moreover, the choice of having a paramedic in the main picture is likely based on the willingness of empowering a certain message: destruction and vulnerability can take place anywhere, even in a “nation of peace”. The “National Post” presents a more 9/11-oriented title, “This day has changed Norway”<sup>141</sup>, carrying therefore a heavier message, denoting a historical aura to the attack. The same can be said for the editorial board’s article<sup>142</sup> appeared on July 22nd on the “National Post” website, whereas the line “their country [Norway] will endure this dark chapter in its history, but they [Norwegians] will never be the same”<sup>143</sup> carries denotations similar to the ones seen after 9/11.

More direct is the “Sun”, whose usually vivid front-page-pictures<sup>144</sup> ignore a certain composure of publication ethos, and show the face of a woman completely covered with blood. The title “Bloody hell” (Figure 15), once again, shows eloquence, and no room for debatable interpretations.

Diametrically opposite to what some Italian newspapers showed, “The Globe and Mail” published an article on its website on July 27th,



Figure 15

which underlines the importance of the responsibility and accountability journalists and press need to display when handling facts like the attack in Oslo. “In Norway, a trigger for discourse”<sup>145</sup> focuses, in fact, on the rushed assumptions many media around the world exposed by simply pointing at the Muslim community as author of the massacre. This way, the risks of spreading Islamophobia and more generally endangering the future of Islam in Europe as a whole are very high. Together with openness, with

more humanity, and more democracy by the West, the article invites the Islamic communities as well, in sharing the suffering as a unity, in order to create a more tolerant and progressive climate.

The topic of responsibility, of divulging correct and fair news, both on newspapers and on TV channels is present also in another article from the "The Globe and Mail"'s website. Timothy Ash, author of the piece entitled "Mass murder and the internet"<sup>146</sup>, reports a discussion that occurred on Fox News' "The O'Reilly Factor" whose guest host literally said "two deadly terror attacks in Norway, in what appears to be the work, once again, of Muslim extremists'. After describing the attacks, she continued: 'In the meantime, in New York City, the Muslims who want to build a mosque at Ground Zero recently scored a huge legal victory'"<sup>147</sup>.

The three Canadian newspapers analyzed in this chapter have offered a somewhat apocalyptic scenario, similar to the one seen in the aftermath of 9/11. Although Norway is to Canada geographically farther than the U.S., the thought that even a small country with no recent past of violence and destruction, could endure such a tragic massacre, seems to have provoked an even deeper unrest. Some Italian newspapers, as seen, commented on 9/11 with the awareness, and maybe hope, that such an evil force could only strike far away, that the "other" was not

contemplated in our “own” society. The same should have happened in this case for Canada, however, “a nation at peace”, as Norway is, has been brutally attacked, this time, from the inside. This new factor is now cause for uncanniness, which seems to have assumed a higher degree of power, and a certain loss of words, witnessed by the presence of big pictures (as in the case of “The Globe and Mail”) symbolizing destruction and surrender. This apparent strong sense of discomfort has not, however, hurdled the consistency, seen so far, in exclusively reporting the news. Even the web articles in defence of the importance of responsibility and accountability that the press, throughout, needs to maintain, confirms a sense of tolerance and respect.

## V

### Conclusions

Adelman (2011) states:

All of us think. That is, we use our intelligence and experience to consider something carefully. Sure, we also overreact, rush to judgements and leap to conclusions. Nonetheless, when something is important, we ponder, reflect, analyze, examine, and sort out information and evidence. [...] Rationality, common sense and reasoning often guide our thinking. However, so too do emotions, instincts and superstition. (p. 1)

Contrary to generally held views, Roger Poole defines elements like rationality, common sense, and reasoning as elements belonging to subjectivity, and elements like emotions, instincts, and superstition as elements shaping instead objectivity. Husserl, Poole tells us, individualized subjectivity as an intentionality, a meaning-conferring ability, since it would be impossible to have an objective relationship with anything at all. Kierkegaard considers it as a relationship to facts, because he recognizes man as a knower, who, with ethical responsibility, has the

knowledge to confer meaning. Different subjectivities can, Poole continues, see the same facts in different ways (Poole, 1972).

“It would be certainly profitable to examine the structures of meaning-conferring as subjective constructions, as ‘cultural achievements’ as Husserl put it” (Poole, 1972, p. 103). Even Chomsky believed, Poole argues, that the objectivity of a specific society, in other words the culture of a society, is a determining factor in the analyses of both our thinking processes and our behavioural attitudes. On the contrary Poole defines objectivity as “the totality of what is taken to be the case, believed to be the case, affirmed to be the case” (Poole, 1972, p. 44). Objectivity becomes impersonal, and it avoids any subjective critique, and therefore, it could be even considered anti-human.

The concepts of subjectivity and objectivity are in a strong connection with the media and their role in delivering news of any type. Enrico Pedemonte, on this note, recalls the notorious debate between Umberto Eco and Piero Ottone on objectivity. The former believes that the reality proposed by the newspapers is manipulated because it only reflects the ideology of the journalist who wrote the article. His models of interpreting reality are too rooted, and therefore, headlines, pictures, and articles are the product of a unilateral vision of the world. Objectivity is

thus, a myth. Ottone, a well known Italian journalist, on the other hand, counterattacks Eco's position, by sustaining that objectivity, intended here as a fundamental element in the credibility and reliability of the media, is indeed obtainable and not a mirage. Separating his own opinions, citing the sources, presenting multiple points of view, and reporting the facts with extreme accuracy through witness statements, is the key for any journalist whose goal consists of delivering news as truthful as possible. Although perfect objectivity does not exist, Ottone argues, theorizing on its impossibility could mean creating an alibi (Pedemonte, 2010).

In this regard, Marletti (2010) writes:

For those who sustain the principle of objectivity, it is not a matter of fact, but, as the philosophers would say, it is a normative ideal, which, although unrealizable in the imperfect world we live in, has to guide our actions and push us in the attempt to realize it, so that we can be as close as possible to it<sup>148</sup>. (p. 63)

Analyzing events such as 9/11, the death of Bin Laden, and the Oslo attack, because they all have had an enormous impact worldwide, the question whether subjectivity and/or objectivity have played a key role raises a more pertaining inquiry: how much has culture impacted the

press in being subjective and objective? Resuming Chomsky's position of objectivity as a consequence of cultural factors, and interpreting it as "the totality of received opinion on what is acceptable/not acceptable, desirable/not desirable, good/not good, etc.", (Poole, 1972, p. 44) it appears to be how culture can define the way we think, the way we express ourselves, the way we absorb and perceive reality, and consequently, possibly, the way media deliver and handle the news. "The world of information reflects the local culture, it embodies its shared values and its collective drives"<sup>149</sup> (Pedemonte, 2010, p. 201). Pedemonte seems to say that newspapers are not solely a tool for publishing news, they interpret a collective identity, they determine what people will talk about, and they provide topics of discussion and intellectual growth.

As seen in the previous chapters, the Italian and the Canadian press have executed different approaches to the above mentioned historical events. The former has often taken a more aggressive avenue, dictated by larger newspapers, whose political and social views have decisively impacted the final product.

Again, Pedemonte (2010) says:

In our country [Italy] all the main editorial groups that control the press are carriers of evident conflicts of interests

[...] In every country the editorial world features an incestuous relationship with the power, but in Italy this seems to be a consolidated rule<sup>150</sup>. (p. 204)

Objectivity has rarely been part of it: the examples that have been shown of the double front page of "Il Giornale" in the case of the massacre in Oslo, or even the front page of the "Corriere della Sera" in the aftermath of the attack at the World Trade Center, where an immediate dichotomy "us/ them" (or "us/ the other") has been created ad hoc, can be seen as witness of cultural factors. In the case of "Il Giornale" there appears to be a complete lack of searching for the truth: both truth-seeking, or "the gathering of information and sifting through conflicting claims in the construction of a story" (Ward, 2011, p. 118), and truth-telling are, in fact, absent. They are replaced by bias, and emotions, all elements of a strong subjectivity deriving from a given cultural pressure. "Il Giornale" is a right-wing newspaper, and as a matter of fact, is also owned by the Berlusconi's; political elements are here, thus, quite evident, but even with the "Corriere della Sera", a much better known national newspaper, it has been shown how cultural factors have impacted the final result: diffidence and suspicions have somewhat guided the delivery of the news, and created the dichotomy "us/ other". The title "Attacco alla civiltà" is, in

fact, the result of an immediate intolerance, the result of a position firmly taken in judging and in defining who is civilized and who is not.

Claiming, though, that the Italian culture is, to some degree, fed by distrust and presumptions is quite pretentious, however, claiming that the title offered by the "Corriere della Sera" and its consequent interpretation are fed by a certain level of distrust, is not. The social role journalism covers obliges journalists to be honest and truthful.

The Canadian press, on the other hand, mainly represented here by "The Globe and Mail" and the "National Post" has given the impression to have adopted, in many cases, a more objective approach. Canada, however, does not seem to possess an equally large number of national newspapers as Italy does, and its political and social background is very different<sup>151</sup>. Stephen Ward argues that traditional news objectivity was introduced by American journalists in the early 1900s and was soon after adopted by their Canadian colleagues (Ward, 2011). That meant that journalists had to be completely detached and had to eliminate all of their opinions. Although postmodernism has dragged along an ever broadening skepticism, able to obscure the assertion of objectivity and the ability to report the truth, the importance of the truth itself is undeniable<sup>152</sup>. The examples that have been shown of how some of the

Canadian newspapers have handled 9/11 and the death of Bin Laden reinforces the concept of sticking to the story, of reporting the facts only, using witness statements, reliable data, and truthful sources. Opinions have, for the most part, been eliminated.

In this case, therefore, there appears to be a more impersonal and unemotional approach (with the exception of “Sun” newspapers), certainly derived by different cultural factors. Canada might possess a more tolerant attitude, most likely because it is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual country, featuring vast regional differences (Steven, 2011). But Peter Steven, in his research on Canadian media, finds also that Canadian newspapers lack a critical backbone, “they seem incapable of playing a real watchdog role, independent of the state and the large corporations” (Steven, 2011, p. 12), as if saying that the presence of a strong objectivity might also derive from social influences.

In the specific case of the death of Bin Laden it has been demonstrated how there has been, in many of the Canadian newspapers, a unilateral will of reporting just the facts, recounting what happened from the realization of the military plan, to its execution, avoiding assumptions and dodging misunderstandings. The social role journalism covers,

obliges journalists in being honest and truthful, and this seems to have been respected in this example.

On the contrary, a misleading and unreliable flow of information can have devastating effects on an entire population, and it can be seen as a mark of an undemocratic society. This is clearly not the case of neither the Canadian nor the Italian press, but if bias, emotions, and instincts cloud our being truthful and objective, this reflects negatively upon society and culture.

Newspapers and culture, in fact, look at each other in the mirror, and as they see each other's reflection, the two-way process is finally unfolded: they both feed off of, influence, and grow alongside each other.

## VI

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Translated from the original: “Solo studiandola in questo modo può essere chiarita nei suoi meccanismi fondamentali” (as stated in the preface, all translations have been completed by the undersigned).

<sup>2</sup> Translated from the original: “Il mondo dell’informazione rispecchia la cultura locale, ne incarna i valori condivisi e le pulsioni collettive”.

<sup>3</sup> “Even the most radical deconstructionists accept the idea that there are interpretations which are blatantly unacceptable. This means that the interpreted text imposes some constraints upon its interpreters. The limits of interpretation coincide with the rights of the text (which does not mean with the rights of its author)” (Umberto Eco, 1990, p. 6-7).

<sup>4</sup> [www.internetworldstats.com](http://www.internetworldstats.com).

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/jan/30/religion.muhammadcartoons>.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3167.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> The topic of “freedom of expression” could be expanded with Stephen Ward’s position on the goals of journalism. Ward says: “Democracy is the goal of journalism because, as Dewey argues, democracy is a precondition for the richest kind of communal life and human flourishing. [...] A democratic approach to journalism starts from the obvious but often overlooked point that a free press is not the goal of journalism” (Stephen Ward, 2011, p. 105).

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.infed.org/biblio/globalization.htm> (1990:64).

<sup>9</sup> The example of the “Danish cartoons” is emblematic in this case: 12 illustrations on a Danish newspaper were able to reach far countries, and thus create controversy first, and distress later.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.infed.org/biblio/globalization.htm> (Hutton and Giddens 2001: vii).

<sup>11</sup> On this note, Juan Carlos Molleda writes: “The constant technological changes we are experiencing challenge what is perceived as authentic. What is ‘real’ and ‘factual’ in an era of interactive communication and information technology is harder to gauge and confirm, especially for the audiences of publics, because the copy can be a clone of the original” (Stuart Allan, 2010, p. 55).

<sup>12</sup> Translated from the original: "Una fotografia ci mostra ciò che avremmo visto in un certo istante da un certo punto di vista se avessimo tenuto la testa immobile e un occhio chiuso e se noi potessimo vedere come attraverso un obiettivo da 140 o da 40mm e se vedessimo in Agfacolor o in Tri-X sviluppate con un D76 e stampate su carta Kodabromide n.3".

<sup>13</sup> Translated from the original: "La fotografia è la traccia di una cosa che è stata reale, più qualcosa che la costituisce in realtà; o magari meno qualcosa".

<sup>14</sup> Translated from the original: "La menzogna, ci viene insegnata, è una facoltà strettamente linguistica. Per saper mentire bisogna saper parlare [...] Esiste bugia, ci viene spiegato, solo dove esiste linguaggio capace di contraddire".

<sup>15</sup> Beyond the fact that all three events affected the entire world, other reasons why they have been chosen in this work are: 9/11 has been recognized by many theorists (Dinoi and Pezzella among others) as the first "media event"; the death of Osama Bin Laden because it is correlated with 9/11 and, on some degree, it ends a cycle; and finally the Oslo attack because, although very recent, still contains the debris of the aftermath of 9/11, with element such as Islamophobia, and the concept of Eurabia.

<sup>16</sup> On this note Frederick Wasser writes: "Dayan and Katz first defined 'media events' as a genre of rituals that occur when the political leadership and media executives negotiate and schedule live coverage of a major event. These are not breaking stories but set pieces in the life of a nation or a global community" (Linda Steiner & Clifford Christians, 2010, p. 162).

<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Oriana Fallaci, in her book entitled "The rage and the pride", describes the attack as a "well-aimed act of spectacular terrorism" (Oriana Fallaci, 2002, p. 59).

<sup>18</sup> Translated from the original: "A questa inversione fondamentale ne segue immediatamente un'altra: quanto più un fenomeno è potenzialmente minaccioso per il potere esistente, tanto più viene rappresentato come effimero, contingente, già noto. [...] quanto più un fenomeno perde in qualità materiale, tanto più la sua immagine-fantasma acquista splendore e luminosità".

<sup>19</sup> Translated from the original: "Sembra suggerirci che è esattamente lo stesso mondo quello in cui ci siamo risvegliati, il nostro mondo con la sua brutale violenza, e che è necessario non cancellare la disumanità che appartiene all'uomo per confrontarsi con l'evento, è necessario non farne un simbolo perché in questo modo si fa il gioco di chi ha progettato l'attacco".

<sup>20</sup> Translated from the original: "È evidente e ovvio che l'utilizzo della TV o dei media diviene parte del conflitto stesso: i media sono divenuti strumenti di manipolazione e contro-manipolazione nella mani dei poteri politico-militari che pianificano e conducono quella data guerra".

<sup>21</sup> Translated from the original: "Sappiamo, anche attraverso gli studi semiotici, che la verità - comunicata, espressa comunque sempre attraverso un dato testo, un dato discorso e mai data di per sé - è frutto di dispute, di discussioni: è anch'essa il prodotto 'di un testo'. Essa si produce, viene confermata e resa credibile, smentita o, ancora, accettata attraverso procedure semiotico-testuali. [...] Una data verità viene proposta, scomposta nelle sue parti, discussa, analizzata ecc. [...] Della guerra sappiamo - è uno dei luoghi comuni più consunti - che 'la sua prima vittima è la verità'".

<sup>22</sup> Translated from the original: "L'11 settembre 2001 [...] il nostro sguardo era cosciente di essere virtualmente simultaneo e omologo a quello di tutti i cittadini occidentali che non fossero a New York in quel momento".

<sup>23</sup> "It is noteworthy that three leading European intellectuals all discuss 9/11 in terms of (Us and) the Others (Baudrillard 2002, Virilio 2002, Žižek 2002)" (Hakan G. Sicakkan, 2006, p. 152).

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.audipress.it/>.

<sup>25</sup> "(2001, Sep. 12). Front page. *Corriere della Sera*. p. 1", retrieved from <http://www.senato.it/notizie/42812/sommariorassegnastampa.htm> (every Italian newspaper article used on this paper has been retrieved from the same aforementioned website, unless differently stated).

<sup>26</sup> Translation: "Attack on America and on civilization".

<sup>27</sup> "De Bortoli, F. (2001, Sep. 12). Siamo tutti Americani. *Corriere della Sera*, p. 1".

<sup>28</sup> Europe and the U.S. are countries of "fear" because they constantly feel threatened by the countries of "resentment".

<sup>29</sup> "Rossella, C. (2001, Sep. 13). L'occidente unito contro le barbarie. *Panorama*, p. 13".

<sup>30</sup> Translation: "A united West against barbarism".

<sup>31</sup> "Gagliardi, R. (2001, Sep. 13). Quale civiltà? *Liberazione*, p. 11".

<sup>32</sup> Translation: "What civilization?".

<sup>33</sup> "Caretto, E. (2001, Sep. 13). Lo spirito antico del giorno dopo. *Corriere della Sera*, p. 1".

<sup>34</sup> Translation: "The old spirit of the day after".

<sup>35</sup> Translated from the original: "L'American Way of Life è fatta da quei beni immateriali di cui si nutre una democrazia: la tolleranza, la solidarietà, il senso delle regole e dei valori di una autentica convivenza civile, ma anche la consapevolezza della forza della civiltà. Valori che probabilmente condividono molti cittadini americani di religione islamica, magari originari dei Paesi che coprono, assistendolo, il terrorismo cieco dei seguaci di Osama Bin Laden. Alcuni di loro, quasi sicuramente, sono sotto le macerie del World Trade Center. E chissà se si riuniranno, nell'aldilà musulmano, a quei terroristi suicidi ai quali i loro capi hanno fatto credere che godranno, insieme alle grazie di 72 vergini, della gloria eterna".

- <sup>36</sup> Translated from the original: "Una sua parte significativa è ereditata, non creata, e discende dal mondo della televisione americana degli anni Ottanta e dall'economia politica dei governi di Ronald Reagan negli Stati Uniti e di Margaret Thatcher in Gran Bretagna"
- <sup>37</sup> Translated from the original: "Berlusconi non è mai stato bene come alla corte di George W. Bush"
- <sup>38</sup> "Gambescia, P. (2001, Sep. 12). L'orrore che cambia il mondo. *Il Mattino*, p.1".
- <sup>39</sup> Translation: "The horror that changes the world".
- <sup>40</sup> Translated from the original: "I terroristi sono arrivati al cuore degli Stati Uniti usando aerei di linea degli Stati Uniti. Si sono votati alla morte come avviene ogni giorno in molte parti del mondo in nome di una rivendicazione, di un'idea o, più spesso, del convincimento di essere nel giusto contro gli infedeli che stanno dall'altra parte. Una guerra così non può essere vinta né con i carri armati, né con il filo spinato".
- <sup>41</sup> "(2001, Sep. 12). Front page. *L'Unità*, p. 1".
- <sup>42</sup> Translation: "State of war in America".
- <sup>43</sup> <http://www.audipress.it/>.
- <sup>44</sup> "(2001, Sep. 12). Front page. *La Stampa*, p. 1".
- <sup>45</sup> "(2001, Sep. 12). Front page. *La Repubblica*, p. 1".
- <sup>46</sup> Translation: "Attack on America".
- <sup>47</sup> "Attacco all'America e alla civiltà".
- <sup>48</sup> "(2001, Sep. 1). Front page. *Il Messaggero*, p. 1".
- <sup>49</sup> Translation: "Act of war".
- <sup>50</sup> "(2001, Sep. 1). Front page. *Il Giornale*, p. 1".
- <sup>51</sup> "Stackhouse, J. (2001, Sep. 1). A day of infamy. *The Globe and Mail*, p. 1" retrieved from <http://199.198.129.206/PageViewTop.asp?CurrentPageId=&> (every "The Globe and Mail" article used on this paper has been retrieved from same aforementioned website, unless differently stated).
- <sup>52</sup> [http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/default\\_archive.asp?fpArchive=091201](http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/default_archive.asp?fpArchive=091201).
- <sup>53</sup> <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrpearlharbor.htm>.
- <sup>54</sup> "Knox, P. (2001, Sep. 12). Clues point to Bin Laden. *The Globe and Mail*, p. 3".
- <sup>55</sup> "Appleby, T. (2001, Sep. 12). World braces to combat a deadly, invisible foe. *The Globe and Mail*, p. 5".
- <sup>56</sup> "Sallot, J. & Windsor, H. (2001, Sep. 12). Canada goes on alert. *The Globe and Mail*, p. 6".

<sup>57</sup> “Koring, P. (2001, Sep. 12). Resolute President talks tough on terror. *The Globe and Mail*, p. 4”.

<sup>58</sup> “Ibbitson, J. (2001, Sep. 15). The world mourns. *The Globe and Mail*, p. 1”.

<sup>59</sup> “Objectivity is what is commonly received as objectively valid, all the attitudes, presuppositions, unquestioned assumptions typical of any given society. [...] Objectivity is, for all practical purposes, the totality of what is taken to be the case, believed to be the case, affirmed to be the case” (Roger Poole, 1972, p. 44).

<sup>60</sup> As in splitting the world in “civilized” and “uncivilized”.

<sup>61</sup> “Wattie, C. (2001, Sep. 12). America vows revenge as terror claims thousands. *National Post*, p. 1” retrieved from <http://www.nationalpost.com/todays-paper/index.html> (every “National Post” article used on this paper has been retrieved from the same aforementioned website, unless differently stated).

<sup>62</sup> “Cienski, J. (2001, Sep. 12). We will past the test. *National Post*, p. 2”.

<sup>63</sup> e.g. “Fahrenheit 9/11” by Michael Moore.

<sup>64</sup> [http://natgeotv.com/ca/george\\_w\\_bush\\_the\\_911\\_interview/videos](http://natgeotv.com/ca/george_w_bush_the_911_interview/videos).

<sup>65</sup> “Rose, A. (2001, Sep. 12). Wait for red mist of anger to clear. *National Post*, p. 5”.

<sup>66</sup> [http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/default\\_archive.asp?tfp\\_region=usa](http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/default_archive.asp?tfp_region=usa).

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.scribd.com/doc/63671233/The-Post-s-A-section-September-12-2001#archive>.

<sup>68</sup> “(2001, Sep. 12). Front page. *Toronto Sun*, p. 1” retrieved from <http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/archive.asp>.

<sup>69</sup> At the same time, though, paradoxically, this could denote, as Guy Debord suggests in “Comments on the Society of the Spectacle” (1998), that even the terrorists would have been produced by the same system. “Such a perfect democracy constructs its own inconceivable foe, terrorism” (Guy Debord, 1988, p. 24).

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/barackobama/8487354/Osama-bin-Laden-killed-Barack-Obamas-speech-in-full.html>.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> “Romano, S. (2011, May 3). Solievo e speranza. *Corriere della Sera*, p. 1”.

<sup>73</sup> Translation: “Relief and hope”.

<sup>74</sup> The front page of “La Stampa” on the same day, bears the same picture.

<sup>75</sup> National Geographic showed documentaries as “Inside 9/11: Zero Hour” and “9/11 and the American Dream”.

<sup>76</sup> “Mauro, E. (2011, May 3). Il simbolo abbattuto. *La Repubblica*, p. 1”.

- <sup>77</sup> Translation: "The crashed symbol".
- <sup>78</sup> "(2011, May 3). Apologia all'America che celebra un atto di giustizia. *Il Foglio*, p. 1".
- <sup>79</sup> Translation: "Apology to America celebrating an act of justice".
- <sup>80</sup> "Olimpio, G. (2011, May 3). Due colpi caccia chiusa. *Corriere della Sera*, p. 2/3".
- <sup>81</sup> Translation: "Two shots the hunt is over".
- <sup>82</sup> "Valli, B. (2011, May 3). Ascesa e caduta del principe del terrore. *La Repubblica*, p. 1".
- <sup>83</sup> Translation: "The rise and fall of the prince of terror".
- <sup>84</sup> "Bianchi, E. (2011, May 3). Ma fare festa è sbagliato. *La Stampa*, p. 3".
- <sup>85</sup> Translation: "But celebrating is wrong".
- <sup>86</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/barackobama/8487354/Osama-bin-Laden-killed-Barack-Obamas-speech-in-full.html>.
- <sup>87</sup> "Giustizia è fatta" is also the main title on "La Stampa"'s front page on the same day.
- <sup>88</sup> Translated from the original: "forse è fonte di appagamento di quel desiderio di vendetta che abbiamo vergogna di confessare e che ci affrettiamo a nobilitare con il termine giustizia".
- <sup>89</sup> "(2011, May 3). Front page. *Il Messaggero*, p. 1".
- <sup>90</sup> Translation: "Now the world is a better place".
- <sup>91</sup> [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xiqgfx\\_obama-the-world-is-a-better-place-without-bin-laden\\_news](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xiqgfx_obama-the-world-is-a-better-place-without-bin-laden_news).
- <sup>92</sup> "Sallusti, A. (2011, May 3). Festeggiamo anche noi. *Il Giornale*, p. 1".
- <sup>93</sup> Translation: "Let's join the celebration".
- <sup>94</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2011/mar/29/death-penalty-countries-world#data>
- <sup>95</sup> "(2011, May 3). Front page. *L'Unità*, p. 1".
- <sup>96</sup> "Rampini, F. (2011, May 3). L'ordine era 'giustiziatelo'. *La Repubblica*, p. 1".
- <sup>97</sup> Translation: "The order was 'execute him'".
- <sup>98</sup> Nicholas Kohler on his article "Bin Laden: Dead or alive?" published on Macleans' on May 17th cites Scott Taylor, a military reporter: "Do I believe Bin Laden is dead? Yes. Do I believe the White House's version of events? Um, which one?".
- <sup>99</sup> "Koring, P. & Smith, G. & Sachs, S. (2011, May 2). Osama Bin Laden is dead. *The Globe and Mail*, p. 1".

<sup>100</sup> Appeared on “What Bin Laden’s death means to Al Qaeda”, published on “The Globe and Mail”’s website.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> “Hosenball, M. & Mason, J. (2011, May 2). Bin Laden is dead. *National Post*, p. 1”.

<sup>103</sup> <http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2011/05/02/alex-wilner-bin-ladens-death-sends-another-terrorist-thug-to-his-just-reward/>.

<sup>104</sup> In strong contrast with Gartenstein-Ross’s view (see p. 39).

<sup>105</sup> “(2011, May 2). Front page. *Toronto Sun*, p. 1” retrieved from <http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/archive.asp>.

<sup>106</sup> Excerpt from “The Norway shooter’s Zionist streak” appeared on “The Daily Beast” on July 25, 2011. Retrieved from <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/07/25/norway-shooter-anders-breivik-s-zionism-in-line-with-pro-israel-european-right.html>.

<sup>107</sup> Excerpt from “Anders Breivik and the war against ourselves” appeared on “Good” on July 25, 2011. Retrieved from [http://www.good.is/post/anders-breivik-and-the-war-against-ourselves/?utm\\_source=pulseneews&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+good%2Ffbvp+%28GOOD+Main+RSS+Feed%29](http://www.good.is/post/anders-breivik-and-the-war-against-ourselves/?utm_source=pulseneews&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+good%2Ffbvp+%28GOOD+Main+RSS+Feed%29).

<sup>108</sup> ““Eurabia” was the title of a journal initiated in the mid-1970s by the European Committee for Coordination of Friendship Associations with the Arab World. [...] A “Eurabia” editorial [...] stressed ‘the necessity for a political entente between Europe and the Arab world as a basis for economic agreements’ and the obligations for Europeans to ‘understand the political as well as the economic interests of the Arab world’” (Ye’or Bat, 2005, p.63).

<sup>109</sup> “Offeddu, L. (2011, Jul 25). Nove anni e 1.500 pagine per architettare la strage. *Corriere della Sera*, p. 1/2”.

<sup>110</sup> Translation: “Nine years and 1500 pages to concoct the slaughter”.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid. Translation: “The new militia of the Poor comrades of Christ and of Solomon’s Temple”.

<sup>112</sup> i.e. multiculturalism, and tolerance and acceptance towards Islam .

<sup>113</sup> <http://www.johnstonsarchive.net/terrorism/wrjp255i.html>.

<sup>114</sup> and Norwegian.

<sup>115</sup> On this note, a further source is an article appeared on “La Repubblica”’s website on July, 24, 2011. at [http://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2011/07/24/news/oltre\\_1500\\_pagine\\_di\\_deliri\\_ecco\\_le\\_teorie\\_del\\_mostro\\_di\\_oslo-19545663/?ref=DRM-19492843-10](http://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2011/07/24/news/oltre_1500_pagine_di_deliri_ecco_le_teorie_del_mostro_di_oslo-19545663/?ref=DRM-19492843-10).

<sup>116</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/court-extends-norway-killers-custody-by-12-weeks/article2235282/>.

- <sup>117</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>118</sup> "(2011, Jul. 23). Front page. *Il Giornale*".
- <sup>119</sup> Translation: "It's always them. They are attacking us".
- <sup>120</sup> Translation: "Al Qaeda's first revenge after the death of Bin Laden?".
- <sup>121</sup> Translation: "Bloody attack. Massacre in Norway".
- <sup>122</sup> "(2011, Jul 23). Front page. *Corriere della Sera*".
- <sup>123</sup> Translation: "Norway, the day of terror"
- <sup>124</sup> Translation: "blond sniper".
- <sup>125</sup> "(2011, Jul 23). Front page. *La Repubblica, Il Messaggero, La Stampa*".
- <sup>126</sup> "(2011, Jul 23). Front page. *L'Unità*".
- <sup>127</sup> Translation: "Terror in Europe".
- <sup>128</sup> "La strage di Oslo, il fondamentalismo e noi. (2011, Jul 25). *Il Foglio*, p. 1".
- <sup>129</sup> Translation: "The massacre of Oslo, the fundamentalism and us".
- <sup>130</sup> " (2011, Jul 25). La strage di Oslo, il fondamentalismo e noi. *Il Foglio*, p. 1".
- <sup>131</sup> Translation: "un'esplosione che ha sconvolto Oslo [...] un atto per destabilizzare il governo e seminare panico. Il successivo assalto affidato ad un killer 'biondo' è il terrore puro".
- <sup>132</sup> Excerpt from "Anders Breivik and the war against ourselves" appeared on "Good" on July 25, 2011. Retrieved from [http://www.good.is/post/anders-breivik-and-the-war-against-ourselves/?utm\\_source=pulsenews&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+good%2Ffbvp+%28GOOD+Main+RSS+Feed%29](http://www.good.is/post/anders-breivik-and-the-war-against-ourselves/?utm_source=pulsenews&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+good%2Ffbvp+%28GOOD+Main+RSS+Feed%29).
- <sup>133</sup> Translation: "That animal is one of us".
- <sup>134</sup> "Malaguti, A. (2011, Jul 25). Il paese davanti al bivio 'Non dobbiamo piegarci'. *La Stampa*, p. 4".
- <sup>135</sup> Translation: "The country is at a fork in the road 'We can't give in'".
- <sup>136</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>137</sup> Translation: "A fierce outpost of the war against Islam".
- <sup>138</sup> Retrieved on Dec. 3rd from: <http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2011/12/03/oslo-breivik-contesta-perizia-psichiatricanon-sono-schizofrenico-pazzo/175054/>.
- <sup>139</sup> Translation: "Oslo, Breivik disputes the psychiatric examination 'I am not schizophrenic, nor am I insane'".

<sup>140</sup> "(2011, Jul 23). Front page. *The Globe and Mail*".

<sup>141</sup> "Blomfield, A. & Rayner, G. & Evans, M. (2011, Jul 23). This day has changed Norway. *National Post*".

<sup>142</sup> <http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2011/07/22/national-post-editorial-board-canadians-should-stand-with-norway/>.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> "(2011, Jul 23). Front page. *Edmonton Sun*".

<sup>145</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/opinion/in-norway-a-trigger-for-discourse/article2110477/>.

<sup>146</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/opinion/mass-murder-and-the-internet/article2113291/>.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Translated from the original: "Per coloro che lo sostengono il principio dell'obiettività non è un dato di fatto ma, come direbbero i filosofi, un ideale regolativo, che pur non potendosi mai realizzare compiutamente nel mondo imperfetto in cui viviamo, deve guidare il nostro agire e spingerci a cercar di realizzarlo, approssimandoci il più possibile ad esso".

<sup>149</sup> Translated from the original: "Il mondo dell'informazione rispecchia la cultura locale, ne incarna i valori condivisi e le pulsioni collettive".

<sup>150</sup> Translated from the original: "nel nostro paese tutti i principali gruppi editoriali che controllano la carta stampata sono portatori di palesi conflitti di interessi [...] In ogni paese il mondo editoriale vanta qualche rapporto incestuoso con il potere, ma in Italia questa è una regola consolidata".

<sup>151</sup> Re-quoting and adapting Pedemonte's position, Canadian editorial groups do not carry the same conflicts of interests Italian groups do.

<sup>152</sup> "Without the distinction of truth and falsehood, other distinctions cannot be made, such as the difference between accuracy and inaccuracy, bias and non-bias, rational persuasion and propaganda" (Stephen Ward, 2011, p. 135).

## VII

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