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The Global versus the National,
Shared versus Cosmopolitan Memory:
The Case of Co-produced Television Documentaries

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Abstract

This thesis is an inquiry into the impact of recent trends towards globalization and commercialization on the ways in which national identity and 'shared memory' find expression in the media. Concentrating on the economics of television documentary production, I ask how commercialization and globalization give rise to 'new' representations of shared memory, and examine the extent to which they impinge on the types of narratives that had previously been associated with 'Old TV'. These questions are explored in the context of one particular mode of television production, international co-productions. Here I find the global and the national interacting with one another in a significant and complex manner. International co-productions provide a kind of focusing lens for the study of the impact of globalization and commercialization on the representation of national identity and shared memory. The analysis proceeds through a detailed case study of a specific television documentary, *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs* (1998) co-produced by three television networks, BBC2, PBS (WGBH Boston) and MBC (Abu-Dhabi/London). Making this programme was only possible after funding from separate sources had been secured, with the *quid pro quo* of each funding source being given the right to use the produced footage to construct its own version of the final product. The completed series thus exists in three distinct national/cultural versions, where each version offers a different reading of the historical events depicted. The present study considers the processes that led to this co-production, examines the actual course of production, and analyses the similarities and differences among the three resulting national/cultural products. Findings reveal basic and inherent tensions, between economic constraints and cultural forces, between the national and the global, and between 'shared' and 'cosmopolitan' memory. The study thus offers lessons extending beyond any single case, onto the broader vista of the three-sided interplay of mass media, shared memory and national identity in an age of globalization.

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Introduction

In 1998 a history-documentary for television was aired simultaneously in three nations/cultures: the United Kingdom, the United States of America and in a number of Arab-States[1]. The *Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs,* a six part documentary series, was produced in connection with the 50th anniversary of the 1948 founding of the State of Israel. At its core, was the fifty years of conflict between Israel and the Arabs. In order to make this series possible, an international co-production framework was set in place with funding from three sources: BBC - the programme's initiator, PBS- WGBH Boston and MBC Abu-Dhabi/London. Each funding source was given the right to edit its own version of the final product. The completed series was broadcast in three different nation/culture versions British (BBC), American (PBS) and Arab (MBC). Each offers a different reading of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The existence of this tri-version series, each cultural product emerging from a primary source (the BBC version) common to all, foregrounds the question which is situated at the centre of my study: How do economic interactions among television co-producers of different countries manifest themselves in the content of the history-film being produced and in the ways in which the narrated 'reality' is shaped? More specifically, to what extent do economic collaborations among broadcasters of different countries (notably co-productions for the making of TV programmes) give rise to new and complex representations of shared memory? To what extent do these cultural products confront and challenge narratives that have tended to be associated with 'Old TV' (nation rather than globally-situated)? Here then is the wider issue central to this study: how do the industrial changes now taking place within the television industry, notably the shift from a national and largely monopolised sector to an international and even global enterprise, reflect themselves in the content of the programme being produced? This question is part of a macro theme which was articulated most clearly by Graham Murdock (1996:103): 'How does the industrial

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[1] The series was aired in major Arab Countries such as Jordan and Egypt. In the month and years that followed, the broadcast history of the film becomes more complex, purchased by supplementary networks, in continues to have a televised life in countries such as: Denmark, Finland, Germany and Australia, to name but a few. Significantly, BBC's version was aired in Israel. All of these issues will be discussed in Chapter Five.

organization of television impinge on its organization as a system of meaning?' Clearly, the television industry can be, and has been, studied as an enterprise which has many characteristics in common with other manufacturing sectors. But it is also unique in that the 'goods' it produces play a pivotal role in framing the discourses through which people make sense of the world (e.g. Elliott 1972; Silverstone 1983; 1985; 1994; Abercrombie 1996; Livingstone 1998; Corner 1999; 2003).

> Television has made enormous chances in people's everyday life lives over the few decades. Developments in new technologies and increased leisure ensure that the mass media will continue to structure and influence people's experiences and understanding of their social world (Livingstone 1998: vii).

Because of television's centrality to daily life, it is seen as playing a prominent role in the shaping and upholding of certain kinds of identities, while at the same time marginalizing others. This complex issue occupies centre stage in television sociology, and a large body of critical work addresses the ways in which television has been implicated in producing and reproducing national communities (e.g. Schlesinger 1978; Morley & Robins 1995). Much of this writing rebounds off arguments set out by Benedict Anderson in his seminal *Imagined Communities*. Anderson, defining the term in his title, a term which has since become a *mot d'ordre* in contemporary studies of a nation building and national identity, writes:

> [A nation is] an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of the fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communication (Anderson 1983:6).

Building on Anderson's concept, it has been argued that television in the 20th century was one of the key institutions through which individuals had come to imagine themselves as members of a national community (e.g. Gripsrud 1999; Hogen; 1999; Lo 2001). Examining the broadcasting systems in Britain, Paddy Scannell ([1989] 2003) writes:

> By providing a common access for all to a wide range of public events and ceremonies – a royal wedding, the FA Cup final, the last night of the Proms, for example – broadcasting would act as a kind of social cement binding people

together in the shared idioms of public, corporate, national life (Scannell [1989] 2003:215).

Since the mid 1980s, however, this relationship between the nation and the television industry has increasingly come into question, as two fundamental changes (one technological, one economic/political) have re-shaped the television landscape (e.g. Morley & Robins 1995; Barker 1997; 1999; Thussu, 2000; Wang *et al* 2000; Wieten *et al* 2000; Parks & Shanti 2003). First is the arrival of cable and satellite distribution, and the convergence around digital technology, which has shifted the television industry from a system cantered around national broadcasting (free-to-air broadcasting) regulated by the nation-state (its primary interest and responsibility therefore to serve the citizens of this nation-state), to a trans-national audio-visual industry selling 'life style' to consumers across the globe (Tracey 1998; Chalaby & Segell 1999). For as Morley and Robins (1995:11) write:

> Audiovisual geographies .... [are] detached from the symbolic spaces of national culture, and realigned on the basis of the more universal' principle of international consumer culture.

Second is the impact of the movement from a national to a trans-national system taking place in the wake of a world-wide triumph of capitalism and privatization. This has fundamentally shifted the balance between public and private enterprise in favour of the market both as a form of economic organization and a preferred criterion for judgments and success (discussed in Murdock 1996; Wieten, *et al* 2000; Born & Prosser 2001). As Serra Tinic recently observed:

> In the new global media landscape, economic contingencies are winning out in the ongoing struggle between market forces and national cultural development goals (Tinic 2003:169).

This changing television landscape has cast issues of national identity into sharp relief, particularly with the advent of trans-national television and its accelerated cross-border cultural flow.

My own approach to this changing landscape is different from that of the large body of multi-disciplinary literature on globalization, which works have consists largely of two main lines of investigation. One, the 'hegemony approach', sees

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globalization as predominant, with national influences waning rapidly (e.g. Hall 1991; Sklair 1995; Herman & McChesney 1997; Murdock 1999; McChesney 2003). The other, the 'heterogeneity approach', upholds the continued prominence of national elements as primary media constituents (e.g. Curran & Park 2000; Wang *et al* 2000). Inasmuch as my present study sees these two views of the media industry as necessarily interwoven, the development of a theory that will support an integration of the two becomes a key concern. To promote such a theory, I will address the issue of the impact of mass media in general, and television in particular, upon the emergence and continuity of national identity, with primary reference to the production practices being adopted for television programming. This emphasis is, in a way, a response to current trends in the sociology of television, which over the last decade, have provided detailed analyses regarding the nature of the television-nation nexus. This research has provided significant material in what can be broken down into three areas: the representation of 'the nation' in televised texts, the consumption of global/nation programmes, and the production of television cultural products. What is striking in the research is that the role television producers play in this regard, and the issues surrounding the producer's role, have been at best marginalized, if not entirely neglected (discussed in Gripsrud 1995; Dornfeld 1998). This issue will be central to my research.

The dominant research on the television/nation relationship has concerned itself with analysis, both specific and more broadly theorized, of how the 'nation' is narrated and represented in television texts. Scholars working within this conceptual framework point to television (among other mass communication systems) as a significant 'container' of stories, images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, symbols and rituals which stand for the shared experiences which give meaning to the nation (Hall 1992:293). This line of inquiry has in recent years followed Michael Billig's seminal work, *Banal Nationalism* (1995). Billig showed that in established Western nations there is a constant "flagging" (Billig 1995:109) of nationhood. He argued that mass media have a crucial role to play in this process. To illustrate his argument, Billig conducted a survey of British daily newspapers. His findings indicated that by employing a complex deixis of 'here', and 'we', the newspapers (the text) presented 'the national homeland as the home of the readers', thus re-producing a sense of nationhood (Billig 1995:11). Billig's conceptual framework has been subsequently applied to various media texts (e.g. Hjort 2000; Yumul & Özkirimli

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2000; Inthorn 2002). These studies have shown how the nation is constantly being flagged in media outputs, among them film and television. Still, from the perspective of how best to study the interplay between mass media and national identity, this approach does not tell us how media texts are actually 'received' by audiences (or citizens).

It was 'reception studies', in their various forms that have attempted to address this issue. Following Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model of communication (1980), a large body of qualitative research has emerged, highlighting the need to explore audiences' interaction with television cultural products. Much of this work situates the viewers as agents rather than passive receptors of television messages (e.g. Morley 1980; Ang 1996; Livingstone 1998). In the wake of the upheavals now taking place within the television industry, notably globalization and the ripples it casts, many critics have directed their attention to the manner in which television texts are being consumed and perceived by audiences in different countries. Liebes and Katz's (1990) work on the reception of *Dallas* in Israel, and Daniel Miller's study on the reception of *The Young and the Restless* in Trinidad (Miller 1992), have shown that the impact which television messages have on individuals depends crucially on reception contexts and on the resources which audience recipients bring to bear in the reception process. Studies of audience's reception of exported television texts concentrate on the role of viewers in resisting processes of globalization, but they largely fall short of discussing the ways in which such television programmes (either global or national) came into being, and exploring what import and impact the production process may have on the cultural product.

Theorists working on production aspects of television programmes have made some attempts to fill this gap. The central issue in these studies has been the nature and the characteristics of television production sites, i.e. the television institutions (channel operators and production companies). Most of the studies in this area have revolved around the question; who are the players dominating the television landscape? (e.g. Herman & McChesney 1997; Thussu 2000; Chalaby 2002). Authors adopting the 'hegemony approach' have argued that the main global producers are Westerners/Americans (e.g. Tunstall & Palmer 1991; Schiller 1991; Herman & McChesney 1997). Writers working within the 'heterogeneity' paradigm reject this notion and present evidence which points to the importance of national producers in the shaping of television outputs (e.g.Wang *et al* 2000; Elasmar 2003). While this

body of work looks at the role of producers in the creation and the transmission of programmes, it falls short of discussing the ways in which the producers themselves perceive their target audiences: global or national. Furthermore, the emphasis on the 'nature'[2] of television producers has resulted in a situation where methods, strategies and dynamics of the "production practices" of television have become marginalized. As Serra Tinic writes:

> The role of cultural producers is often elided in the literature of media globalization, which, by either emphasizing the rapid flow of media content in abstract terms or privileging textual analysis for intrinsic cultural meanings, rarely examines the *negotiations* behind the image displayed on television and movie screens around the world (Tinic 2003: 170, My italics).

One of the critical determinants of the nature of 'production practices'[3] is the choice of production strategies adopted. International co-production becomes an ever more prevalent alternative-of-choice.

The term 'international co-production' is used to describe a situation in which broadcasters in more than one country are involved, both creatively and financially in the production of a specific audio-visual product. This form of alliance, among other advantages, permits partners to pool resources, in an effort to raise the substantial budgets required to produce the master copies at minimal cost, to accommodate a plurality of markets (Hoskins *et al* 1997).

The goal of this strategy then, of necessity, becomes to produce programmes that have a national relevance in all the represented countries, allowing producers access to the specific funding mechanisms available in those countries, such as tax incentives, grants and investments (Blind & Hallenberger 1996). As Doris Batruschat describes it:

> Co-productions provide a means to pool financial, creative and technical resources from participating countries for the production of a film and television programs. Governed by official treaties they allow access to various public funding mechanisms and, therefore, increased production budget (Baltruschat 2002:1)

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[2] The focus of attention was the increasing numbers of global media corporations (mainly American) such as CNN, HBO, Disney, and MTV, which sell packaged programmes across national borders, thus undermining national and local television production.

[3] I will use the term 'production practices' to indicate the processes which led to the emerges of a single television programme (commissioning, scripting, filming, editing)

This mode of production gathered momentum through recent technological advances combined with processes of deregulation and privatization, which gave rise to a multitude of channels available to the viewing public in the West, notably in European countries and in the US, but also in Australia and Japan (Hoskins *et al* 1995; 1997). Simultaneously, intensifying competition among television networks has led to smaller television audiences and higher standards pushing up the costs of programming. This development has forced television producers to re-examine the funding of television programmes. In order to lower the cost of production, the creators of programmes find themselves increasingly driven to consider international collaborations with other, mostly 'foreign', television networks (see Hoskins *et al* 1997; Doyle 2002).

Clearly, the rise in popularity of this trans-national mode of production bears sharply upon the question of television's role in the construction of national identity. The current scholarly discourse, regarding this question is dominated by two opposing camps. One suggests that co-productions have led to standardized products, with national attributes gradually withering away (e.g. Strover 1995; Baltruschat 2003). The other sees co-production as a tool for resisting globalization, and pays special attention to the manner in which this strategy may actually contribute to the upholding of national culture (e.g. Bergfelder 2000; Jäckel 2001). Since both strands provide reasonable evidence in support of their opposing claims about how international co-productions are accomplished[4], one is led to ask how the two views/arguments may be reconciled or integrated. This issue becomes a key concern in the present study. In particular, it is important to account for the 'push-and-pull' between the two conceptual frameworks described above and to look beyond their specific deterministic approaches. What must be asked is, how a global product emerges (as per the first approach), and how, simultaneously, this very product becomes instrumental in the upholding of specific national narratives (as per the second approach). Furthermore, given their differing theoretical perspectives, the existing studies of international co-production limit themselves to one of the two ends of the production process. Media economists, with their emphasis on cost incentives, tend naturally to focus their attention on the first stage, i.e., on the decision to commission

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[4] This issue will be discussed in Chapter Three when the two lines of investigation will be considered.

a programme through co-production (e.g. Hoskins *et al* 1997). Cultural theorists, placing the emphasis on content, tend to examine the final stage of a co-production, i.e. the emergent filmed text and the process of its consumption (e.g. Jäckel 2001).

I will argue that it is essential to examine the *production process:* from the pre-production commissioning decisions, through the production process itself, and finally to post-production decisions and adjustments. In this way, a bridging between the two existing approaches can hopefully be accomplished. I will maintain that the tracing of the steps involved in the *production process* (commissioning, production, post-production), will reveal the fundamental interplay between the conflicting elements that are at work: between economic interests and cultural constraints, between the global and the national, and between the standardized and the particularized.

It is precisely the *production process* of co-produced programmes which permits, and even demands, the opening up of the line of critical vision to encompass both the media economics approach and the cultural studies approach. Research on television production, when carried out from a broad cultural studies perspective, is concerned mainly with the formation of meaning: how meaning and values are produced and how they are processed and deconstructed in social life. One strand in this cultural studies research deals with audience reception. It considers the manner in which audience members interpret television outputs and incorporate them into their daily life (e.g. Morley 1980; 1992; Ang 1996; Livingstone 1998). Such research, basically ethnographic, highlights the creativity of audiences and offers a response to simple 'effect models'. These cultural studies theories, however, tend to look at televised texts as given entities while overlooking the ways in which these texts come into being. Given the tendency of the cultural studies approach to neglect the economic side of television production, one must turn to the economists of the 'media industries' to better understand the behaviour of television markets and consumers. The 'mainstream economics' approach examines how the media industries (television included) use the scarce resources at their disposal to produce content for distribution to consumers with perceived wants and needs (see Albarran 1996; Doyle 2002). Current studies within this framework consider the emergence of television conglomerates, the growing numbers of channels available to audiences, and the increasing trend towards global activity of both public and private corporations (e.g. Herman & McChesney 1997; Hoskins *et al* 1997). By and large, economists focus on

the exchange that takes place in markets, as consumers (viewers) choose between competing commodities on the basis of the utility and satisfaction they offer and the price, if any, being charged for their use. However, there is hardly any discussion in these studies of the ways in which these forces are reflected in the content of television outputs or in the process of consumption. Once again, a joining of the two theoretical frameworks (cultural studies and economics) is needed if one is to understand the manner in which meaning is being created, shaped and maintained in television outputs.

At this point, however, one must set aside these concerns (if only to return to them later) and to focus on those areas much at the centre of television studies – the issues of television/nation (which I mentioned in the beginning of this introduction), nation/memory and television/memory.

Following Ernest Renan ([1882] 1996) it has recently become an accepted practice to define the nation as a community of shared memory and shared forgetting (e.g. Deutsch 1966; Anderson 1991; Smith 1991). Smith, for example, defines it as:

> [A] named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical *memories*, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members (1991:14 my italics).

This observation was taken up in recent years by media theorists who have pointed to the vital role different media play in articulating and constructing aspects of the nation's past (Reading 2003). Molly Andrews (2003), for instance, examined the 'Truth Commissions' in South Africa and East Germany and has argued that these forums:

> act as conduits for collective memory; as individual stories are selected as being somehow representative, these stories come to frame the national experience (Andrews 2003:46).

In this context a multi-disciplinary literature has emerged highlighting the role of *television* in the 'continuous' feeding of collective memory (e.g. Edgerton 2001; Hoskins 2003:7). These studies, however, while exploring the television/memory nexus, fail to account for the *three sided* interplay between television/memory/nation. In other words, they provide no analysis of the manner in which television (as a 'nation construct') has been employed by the nation-state to generate a sense of

shared memory and national identity. Furthermore, such studies, while pointing to the significant role television producers play in designing and framing shared memory (e.g. Kaes 1990; Toplin 2000), largely overlook the production processes by which these 'configurations' come into being. It is critical to emphases here that despite the enormous studies on the interplay between shared memories and the nation both television historians and television sociologists have manages to somewhat sidestep this issue.

I can now return to my own central argument regarding the critical connection between the economics of television (especially television co-productions) and the shaping of shared memory. It is precisely at this meeting-point that my own concerns are situated: To what extent do changes in the television industry (notably co-productions among broadcasters of different cultures/nations) give rise to new and complex representation of shared memory? To what extent do these 'new' manifestations confront and challenge narratives that have tended to be associated with 'Old TV'? I will address these questions within the specific context of television's *documentary* sector.

Documentaries provide an appropriate focus because of their (perceived) credibility as sites of reliable, even "true," information (e.g. Corner 2000; 2001; 2002; Ellis 2000). In his book *Claiming the Real* (1995) Brian Winston writes:

> The contemporary use of 'document' still carries with it the connotation of evidence. This sense of document provided the frame, as it were, into which the technology of photography could be placed. The photograph was received, from the beginning, as a document and therefore as evidence. This evidential status was passed to the cinematograph and is the source of the ideological power of documentary film (Winston 1995:11).

The label 'documentary' is given, internationally, to certain kinds of film, television, and radio texts which ostensibly reflect, report on, and represent 'the real,' through the use of recorded images and sounds of actuality (Corner 1996:2). In other words, documentaries are perceived as recording aspects of real-life judged worthy of pertinent consideration, and which are empowered to then transmit interpretations of relevant representative real-life events to an audience, to members of a society (Barsam 1992; Rosenthal 1988). As John Corner observes:

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The *Sociological* dimension of documentary not only follows from its important and sensitive positioning within the political and social structure of 'public communication', 'public knowledge' and 'public opinion', but it is also a result of the self-proclaimed purposes which documentary work has frequently espoused and the social character of so many of its topics (Corner 1986:ix).

An interesting illustration of the ripple effect of this perceived linking of 'documentary' and 'credibility', can be found in a significant creative decision made by the film director Steven Spielberg, in his feature film, *Schindler's List* (1993). The most distinctive aesthetic feature of this film, from the very first scene, is the use (with two notable exceptions: the girl in the red coat and the epilogue) of black and white photography. Both producer/director Spielberg and cinematographer Janusz Kaminski explain the decision as having been motivated by a desire to remain 'true' to the spirit of *documentaries* from the period of World War II. By filming *Schindler's List* in black-and-white, Spielberg sought to create a contemporary "document" formally analogous to vintage photographic records. Spielberg described his use of this black-and-white as constituting a more "realistic" approach to his subject, making the film, as he put it, 'closer to [a] documentary':

> ... I think black and white stands for reality. I don't think colour is real. I think certainly colour is real to the people who survived the Holocaust, but to people who are going to watch the story for the first time, I think black and white is going to be the real experience for them. My only experience with the Holocaust has been though black and white documentaries. I've never seen the Holocaust in colour. I don't know what Auschwitz looks like in colour. Even though I was there, it's still black and white in my eyes.... (Steven Spielberg, cited in Shandler 1997:156)

Spielberg's remarks not only contradict contemporary notions of colour photography as being more 'realistic' then black and white, but also reveal the distinctively privileged position that the documentary images of World War II and the Holocaust have had for those who did not experience the war. For the overwhelming majority of viewers, the *memories* of the Holocaust have always been mediated through black-and-white moving images: Newsreels, Nazi propaganda films, filmed reports on the liberation of concentration camps by Allied forces, and documentary films produced after the war such as Alain Renais' *Night and Fog* (1955). In simulating canonical black and white Holocaust images, Spielberg is working to endow his version/vision of the Holocaust with the truth-impact of a documentary. His reflection on the effect

that World War II documentaries have had on him foregrounds the significant power of documentary-as-genre: perceived, not as artistic expression, but as 'reality' itself.

Now, almost two hundred years after the advent of photography, we can acknowledge that the photograph shows the world as the photographer alone sees it. For more than he photographs that which is, he photographs that which he is, offering up to us a 'document' which retains only a trace of the original and which, like all 'documents', is subjective, partial, elusive, and incomplete. Surely this is true of the documentary film as well. By framing and focusing the gaze, by closing in, by enlarging, by slowing down or speeding up the motion of reality, by carefully selecting caption and narration, the documentary filmmaker creates not just a print, but an imprint; a camera-script which presupposes complicity and inside knowledge.

This complex relationship between film coverage and the events themselves has prompted extensive academic debate. Discussion has revolved around the ways events are represented and has questioned the legitimacy of any claim that coverage represents an external reality (e.g. Nichols 1991; Bruzzi 2000; Winston 2000; Corner 2001). Points of contention include the distinguishing between fiction and non-fiction programmes; the criteria for truth-claims; and whether detached or objective coverage is at all possible. Such debates often lead to abstract speculation about the nature of 'reality', which cannot be usefully addresses in empirical research. It is not my intention to retrace these debates. What does interest me here are the ways in which past events (the subjects of documentaries), are reconstructed in televised products, rather than whether moving-images have an indexical basis in reality.

Still, the decision to focus my attention on documentaries is based on the assumption that although documentaries do not reveal the truth, they do reveal "a truth," (or "truths"), presenting and representing the ideologies and sensibilities that make up competing narratives through which viewers strive to make sense of events. In other words, documentaries (unlike 'realist fictions' such as Oliver Stone's *JFK*), are films with a special commitment to convey the 'real', the 'truths' which matter in people's lives notwithstanding scholars' claims that such 'truth' can never be objectively represented.

This unique 'status' of documentaries impinges on the economics of their production. They are, on one level, seen as commodities. They are, as Kilborn & Izod write:

bought, sold and exchanged in the international markets, and the conditions under which they are produced are subject to the most rigorous scrutiny in terms of production turn-around times, budgetary requirements and potential consumers and/ or advertiser appeal' (Kilborn & Izod 1997:175).

Yet, in contrast to other television 'goods' (such as dramas and talk shows), documentaries are not normally perceived only in terms of the potential of their financial revenue (Rosenthal 1988; Barsman 1992; Corner 1996; Kilborn & Izod 1997). This distinction accorded to the documentary demands that one should examine the unique characteristics, *modus operandi*, and roles of the documentary industry, and avoid, lumping it together artificially with television sectors that differ fundamentally from it.

And so I return to my opening statement: the situating of the 'case study' for my research alongside the 1998 documentary film for television aired simultaneously in three differing versions, before audiences in three sites of nation/culture, namely, *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs* (1998). My findings emerge from this "case study" of a television history funded by three television networks, BBC, PBS and MBC. The film's topic is the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Arabs. Each funding source 'bought' the right to re-edit its own version of the film. The completed documentary thus exists in three distinct nation/culture television versions, British (BBC2), American (PBS) and Middle-Eastern (MBC). My goal, of studying the 'production process' leading to the emergence of the 'master-text', and to its subsequent three nation/culture film texts, is here pursued by exploring the reasons for the film having been commissioned as a co-production in the first place, by going on to investigate the interaction between the three national broadcasters (BBC, PBS and MBC) who were partners in this documentary, and finally by analysing the similarities and differences among the three separate end products. This will make it possible to identify the tensions, in both process and product, between economic constraints and cultural forces, between the global and the national, and between 'shared' and 'cosmopolitan' memory. In examining these issues, I have utilized research techniques that are common in the study of the production of television documentaries, combining ethnographic elements such as semi-structured interviews, with other qualitative methods such as text (film) analysis.

The thesis is divided into two parts. The first part, comprising the four initial chapters, is meant to provide a theoretical foundation, both from historical and from methodological perspectives. The second part consists of two empirical chapters: Chapter Five considers the 'production process' involved in the creation of the documentary *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs* (1998). Chapter Six and Chapter Seven offer quantitative film analysis of selected segments of the three versions of the film under investigation.

Chapter One

'The Television Documentary' and the Representation of National Identity and Shared Memory

> We would like to hear about what you did and what you witnessed.... In our programmes, 'telling it as a story' matters as much as the information itself. Our aim is to take viewers inside meetings at which critical decisions were taken so they can hear the arguments as they happened. In this way dry concepts come alive for the viewers. Our method is to choose a few key events and go into them in depth. We would like to hear your own memories of the following events in which you were involved [5] (Norma Percy, Series Producer, *The Fifty Year War Israel and the Arabs*, Brian Lapping Associates, London, UK)

I begin with Norma Percy, neither cultural historian nor economist, nor media theorist or television critic, but a television producer. The role of the TV producer is central to my research on the economic and cultural interactions among the creators and disseminators of television documentaries, as I trace the production process in the creation of BBC/PBS/MBC co-produced documentary *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs*. Speaking to potential 'subjects' to be interviewed for the film, Percy, above, makes it very clear that for her film to '[tell history] as a story', her 'witnesses', will have to recount their 'memories' for the 'television documentary' to 'matter'. Here, Percy is foregrounding the central issues which will concern me in this first chapter: the role of 'television history' in shaping, maintaining and reflecting national identity, in its providing an 'historical map' which will be readable to a community that conceives of itself as worthy of belonging to, the role of 'television history' in insisting on providing experiences of 'shared memory'.

'To possess a culture', Tzevetan Todorov writes in his 1997 essay *The Coexistence of Cultures* 'means having at our disposal a prearrangement of the world, a miniature model, a map of sorts which permits us to orient ourselves within it' (Todorov 1997:3). Television documentaries have, since their inception, provided and they continue to provide Todorov's 'miniature model', his 'map of sorts' which permits members of a nation/culture community to orient themselves. They are crucial in the shaping, maintaining and reflecting of national identity, linking a national audience to a national experience and to 'shared memory' (e.g. Smith 2000:52; Edgerton 2001).

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[5] Cited from a working paper of Brian Lapping Associates

Television is a cultural practice as well as a cultural institution. It is a vehicle through which cultural forms are manifested. It is a significant site of a nation's culture itself. More specifically, 'television histories', the unique mode of representation which is at the centre of the present study, have been essential constructs through which recognizable symbolic forms, narratives, and languages, in short cultural representations that go to make up the achievements of a national identity, have been beamed towards a public.

The creators of 'television histories' I contend, should, therefore, be counted among the significant agents that fulfill the role of interpreting the nation's past as a coherent and meaningful entity. Their function in the interpretation of 'the past' can be described as the placing of historical events into meaningful narrative frameworks, based on shared symbolic systems (values, myths and memories) that are reaffirmed as they are represented. These representations provide a scaffolding for a shared (or contested) political, cultural and social discourse —the site of national identity.

To capture the critical link between television history and 'nation', it is essential to begin by looking at the theorizing of this national identity. My attempt to deal with the situating of 'television histories' alongside the demands of national cultures, requires a review of the range of critical studies dealing with concepts of nation/nationhood and with the link of nation/culture and shared memory. Over the past fifteen years, the critical vocabulary of diverse disciplines (Sociology, Economics, Cultural Studies, Media Studies) has floated a clear language of terms (some old, some new) to deal with these issues: nationalism, cosmopolitanism, globalization and post-nationality, to name but a few. I begin at the beginning, looking at some noted definitions of 'nation'.

I. Defining 'Nation'

For the purpose of this research, I shall use the definition of the nation proposed by Anthony D. Smith, in his book *National Identity*. According to Smith (1991:14):

> [a nation] is a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.

To this useful definition I shall add an element emphasized by Walker Connor (1978; 1993), namely, the essentially irrational psychological bond that binds fellow nationals together and which is supposed to constitute the essence of national identity. Such a bond is, in Connor's terms 'a sense of belonging'. In the phrase of anthropologist Clifford Geertz, it is called 'a fellow feeling' (Geertz 1963). And Jessica Evans (1999) writes in her 'Introduction' to *Representing the Nation: A Reader*:

> In recent years, "The Nation" has come to be seen not merely as the object of political geographical or economic analysis, but as one of *cultural* analysis. People are not merely legal citizens of a nation; in an important sense a nation is also a symbolic community which creates powerful - and often pathological allegiances to a cultural ideal.....This cultural ideal expressed is the motivation to unify, to create a congruence between membership in a political nation-state and identification with a national culture, a way of life (Evans 1999:1, Evans's italics).

This conceptualisation of a nation as a socially constructed category of meanings has become common in recent years. Along with the general 'cultural turn' in social history, scholars working on issues of ethnicity and nationalism began deconstructing nationalism and national identity by studying the shared symbols, values, discourses and memories by which large human populations develop a sense of themselves as a national community (e.g., Anderson 1983; 1991; Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983; Billig 1995). The questions which occupy centre stage in this discourse are: How do claims of national identity achieve priority among all other claims of social identity and loyalty? 'In what way does a national identity maintain temporal continuity, exerting its fierce gravitation pull from generation to generation' (Bell 2003:67)?'

These questions tie into the wider debate over the origin of nationalism, and they have generated a wide variety of responses (e.g. Anderson, 1983; Gellner 1983; Smith 2001). Whatever differences appear in the various approaches to the theorizing of nationalism, 'all the different modes of theorizing', Duncan S.A. Bell tells us, 'rely on the centrality of nationalist *story telling*, on the evocative narration of the links between the past, present and future' (Bell 2003:66, Bell's italics). Duncan S.A. Bell (2003) has provided a useful classification, fitting the different theories of nation and

nationalism into five categories[6]: primordialists, perennialists, modernists, historical ethno-symbolists and the post-modernists. Each of these approaches seeks to provide answers to the question regarding the temporal continuity of national identity (Bell 2003:66).

The *primordialists* see the nation as rooted in kinship ties and genetic similarities. One's alliance to the nation, they claim, is as much a function of blood, or nature, as it is of history. Here, the strength of biological ties is centred on age old customs of *story telling*. It is these stories that crystallize a national 'rebirth' and mobilize the emotions of people (Geertz 1963: Connor 1993). *Perenialists* claim that nations have been a constant feature of human history, from ancient Egypt to the present. Humans create nations. Nations emerge and dissolve, only to reappear continually in different periods and geographies (discussed in Smith 1999:5). Here, the perenialists assume the ability of nationalists to generate a form of communal identity and to be able to clearly differentiate themselves from one another. It is this need to differentiate oneself that makes the bond between *representation* and *identity* so crucial (e.g Hastings 1997). The *modernists*, see the 'nation' as the product of modernity, exemplified by the bureaucratic state, the industrial economy of capitalism and secular social norms (e.g. Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990). Scholars who subscribe to this approach concentrate on the industrial revolution, the spread of capitalism and the role of economic and political elites in the construction (and invention) of the social bonds necessary to instil a sense of national unity through a construction of particular historical narratives. *Representation* of stories from the past is thus central to this line of reasoning (e.g. Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983; Anderson 1991). For the *historical ethno-symbolism* approach, what gives nationalism its power are myths, memories, traditions, and symbols of ethnic heritage and the ways in which a popular *living past* has been and can be rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias (Smith 1999). Here again *representation* is crucial, for without the construction of a particular interpretation of the past, this type of argument would be impossible. The *post-modernists* do not offer a distinct explanatory framework but rather propose a set of concepts employing a constructivist mode of theorizing. For the postmodernists (e.g Bhabha 1990), what is

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[6] This classification is based on Anthony Smith's (1999:2001) typology of four theoretical perspectives of nationalism.

important are the ways in which particular *narratives* are shaped and distributed: nations are here perceived as cultural artefacts. The postmodernists focus on the necessity for the discursive construction of national communities. What follows from this is an interest in the media through which such narratives are communicated, and through which imagined communities are formed and dissolve.

Despite these different interpretations of the genesis and nature of 'the nation', the five main perspectives reviewed here all see as essential, the elements of *story-telling* and *representation*. The construction of nation-specific narratives of the past is central to each theory. In summarizing the core element within each of the five theoretical perspectives, Duncan S.A. Bell clearly points to 'representational practices':

> Representational practices are thus inherently bound up in the process of national identity formation: to mould a national identity – a sense of unity with others belonging to the same nation – it is necessary to have an understanding of oneself as located in a temporally extended narrative, and in order to be able to locate one as such, nationalists discourse must be able to represent the unfolding of time is such a way that the nation assumes a privileged and valorized role (Bell 2003:69).

A recurrent attempt to explain how nations produce and reproduce the crucial link between past, present and future is to turn to the form of *collective memory* - a memory that is somehow found in, and shared between many, perhaps most, of the members of any given national community (Bell 2003:69). It is through these memories, so the argument goes, that the nation is first forged and then maintained.

> Memory, almost by definition, is integral to cultural identity, and the cultivation of shared memory is essential to the survival and destiny of such collective identity (Smith 1999:10).

For Smith, this explains why it is imperative that 'nationalists must rediscover and appropriate shared memories' (Smith 1996:383).

II. Theorizing the nation-memory nexus

In his essay *What is a Nation?* ([1882] 1996:52) Ernest Renan, the French historian of religion, defines the nation as: '... a soul, a spiritual principle' and immediately links this definition to 'memories'.

> Two things, which, in truth, are really just one, make up this soul, this spiritual principle. One is in the past, the other is in the present. One is the possession in common of *rich legacy of memories*; the other is current consent, the desire to live together, the willingness to continue to maintain the values of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form (Renan 1996:52, my italics).

Renan's answer to the question of his essay's title is that it is the nation's common history – and the contemporary commitment to this history – that forges a community. What Renan means by a shared history is a *story* of the past held in common, which he defines as 'a rich legacy of memories.' The nation, Renan argues, is bound together not by the past itself - what actually happened - but by stories of that past that members in a national community tell one another in the present - what they remember. Significantly Renan added that the national community also agrees to forget, for the story of the past is made both by holding on to some events and by letting go of others. What the nation 'forgets' and what it 'remembers', make it the kind of nation that it is.

Renan's definition of the nation, locates 'national memory' at the heart of national identity. The stories of the nation's past are kept alive in the present, in the mind of individuals, narrated in written texts, performed on stage, represented on screen, encoded on monuments. It is available (in principle) to every member in the community to refer to and draw upon as a basis for his/her continuing understanding of what Renan called 'the willingness to continue to maintain the values of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form' (Renan 1996:52).

Renan's pioneering conception of the 'nation' as a community of shared memory and shared forgetting was developed further in more recent work, such as Pierre Nora's *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire* (1989). According to Nora, the fall of memory from grace occurred in the 19th century with the accelerating pace of everyday life brought about by industrial and social modernization. As old traditions and affiliations lost their grasp, the relation between people and their past was reconstructed through 'second-order' simulations: elites produced 'sites of memory' in language, monuments, and archives which had one common referent — the *nation*, and which strove to secure the future of the nation through compelling inventions of its traditions. Looking in particular at the construction of 'collective memory' in France, Nora (1996) inventoried the sites of French national memory as they had been constructed over the centuries. Similar

studies were done for other nations (e.g. Gillis 1994; Samuel 1994 [UK]; Zerubavel 1995 [Israel]; Zamponi [Italy] 1998).

This body of work provided a useful springboard for critics working in the field of nationalism and ethnicity to study the interplay between memory and national identity. In his prolific writing, Anthony. D. Smith (1986; 1991; 1995; 1996; 1999) places great weight on the role memory plays in the forging and maintaining of national identity, noting that the vital 'relationship of memories to collective cultural identity and the cultivation of shared memories is essential to the survival and destiny of such collective identities' (Smith 1999:10). '[O]ne might almost say: no memory, no identity; no identity, no nation' (Smith 1986:383). In his book *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical Survey in of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (1998) Smith bolsters his claim by pointing to the historiography of specific nations. Looking for example at the newly forged state of Poland, Smith shows that this nation is not simply an invention but was rather,

> linked in many ways with the earlier Polish state, not least through the shared codes, rituals, *memories,* myths, values and symbols which bound Poles together during the long nineteenth century of their unfreedom (Smith 1998:131, my italics).

For Smith this joining of memory and nation rests on the crucial interplay between many and disparate cultural elements shared by most of the members in a given national community, capable of withstanding hardship over time (see Bell 2003: 69). Other critics join Smith in proposing that it is in large part through 'shared memory' that the nation produces and re-produces itself over time (e.g Anderson 1991; Hall 1992b). Karl W. Deutsch (1966), for example, argues that the ultimate exercise of national power relies upon '[a] relatively coherent and stable structure of *memories,* habits and values' (1966:75 my italics). For Deutsch, the notion of 'shared memory', whether of real events or of ancient narratives, locates the collective inside a shared history. Memory acts as a powerful cohesive force, binding disparate individuals together, under the political (and cultural) 'roof' of the nation. It is memory, writes Duncan S. A Bell:

> [that] demarcates the boundary between Them and Us, delineating the national self from the foreign, alien Other. Such binding memories can be passed from generation to generation, transmigrating across multiple historical contexts.

They can (allegedly) be invented, acquired, and established, although more often than not they assume a life-force of their own, escaping the clutches of any individual group and becoming embedded in the very fabric, material and psychological, of the nation (Bell 2003: 70).

These observations regarding the significant relationship between memory and national identity have been taken up in recent years to the study of the vital role which different media play in articulating and constructing aspects of the nation's past (Silverstone 1999; Reading 2003). Such studies point to the mass media (pictures, newspapers and the like) as being the main mnemonic sites and the most influential mnemonic agents for the construction and maintaining of nationalism (e.g. Mosse, 1990; Sturken 1997; Olick 1998). To adequately explore the nature of the three-sided interplay between national identity, 'shared memory' and the media, it is necessary to clarify what this term 'shared memory' designates.

III. Theorizing 'shared memory'

One can trace the roots of scholarly interest in 'shared memory' at least as far back as Emile Durkheim (1915) and his notion of the 'conscience collective'. However, most theorists of collective memory take the work of the sociologist Maurice Halbwachs as their launching pad. Following Halbwachs, a student of Durkheim, they define collective memories as collectively shared representations of the past. Halbwachs' primary thesis was that human memory could only function within a collective context:

> Memory needs continuous feeding from collective sources and is sustained by social and moral props. Just like God needs us, so memory needs others (1992: 34).

Throughout his work Halbwachs claimed that various groups of people have different 'memories', which give rise to different modes of behaviour. In discussing this characteristic of collective memory, however, Halbwachs ended up declaring memory's failure in the face of the superior certainties of the 'science' of history (thus aligning himself with the era's dichotomous stance which opposed history to memory). His emphasis on the function of everyday communication for the development of collective memories, and his interest in the imagery of social

discourse, resonate with recent theoretical stands on *historical representation*. For, as many current theorists argue, history is a selective representation of the past, a narrative interpretation of events (e.g. Carr 1961; Hutton 1993; Munslow 1997; Arnold 2000). On this view, history does not merely reproduce facts; rather, it constructs their meaning by framing them within a cultural tradition that is inter-subjectively shared. History, in other words, resorts to discursive forms which occur in the present and are in themselves carriers of ideological and political implications (e.g. White 1988). According to this approach, the current understanding of 'history' is not very different from what Halbwachs defines as collective memory. They are both based on a common cultural tradition that supports and facilitates the communication between members of a community. And they both rely on narrative discourse as a mode through which people establish mutual understanding within a collective (Zamponi 1998).

Collective historiography has not treated Halbwach's study of collective historical consciousness too kindly. He has been criticized again and again (mostly by historians) for overlooking the role human agents (individuals and institutions) play in the construction of memories. As a result, although Halbwachs is frequently cited, historians find that they must distance themselves from him, in order to be able to return to their preferred subjects, the objectives and actions of individuals in history. As Wulf Kansteiner (2002:181) writes:

> ...many historians remain uncomfortable with Halbwachs's determined anti-individualism. They object that Durkheimians held tenaciously that individual memory was entirely socially determined and thus wrote the individual out of a role in the history of collective memory.

In order to find alternatives to Halbwachs's sociological conception of 'collective memory', historians have coined terms such as 'social memory' (Fentress & Wikham 1992), 'collective remembrance' (Winter & Sivan 1999), 'cultural memory' (Anderson 2001) and 'popular memory' (Spigel 1995). The multitude of terms has further increased as theorists sought to develop concepts that illuminate the social base or social function of the collective memories under consideration. The vocabulary of memory studies thus includes terms such as 'national memory', 'public memory', and 'vernacular memory' (see Kansteiner 2002).

In recent years a shift back to a more socially oriented framework regarding collective memory has emerged. In this context Jan Assmann's (1995) juxtaposition of two types of memory is particularly useful. Assmann differentiates between "communicative memory", based on group-specific carriers, on the one hand, and "cultural memory" that can exist independently of its carriers (see Levy & Sznaider 2002). 'What is at stake', he writes, 'is the transformation of communicative, i.e. lived and in witness embodied memory, into cultural, i.e, institutionally shaped and sustained memory, that is, into cultural mnemotechnique' (Assmann, 1991:343 cited in Levy & Sznaider 2002, translated from German by the authors). Assmann highlights a distinctive feature of collective memory (in contrast to history) namely that collective memory displays a strong bias for the present; it dedicates disproportionate amounts of time, space and resources to events that happened within the lifetimes of its producers and consumers. This element has been neatly summarized by Wulf Kansteiner (2002:180)

> Collective memory is not history, though it is sometimes made from similar material. It is a collective phenomenon but it only manifests itself in the actions and statements of individuals. It can take hold of historically and socially remote events but it often privileges the interests of the contemporary. It is as much a result of conscious manipulation as unconscious absorption and it is always mediated.

This notion of memory as primarily a social, rather than individual, phenomenon has become a central theme in 'collective memory studies' (e.g. Bommes & Wright 1982; Assmann 1995; Wood 1999; Jedlowski 2001; Levy & Sznaider 2002). Within this context, psychologists and neurologists have emphasized the social nature of individual remembering and forgetting. These studies, by and large, show that people's ability to store, recall, and reconfigure verbal and nonverbal experiences and information are connected to patterns of reception which people have learned from their social environment. For instance, the very language and narrative patterns that people use to express memories, even autobiographical memories, are inseparable from social standards of plausibility and authenticity. This approach regarding the nature of human memory seems to confirm Halbwachs, who had argued that 'the idea of an individual memory, absolutely separate from social memory, is an abstraction almost devoid of meaning' (cited in Kansteiner 2002:185). But the fact that individual memory cannot be conceptualized and studied without reference to its social context

does not necessarily imply the reverse, that is, that collective memory can only be imagined and accessed through its manifestation in individuals (Kansteiner 2002:185).

This observation regarding the distinction between individual and collective memory highlights another significant aspect regarding the concept of collective memory, namely collective amnesia. Following from Freud's work it is now clear that an individual's failure to work through his or her past may result in unwanted symptoms of psychological distress that the self relies on a sense of continuity that makes it impossible to repress the past without having to pay a psychological price for this repression. But on a collective scale, especially on the scale of larger collective, such assumptions are less applicable. For one thing, nations can repress memories with psychological impunity; their collective memories can be changed without a return of the repressed (discussed in Sturken 1997; Cohen 2001; Kansteiner 2002; Margalit 2002) In his book *States of Denial* (2001), Stanley Cohen discusses this 'collective forgetting', or 'social amnesia':

> Memories are lost or regained about what has happened to you (as victim), what you have done (as perpetrator) or know about (as observer).... Such denials belong to the wider cultural pool of collective forgetting ('social amnesia'), such as the glossily selective memories of victimization and aggression invoked to justify today's ethnic nationalist hatreds. Sometimes, this amnesia is officially organized by the state, covering up a record of genocide or other past atrocities (Cohen 2001:12).

This issue of collective remembering vs. collective amnesia has become a focus of major academic concern (e.g. Sturken 1997; Wood 1999; Jedlowski 2001). In this context Avishai Margalit's (2002) differentiation between 'shared memory' and what he terms, 'common memory' is particularly useful. For Margalit a common memory is an aggregate notion. It brings together people all of whom remember a certain episode which each of them had experienced. If the rate of those who remember the episode in a given society is above a certain threshold, then Margalit says that the memory of the episode is "common" in that society. A 'shared memory', on the other hand, is not a simple aggregate of individual memories; it requires *communication*. A shared memory is a calibrated memory, in the sense that it integrates the different perspectives of those who remember the episode into one version (or a small number of versions). This process allows other people in the community, who were not there at the time, to be plugged into the experience of those who were present through

'channels of description rather that by direct experience' (Margalit 2002:52). In distinguishing between the two terms, 'common' and 'shared' memory, Margalit points to a fundamental distinction regarding the notion of 'collective memory': unlike common memory (stored in the memory of many individuals) which, in most cases is, *involuntary*, shared memory (calibrated memory) is *voluntary*. This means that shared memory involves an active process by which a story is preserved and retold. This Margalit calls 'a division of mnemonic labor' (Margalit 2002:52):

> In modern societies, characterized by an elaborate division of labor, the division of mnemonic labor is elaborated too. In traditional society there is a direct line from the people to their priest or storyteller or shaman. But shared memory in a modern society travels from person to person through institutions, such as archives, and through communal mnemonic devices, such as monuments and the names of streets..... Whether good or bad as mnemonic devices, these complicated communal institutions are responsible, to a large extent, for our shared memories (Margalit 2002:54).

Margalit's 'shared memory' is very close to Renan's 'rich legacy of memories'. According to Magalit, the task of supporting these mnemonic institutions (such as museums and archives), and devices for memory (monuments and streets-names) is a collective (national) one (discussed in Appiah 2003).

Margalit's critical term 'mnemonic labor', and his conceptualization of the role played by institutions (notably national organizations) in the construction (and dissemination) of 'shared memory' is crucial to my study. It provides the basis for an analysis of the ways in which television as 'the principle means by which most people learn about history...' (Edgerton 2001:1) become instrumental in the shaping and maintaining of shared (national) memory. To explore the role television plays in this process, it is necessary to place television within the broader context of the role mass communication systems play in the construction of national identity and shared (national) memory.

IV. Nationalism and shared memory in communication theory

In his book *Nationalism and Social Communication* (1966), Karl W. Deutsch made a critical observation regarding the interplay between national identity, memory and

mass communication systems that remains pertinent for current debate. For Deutsch, the ultimate exercise of national power relies upon 'the relatively coherent and stable structure of *memories*, habits and values' which 'depends on existing facilities of *social communication*, both from the past to the present and between contemporaries' (1966:75, my italics). Social communication is, therefore, understood as an interactively sustained mode of being that integrates a given people and provides it with singularity (Deutsch 1966:97-7). Central to this argument is the view that national communities are strongly bound by their socially communicative structures of information, and that 'people are held together "from within" by this communicative efficiency, the complementarity of the communicative facilities acquired by their members' (Deutsch 1966:98). The key proposition in Deutsch's theory is that the essential aspect of the unity of a people is the complementarity or relative efficiency of communication among individuals—something that is in some ways similar to mutual rapport, but on a larger scale (1966: 188). If he had not made things clear enough, Deutsch turned to the pragmatic, writing that the nation-state was 'still the chief political instrument for getting things done'. (Deutsch 1966:4). Much of this 'getting things done', and 'on a larger scale', is to be achieved through the mass media.

Deutsch's theory, regarding the contribution of mass communication systems to the formation of nations, has been developed further in the more recent work of Ernest Gellner, who in his *Nations and Nationalism* (1983) argues that nations are novel and their formation was an inevitable outcome of industrialization, with its concomitant division of labour. According to this argument, in order to function effectively in industrial society, one needs in principle to be able to perform any job, and this requires 'generic training'. This in turn requires a standardized system of education, built on a standardized linguistic medium. It is this process that brings about an inevitable 'deep adjustment in the relationship between polity and culture', namely nationalism, which is 'the organization of human groups into large, centrally educated, culturally homogeneous groups' (Gellner 1983:35). Gellner's theory connects the explanatory power of industrialization to what Philip Schlesinger, in his essay *The Sociological Scope of 'National Cinema'* (2000:21) calls 'quintessentially Deutchian conception of social communication'. For Gellner "culture" refers to 'the distinctive style of conduct and communication of a given community', which in the modern world takes its form from the nation-state. For those participating in such

political formations, 'culture is now the necessary shared medium' (Gellner 1983:37-8).

However, both Gellner and Deutsch disregard the contents of the messages being delivered by the communication systems, arguing that it is not the content of such communication that matters, but rather:

> [I]t is the media themselves, the pervasiveness and importance of abstract centralized, standardized, one to many communication, which itself automatically engendered the core idea of nationalism, quite irrespective of what in particular is being put into the specific messages transmitted. The most important and persistent message is generated by the medium itself, by the role, which such media have acquired in modern life. The core message is that the language and the style of the transmission is important, that only he who can understand them, or can acquire such comprehension, is included in a moral and economic community, and that he who does not and cannot, is excluded (Gellner1983:127)

Echoing Marshall McLuhan (1967), Gellner argues, in effect, that the media are the message. But here the formula is modified to take account of 'language and style', of how common codes invite audiences to consider and understand themselves as members of a given community. The media therefore are boundary-makers, intimately related to the 'political roof' that caps a culture and makes it into a nation-state (discussed in Schlesinger 2000).

Gellner, was very conscious of the role of memory in creating nations. Like Renan (1996), he too emphasised the importance of national amnesia and getting one's history wrong for the maintenance of national solidarity. However, as Anthony D. Smith observed (Smith 1996:382) 'there was no systematic attempt in his work to deal with the problems posed by shared memories of a collective past'

The nature of the memory-nation nexus found expression in Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983; 1991). Anderson, like Gellner and Duetsch, takes mass mediated communication to be of central importance in the formation of national identity (and shared memory). Anderson argues that the nation at the turn of the twentieth century depended for its formation on a process by which existing societies used representations to turn themselves into new wholes that would act immediately upon people's feelings, and upon which they could base their identity. The belief that something fundamental underlines 'nations' is itself the result of a conscious myth-building process. Anderson makes it clear that it is precisely the mass

media that produce the requisite solidarity, through constant repetition of images and words. Technological changes in the means of communication are of central importance for the structuration of memory and identity. In the era of the nation-state, the central institution was the press. By co-ordinating time and space, newspapers could address an imagined national community even before it had developed into a full fledged nation-state.

Anderson's analysis adds a significant new dimension to the study of the interplay between mass communication systems and national identity. However, like those before him, he appears to neglect the ways in which the nation (and the nation's past and stories of this past) is being represented and constructed in the media.

Michael Billig's work *Banal Nationalism* (1995) serves to fill this gap. In taking up Anderson's argument about imagined communities, he shows that in established nations there is a constant flagging of nationhood. Billig introduces the term 'banal nationalism' to cover all those unnoticed, routine practices, ideological habits, beliefs, values and memories which make the daily reproduction of nations in the established states of the West possible:

> The metonymic image of banal nationalism is not a flag which is being consciously waved with fervent passion; it is a flag hanging unnoticed on the public building (Billig 1995: 8)

To illustrate his argument, Billig conducts a survey of British daily newspapers on a randomly selected day. His findings are significant: British papers constantly flag nationhood. For instance, the structure in which they present their news takes the existence of a world composed of different nations for granted. Furthermore, by employing a complex deixis of 'here', and 'we', they present 'the national homeland as the home of the readers' (Billig 1995:11). In his joining of 'national' and 'ism'— nationalism, Billig highlightings the situation in which a national (ism) will then essentially be presented as positive and valuable. This 'isming' of nation is in Billig's critical reading, a site of self praise which allows nations to produce and reproduce themselves.

There is a significant segue to be traced between Billig's situating of his 'banal nationalism' within the clear framework of an *ideology* and Robins and Aksoy (2000) positioning of their term 'deep nation' within a similarly ideological construct. My shift to look at the work of Robins and Aksoy is significant in that it is my first

move to a theorizing of nation and cinema. While social communication theories have promoted a close fit between communication and the national, and what Schlesinger calls 'an overwhelming concern with the interior of the national communicative space' (2000: 24), the Robins/Aksoy work on Turkish cinema is a striking example of how this sociological work has been reproduced in recent film theory.

Writing about the Turkish cinema culture, Robins and Aksoy (2000) are concerned with how the production, circulation and consumption of the moving image is representative of a national collectivity. Working within the boundaries of a given state, Turkey, they coin the term 'deep nation' to cover '... the most fundamental aspects or level of belonging in any group...the grounding for what is imagined as the ontological nation, affording the energy and tenacity that inform its act of imaginary closure' (Robins & Aksoy 2000:205). In addressing the concept of 'deep nation' the critics were concerned with how it is that a national community exists together and holds together. They pointed to two binding mechanisms. First is the mechanism of repression, what Daniel Sibony (1997) refers to as the groups, 'point of silence', allowing its specific nation/culture audience to become that *collection of people who are resolved to stay silent about the same thing* to protect that thing, and to protect themselves from it by means of it' (Sibony 1997:248, cited in Robins & Aksoy 2000:205, Sibony's italics). This is the negative description of the process: agreement on what will not be spoken. The second mechanism is the positive valorisation of the group. 'It is this mechanism that ensures the conditions of possibility for the idealisation of the group's own self- the uncontaminated ground on which it is possible to construct the ideal image of the nation' (Robins & Aksoy 2000:206). Robins and Aksoy's presentation of the double mechanism of self praise/consentual silence, and the role cinema plays in this process, is an important precursor for my own discussion of 'shared memory' and 'collective amnesia'.

V. National identity and film theory

In the wake of extensive critical writing on issues of national and nationalism (e.g. Anderson 1983; Hobnsbawm & Ranger 1983; Bhabha 1990) over the past twenty years have seen the emergence of a broad swathe of critical studies on national cinemas (attempting to define a singular national self-identity) and to careful analytical work on the concept of national cinema itself—working to situate national

cinema within an international system of difference[7] (e.g. Butzel & Lopez 1993; Martín-Barbero 1993; Higson 1995; Hjort & MacKenzie 2000; Smith 2000; Williams 2002). This large body of multi-disciplinary literature has provided significant material in what can be broken down into three areas: the first consider the ways in which nation-states used cinema in their efforts to create national culture; the second explores diverse strategies involved in the production of national cinema; the third examines patterns of consumption and consider the ways in which images of the nation are understood by audiences both at home and abroad (discussed in Hjort & MacKenzie 2000).

In his book *Waving the Flag: Constructing Cinema in Britain* (1995) Andrew Higson writes:

> Cinema, both as general culture experience and entertainment form, and as individual films which contribute to that experience, is of course one of these 'mass' communications systems, one of the means by which the public sphere is constructed on a national scale (Higson 1995:7)

Higson goes on to describe the process thus:

> Individual film will often serve to represent the national itself, as a nation. Inserted into the general framework of the cinematic experience, such films will construct imaginary bonds which work to hold the peoples of a nation together as a community by dramatizing their current fears, anxieties, pleasures and aspirations. A diverse and often antagonistic group of peoples are thus invited to recognize themselves as a singular body with a common culture, and to oppose themselves to other cultures and communities (Higson 1995:7).

In his analysis, Higson suggests that national cinema might be defined through a range of characteristics: industrial and business aspects, screenings and consumption and their impact on national culture, the distinctions used by cultural policy-makers and critical circles, and finally, types of representations, in particular the choice of genre (Higson 1995:4-5). In the same vein, Sarah Street (1997), also writing on British cinema, offers a more pragmatic definition of national cinema by stressing the notion of domestic production to be understood as a 'film registered as British', despite the ambiguities this creates, given the diverse national mixes of finance,

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[7] It is not within the scope of my thesis to enter here into the normative argument on whether national cinema ought to represent cultural diversity and why it should not necessarily have a nationalistic mission.

producer partnerships and creative personnel typical of movie-making. This simplification, however, is tempered by an acceptance of Britishness as 'one element in the increasingly international, intertextual diversity of modern genre cinema' (Street 1997:113). For Susan Hayward, the issue of 'national cinema' is rooted in the developing of a nation's political culture. In her study on French cinema she writes:

> Film functions as cultural articulation of a nation .... film textualises the nation and subsequently constructs a series of relations around the concepts, first, of state and citizen, then the state, citizens and other (and so on). In this way .... a 'national' cinema-is ineluctably 'reduced' to a series of enunciations that reverberate around two fundamental concepts: identity and difference (Hayward 1993:x)

This line of investigation has changed slightly in recent years. Following Stuart Hall's 'encoding/decoding' model of communication (1980) scholars have moved the argument away from questions of production, and underlined the key importance of how viewers consume audio-visual texts. The issue thus becomes one of 'how actual audiences construct their cultural identity in relation to the various products of the national and international film and television industries' (Higson 1995:279; Higson 2000).

Similarly, Pierre Sorlin (1996), writing about Italian cinema, argues that the *consumption* of films by successive generations is the key to understanding national cinema:

> Four generations of cinema-goers built up an enormous palimpsest of different sounds and images, domestic as well as alien, and used it to organise their lives in the particular place where they were residing, Italy (Sorlin 1996:172).

Focusing on viewing habits in Italy, Sorlin (1996) illustrates the manner in which cinema was part of a cluster of tools which enabled the Italians to build a picture of themselves, both individually and as members of a group. For Sorlin, cinema - like the Andersonian novel and newspaper- has been the vehicle for creating a common 'spatio-temporal horizon' (Schlesinger 2000:28) for the Italian viewers. Sorlin (1996) writes:

> Together with radio and later television, cinema helped introduce Italian to zones where, otherwise, it would not have been heard. Far from taking their

identity from the language they use, filmmakers have actively co-operated in given official Italian its present status of most common idiom in the peninsula (Sorlin 1996:10).

In order to understand how films can contribute to the kind of *imagining* that becomes instrumental in the nurturing of a nation, it is necessary to look at the historical origins of the interrelations between films and the nation. A brief look at the history of non-fiction films will enable me to consider the manner in which nations attempt to forge shared memory and collective historical awareness through cinema.

VI. Non-fiction films and the nation

In his essay *Images of the Nation: Cinema Art and National identity* (2000), Anthony D. Smith pointed out the significant role which cinematic representations play in the construction and maintenance of national identity. Looking especially at the role of filmmakers in this process, he writes:

> [filmmakers] help to create and reproduce the very fabric of national communities to which they belong, and thereby disseminate and perpetuate the idea of the nation itself, its history, development and destiny (Smith 2000:57).

It is essential to note, however, that (silent) films in their early days were clearly a form of communicating that, in their essence, seemed to transcend any specific language. The earliest motion pictures (such as *Record of a Sneeze* (1884) and *Workers Emerging from the Factory* (1895)) readily crossed national boundaries and, unlike books or newspapers, could be easily understood without any translation; they thus had the potential to undermine national boundaries, standards and identities (Musser 1999). By the end of the 19th century, however, things started to change. With the sinking of the U.S battleship *Maine* in 1898, the subsequent Cuban crisis, and the Spanish-American War, filmmakers had their first opportunity to record live combat action. These early war films not only provided audience with the thrill of seeing motion pictures of combat for the first time, but also roused public opinion and post-war sentiments, helping to exploit, distort and exaggerate the news. The success of such films established a pattern for both British and American films made in the Spanish-American War: some filmmakers travelled to the battle zones to record the action, while others stayed at home and staged war scenes for their cameras. These films reflected both the non-fiction and the fiction impulses of the early cinema: On

the one hand, there was a desire, almost the obsession, to record events 'as they really happened' (albeit from some specific perspective) and on the other hand, there was also the desire to dramatise events, through cinematic feats, such as close-ups, double exposure etc. (Barsam 1992).

By 1903 'editing' was discovered, and with it the possibility of manipulating the images- shooting speeds, time continuities and space (Plummer 2000). The first edited film *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) made by Edwin S. Porter 'provided the key to the whole art of film editing, the joining together of bits of film shot in different places and at different times to form a single, unified narrative- a principle that Méliès, with his theatrical background, was never able to grasp' (Arthur Knight 1957, cited in Lynes 1985: 37). The film historian Lewis Jacobs writes:

> The invention of editing-representing a kind of technological quantum jump-endowed the movies with great new capabilities for controlling and manipulating the flow of time, the speed of events, and screen continuity or order. Editing propelled movies to a radical change in screen subject matter. Motion pictures, until then almost exclusively devoted to the films-of-fact's objective recording of unmanipulated actuality, now were suddenly opened up to the rearrangment and reconstruction of reality for narrative and dramatic purposes (cited in Sherman 1998:3)

When World War I broke out in 1914, *narrative* films became a weapon for information and propaganda (Barsman 1992). The need to mobilize public opinion became an essential task for all the countries involved in the war, and the coverage of battlefields tended to be *nation specific*, rather then universal. The war created a new audience interest in films about politics in general and about the war in particular (Barta 1998). Such war films not only provided the public with the thrill of seeing motion pictures of combat for the first time, but also enabled viewers to '*witness*' and thus, *participate* in the nation's struggle (Sherman 1998). This element has been described by Jean-Paul Sartre. In his autobiography *Words* ([1964]2000:79) he reflects on his visit to the cinema during the war:

> I was satisfied, I had found the world in which I wanted to live. I was in touch with the absolute. What uneasiness, too, when the lights went on again: I was torn with love for these characters and they had disappeared, taking their world with them; I had felt their victory in the bones, yet it was theirs and not mine: out in the street, I was a supernumerary once more.

In contrast to other visual forms of representation (such as still photographs), films could be (and were) watched simultaneously by many, thus bringing identical images of past events to the masses. Furthermore, films are typically viewed in semi-public spaces, so watching a film becomes a shared experience. These unique characteristics were instrumental in the moving image becoming a major source of knowledge (and pride) for a large fraction of the citizenry.

The British, who entered the war in late August 1914, soon realized the importance of films to the war effort. In late 1914 the British government established The War Propaganda Bureau. A few months later, a financial agreement was reached between the War Office and leading representatives of the British film industry. The parties agreed that the British film industry would supply the necessary equipment and expertise, while the budget would be provided by the War Office. Furthermore it was agreed that all negatives, prints, and copyrights would be the property of the government and that films would be distributed for exhibition only in the British Empire, excluding the sensitive areas of Egypt and India (Barsam 1992; 34).

This trend is characteristic also of the American film industry. Eight days after the United States declared war on Germany, President Wilson established the Committee on Public Information. The Committee shaped American public policy on war films, monitored domestic production, and regulated international film trade with the United States. It was charged with providing information about the war for Americans and information about America for foreigners. The films' overall themes were to present the democratic way of life, to convey the basic idea that America at war was a powerful, not a violent country, and to emphasize the belief that the war would be won by the self-sacrifices of ordinary men and women (Barsam 1992:40).

Alarmed by the growing number of effective anti-German propaganda films made by the British, the German government realized that such films would make a vital contribution also to the German war effort. As a result, in 1915 the production and distribution of German films was placed under state control. General Erich Ludendorff, commander in chief of the German Army, wrote:

> The war has demonstrated the superiority of the photograph and films as means of information and persuasion. Unfortunately, our enemies have used their great advantage over us in this field so thoroughly that they have inflicted a great deal of damage. Nor will films lose their significance during the rest of this war as a means of political and military persuasion. For this reason it is

utmost importance for a successful conclusion to the war that films should be made to work with the greatest possible effect wherever any German persuasion might still have any effect (cited in Barsam 1992: 36-37).

After the war, documentaries took on the stature of an 'art form', and the filmmaker primarily responsible for 'the creative documentary' Robert Flaherty, came to be called 'the father of the documentary'[8] (Lynes 1985:294; Sherman 1998). Flaherty lived in 'Eskimo Country' for eleven years and during this time he shot his film on the life of one specific individual- Nanook. At the same time, in different parts of the world, the cinematic documentation of life continued. For other filmmakers, especially in France and Germany, the documentary continued the 'slice of life' approach that Flaherty had initiated in the early 1920s. Not wishing to seek out the unusual or exotic in faraway places, these documentaries relished the rhythms and tempos created by anonymous urban everyday life. *Nothing But the Hours* (1926), Alberto Cavalcanti's detailing of the upper and lower classes of Paris, and Walter Ruttman's *Berlin: The Symphony of a Great City* (1927) are the most outstanding examples (Barsam 1992; Sherman 1998). However, the filmmaker Dziga Vertov, is generally regarded as the pioneer of films in which the documentary filmmaker acts not only as a 'passive' observer but also as an active commentator- as a reporter. Vertov believed that the camera offered an objective means to report events. In his development of the 'kino-eye theory', he argued that the camera eye had power beyond that of the human eye, hence, was superior. The camera, according to Vertov had limitless capabilities. Yet the camera-person was not to attempt creativity. The film was to be unbiased and totally 'realistic' in intent. Only in the editing stages could the filmmaker make a personal statement. *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1928) best demonstrated Vertov's theories of the kino-eye. The filmmaker presents the viewer with a day in Moscow, similar to the city symphonies. At the same time, he points out how raw material should be used. The film opens with a camera pointed at the audience. Thus the audience is instantly aware of the massage that the kino-eye is meant to see all. Throughout the film an eye is intercut with the scenes to repeat

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[8] The British filmmaker John Grierson is generally acknowledged as one of the first to use the term 'documentary' which he intended as a concept or idea rather a mode of narration. He coined this terming 1926, in a review of Flaherty's film Moana. From that time on, documentary has been a firmly established term. Unlike the fiction film, the documentary takes its content from the perceptible behaviour of people in relation to society. Crucial to this definition is that it does not fabricate characters or situations but lets the unrehearsed drama of everyday life unfold before the camera.

that this is a film not 'reality' (discussed in McDonald & Cousins 1996; Sherman 1998). Opposed to the romanticization of 'far away places' as presented by Flaherty, and to the concentration on form evidenced by Vertov, the British filmmaker John Grierson believed that the main intent of the documentary was the 'creative treatment of actuality'.

> Cinema has a sensational capacity for enhancing the movement which tradition has formed or time worn smooth. Its arbitrary rectangle specially reveals movement; it gives it maximum pattern in space and time. Add to this that documentary can achieve an intimacy of knowledge and effect impossible to the shim-sham mechanics of the studio, and the lily-fingered interpretations of the metropolitan actor (Grierson 1972, cited in McDonald & Cousins 1996:97).

Like Vertov, Grierson thought that film had *social purpose* and he demanded that it inform the *citizens* of an actual or needed social programme so that it would function as a means of communicating issues of social reform (Corner 1986). Preceding McLuhan's ideas concerning the media revolution by four decades, Grierson foresaw a decline in print orientation and believed that films could be used as a tool in the task of providing British *citizens* with educational enlightenment (Sherman 1998:13). The funding for the work which he and other members of the British Documentary Movement produced came, by and large, from the state and from industrial sponsorship (Kilborn & Izod 1997:19). The key to Grierson's perception of the important role the filmmaker has in a democratic society was his by turning the camera onto his own, rather than a remote, society. However, rather then being descriptive by compiling images without analysis, Grierson presented a problem and either offered solutions or evoked a desire in the viewers to provide a solution. Bill Nichols (1988) identifies 'Griersonian tradition', the dramatised illustrative lecture, as the first coherent documentary style. Generally, this style involves an authorial commentary combined with dramatic images, to create a narrator-directed exposition of a topic (Nichols 1988). The key justification for this 'authorial approach' was the traditional assumption by which the camera ensures direct access to the truth, as the mediation is technical as opposed to human. This was reinforced with the developments of technology, most notably sound recording. John Corner (1986) notes that the act of recording reproduces a likeness, thus creating an independent existence for that which is recorded. This point was developed by Brian Winston (1995) who

explained the manner in which the process of recording creates the illusion of the documentary as almost unimpeachable:

> Watching 'actuality' on the screen is like watching the needles dance on the physiograph: the apparatus becomes transparent; the documentary becomes scientific inscription-evidence (Winston 1995:137).

New sound technologies outstripped the movie in media politics. The microphone and the loudspeaker carried the voices of national leaders into every town and square, enabling the citizenry to *'witness'* (see and hear) and *'participate'* in the making of history (Kilborn & Izod 1997:18).

> American, Soviet, Fascists, and National Socialist achievements were projected to the world of the 1930s in ideological competition with more established varieties of imperial propaganda (Barta 1998:5).

In England, documentaries made by the government under the guidance and with the inspiration of John Grierson assumed a quiet but purposeful attitude toward public welfare. These films were first made under the aegis of the Empire Marketing Board and after 1933 by the Film Unit of the General Post Office, so that by the time the Second World War came there was not only a tradition of government film making but an organization to undertake the production of both morale and training films. After Britain declared war on Germany, the Ministry of Information took over the supervision and in most cases the production of documentaries (Lynes 1985:296).

In the United States, there was no such single, concentrated organization to deal with propaganda and training. In the 1930s documentaries about the threat of war were not in the least common in the US. But the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) provoked films, which aroused the wrath of Catholic organizations backing Franco, and there were also a few films made to support the Chinese in their fight against the Japanese invention. Such films aroused little interest, and most theatres ignored them.

World War II greatly enhanced the development of non-fiction films. The majority of documentaries made during the War were based on the fundamental values of the countries which produced them. These films (mostly funded by governments) are most notable for attempting to convince the people of various countries that their national cause was just (Sherman 1998). Military and civilian strategists realized, more fully than they did in World War I, the important role that

films could play in modern warfare. Films could create or influence public opinion, strengthen attitudes, stimulate emotions and explain government policies. Each side in the War made films that expressed outrage at the enemy's actions and righteousness about its own responses. Each used stylistic elements - particularly music and narration- to establish and reinforce its case. The British films focused on British unity, patriotism, and humanity in a time of national crisis. The German films represented a vision of a new world that exalted Aryan supremacy and promoted anti-Semitism.

The United States, entering the war in 1941, had the advantage of adopting both Axis and Allied strategies in their production or using their footage in the compilation of films such as the "Why We Fight" series (Barsman 1992). The film industry turned to the federal government to seek advice on ways the movies could be most effective as a weapon in the war effort, and asked that there be one agency with which it could 'harmoniously' co-ordinate its efforts. Many of Hollywood's most distinguished practitioners enlisted in branches of the Armed Services to write, direct, and edit training and morale films for both military and civilian audience. What audiences saw was essentially the earlier formula, now accompanied by newsreels of action, fresh from the 'theatre of combat' (Lynes 1985: 298).

As the war wound down, filmmakers began making films concerned with domestic and personal issues that mirror national topics (Barsam 1992; Barta 1998). However, in order to maintain its claim about access to unmediated 'reality' and objectivity, the camera had to be invisible. The introduction of lighter and smaller equipment in the 1950s made intimate observation possible and initiated a style of filmmaking in which filmmakers were merely observers. This style aimed to record events as directly as possible and conveyed to viewers a feeling of being there while ordinary people went about their lives and talked about everyday things. These practices began in France with cinéma vérité, a self-reflexive realistic style.

Cinéma vérité aimed to highlight the filmmaking process while direct cinema aimed to hide it and provide the viewer with unmediated access to the events depicted[9].

At the same time, a significant development occurred, namely a shift from the heroic mode of the movies to the *domestication* of the moving images (Barta 1998). The vast majority (over ninety per cent) of documentaries are nowadays produced directly by, or at the behest of, television networks (Kilborn & Izod 1997:16; Edgerton 2001: 2). The new medium-television brought the imagined past as well as live events to people's homes. The screen was smaller, more intimate, and more instant (Silverstone 1994). When colour arrived it fulfilled television's claim to be a window to the world.

> The set in the corner gave instant and democratising access to statesman, floods, famines, and, of course, wars. "Bringing the war home" meant frontline gunfire and body counts in the living room, the television permanently inciting assent to-or dissent from-- *national policy*. Yet it is always seemed undemanding (Barta 1998:5-6, My italics).

This illusion, which is provoked when one is watching television, is often characterized by the cliché 'being there' (Edgerton 2001). This is exactly what Norma Percy, the series producer of television histories such as *The Fifty Years War*, referred to when she wrote:

> Our aim is to take viewers inside meetings at which critical decisions were taken so they can hear the arguments as they happened. In this way dry concepts come alive for the viewers[10].

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[9] The issue regarding the relationship between coverage and the events depicted has evoked extensive academic debate. Discussion has revolved around the ways events are represented and the legitimacy of the very claim that coverage represents an external reality (e.g. Nichols 1991; Winston 1995; Corner 1996). Points of contention include how the filming of events changes what is captured; an over-reliance on elite sources; difficulties in distinguishing between fiction and non-fiction programmes; the criteria for truth claims; and whether detached or objective coverage is possible. Such debates often led to abstract speculation about the nature of 'reality', which cannot be usefully addressed in empirical research. It is not my intention to reproduce such debates as they have been dealt with in considerable detail elsewhere, and are not the primary concern of this study. I am interested in the ways in which past events are organized, narrativized and presented in documentaries, rather than whether the recorded images have an indexical basis in reality. In this context, however, it is important to note that documentaries (unlike 'realist fictions') are films with a special commitment to convey the "real", the "truths" which matter in people's lives but which cannot be objectively represented.

[10] Cited from Brian Lapping's working paper.

Indeed, the producing, transmitting and viewing of historical programming has become a large-scale cultural ritual. This process fulfils a number of important functions:

> ...it organizes together various viewing constituencies into a web of understandable relations, which are defined mostly by their differing identities and positions of power; it loosely affirms majoritarian standards, values, and beliefs; and it facilitates a society's ongoing negotiation with its useable past by portraying those parts of the collective memory that are most relevant at any given time to the producers of these programs as well as the millions of individuals who tune them in (Edgerton 2001:8).

Analysing the 'television documentary' genre, television historians (e.g Sterling & Kittross 2002) have provided vivid accounts of how television programming came to dominate national culture, by favouring uniformity over diversity, replication over innovation, and the national over the local (see Curtin 2001:336). These tendencies will be discussed here in the context of television production practices and, in particular, of one specific mode of production, known as *international co-production*. It has been claimed that this mode of production tends to weaken the strong bond between television histories and the national entity (Strover 1995; Murdock 1996; Baltruschat 2002). For example, Serra Tinic (2003) writes:

> International media buyers are unwilling to pay top dollar for programmes that carry a cultural discount, if they are willing to buy them at all. In an effort to avoid the cultural discount, most international coproductions aim a form of universalism that homogenizes television content so that stories take place in .... a "no-where land" (Tinic 2003: 174)

In order to examine this claim, I shall locate international co-production for the making of televising histories within a broader category and explore the role played by television in the construction and maintenance of nationalism.

Chapter Two

Theorizing Television/Nationalism/Globalization

> Our role is to explore and articulate the meaning of Britishness in a multi-cultural developing Britain. Every household pays our wages and funds our programmes though the privilege of the license fee, and because of this we are charged with providing programmes and services for everyone and we are publicly accountable for doing so (Greg Dyke, BBC Director General, 7 May 2000)[11].

In a speech of Greg Dyke, posted on the BBC's website in May 2000, Dyke defines the role of the BBC as 'to explore and articulate the meaning of Britishness'. In using the word 'articulate,' Dyke clearly articulates the strong bond between the nation and its television network.

In the following chapter I consider the complex nature of the relationship between television and the national entity[12]. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part explores the role of television in forming and sustaining national consciousness. The second part assesses the impact of the recently emerging global television on the decline of the nation and, by implication, of national identity. The remainder of the chapter examines the role played by global television in challenging the nation-memory nexus by concentrating on what has been referred to in the newly coined term 'cosmopolitan memory' (Levy & Sznaider 2002).

I. Television and the nation

Up to the 1980's the strong bond between the nation and its television industry was, in Western Europe, undeniable (e.g. Barker 1997; 1999; Wieten *et al* 2000). When television was first introduced, the main carriers of broadcasting were the airwaves, and television programmes were transmitted to the viewers via aerials (Free Over the Air Television). Air was and still is a national resource, and its owner is, by definition, the nation-state. In such circumstances the scope for genuine competition in supply was quite limited, and the natural method of payment for service rendered was tax-based. The absence of a market mechanism served as a justification for extensive regulation of programme content, and viewing times. These legal interventions

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[11] Cited from Greg Dyke speech 2000: www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning /pitching
[12] The focus is on broadcasting systems in the Western world.

imposed rules on programming mix and strict controls on the broadcasting of foreign material on the national channels that were open to all. The television industry, therefore, was assigned and assumed a dual role: to serve as a political public sphere of the nation-state and to act as a locus for national culture (discussed in Morley & Robins 1995; Tracey 1998; Born & Prosser 2001; Harrison & Wood 2001).

Clearly, this construct was based on a well established model of radio, first introduced in the 1920s. The mental attitudes of the first generation of radio broadcasters in most Western countries were moulded by the sense of national identity that emerged in the wake of the First World War (Price 1998). In one country after another, the nation-state promoted the structuring of the broadcasting industry, regulating it to limit competition. In the post-war years, radio broadcasting became the central mechanism for constructing the culture that defines a nation and 'brought into being a culture common to whole populations and a shared public life of quite a new kind' (Scannell 1989:138). Historically, radio's role, operations, and institutional structure varied from country to country; there were, however, and still are, many common elements to public broadcasting across borders (Raboy 1996; Barker 1997; Wieten *et al* 2000). Today, countries with highly developed public broadcasting, such as the UK, France, the Netherlands and Germany, typically do not restrict programming to specific genres. Instead, it is a common understanding that public broadcasting has to appeal to a broad audience. At the same time, it is regarded as important that in its programme schedules, public broadcasting exhibit the distinct and common elements of public interest programming. These core elements include news, information, culture, and programs for children/youth. Public broadcasting was designed as a service to a public demarcated by national boundaries and national terms of reference. It was also expected to protect the national language and culture, to 'represent' the citizens of the nation-state and, more broadly, to protect national interests (Morley & Robins 1995:10-11).

Overall, the public broadcasting service (both radio and television) created a community by the ongoing offering of possibilities for identification with the nation via the invitation to be present at 'national' ceremonies and rituals. By so doing the service made sure that the vast majority of the citizenry could take part in the daily life of a society that covered an entire country, uniting individual members of the national community around a shared cultural agenda. PSB was offered as a service to all citizens within the nation-state's geo-political borders and in this way contributed

to national integration (Raboy 1996; Tracey 1998; Van-den Bulck 2001:57-58). In the words of the BBC's first director-general, Lord Reith:

> ...the clock which beats the time over the Houses of Parliament, in the centre of the Empire, is heard echoing in the loneliest cottage in the land (Reith 1924:220).

Even in the United States, where commercial broadcasting (radio and later television) was, from the beginning, the norm, national concerns were paramount; the 'national networks' CBS, NBC and ABC, served to focus on national life, interests and activity. On both sides of the Atlantic, broadcasting was one of the key institutions through which listeners had come to imagine themselves as members of a national community (Morley & Robins 1995:11)[13]. A prime illustration of the close ties between the United States and its public service system is in the Public Broadcasting Service slogan 'This program was funded by viewers like you'. This slogan is placed in programmes' credits to acknowledge the financial support it had received, an appeal to the audience that attempts to position viewers as participants in the system (Dornfeld 1998:61). However since PBS's programmes are usually accessible only within the geo-political borders of the United States, the slogan caption targets a specific group, namely Americans. The uses of this slogan and the message it conveys throw light on a 3-sided interplay between *content, funding* and *audiences*. This triangle characterizes the concept of Public Service Broadcasting in the US and elsewhere, namely, the programmes are made for the citizens (public good), are funded by the public (tax or voluntary contribution) and designed for the public, i.e. the citizenry.

It is essential, however, to note that broadcasting signals are not by their nature national. Radio and television signals travel readily across borders so that the development of a national network was a product of a social, political and legal system whereby broadcasting institutions could be regulated on a national basis. Given their technology, which is inherently trans-national, radio and later television had to be regulated so as to become national media. In this respect the history of

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[13] In the US, public service television was designed from the start as a national project, even though it operated in a commercial environment and was thus, very different from the European model (Viewer ship was limited to 2-3% of the general audience and financial viability depended on sponsorship and donations).

broadcasting is the history of the development of legal and regulatory instruments designed to inhibit the inherent trans-national tendency of the media. As a result of these legal efforts, the broadcasting industry came into existence as an institution under structures to articulate a national culture and to serve as a communications media for the national public sphere. It was within this context that "public service broadcasting" was established, as a model rooted in the national imagery (Robins 2002).

It is not surprising then that with the publication in 1983 of Benedict Anderson's book *Imagined Communities* the term 'imagined communities' caught on so widely:

> [A nation is] an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of the fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communication (Anderson 1983:6).

Building on Anderson's concept, it has been argued that television in the 20th century is one of the key institutions through which individuals come to imagine themselves as members of a national community (e.g. Gripsrud 1999; Murdock 1999; Hogen; 1999; Lo 2001). Kevin Robins (2002:2), for example writes that:

> Television [....] has made visible to us all of those people who we feel are part of the same national community but whom we would never otherwise generally have seen.

Yet alongside the theorizing about this strong and nourishing connection of TV-industry/nation, a second group of theorists was increasingly calling into question the nature of this same bond. Two fundamental changes, they claimed, one technological, one economic/political, have re-shaped the television landscape (e.g. Mattelart 1979; Tunstall 1977; Barker 1997; Thussu 2000; Wang *et al* 2000; Wieten, *et al* 2000; Park & Shanti 2003).

The first major salvo in this development was the inception of commercial television. Studies show that up to the early 1980s public networks dominated the field in all seventeen countries of Western Europe. Compared to some 40 public channels existing, there were in 1980 only four commercial channels in only three countries (Luxembourg, Finland and the UK). By the end of the 1990s this balance had shifted: in these same seventeen countries, there are now almost 60 public

channels and over 70 private channels, all intended for national audiences and reaching more than 50 per cent of households (Wieten *et al* 2000). Privately-owned television providers now operate their own transmitting stations, and compete with one another in the supply of programmes. With the programmes financed from advertising revenue, a direct connection was established between customer preferences and supply incentives. The more viewers a programme garnered the more valuable the advertising air-time sold with it (Congdon 1992). With the advent of commercial channels, the television industry has had to cater to people with different tastes, offering them different types of programmes (Chen & Su 2000). However this new structure of the television industry was still remote from any competitive ideal. There was competition between the public service channel/s and the commercial private channel/s, but it was competition of a regulated and artificial kind.

In the 1990s the change accelerated with major advances in the realm of technology (Congdon 1992; Thussu 2000; Born & Prosser 2001). The emergence of cable distribution systems dramatically enlarged the number of channels available in most countries (e.g. Herman & McChesney 1997; Thussu 2000), and fierce competition emerged among an extremely large number of suppliers (both commercial and public).

Competition was also boosted by the move towards digital technologies. For the first time, all forms of communications -- written text, statistical data, still and moving images, music and the human voice -- could be coded, stored and relayed using the same basic computer language (Golding & Murdock 1996:20) As a result, television outputs now flow across geographic boundaries in an increasingly fluid way, blurring the boundaries that have traditionally separated different national communities. Jean Chalaby and Glen Segell (1999:366) clearly indicate this as a new threat:

> As the field globalizes and becomes dominated by transnational corporations and international consortia, who have the technological expertise to be competitive and the resources to afford the gamble, national public broadcasters are threatened with decline.

Studies point to another significant technological change which has had a dramatic effect on the television industry (in terms both of structure and of content) namely, the possibility of instituting direct payment for individual channels and programmes. Until the 1990s technology has been unable to gauge how viewers value a given

television service and to determine its market value. Technology did not allow viewers to express their preferences directly, either for the service as a whole or for a particular programme. Direct payment changed this situation by allowing direct demand information to flow between audience and broadcaster, as in more conventional market structures. Furthermore, direct payment (pay-per–view and various kinds of subscription schemes) created a situation where broadcasters could charge individuals according to viewing. This resulted in television outputs being funded much like any other commodity and produced accordingly (Congdon 1992; Chalaby & Segell 1999).

Within this new context, the promoting of the political and social motivating factors of the public television era - democracy and public life, national culture and identity - have come to be regarded as factors inhibiting the development of a new media market (Morley & Robins 1995). From a monopoly situation, with income, in most cases, both from license fees and from advertising, public broadcasters suddenly have to share that resource with an increasing number of private channels, with the license fees and/or tax income remaining static in most countries (e.g. Thussu, 2000; Wang *et al* 2000; Wieten, *et al* 2000; Park & Shanti 2003). In this new competitive environment, public television is pressured into adopting a commercial logic (Barker 1997; Born & Prosser 2001). The commercialization of public networks has taken various forms including the introduction of advertising on public television (Italy and Israel), the increased involvement of public television in commercial merchandising (BBC and ABC), greater reliance on outside independent production companies (BBC and WGBH), and a drift of public channels into more competitive scheduling practices (Barker 1997;1999).

Clearly, these transformations find expression in the contents of television outputs. When television was first introduced, it was seen as a 'public good,' defined by economist Paul Samuelson as a commodity 'which all enjoy in common in the sense that each individual's consumption of such a good leads to no subtraction from any other individual's consumption' (Samuelson, cited in Condon 1992: x11). Policy-makers had to treat it differently from other goods and services and, indeed, from other media. Whereas a free market economy is successful in matching the supply of private goods with the demand, no decentralized pricing system, Samuelson writes, 'can serve to determine optimally' the consumption of public goods, because 'it is the selfish interest of each person to give false signals, to pretend to have less interest in a

given collective consumption activity than he really has' (Samuelson, cited in Condon 1992: x11). According to this definition, what the television industry produces is clearly a 'public good'. Once the television transmitters had been set up, a decision by any one viewer to tune into a programme did not encroach in any way on other viewers' ability to watch the programme. Both the marginal cost of supplying a new viewer and the price confronting him were zero. Because technology did not allow viewers to give the correct signals about how much they valued the overall television service and to indicate an appropriate price, television suppliers were 'misled'. New technology permits monitoring of the numbers of consumers viewing a specific programme, and thus makes it possible for television suppliers to put an appropriate 'price tag' on the programmes they produce. This process allows television outputs to be produced according to consumer demand (Doyle 2002).

New technology, allowing for a direct flow of information between suppliers and consumers and greatly reducing spectrum scarcity, has all but removed the justification for State spectrum control. At the same time, market forces were perceived by policy-makers to be the best mechanism for ensuring effective delivery of television services, which justified the move away from a heavily regulated television environment (discussed in Harrison & Wood 2001; Wieten *et al* 2000). The combination of these two elements, new technology and liberalism, resulted in a notable shift from close regulation, administered in the public interest, to a new regulatory regime (often described as 'deregulation') 'driven by economic and entrepreneurial imperatives' (Morley & Robins 1995:11). This change has, in turn, produced a trend whereby the number of television channels (public and private, national and trans-national) in most countries increased dramatically, allowing the television industry to shift from being a national and largely monopolized sector to being an international and even a global competitive enterprise.

These current developments have led to the emergence of more channels available to the viewing public, resulting in turn in a growing competition among different television providers. But by the same token, for the typical television operator (public and private, national and trans-national) intensifying competition has meant smaller television audiences and a higher cost of programming (Shew 1992:64, Chalaby & Segell 1999, Born & Prosser 2001). One noticeable consequence of these trends is an expansionist tendency, which pushes towards the formation of ever larger television markets. As Chalaby & Segell (1999: 362) observed: '...players are aware

that they cannot be successful in the digital age if their strategy is narrowly national'. And David Morley and Kevin Robins (1995) argue:

> No longer constrained by, or responsible to, a public philosophy, media corporations and businesses are now simply required to respond to consumer demand and to maximize consumer choice.... The imperative is to break down the old boundaries and frontiers of national communities, which now present themselves as arbitrary and irrational obstacles to this reorganization of business strategies (Morley & Robins 1995:11)

This changing television landscape bears sharply upon the question of television's role in the construction of national identity, particularly with the advent of trans-national television and its accelerated cross-border cultural flow. The large body of multi-disciplinary literature on television globalization can be described as divided into two main lines of investigation. One suggests that global television has led to standardized products, with national attributes gradually withering away (Hall 1991; Schiller 1991; Herman & McChesney 1997). The other sees television as a device for resisting globalization, and pays special attention to the manner in which this medium may actually contribute to the upholding of national culture (e.g. Miller 1992; Curran & Park 2000).

The 'globalization approach' argues that the rise of new communication systems technology, compressing time and space and transcending national frontiers, is bringing into being a "global village" (e.g., Tomlinson 1999; Thussu 2000; Sinclair *et al* 1996; Hoskins *et al.* 1997). As Annabelle Serberny writes: 'more and more of the world is wired as a global audience with access to electronic media' (Sreberny 2000:97). Critics and theorists supporting this position, use the term 'global' in conjunction with the communications media or industry, referring primarily to the extent of coverage and the popularity of cables and satellite technologies and computer networks as indicators of the ever increasing extent of the globalization of communications. Here, attention focuses mainly on the technological aspects of television. For example, Sinclair *et al* (1996) showed how the pan-Asian satellite service STAR TV (operating from Hong Kong) changed the whole Asian television landscape. Viewers, used to programming which in the past was heavily controlled by local governments, were now exposed to Western programmes. Research conducted in the Middle East, showed how satellite broadcasting created a web of trans-national services, which cut across borders within the Arab world (Sakr 2001). Such studies

also pointed to the phenomenon, in which new satellite capabilities allowed for programmes produced in the Middle East to reach Arabic speaking populations outside the Arab World, mainly in Europe and in North America (Amin 1996). Similar findings were obtained by John Sinclair (1996) who studied the expansion of satellite services in Latin America, showing the increased spread of North American programming in this region. Sinclair also pointed out a movement in the other direction in which *telenovelas* flow from Latin America to Europe and North Asia in particular (Sinclair 1996). Similarly, Colin Sparks (2000) has looked at the role played by television programmes flowing from Western Europe to the East in the erosion of the authority of the Communist states in the former Soviet Bloc (Sparks 2000).

Within this context, much academic concern was directed at the pattern of ownership of global television networks and to the emergence of global media players. Prominent here are Marxian theorists who, describing a 'cultural imperialism' thesis, looked at the rapid growth and cross-border activities of television largely in terms of the study of international conglomerates (e.g. Schiller 1991; Herman & McChesney 1997). Critics and theorists who subscribe to this school of thought argue that the global flow of television outputs leads to increased uniformity and to the demise of cultural diversity in favor of the uniform programming of a 'Capitalist West'. The focus of attention has been on the increasing numbers of Western corporations such as CNN, HBO, Disney, and MTV, which sell packaged programmes across national borders, thus undermining national and local television production. As Herman and McChesney (1997) describe it:

> Since the early 1980s there has been a dramatic restructuring of national media industries, along with the emergence of genuinely global commercial media market. The newly developing global media systems is dominated by three or four dozen large trans-national corporations (TNCs), with fewer than ten mostly US-based media conglomerates towering over the global market....Such a concentration of media power in organizations depends on advertising support and responsibility.... primary to shareholders is a clear a present danger to citizens' participation in public affairs, understanding of public issues, and thus to the effective working of democracy (Herman & McChesney 1997:1)

Alongside the 'cultural imperialism' thesis, a more 'liberal' approach emerged, emphasizing the idea of global television serving to spread modernity and democracy. Global television, it argued, creates a shared symbolic space, thereby helping to

liberate people from the constraints of place and time. Globalization was opening up new lines of communication, and constructing new spaces for the building of mutuality (discussed in McQuail 1994).

This approach regarding the globalization of television has not been received without challenge. Many theorists argue that "nation" is still crucially important to media networks and that its persistent significance tends to be underplayed by the 'globalization approach' (e.g. Wang et al 2000; Curran & Park 2000). Despite the globalization of televised texts and the rise of trans-national corporations, television, is still in many regards national. Detailed schedule analysis indicates that most television programming on mass channels are locally produced (e.g. Lee 2000; De Bens & de Smale 2001; Elasmar 2003). The popular notion that most people watch American programmes ('Wall-to-Wall Dallas') is also unsupported by the evidence (Sinclair et al 1996). Nation-states still play a central role in shaping the television industries operating within their geo-political borders. They are the sole licensing authority for national television and radio channels, an arrangement anchored in international law. With national channels still quite dominant, the nation-state remains the chief broker of control over broadcasting systems. Moreover, detailed text analysis shows that the nation is still a very important marker of difference (e.g. Hogen 1999; Lo 2001): different languages, political and cultural institutions, power structures, economic traditions, international links and histories (e.g. Curran & Park 2000). Diverse nations are, as well, characterized by diverse patterns of consumption. Reception studies demonstrate that the impact which television messages have on individuals and the uses to which mediated symbolic materials are being put by recipients, depend crucially on (national or ethnic) reception contexts and on the resources which audience recipients bring to bear in the reception process (discussed in Thompson 2000). The latter is well illustrated by the Liebes and Katz study on the trans-national reception of Dallas (Liebes & Katz 1990) and in Daniel Miller's study on the reception of The Young and the Restless in Trinidad (Miller 1992).

It is essential to note that the research that has been pursued by media critics has based itself on major theoretical work in the globalization debate and has therefore been much influenced by it. As this debate is dominated by two contrasting approaches - a dichotomy stance- media theorists working on globalization issues have adopted a dichotomous position as well: either, within the processes of globalization, the nation (and hence national identity) is withering away (Hobsbawm

1990; King 1991; Castells 1996),or the nation still functions as the primary socio-political community, and a politics of identity continue to be fostered within the concept of the nation (e.g. Smith 1999; 2001; Hutchinson & Smith 2000). Such debate, according to Leela Fernandes (2000:612) 'forecloses an interrogation of the 'discourse of globality'', thus ignoring the shifting and contested terms in which the 'world-as-a-whole' is defined (Robertson 1997).

II. The globalization debate: stating the dichotomy stance

The term 'globalization' has been invoked in the social sciences and humanities to express the sense of a growing interconnectedness between different parts of the world and the increasing complexity of new forms of supra-national interaction and interdependency (e.g. Giddens1990; Thompson 1995).

The discourse on globalization can be divided roughly into two camps namely, the 'globalization thesis' and the 'nation upfront thesis'. Supporters of the globalization thesis argue that contemporary changes are weakening the nation-state and the salience of national identities. As Eric Hobsbawm (1994:15) puts it, national economies have become mere 'complications of trans-national corporation'. In cultural theory, they are imagined communities that are losing their hold on their imagination. In the words of Anthony Giddens (1999:31) the 'era of the nation-state is over'. Within this approach we can identify two main scholarly strands: The 'global culture' strand and the 'consumer society' strand. Scholars who subscribe to the first of these two argue that processes of globalization lead to the creation of a global culture. This version of the 'post-national' thesis starts from the notion of a global culture based on electronic mass communications. The information society and the mass communication systems have, it is claimed, created a condition for the emergence of a global culture, one in which a single, cosmopolitan and science-oriented culture encompasses the globe and gradually delegitimizes all the pre-existing ethnic and national cultures. In this view, the nation belongs to a Romantic age, and to the epoch of Modernization. Hence, in an age of mass communications, national cultures are no longer relevant (Hobsbawm 1990; Castells 1996).

The second strand is the consumer society approach. This version of the globalization thesis emphasizes the concept of mass consumerism. The consumer society theorists (e.g. Hall 1991; Sklair 1995; Herman & McChesney 1997) direct

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attention to the mass production of commodities by global corporations and to the growing standardization of consumption patterns wherever living standards permit the purchase of Western goods and services. According to this thesis, the massive flow of capital across national boundaries makes national institutions and organizations increasingly powerless and hence irrelevant. For the consumer society theorists, the significant effect of the decline of the nation-state is the bypassing of national cultures. In this view, 'cultural imperialism' erodes the differences in national cultures, reducing them to mere packaging (e.g. Murdock 1999).

This two-part 'globalization thesis' (the global culture stand and the consumer society strand) has been rejected by many critics who subscribe to the 'nation upfront' thesis. These theorists flag important *a priori* positions concerning the role of the 'nation' and the salience of national specificities, which are underplayed by globalization theorists (e.g. Hutchinson & Smith 2000; Smith 2001). First, they claim that while new communication technologies may facilitate the 'compression of time and space' by reducing the costs of mobility across physical space, the extent and forms of any extended globalization (or any other new 'social space') will be shaped by particular (national) configurations of economic, political and cultural processes. In other words, even if national boundaries have become more 'fluid' in recent decades, mass communications have not rendered geo-political borders obsolete or diminished the regulatory control of the nation state (Preston & Kerr 2001). Second, the globalization processes, facilitated by new communication and transportation technologies, do not necessarily imply any singular homogenization of socio-economic or cultural space. Cultural productions and reproductions are organized and by-and-large controlled by national governments and are adapted to the particular 'tastes' of national communities. Even when adopting Western goods and lifestyles, state elites resist cultural imperialism and seek to cultivate their own cultural practices and strive for national cultural autonomy (Curran & Park 2000).

III. Integrating the global approach and the national approach

It is quite clear that both the 'global' approach and the 'nation upfront' approach provide reasonable evidence in support of their opposing claims about the effects of processes of globalization on the persistence on national identity. One is thus led to

ask how the two views may be reconciled or integrated. This issue becomes a key concern of the present study. In particular, we need to account for the dialectic between the two conceptual frameworks described above, which implies a need to look beyond their specific deterministic approaches. What must be asked is how a global, trans-national, product emerges (as per the first approach) and how, simultaneously, this very product becomes instrumental in the upholding of specific national narratives (as per the second approach).

This interplay between the global and the national so critical to my work has been recently addressed in the albeit few but solid critical works of Robertson (1992), Miller (1992), Sassen (2000), Sreberny (2000;2002), Denning (2001) and Beck (2000; 2002). In her article *New Frontiers Facing Urban Sociology at the Millennium* (2000) Saskia Sassen argues against the dichotomy stance:

> ...one of the features of the current phase of globalization is that the fact a process happens within the territory of a sovereign state does not necessarily mean that it is a national process. Conversely, the national (such as firms, capital, culture) may increasingly be located outside the national territory, for instance, in a foreign country or in digital spaces. This localization of the global, or of the non-national, in national territories, and of the national outside national territories, undermines a key duality running through many of the methods and conceptual frameworks prevalent in the social sciences, that the national and the non-national are mutually exclusive (Sassen 2000:145-146).

Ulrich Beck's work *The Cosmopolitan Society and its Enemies* (2002) has expanded upon Sassen to emphasize the need to integrate the two poles (the global and the national) and to employ a 'logic of opposition', rather than one of determinism. For him, globalization is:

> [A] non-linear, dialectic process in which the global and the local do not exist as cultural polarities but as combined and mutually implicating principles. These processes involve not only interconnections across boundaries, but transform the quality of the social and the political inside nation-state societies (Beck 2002: 17).

Beck further argues that: 'globalization includes, 'globalization *from within*' which he calls 'globalization internalized'. In his new portrait of globalization 'the national is no longer the national. The national has to be rediscovered as the *internalized global'* (Beck 2002:23). Beck's conceptualization of a non-linear dialectic relationship

between the global and the national and his critical new term 'the internalized global' are fundamental to my study. For the theorist is, in effect, shifting the terms of the discussion regarding globalization from the question of how the nation is being transformed through processes of globalization to the question of how the nations themselves are being produced and re-produced in an era of globalization. This shift is necessary because of a common assumption, which underlies much of the debate on globalization, namely that globalization is marked by processes of de-territorialization which transcend or destabilize the territorial boundaries of the modern nation-state (e.g. Hall 1991; Appadurai 1996; Castells 2000). These arguments which refer mainly to the *spatial* dimension often assume that 'the global' encompasses 'the national' and must therefore, by definition, be marked by cultural, economic and political processes which transcend the national into the 'post-national' (King 1991; Appadurai 1996; Urry 2000). By focusing on 'territory', or 'place' this approach disregards the growing cultural, political and economic irrelevancy of physical location in the global era.

This point is of special importance it has been adopted by many critics working in the small arena of television sociology (e.g. Meyrowitz 1985; Leibes & Katz 1990; Miller 1992; Ang 1996). These theorists, by emphasising the centrality of place, lose sight of one of the major effects of globalization, namely the blurring of that same physical space. A fundamental aspect of globalization is lost -- the interplay between the global and the national, an interplay which occurs at no specific locality.

Let me briefly (and quite schematically) review this body of work on the globalization of television - a field of research that can be broken into three areas: the production of television programmes, the consumption of global/national television artefacts, and the content of television products.

In nearly all studies on the *production* of television programmes, the central issue is the nature and the characteristics of television networks that operate on the global scale. Most of the theories in this area revolve around the following questions: Who are the players operating on the global scale? In what sector are they active? In this context, authors associated with the 'globalization approach' argue that the main global producers are Westerners/Americans (e.g. Hoskins *et al* 1997; Herman & McChesney 1997; McChesney 2003). Writers working within the 'nation upfront' paradigm reject this notion and present evidence which points to the importance of local and national producers in the production of media outputs. Both camps rely on

quantitative data to support their arguments. The globalization approach seeks to prove the contention that the world is becoming Westernized (read: Americanized) simply by pointing to the large number of Western/American corporations operating on a global scale, to the sheer number of countries in which they operate, and by documenting the large amounts of products being exported to foreign markets (e.g. Herman & McChesney 1997). Interestingly, the 'nation upfront' stand relies on the same types of data for a contrary argument. Quantitative data is displayed showing that more culture products are being produced in local markets for local use than those being imported over the global market (e.g. Lee 2000; Elasmar 2003). This raises the following critical observation: While this body of work concentrates on the role of *producers* in the transmission and dissemination of television programmes, it falls short in discussing the ways in which the producers themselves perceive their targeted audiences, in terms of global versus national. The producer-as-agent has been left invisible.

A significant body of work has been dedicated to the impact of processes of globalization on the nature and characteristics of television artefacts. Scholars who subscribe to the 'globalization approach' argue that processes of globalization have led to standardized products with national attributes gradually withering away (e.g. Hall 1991). Scholars working within the 'national upfront' paradigm focus on national/local resistance to globalization, analysing the manner in which nations (among other communities) are narrated and represented in television products (e.g. Hogan 1999; Lo 2001). All of these critics, however, limit themselves to the end result of the production, i.e, to the final cultural product, while disregarding the processes by which the programme under investigation (whether local or global) came into being.

In recent years, a large number of studies, offering data on reception and penetration of cultural products, were conducted by the proponents of the 'nation upfront' point of view. The findings show, by and large, that the rate of consumption of global programmes is lower than the corresponding rate for television programmes produced locally for local use (e.g. Lee 2000). Similar findings were obtained in studies on the consumption of foreign programmes in different parts of the world (such as Asia and Latin America) (Sinclair *et al* 1996). These studies too, while emphasising patterns of consumption, tend to overlook the manner in which specific programmes (global or national) came into being.

What emerges quite clearly here is that television critics working within the discourse of globalization, by and large, tend to limit themselves to one aspect of television production: either to the nature and characteristics of television networks (global or national) or to the content and consumption patterns of television programmes. I would maintain that it is because neither camp has committed itself to tracing the *processes* involved in the *production* of television products, that neither has been compelled to confront the *interplay* between the global and the national. It is precisely this dynamic *production process* that leads over time from the decision to commission a particular programme to the production process itself and finally to the end result of the process, i.e. to the television programme, that enables us to trace the essential interplay between the global and the national and between shared and cosmopolitan memory.

IV. Global TV and the emergence of cosmopolitan memory

Ulrich Beck's argument, referred to above, regarding globalization from within, in which 'the national is no longer the national', and his critical new term 'internal globalization', provides a new basis for an analysis of the nature and characteristics of shared (national) memory in an era of globalization. Again it is Beck who poses the question central to this discussion:

> In the social sciences and cultural theory globalization is often defined it terms of 'time-space compression', 'de-territirialization', de-nationalization' etc. Those concepts mostly refer to the *spatial* dimension. But what do globalization and cosmopolitan society mean in the dimension of *time* and *(collective) memory* (Beck 2002:27)?

Beck's challenging question has been taken up recently by Daniel Levy and Nathan Sznaider. In their pioneering study *Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory* (2002), the authors argue that *alongside* nationally bounded memories a new form of memory emerges. They call this 'cosmopolitan memory', and they relate it to a process of 'internal globalization' through which global concerns become part of local (and national) experience. In conceptualizing the term 'cosmopolitan memory', Levy and Sznaider are building on Ulrich Beck's definition of 'cosmopolitization' (Beck 2002): [a] 'globalization *from*

within the national societies.... [in which] issues of global concern are becoming part of the everyday local experiences and the 'moral life-worlds' of the people (Beck 2002:17). Beck's core argument for a cosmopolitan perspective stands staunchly opposed to a national perspective:

> The national perspective is a monologic imagination, which excludes the otherness of the other. The cosmopolitan perspective is an alternative imagination, an imagination of alternative ways of life and rationalities, which include the otherness of the other (Beck 2002:18).

Applying Beck's (2002) definition of 'cosmopolitanism' to the study of collective memory, Levy and Sznaider argue (2002), in effect, that the 'national container' in which collective memory is embedded is being slowly cracked by processes of 'internal globalization' (Beck 2002). National memory, their argument goes, is being transformed in the age of globalization rather than being erased:

> [National memory] continues to exist, of course, but globalization processes also imply that different national memories are subjected to a common pattering. They begin to develop in accord with common rhythms and periodization. But in each case, the common elements combine with pre-existing elements to form something new. The new global narrative has to be reconciled with the old, national narrative; and the result is always distinctive (Levy & Sznaider 2002:89).

In an attempt to sustain their claims, Levy and Sznaider (2002) trace the emergence of 'cosmopolitan memory' through an examination of how a particular event, the Holocaust, has been remembered in Germany, Israel and the United-States in the course of the last fifty years. Their findings show that memories of the Holocaust provide the foundations for a new cosmopolitan memory that transcends ethnic and national ones.

> It is precisely the abstract nature of 'good and evil' that symbolizes the Holocaust, which contributes to the extra-territorial quality of cosmopolitan memory. As such, memories of the Holocaust contribute to the creation of a common European cultural memory (Levy & Sznaider 2002:87).

Examining the formation of cosmopolitan memory, the authors point out the significant role played by mediated representations in this process. Finally, the areas of memory studies and media studies meet in a new contemporary theory. This work,

with its specific focus on the *media*, is understandably, especially relevant for my own study:

> In the case of the Holocaust, only a small minority who experience Nazism first hand is alive. For all the rest of us, it is an experience mediated by representation (Levy & Sznaider 2002:91)

For Levy and Sznaider, it is precisely an era of globalization, with its electronic (global) *media*, that will facilitate a shared consciousness and cosmopolitan memories that span national borders: 'In global times, the media becomes ... a mediator of moral affairs' (Levy & Sznaider 2002:91). In pointing to electronic media as one of the main constituents reflecting and creating cosmopolitan memory, Levy and Sznaider highlight the role *television* plays in this context. It is through televised events (Dayan & Katz 1992) Levy and Sznaider argue, that a live and concentrated local action can be globally shared.

> [And] this is how the world is transported into the local. Distant others can be part of the strong feeling of everyday life... (Levy & Sznaider 2002:91).

Levy and Sznaider's arguments regarding the role played by television in the creation and reflection of universal (moral) values and cosmopolitan memories is crucial to my study of the impact of the emergence of global television on the construction of national identity and shared (national) memory.

I would argue that trans-national collaborations (notably the strategy of international co-productions) for the making of television programmes, are a vivid example of a non-geographical interplay between the global and the national, and between shared (national) memory (Margalit 2002) and 'cosmopolitan memory' (Levy & Sznaider 2002). As observed by Steven Seidenberg, head of development at Café Production, London, UK:

> Having a project [an internationally produced film] with "international appeal" does not mean that it has to be filmed in lots of different countries. Nor does it mean that it has to have talking heads from lots of different places..... (Seidenberg 2000)[14].

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[14] Cited from a communication sent to the 'Israeli Forum of Co-Productions' (March 2000)

To a close examination of international co-productions for the making of television programmes I now turn.

Chapter Three

Theorizing Co-Production for the Making of TV Programmes

> The idea of co-production is very good, very necessary. It is the sort of thing that senior executives and broadcasters around the world say, "Ah, yes, we must do it," and assume that just by saying it, they can make it happen. But if we are going to be honest, no producer really likes doing co-productions (Leo Eaton ([1992] 2002)

Over the past quarter-century, many industries have undergone a profound change, towards globalization and multinational structures. This widely observed trend has come hand-in-hand with increased competitiveness, increased mobility of both labour and capital, enhanced flexibility in many production technologies, funds flowing swiftly (virtually instantaneously) among financial markets, and low-cost communication channels emerging and forcing individuals and businesses into using a small number of languages as their vehicles of communication. In several industries, today's players are but a few multinational giants, while in other cases, industries often rely on multinational supply networks for their inputs of goods and services.

The extent to which all this has been true in the *television* industry has been the subject of extensive study in recent years (see Chapter Two above). There is no doubt about movements towards globalization having occurred in this sector but, unlike in other industries, the extent of this being at the expense of the local and national sectors of broadcasting is still very much under debate, with various scholars offering different assessments of the relative prominence of the global vs. the national in the world's total output of television products (e.g Sinclair *et al* 1996, Thussu 2000, Wang *et al.* 2000). We have certainly not seen a handful of mega-corporations taking hold of the bulk of the world's television production. On the other hand, international outsourcing and use of inputs imported from far and wide – the other characteristic of globalization – is known to be extremely prevalent.

On the face of it, international co-production of television programmes would be a category that belongs distinctly – almost by definition – to the globalization trend in the television industry. As Doris Baltruschat (2002)[15] has recently noted:

> Co-productions represent a dominant trend in international television and film production, which is increasingly global in orientation — to the demise of locally relevant issues and their representation.

The picture, however, is not all that simple. Witness the fact that media theorists who have looked at international television co-productions are far from unanimous in their assessments of the extent to which these co-productions signify the global or the national.

The present chapter examines these divergent views of researchers and seeks to identify the position of international co-productions on the global vs. national spectrum. In particular, it explores the nature of this mode of production and the conditions that enabled it to come into being. My claim will be that without a careful tracing out of these elements, the issue of the global vs. the national in television documentary cannot properly be analysed.

Clearly, it is important to distinguish the category of 'International Co-productions' from other forms of trans-national collaborations that are often encountered in the television industry. There are basically three major forms of collaboration for the making of television programmes, namely, (a) acquisition (b) pre-sale; and (c) co-productions (see Shew 1992).

'Acquisition' is an arrangement in which a broadcaster buys the right to screen a programme that has been produced by another broadcaster or by an independent producer operating in its own domestic market. For the buyer this is the cheapest mode of programme generation, making it possible to avoid the cost of the actual production. For the producers, on the other hand, relying on acquisition prospects is a risky and expensive funding strategy, since they alone must absorb, at least initially, the whole cost incurred in the production.

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[15]A paper delivered at a conference: Media in Transition: Globalization and Convergence, May 10-12 2002, MIT Cambridge Massachusetts, USA. Electronic version: no indication of page numbers.

The second mode is 'Programme Sales' ('pre-sale'). This term is used to describe a situation in which a channel operator, or an independent production company, produces a programme with the intention of selling broadcast rights in foreign markets. This mode is thus, in a sense, the "reverse" of the first mode, "acquisition". The sale of broadcast rights reduces the net cost borne by the programme's original producer, while at the same time providing the buyers of the rights with relatively inexpensive programming. In this manner, the cost of producing the programme can be distributed over several television audiences, at different geographical locations. When a channel operator buys a programme from an independent production company much the same occurs. Indeed, the operator may pay the independent company the full cost of production in exchange for the rights to sell the programme in foreign markets, in addition to broadcasting it on the buyer's own channel. Alternatively, the amount paid by the channel operator may be less than the full cost, in which case the producer retains the rights to sale in foreign markets.

The third type of alliance, 'International Co-production', is a device often used to spread the costs of programme production. Here two or more broadcasters (often channel operators) agree jointly to produce a programme and to share in its prospective proceeds. Each partner has the right to screen the co-production in its own geographic market. Each partner provides support, whether monetary or in kind, and has a say in production decisions (Shew 1992; Hoskins *et al* 1997).

The increasing number of trans-national collaborations for the making of television programmes raises an array of questions. Why have such collaborations become popular? What were the conditions that enabled them to come into being? And in particular, what cultural or symbolic effects would be likely to flow from these economic interactions?

The form of collaboration known as *International Co-Production* provides a particularly appropriate setting for looking at these questions. International co-production is one of the significant forms of *financial* and *editorial* interaction among broadcasters from different countries, and is consequently an arena where the interplay between the global and the national is particularly significant.

Some of the elements of this complex interplay have been described by Graham Murdock (1996:103):

... co-productions are one of the major devices within television through which we negotiate these double movements across territorial borders and psychological boundaries. They obviously involve tangible economic trades in assets, financial, facilities, rights and personnel. But they also entail symbolic or cultural trades, across imaginative spaces and perspectives of the world.

And Leo Eaton ([1992] 2002), a leading independent producer, writes in a paper delivered at a co-production seminar:

The idea of co-production is very good, very necessary. It is the sort of thing that senior executives and broadcasters around the world say, "Ah, yes, we must do it," and assume that just by saying it, they can make it happen. But if we are going to be honest, no producer really likes doing co-productions. They're difficult. They're complicated. They cause a lot more work. I think we all wish we had sufficient money, sufficient resources and sufficient international awareness to just go off and make the sort of films that we want to make. But that's not the world we're living in. We can't afford to fund the programs we want to make so we have to co-produce, and we have to learn how to make it work. And not only may we actually enjoy the process, but we may also widen our own perspective and make a more interesting and less insular program. That means knowing very clearly both how similar we are to our partners, and how very different we are.

Eaton's observations are confirmed by Zvi Dor-Ner, an executive producer of WGBH Boston:

The main thing is that you have another set of ideas, another set of concerns to begin with. You have to take into account here that there are people who pay for the product. Often it is enriching its worthwhile, you learn something new…. Often it's just a pain in the ass. You have to take into account opinions that you might consider unimportant, not intelligent, nationalistic, biased, not relevant…. (Zvi Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001)

Thus, the significance of international co-production for the study of the interplay between economic and cultural forces (and between the global and the national) seems to emerge quite clearly. We must begin, however, by looking at the definition of this specific mode of production.

I. Defining international co-production

The term "International Co-Production" is used to describe a situation where broadcasters in more than one country are involved, both *creatively*[16] and *financially*, in the production of a specific audio-visual product. This form of alliance permits partners to pool resources, in the effort to raise the substantial budgets required to produce the master copies to accommodate a plurality of markets at minimal cost (Blind & Hallenger 1996; Hoskins *et al* 1997). The goal of this strategy is to produce programmes that have a national relevance in all the represented countries, allowing producers access to funding mechanisms available in those countries, such as tax incentives, grants and investments (Baltruschat 2003). Expanding on this strategy, Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH Boston says:

> The principle will be to amalgamate budget. You have an expansive idea which you cannot carry by yourself and you think you can benefit from other contributions, enlarging the budget making it more complicated, richer, more facilities, and so on .... So if I was interested in a subject in Japan it will be appropriate for me to approach NHK and say: I'm going to do that, I think it would be of interest to you... if you want to enter a co-production you have a voice about how to do it, you can participate in the production and effect its content its structure you can contribute both in cash and time. You can have all kinds of benefits and make a programme which could work well for you and help me.

Diana Ingraham and Meg Villarreal, co-directors of U.S Independent, Inc.[17] identify the unique features of international co-production:

> There is a difference between 'pre-sales and co-productions or co-ventures'. In a pre-sale, editorial control and production aren't shared; a broadcaster agrees to license a programme or series for its broadcast territory. A co-production is a *financial* and *editorial* relationship between production entities from different countries that is based on a treaty between those two countries. The United States has no treaties with any countries. So the international market place tends to use the word 'co-venture' instead. In a co-venture, two parties come together to jointly raise funding and produce a product that will be appropriate for their individual markets (Ingraham & Villarreal, 2002, my italics)

This observation is reinforced by Bjorn Arvas, a commissioning editor of SVT 1, Sweden:

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[16] This refers mainly to broadcasters having editorial control over the product being financed.
[17] U.S Independent, Inc. is a cooperative effort that helps independent producers and small distributors enter the international market.

If we, Sweden put more money into it [a co-produced documentary] what we can do by putting the money, we can be part of the structure and decision process of the film (Bjorn Arvas, Interview, November 2001)

There is also a difference among the three modes of production in terms of their costs[18].

Type of financial agreement	Local/National production	Co-production	Pre-sale	Acquisition
The broadcaster financial contribution to the produced programme's budget (in percentages)	100	70-15	14-1	Less then 1

As the table indicates[19], it is cheaper for the channel operator to commission a co-produced programme than to 'go it alone'. On the other hand, co-production is clearly more expensive than buying a ready made programme before or after its production, i.e. relying on pre-sale or acquisition.

Steven Seidenberg explains the reasons for the extra costs involved in co-production, thus highlighting the unique characteristics of this mode of production:

The broadcaster puts up funds but simultaneously expects to have editorial input into the project. (In return for putting up the cash to make the film the broadcaster wants to be able to say "This works for my audience" or "That doesn't work for my audience, change it) (Steven Seidenberg 2000)[20]

And Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH again, adds:

We use the same material we are going to edit something in common, and eventually we are going to create a version which is just for you and your audience and whatever you think it needs. And then there will be another version for me that will be suitable for my audience and reflect my understanding of what this audience needs. And they will be different. So yes the product will be different if you have two entities or more (Zvi Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001).

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[18] Data updated in September 2003.
[19] Source: Clair Heaily, Book Lapping/Ten Alps, London UK; Sue Temple, Temple International, London UK, Tom Kock; WGBH International, Boston, USA
[20] Cited from a communication, sent to the 'Israeli Forum of Co-Productions' (March 2000)

These observations were confirmed by Tom Kock, director of WGBH International. In discussing a recently co-produced film, he notes:

> We are buying Danny's[21] project. Now he understands that what goes on our screen will not be what he made. He will make a version of the film... they understand that we are taking the film but what they made is not what's going to be on. We'll take it a completely... we will disassemble it and re-build it[22] (Tom Kock, Interview October 2001)

These accounts highlight the distinctive features of international co-production. Unlike other forms of international alliance ('Acquisition' and 'Programme Sales') the final product of an international co-production is frequently split into separate versions, where each of the broadcasters who had participated in the financing, has the right to produce its own national version of the product. The splitting of a co-produced programme into several versions points to an interesting phenomenon: despite the fact that co-productions often arise in response to the need to lower the costs of production, broadcasters are willing to incur additional costs by creating the same film in different national versions. Examining this apparent tension, I argue that although the television industry is becoming global, the production of television documentaries is still influenced strongly by ideas of national belonging. In the case of television dramas this tension could be explained simply in terms of the need to respond to consumer demand, i.e. producers gain extra revenues by producing different national versions of what is basically the same programme. This is not, however, a sufficient explanation in the case of the production of documentaries since programmes of this type are not normally perceived only in terms of their financial revenue potential. As Tom Kock, director of WGBH International, explains:

> The underlying assumption of co-production of documentaries (unlike dramas) in which I could be technically a co-producer but I have a financial investment which I can recruit. The investment which I can recruit from documentaries is very very small it is probably insignificant, so that the only capital that one really looks for is editorial capital. That's my investment. I put up money and I expect something in return. With feature films I expect a profit; with documentaries I expect something else, I want to serve my audience, I what to

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[21] Kock reefers to the documentary film 'Shattered Dreams of Peace' (2002) produced by Dan Setton of Set Productions.
[22] The film 'Shattered Dreams of Peace' (2002) was commissioned by Tom Kock as a co-production. This means that the commissioning editor had a full editorial control over the final product.

get an involvement. I what to get a project that will work for my country, or my cultural ...my audiences' taste, or my perceived assumption of what my audiences' taste is (Tom Kock, Interview October 2001)

Here, Kock is highlighting the fundamental advantage of international co-production as a strategy that enables a channel operator to reduce costs by sharing them with others, while at the same time, rendering a service aimed specifically at a national audience, by producing a nationally specific product.

In order to gain a better understanding of the complex interplay between economic and cultural forces (and between the global and the national) we must examine the conditions that enabled the co-production mode to come into being.

II. Why international co-production?

The emergence in the last two decades of new technologies and liberalized regulation regimes, has prompted a significant expansion of television channels (e.g. Chalaby & Segell 1999; Doyle 2002). While the liberal licensing of new channels (domestic and trans-national) has generally been regarded as a positive development, providing viewers with greater choice and permitted the airing of a more diverse range of political and cultural views thought to be of considerable value in a democratic society (Shew 1992:66; Albarran 1996), it has for any particular television network, prompted intensifying competition which has meant smaller television audiences (Shew 1992:65; Wieten *et al* 2000; Doyle 2002). Demand for television viewing is known to be relatively inelastic, in the sense that an increase in channels leads to a less than proportionate increase in total viewer hours. Smaller audiences are likely to reduce a commercial channel's ability to finance its programming, whether through advertising revenue or through subscriber payments. Nor are publicly funded channels necessarily immune to the financial impact of declining audiences, since the inclination of public officials to commit public funds may not be independent of expected viewer demand (Born & prosser 2001; Doyle 2002). In addition to reducing revenues, this increased competition among channel operators also drives up programme costs, by increasing the standards of programming (Shew 1992:66). For any given programme produced, the channel operator ends up having to pay more than would have been the case previously (Chalaby & Segell 1999).

In order to understand the significance of these developments for the emergence of international co-productions, we must look first at some of the unique characteristics of television outlets.

Television programming is a 'public good' in the sense of being a 'joint-consumption good', i.e. viewers are not rivals in consumption: viewing by one consumer does not use up the product or detract from the ability of any other viewer to enjoy the same product. As a consequence of this joint-consumption characteristic, the cost of supplying a television programme is largely unaffected by the number of viewers. Even where an extra copy or print of the programme is required in order to serve viewers in other markets, the cost of replication and distribution is insignificant compared to the original production cost (Hoskins *et al* 1997:31; Doyle 2002). Secondly, once a television programme has been produced, it can be screened time and again. This reusability, which distinguishes it from most cultural products, means that the programme (i.e. the very same product) can be sold simultaneously in several markets. These features imply that any television output which is produced and exhibited originally by some particular channel may also bring in revenues from secondary markets, mainly from television channels abroad (Shew 1992:71). Such foreign markets allow the cost of a programme to be supported by a wider audience, through contractual arrangements with other providers of television programming. Recent studies point to such arrangements becoming increasingly important, as channel operators, faced with declining audiences due to competition, experience a growing need to economize on programming (e.g. Hoskins *et al* 1997; Chalaby & Segell 1999; Doyle 2002).

III. Globalization, nationalism and international co-production

With international co-productions becoming increasingly prevalent (Hoskins *et al* 1997), they became an object of growing academic interest in the 'media economics' literature (e.g. Blind & Hallenberger 1996; Hoskins *et al* 1997; Baltuschart 2003). Theorists working in this area have been interested primarily in observing the economic incentives lurking behind broadcasters' decisions to engage in trans-national collaborations. Sinclair (1996) has examined the manner in which STAR TV used co-production agreements to create programming accessible to domestic viewers

in different parts of Asia. Strover (1995) has examined US-European co-production as a form of institutional adaptation to emerging trade patterns. Collins, Garnham and Locksley (1986) focused their research on British participation in co-productions, with a European perspective being supplied by Watson (1990). Hoskins *et al* (1995) have studied the advantages and disadvantages experienced by Canadian international co-production participants in the production of both television and feature films, and Hoskins *et al* (1996) have compared the experiences of Canadian participants in domestic joint ventures with those in international co-productions. Hoskins, McFayden, Finn and Jäckel (1995) have looked at the benefits and drawbacks associated with international co-productions between Canada and Europe. Similarly, Hoskins, McFadyen, and Finn (1998) have explored the motivation for international collaboration in different countries, focusing on countries such as Japan and the English speaking world.

By and large, these studies indicate that the main motivation for broadcasters' involvement in this mode of collaboration is a growing pressure to lower the costs of production by sharing them with 'partners' of different markets (e.g Hoskins *et al* 1995,1998; Strover 1995). As Carla B. Johnson (1992) writes:

> Co-production experiments have taken place for several decades, motivated both by the desire to cut production costs and by the desire to produce programs on topics otherwise not available. Now, as we embark on the 21st century, the full potential of this tool is becoming clearer (Johnson 1992: 1).

Similarly, Jolanda Klarenbeek, director of Europe's largest television documentaries co-production forum (IDFA FORUM)[23], has noted:

> To make creative documentaries you need quite a budget, next to national film funds you need money from the broadcasters. 85% of creative documentaries is financed in this way. Since the average amount spent on docu's (50-60 minutes) per broadcaster is $50.000 - $100.000 (now I'm talking of outdoor productions, with an independent producer) there is always need of other financiers as well. That is were co-producing (as a follow up on co-financing) comes in place (Jolanda Klarenbeek, Interview 7.2.2000).

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[23] IDFA is an annual event among other international television forums which serve as venues for concept developments, information exchange and business deals. It is designed exclusively for television documentaries.

While media economists concentrate on the pecuniary incentives underlying international co-production, cultural theorists highlight the nature and characteristics of the *end product* of this mode of production, namely the *contents* of the actual programme that had been produced. This approach maintains that co-productions have led to standardized products, with national attributes increasingly being neglected or suppressed. In her article *Recent Trends in Coproductions: The Demise of the National* (1995) Sharon Strover claims that:

> ... the coproduction, among other forms of media ventures such as format licensing, makes economic sense but chips away at the notion of media that can build national collectivities or represent single countries. In the face of calls for revitalised "national media," impulses toward transnational products and media content that easily cross borders may portend a demise of the national (Strover 1995:98).

Similarly, Doris Baltuschart (2002) argues that:

> ... co-productions are predominantly used as a means to access funding in an international marketplace-a market dominated by commercial productions which fail to address audience as nationally and locally differentiated and unique (Baltruschat 2002:1).

Looking specifically at international co-production in the making of documentaries, Baltruschat notes:

> Co-produced documentaries are mainly about nature, sports, international celebrities or common histories. Consequently, co-productions focus less on stories relevant for local communities which remain the domain of locally and independently produced programmes (Baltruschat 2002:4).

In recent years, however, a new scholarly trend has come to the fore. It sees international co-production as a tool for *resisting* globalization. Its hypothesis is that the strategy of international co-production actually contributes positively to the upholding of national culture. Anne Jäckel's *The Search for the National in Canadian Multilateral Cinematographic Co-productions* (2001), looks at several films made in the last decade through co-production agreements between broadcasters from Canada, France, and the UK:

Co-productions, not only helped the emergence and guarantees the very existence of national film industries, but in some countries, they have also been seen as 'a mechanism for nation building' (Jäckel 2001:155).

This observation is in agreement with other studies, which see international co-production as a mode of production helping to preserve the national. For instance, Paul W. Taylor (1995), who explored the usage of international co-productions in Canada, showed how this strategy was used by Canada to help find it own identity self in the midst of a popular culture dominated by its big neighbour, the USA (Taylor 1995). This line of thinking was also presented in studies conducted in other parts of the Western world. For example Bergfelder (2000) demonstrated the manner in which this strategy helped to re-establish the European 'post war' film industry and to resist American domination.

IV. Interplay of incentives: going global vs. going national

As we have seen, two opposing views dominate the current scholarly discourse regarding international co-productions. One suggests that co-productions have led to standardized products, with national attributes gradually withering away (Strover 1995; Murdock 1996; Baltruschat 2003). The other sees co-production as a tool for resisting globalization, and pays special attention to the manner in which this strategy supposedly contributes to the upholding of national culture (e.g. Jäckel 2001; Bergfelder 2000). Both these strands of research clearly rely on the factual observation of how international co-productions actually come into being.

The first approach sees international co-production as one of the manifestations of globalization in the recent development of the media industry. Among the subscribers to this approach are those whose empirical focus lies in the data that pertains to economic incentives as the primary motivation for broadcasters to engage in international co-production (e.g. Hoskins *et al.* 1997*)*. There are also some writers among the culture theorists who subscribe to the line of thinking that emphasizes the global characteristics of co-produced films, as expressed in their contents. They too recognise the importance of the pecuniary incentives underlying international co-production (as do the economically inclined media scholars) and agree that such incentives tend to push towards global and standardized products. Their studies, however, do not adequately account for the rationale of producers who

choose international co-production over other, cheaper, modes of trans-national collaboration, such as acquisitions. In other words, these studies fail to account for the distinctive feature of international co-production, namely that alongside the need to economize on programming costs, producers are in fact willing to incur *additional* costs (in comparison with other available alternatives) in order to make the final product suitable for their national audiences. This last point, the deliberate strategy of producing several different national versions of a given co-produced film, has been ignored by most theorists, including those committed to a mode of analysis that focuses on the *end product* of a co-production. For these theorists, it was a failure to recognize the fact that the existence, side by side, of several distinct national versions of a given co-produced film is evidence of the role played by the film in actually *resisting* globalization.

The second of the two above-mentioned trends of research, namely the one that sees international co-production precisely as a tool for *resisting* globalization, is of course, quick to observe that co-produced films that come in several national versions are evidence that reinforces their basic claim. However, the scholars who subscribe to this approach tend to neglect the fact that when different broadcasters, representing different nationalities, engage in a particular co-production, they remain *jointly responsible* for the contents and characteristics of the film as initially produced[24]. In other words, the individuals who finance these films (usually the commissioning editors) contribute to the script, to the choice of interviewees, to the selection of archive footage, etc., thus endowing the film with a trans-national flavour. The very interaction among the different partners involved in the making of a particular co-production is a move in the direction of the global.

To summarize, both of the research trends reviewed here fail to provide, each in its own way, an adequate explanation for the existence of international co-production in the making of television programmes. If the 'global approach' had the complete story, then we would expect to see broadcasters choosing to buy ready made programmes produced in foreign countries, in preference to engaging in the tedious and more costly arrangement of co-production. If, on the other hand, the 'national' approach was completely right, then we would see broadcasters resorting to a pre-sale

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[24] The versioning process 'takes place' (normally) in the final stage of the production, i.e. in the post-production.

strategy rather than engage in co-production, i.e. making their own ('national') film and arranging for it to be sold later to foreign channel operators.

Recognizing the existence of international co-production and the fact that in some cases this mode of production is preferred to other modes, such as acquisition or pre-sale, leads us to seek ways in which the two research approaches discussed above might be reconciled or integrated. In particular, we are led to consider a kind of a 'push-and-pull' between the two conceptual frameworks described above, and to look beyond their separate deterministic points of view. What must be asked is how a global product emerges (as per the first approach) and how, simultaneously, this very product becomes instrumental in the upholding of specific national narratives (as per the second approach).

Given their theoretical perspectives, the existing studies of international co-production limit themselves to one of the two ends of the production process. Media economists, given their emphasis on cost incentives, tend naturally to focus their attention on the first stage, i.e., on the decision to commission a programme through co-production. The other strand (mostly culture theorists), placing the emphasis on contents, tends to examine the final stage of a co-production, i.e., on the filmed text as it finally emerges. I will argue that it is essential to examine the intervening *dynamic* process that leads, over time, from the pre-production commissioning decisions to the production process itself and finally to post-production decisions and adjustments. In this way, the proposed bridging between the two existing approaches can hopefully be accomplished. I will maintain that the tracing of the steps involved in the production *process* (commissioning, production, post-production) should reveal the interplay between the conflicting elements that are at work: between economic interests and cultural constraints, between the global and the national, and between the standardized and the particularized.

These issues will be discussed within the specific context of television, which is fundamentally different from the other main area where international co-productions play an important role, namely feature films[25].

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[25] The existing studies on international co-production offer no discussion of the unique characteristics of the television industry. In conceptualising the audio-visual industry (film and television) as a single unified entity, these studies tend to disregard the different features, modus operandi and roles of this specific industry, lumping it together artificially under the same category of 'film and television', when in fact there are many different culture industries that differ fundamentally from one another (e.g. Murdock 1996; Hoskins *et al* 1995; 1997; 1998 Baltruschat 2003).

In order to be concrete, I shall concentrate on a particular type of product, a documentary programme, on three specific television networks, BBC, PBS, and MBC, and finally, on a particular instance, their internationally co-produced documentary series *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs*. We shall observe that despite the fact that this series was made through an international co-production, it was in fact designed to serve particular national audience(s). In order to ground this argument, the different stages in the production of this documentary series will be explored in detail. Starting from the pre-production stage, I shall look at the motivations for commissioning this programme through co-production. I shall then trace the production stage itself looking in particular at the interaction among the producers and the commissioning editors. Looking finally at the end product (the film) and, in particular, at the similarities and differences between the three national versions of the final product, I shall demonstrate the manner in which a national narrative can arise, and be re-produced, in what is fundamentally a global product. But, before I embark on this task, I would like to discuss the methods to be employed in this research.

Chapter Four

Research Methodology

> Audience work turned to a form of ethnographic method to move out and apply this theoretical foundation to study actual reception processes, resulting in a growing body of research and theory. Unfortunately, we have abandoned the situated study of production in the process. This shift in focus leaves us with a shallow view of texts that arrive in the home preencoded with the dominant ideology of an institution or class segment, awaiting de-coding by the subjected or oppositional viewers (Dornfeld 1998:16)

The purpose of this chapter is to present the philosophical assumptions underpinning the research on international co-production in the making of television documentaries, as well as to introduce the research strategy and the techniques to be applied for carrying it out. The relevance of this chapter consists in defining the scope and limitations of the design from the research point of view, and in setting out the framework for my choices.

My philosophical assumptions for conducting this research came from the interpretive tradition. The research strategy adopted was to conduct a single, in-depth, case study of a television documentary (a history-film) produced through international co-production. The research techniques utilised are those associated traditionally with interpretive research in media studies: semi-structured interviews and film (text) analysis.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section looks at qualitative research that has been applied to television documentaries. The chapter then moves to a presentation of the empirical and methodological framework, discussing the criteria for selecting the particular case, coupled with a brief introduction to the actual film *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs*. The third part of the chapter provides a detailed account of the procedures involved in the data collection. It discusses the rationale for the methods chosen (interviews and film analysis) as well as the manner in which these techniques were made operational. Finally, matters concerning data analysis are considered, focusing on the implications and significance of employing three sets of data (interviews, production documents, and film analysis).

I. A qualitative research approach and television production

The *qualitative* orientation of my research design is rooted in the questions I set out to explore. I was interested in how economic collaborations (notably co-productions) among producers of different countries give rise to 'new' and complex representation of shared memory, and to what extent these 'manifestations' confront or challenge narratives that have tended to be associated with 'Old TV'. My contention was that an investigation of these issues can usefully be served by looking at the ways in which the interactions among television producers manifest themselves in the actual *production processes* as well as in the *contents* of programmes being co-produced.

The emphasis on *production practices* is a response to and reaction against the dominant trend in media research, which, over the last two decades, has remained centered on an analysis of the consumption of television texts and messages. Following Stuart Hall's model of communication (1980), a large body of qualitative research has emerged, highlighting the need to explore the audiences' interaction with television texts. Much of this work takes the viewers themselves as agents rather than as passive receptors of cultural products (e.g. Morley 1980; Liebes & Katz 1990; Lewis 1991; Miller 1992). This focus has resulted in a situation where the study of the actual production processes of television texts has been marginalized. As Dornfeld writes:

> This shift in focus leaves us with a shallow view of texts that arrive in the home preencoded with the dominant ideology of an institution or class segment, awaiting de-coding by the subjected or oppositional viewers (Dornfeld 1998: 16)

In setting my own focus on the *production* of television programmes, I am aligning my work alongside the critique (as that raised by Dornfeld) that has been brought against the prevailing research. Rather than focus on audience interaction with a given televised text, this study takes a different focus by providing a critical account of the ways in which the *creators* of television documentaries arrive at their televised texts, whether by design or by default. This focus has led to a methodological framework which is situated within existing *qualitative* studies on the production of television documentaries (e.g. Elliott 1972; Dornfeld 1998; Aron1999).

The *qualitative* approach to production differs from the *quantitative* approach in that it does not ask *how many* films are being produced or *who* the producers are and *in which* sector they operate. Rather it pursues questions of *why* documentaries are being produced, *what* processes are involved in their production, and *how* these processes reflect themselves in the contents of the programmes being produced. Seeking to answer such questions in relation to international co-production of documentaries, I have relied upon a research design that is well established in the study of the production of television documentaries, combining ethnographic elements such as semi-structured interviews with other qualitative methods such as audio-visual (film) analysis[26].

Although I have chosen to employ qualitative methods, I do not argue that quantitative research on the production of documentaries in general, and on international co-productions in particular, is unimportant. Rather I believe that qualitative research such as my own and the quantitative studies carried out by others, can fruitfully be combined with each other. Additional empirical evidence, which I could not generate directly due to both time and financial constraints, was drawn from existing quantitative work in the field, notably from Doris Baltruschat (2003) and Hoskins *et al* (1995;1997). The first study provided empirical evidence showing that the co-production mode is on the increase (Baltruschat 2003). The second, based on a survey with television producers, points out the "need to lower cost of production" as being the main factor motivating producers to engage in this co-production strategy (Hoskins *at el* 1995; 1997).

While qualitatively oriented in its methodological structure, my own research takes the quantitative evidence that emerges from the above-mentioned studies as the basis for an important working assumption, namely that the growing popularity of international co-productions is largely due to the economic factor, which is a major driving force for producers engaging in this mode.

II. The research design

As already mentioned, I designed my study on international co-production in the making of television documentaries combining different qualitative methods (semi

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[26] A detailed account of the methods employed and the rationale for using them will be given as the chapter unfolds.

structured interviews and film analysis). The research strategy adopted was to conduct a 'case study' of a television documentary which had been produced through international co-production. In what follows, I shall state what I mean by 'case study' and provide a useful taxonomy. Secondly, I reflect on the limitations entailed in the adoption of the case study as a research method. Thirdly, I discuss the ways in which the case study as research strategy has been applied in the field of media studies (notably in the studies on the production of television documentaries). Finally, I indicate the motivations and circumstances that influenced the selection of the specific documentary programme on which I conducted my case study.

In his book *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Yin (1994) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that uses multiple sources of evidence to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, in which the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident. This definition highlights how a case study differs from other research strategies. For example, an experiment separates a phenomenon from its real-life context (the context is controlled by the laboratory environment). The survey technique tries to define the phenomenon under study narrowly enough to limit the number of variables to be examined. Yin (1994) points to the 'prejudice' against case studies. Case studies, he claims, are criticized for lacking rigour and evidence and for introducing the researchers' biases. Although this may be symptomatic of other types of research, Yin maintains that these problems are more common in case studies when they are conducted without rigour: i.e. without triangulation and disregarding the chain of evidence. In addition, they take too long and produce overly extensive reports. Yin argues that this may be because case studies are often confused with ethnographies. Finally, the most common prejudice against case studies is that because of the inherent difficulty of representing populations, they do not lead to generalizations. This criticism is founded on the expectation that results stemming from case studies should be generalisable to populations. Authors who recognize the above-mentioned limitations of the case study technique, also see in it some clear advantages. Benbasat *et al* (1987:370) offer three reasons for adopting the case-study strategy: (1) it is effective for generating theory from practice; (2) it is useful for answering 'how' and 'why' questions, that is for understanding the nature and complexity of the processes taking place; (3) a case study approach is an appropriate way to do research in areas where few previous studies have been carried out.

For the purposes of this study I have decided to conduct a single, in-depth case study. Yin (1994) has recommended a single case study when the case is rare and 'unique'; when it is 'revelatory' (that is when the researcher has an opportunity to access phenomena that have not been previously studied), and when it represents a critical instance in testing a theory (a single case matching all conditions for testing the theory). The last two reasons determined my selection of the documentary on which I conducted my case study: a documentary programme produced though an international co-production. Using a case study that focuses on a particular co-produced documentary of the type chosen here has the particular advantage of allowing a direct test of the impact of globalization on the bond between national identity, shared memory and documentary television.

My own work is in no way unique as a 'single case study'. This method has been used widely in empirical research on the production of television documentaries (e.g. Silverstone 1985; Dornfeld 1998) and has proven itself successful in yielding insights into the circumstances and processes by which television programmes came into being (Elliott 1972:8). Among the questions which have been investigated are; How have television programmes been made available? How is the material selected and created? How far is the production process a matter of self-conscious, reflective decision making? How do television institutions (public and private), and individual producers working within them, perform their function? How do television professionals see audiences, their expectations, and the responsibilities they have towards them? And, how have the changes in the production processes (technology, for example) affected the nature of television programmes and of television as a communication system (Elliott 1972; Kilborn & Izod 1997; Dornfeld 1998; Corner 1999)?

In his pioneering study of the production of television documentaries, Philip Elliott (1972) traced the making of a seven-part series, *The Nature of Prejudice* (1967) transmitted on Britain's Independent Television Network. Elliott observed the production process (scripting, filming and editing), and described/discovered a media culture that is 'a largely separate and self-contained system' (1972:146). In particular, he noted, the formal and informal 'content mechanisms' used by the production team to assemble material which, in Elliott's view, led to 'cultural repetition and continuity' (Elliott 1972:147).

Roger Silverstone (1985) studied the constraints and negotiations involved in the making of a BBC science documentary, *A New Green Revolution*. Silverstone's study is one of very few complete accounts of the production process of a documentary programme. Observing the different stages of the actual production of the film (planning, scripting, filming, editing and broadcasting), Silverstone showed how the translation from a scientific to a televisual discourse dictated a restructuring of intent and objectives, and was in itself a highly politicised process. Silverstone's study benefited from the ability to observe the actual processes of the production and to reflect on the forces that shaped the programme:

> Broadcast television, the culture of the BBC, the genre of the documentary film, the particular history and identity of Horizon, the 50-minute slot, the working of ideas into images and explanations into stories, of competing voices into a single voice, together define an entirely distinct kind of cultural work- obviously sharing much with other kinds of products both on television and more broadly in other media- and equally obviously, constantly changing and adapting to new demands and new opportunities (Silverstone 1985: 167).

While acknowledging the limitations of the single case design, Silverstone also points out some clear advantages:

> The problems with such case study are clear enough. Nothing that happens need ever happen again. What does happen, whether it be the object or praise or blame, cannot easily, or obviously, be the source of generalization... But on the other hand, case studies are intensely valuable, both for their hopefully accurate descriptive detail and for the possibility of using that detail to explore general questions, which are raised by it. A case study is not typical but it can be used to understand the typical. However unusual a film turns to be, however distinctive an individual producer's style, the film must nevertheless be the product of a negotiation with a set of political, aesthetic, technical and bureaucratic constraints which provide the context for most of the film-making in the given organisation or culture (Silverstone 1985:2).

Following upon Silverstone's work, there was a very fallow period in the presenting of case-study television research (as noted earlier, the focus was on audience reception of televised texts). Barry Dornfeld's (1998) analysis of the making of the documentary series, *Childhood,* made in 1989-1991 on the US's WNET-TV Network, is the next significant example. Its importance rests largely in the fact that it employs multiple sources of evidence. Dornfeld (who had also worked, as a researcher, on this

production), interviewed the production team of the documentary series, observed actual scripting, filming and editing practices, and had access to corporate documents. His detailed work reveals not only the processes through which the culture artefacts (the televisual-texts) came into being, but the manner in which filmmakers' perceptions concerning cultural differences find expression in the content of the documentaries they produce (Dornfeld 1998:7). Researching and writing in 1998, Dornfeld was already exposed to the topic at the centre to this study, namely the production of co-produced documentaries. However, while acknowledging the fact that the series under investigation (*Childhood*) was produced thorough an international co-production, Dornfeld overlooked the ways in which this mode of production manifested itself in the programme's contents.

III. The selection of a case-study

The main objective of the present study is to examine the manner in which economic interactions among television producers from different countries manifest themselves in the contents of the film they co- produce, and as a result in the ways in which the narrated 'reality' is shaped. As mentioned earlier, the methodology to be used in analysing this topic is that of pursuing a single case study. The rationale behind this choice had to do with the need to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon rather than to map out the common elements which widely characterize international co-productions in the making of television documentaries. The price to be paid for the decision to concentrate on a particular case study was the lack of scope for a statistical generalization of the findings. Under such circumstances any generalizations will have to be analytic, rather then deductive with theory being used to compare the empirical results (Yin 1994). In other words, rather than asking whether, and in what way, the chosen 'case' is representative, I shall be content to ask what are the processes that this case can be seen to reflect.

The particular film *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs*[27] was chosen as a case study because of its relevance and appropriateness. I make no claims that this documentary can be taken as representative of other films. However, the choice of

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[27] The 'case' to be explored here is not the conflict between Israel and the Arabs but the presentation of historical subject-matter in a documentary film co- produced by broadcasters from different countries through an international co-production.

this particular film was made in view of the fact that this television documentary was produced through an international-co production, which means that:

1. The film was co-produced by broadcasters from different countries[28] (The UK and the USA)
2. All the partners (BBC and WGH Boston) were involved creatively and financially in the process of making the film.

The selection of the television history *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs* brings up two significant questions: (1) Within television documentaries, why concentrate on a television history? (2) Within the genre of television history, why select a "political" example, having to do with an emotionally charged international conflict? The answers to both questions should be obvious. The systematic study of a given phenomenon, whether within social science or within science in general, is best served by concentrating on an observational object that exhibits the target phenomenon in the most pronounced fashion[29].

The Fifty Years war: Israel and the Arabs (1998) is a series of six documentaries, which was produced in connection with the 50th anniversary of the 1948 founding of the State of Israel. The central narrative at its core is the 50 years of conflict between Israel and the Arabs. The series was initiated by the BBC. Michael Jackson, BBC2's controller, approached Brian Lapping Associates, a London-based independent production company, to produce the series. The BBC, however, was reluctant to commission such a high-cost project by itself and so it prevailed on the Lapping Associates to line up foreign broadcasters to join the production team, and to share its costs. Lapping Associates (represented by the distributor, Sue Temple of Temple International) succeeded in securing the American television Network WGBH Boston as a partner. The two networks (BBC and WGBH Boston) signed a

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[28] The television network, MBC joined the co-production in a later stage. Full discussion will be provided in Chapter Five.

[29] It musr be noted that a co-produced television documentary (television history included) is normally produced in different national/cultural versions (e.g. Shew 1992). A good example is a television programme co-produced by the BBC and by the American PBS on the history of Rock and Roll (1996). This documentary was produced in two distinct national versions (American and British). It is beyond the scope of this study to provide a detailed analysis of this programme. However, a useful illustration of the differences among the versions is the chosen title: the American version carried the title 'The History of Rock 'n' Roll' the British producers opted for the title 'Dancing in the Streets' (Tom Kock, Executive Producer, WGBH International, Interview October 2001).

co-production agreement with Lapping which gave the channel operators full say in editorial decisions and granted them complete control over the final product. Toward the final stages of the production, the commercial Arab television network MBC was approached by Brian Lapping with an offer to buy into the final product. MBC (based in Abu-Dhabi but represented by a London based production company, OR Media) agreed to purchase the programme, on condition of being allowed to the right to re-edit the series and construct its own version[30].

IV. Collecting and analyzing the evidence

As stated earlier, my aim has been to examine the production processes which led to the emergence of the documentary film *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arab*, and to see what insights emerged from this investigation regarding the tensions and contradictions arising in processes of globalization and commercialization. The working assumption was that the tension between the 'globalized' nature of the multi-national co-production team on the one hand, and the professional, cultural and ideological pressures of the individual producers on the other, would find expression both in the production process and the outcome. The fact that from the project's inception, the film was designed to exist in different national versions, seemed to promise distinct cultural/national/ideological proclivities both in the production process and in the contents of the final cultural products[31].

To explore the 'production process' (pre-production, production, post-production), semi-structured interviews with producers were conducted, and 'production documents' were collected. Qualitative textual analysis of the film (all three national versions) was applied to the film's contents i.e., analyzing the ways in which it conveyed the conflict between Israel and the Arabs.

Interviews with filmmakers

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five members of the production team, the main 'creative' players in the making of the film *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs,* namely, the commissioning editors and the producers working for BBC2 (U.K), PBS (U.S.A), MBC (Middle Eastern Arabs countries), as well as the series

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[30] A detailed discussion on the agreement and its outcomes will be provided in Chapter Five.
[31] This issue will be discussed in Chapter Five.

producer for the firm of Brian Lapping, a London-based independent production company which produced the film for all three broadcasters.

My decision to concentrate on the commissioning editors (executive producers) and the producers of the film has to do with their position at the intersection between commissioning and content. As it was they who initiated the production (decided to commission the film through co-production), my assumption was that it would be them as well who would determine the film's contents (exercise editorial control).

Participants were:

Zvi Dor-Ner, Commissioning Editor (executive producer), WGBH Boston, USA

Eddie Mirzoeff, Commissioning Editor (executive producer), BBC2, UK

Norma Percy, Series Producer, Brian Lapping, London, UK

Brian Lapping, Independent Executive producer, London, UK

Christine Garabedian, Producer, OR media, MBC (Saudi Arabia)[32]

Sue Temple, International Distributor, Temple International, UK

In addition to interviewing the creators of the film, I interviewed a small number of filmmakers who are actively engaged in international co-productions of television documentaries: these included commissioning editors for various television networks and independent producers:

Jolanda Klarenbeek[33], Director, IDFA Forum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Steven Seidenberg, producer, Cafe Production, London, UK

Dan Setton, producer, Set Production, Jerusalem, Israel

Tom Koch, director WGBH International, Boston, USA

Ralf-Peter Piechwiak, Commissioning editor, ZDF, Mainz, Germany

Bjorn Arvas, Commissioning editor, SVT 1, Sweden

Rudy Buttignol, Commissioning editor, TV Ontario, Canada

Ikka Vehkalahti, Commissioning editor, YLE TV2, Finland

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[32]MBC's headquarters moved from London to Abu-Dhabi in 2000-2001
[33]E-mail correspondence

Interviews with filmmakers are used widely in empirical studies on the production of television programmes in general, and of documentaries in particular (e.g. Gripsrud 1995; Dornfeld 1998; Aron 1999). This method has proved successful in gaining insight into the actual process of production, and was therefore employed in this study as well. It was largely through these interviews with the creators of television documentaries that I was able to develop an understanding of the ways in which my specific case-study documentary film came into being, and the decisions and actions involved in this process. Because of my own personal experience as a director of documentary films and my acquaintance with some of the producers, it was not difficult to identify the persons to be interviewed and the relevant documents, and most importantly to obtain copies of the actual film (all three versions). Furthermore, I developed almost immediate rapport with most of the interviewees because they perceived me as 'one of them'. As a result of this personal acquaintance, the subjects of the study (the filmmakers), had a favourable disposition towards the research, and were open and forthcoming in the interview situation.

Interviews, more than any other method, allowed me to identify the attitudes, values and beliefs of the creators of the film under investigation, thus shedding light on their underlying perceptions of the national and the global. The interview is the research site in which the actions and beliefs of important actors/players in the project are translated into words. Significantly, this process of verbalization 'organizes' what is only latently recognizable in the social actions. More precisely, I refer to the reasons that motivate decisions made during the production. The interviews also enabled me to gain a better understanding of the environment in which the subjects operated. Being present on site, often itself provided many answers to questions asked and unasked, since the environment in which producers work and in which the films are made has a marked impact on the final product. Moreover the interviews invite participants' self reflection: a process which helped both the creators of the film and me to pin down the potentially slippery link between actions and their precipitating causes. I regularly prompted the producers and commissioning editors of the film to talk about their personal experiences as well as to discuss the considerations and the compromises they made throughout the film's production. By asking the filmmakers to reflect on their experience and behaviour, I was able to trace some of the personal, professional and cultural pressures, which are often latent and barely visible.

On the practical level, interviews (in contrast to other ethnographic methods such as participant observation) are useful for achieving this aim because they (usually, though not always) provide ready and easy access to the participants, (at the very least, the access is consensual), they are usually convenient in terms of scheduling, and (often) offer flexibility of interview length. Working to my advantage was the fact that I was not constrained by a tight timetable and could meet the producers at their convenience, as the research progressed. This enabled me also to sharpen the interviews and to highlight the issues at hand, which meant better access to a detailed and ongoing account of the actual production process of the film under investigation.

The interviews were conducted in an informal setting, which proved quite helpful. I met the creators of the film *Israel and the Arabs* in convenient places (cafes or their offices), always in a setting which enabled me to maintain constant eye contact with the respondents. In this relaxed ambiance, I was able to elicit personal and confidential information regarding the processes involved in production of the film under investigation. It also enabled me to gain a better understanding of the ways in which the creators of the documentary perceived their role as cultural agents facing the profound changes taking place in the television industry, information which often remains latent. The interviews were scheduled well ahead of time, so the interviewees could respond at leisure, without interruption. This enabled them to concentrate on the interview, and to free themselves from the hassle of their work.

Interviewing the creators of television documentaries means interviewing 'experts'. An 'expert' is somebody who is chosen on the basis of a professional role they occupy. The experts are being questioned about a world on which they have specialized knowledge and so perform the dual purpose of informing the interviewer about that world and at the same time expressing some form of opinion on it (Flick 1998). Notwithstanding, 'experts' can sometimes regard themselves as representatives of an organization (in this case the commissioning editors represent a particular television network) and thus may speak 'on behalf' of that constituency, rather than asserting their personal opinion. However, in this case the personal accounts of experts, namely the commissioning editors and the producers of the documentary *The Fifty Years War,* were in fact the providers of the study's primary substantive data, simply because these 'experts' are the ones who had represented the television networks (BBC, PBS and MBC), initiated the production and determined the contents of the film under investigation. Only by interviewing these producers and

commissioning editors could this data be obtained. This aspect of the data collecting process has clear analytical implications which will be developed later when the analysis is considered.

Semi- structured interviews

I chose the semi-structured interview as the most appropriate form through which to approach my informers' (the producers and commissioning editors of the documentary *Israel and the Arabs*) perceptions and opinions, since it gives respondents an opportunity to develop their own reflections and frameworks of discourse. It seemed particularly appropriate to use semi-structured interviews with filmmakers, since on the one hand they are generally open and articulate so it is usually unnecessary to create an outside incentive to motivate them to talk about their activities. On the other hand, it was important for me to ensure that certain issues were covered, and therefore I did not employ a completely open interview. In particular, my main objective was to explore how filmmakers perceived the 'globalization' of the television industry, and how their national and global perceptions are reflected in the films they make. My approach proved justified. I encouraged filmmakers to reflect on their personal experiences as well as on their role as cultural (notably mnemonic) agents.

The questions that I asked the interviewees had to do with the behaviour of the individual filmmaker, his/her attitudes, and the perceptions he/she has of his/her role in determining audio-visual content. Arguably, an account of the course of a film's production process, as given by the 'actors' themselves, may be quite different from an account of the same process when narrated by an outside observer. The actors' personal accounts will undoubtedly be highly subjective and therefore biased. However in the case of this particular study, using the producers' personal accounts as the primary substantive source, did have a clear advantage. It is precisely their subjectivity and bias that I want. This is simply because these filmmakers are the ones who had represented the television networks and had therefore determined the audio-visual content. I have therefore used the producers' personal accounts from which to gain insights into the ways in which filmmakers perceive their role in shaping and constructing national (historical) awareness and shared memory.

The open-ended design of the questionnaire meant that interviews were not conducted through a strict order of questioning. They were, however, structured along certain key subject-areas of discussion, proceeding from the general to the particular. They began at the broadest level, exploring the reasons for producers to engage in international co-productions in general.

1. How do you define a co-production?

2. Why do you engage in co-productions?

3. How do you choose your co-players?

4. What are the main advantages of a co-production?

5. What are the main drawbacks of a co-production?

6. What are the effects of this kind of collaboration on the content of the film you produce?

7. Are the films produced through international co-production differ from those solely produced?

8. Do you think that there are topics that are specially suited to a co-production and others which do not fit this format?

I then proceeded to examine the reasons for the particular film, *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs,* to have been produced through a co-production.

1. Why did you decide to *commission* a film about the conflict between Israel and the Arabs?

2. Why did you decide to *commission* this film through an international co-production?

3. Would you pursue the project if it had not been co-funded as an international co-production?

The next set of questions was concerned with the actual production process of this film. Starting with the pre-production phase, I examined the nature of the financial arrangements that had been concluded:

1. What was your network's share in the direct funding to the project?

2. Why did you pick (or agree to) this share?

3. What did you expect to get in return for your financial commitment?

The last set of questions concerned the production process itself, namely the scripting, the filming, and the editing. Here, I was interested mainly in contents, and in content related decisions, attempting to identify the manner in which the different partners established editorial control over the product.

1. What compromises did you make for this particular international collaboration to be possible?
2. How did you gain control (make editorial inputs) over the final product?
3. Do you insist on having editorial control over the final product?
4. What is the importance of making a national version of the film? Do you always insist on it?
5. Would you do the film differently if it had not been a co-production?

As noted earlier, much of the empirical basis for this study came from face-to-face interviews with many of the actors (producers, executives, etc.) who were involved in the various stages of the production of the Series. These interviews (in some cases a person was interviewed more than once) took place some time – usually two or three years – after work on the Series had ended, indeed after it had been broadcast in all of it intended markets. This delay may be seen as a shortcoming of the present study, in view of the fact that people's memories are far from perfect. My impression, however, was nearly the opposite: The facts that lingered in the interviewees' memories, the facts that they were eagerly reporting despite the lapse of time, were, to a large extent, precisely the facts that had to do with the vexing questions of perceived predispositions regarding the construction of historical narratives and memory, i.e., precisely with the questions that lie at the core of this study.

Production documents

In addition to interviewing filmmakers I collected and read many corporate documents. The documents selected were those related to the actual production process of the co-produced documentary *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs*. I

was allowed to photocopy the documents as well and to borrow some of them[34].

Those documents were useful in tracing the processes involved in the production of the documentary under investigation and played a crucial role maintaining a chain of evidence[35].

The documents included:

1. The financial agreement (contract) between the independent production company and the co-production agents.

2. The programmes' initial proposal (synopsis, written by Lapping's production team)

3. An exchange of letters between the independent production company and the co-production agent –WGBH Boston[36].

4. Four scripts of four viewing sessions: Sessions took place in Lapping's office in London, participants: Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH Boston, Peter McGhee WGBH Boston, Eddie Mirzoeff BBC, Norma Percy and Brian Lapping Brian Lapping Associates[37]. The scripts were written by Lapping's production team, and notes of viewing sessions were hand-written on script by series producer Norma Percy of Brian Lapping Associates.

Film (Text) analysis – The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs

Qualitative film (text) analysis was applied to the film's contents. The objective of the analysis was to illustrate how the interactions among television co-producers of different countries manifest themselves in the content of the documentary being produced and as a result in the ways in which the narrated 'reality' was shaped. In fact, given that the film *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs* was produced through an international co-production and was planned from its inception to emerge with a cultural product existing in different national versions, a distinct cultural (national) predisposition was expected and hypothesized. My working assumption was that each national version (British, American and Arab-States) would offer its own

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[34] These documents were especially significant in the context of this research since they offered a play-by play account of 'real time' production practices. This in contrast to the producers account that were provided conducted 2-5 years after the transmission of the three national/cultural film broadcast texts.
[35] See discussion in Chapter Five
[36] Discussions between the independent production company and the second co-production agent (BBC) were conducted over the phone.
[37] See a detailed discussion in Chapter Five.

(nation/culture) reading of the Arab-Israeli conflict, while at the same time sharing many patterns and features with other versions.

In this study I preferred the textual analysis/literary approach to media artefacts over the 'content analysis' approach. I wanted to 'tease out' those determining but hidden assumptions which in their unique ordering remain opaque to quantitative content analysis. At its best, qualitative (textual) analysis is more flexible than the quantitative kind; it aspires to a level of complexity that remains true to the actual complexity and contradictoriness of television artefacts (Gitlin 1980:303). I did not count instances of recurrent themes mainly because much of the subtlety I find interesting would probably be lost in quantitative sieves. It needs to be said furthermore that the literary (textual) choice emphatically does not amount to a choice of the intuitive against the objective. For as Todd Gitlin (1980: 304) observes: 'Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies rely on preliminary interrogations of the material, interrogations which proceed, at least implicitly, form 'intuitive' assumptions about what matters in the content, what needs to be either analyzed or counted'. This point was summarized nicely by Stuart Hall:

> The error is to assume that because content analysis uses precise criteria for coding evidence it is therefore objective in the literal sense of the term: and because literary/linguistic analysis steers clear of code-building it is merely intuitive and unreliable. Literary/linguistic types of analysis also employ evidence: they point, in detail, to the text on which an interpretation of latent meaning is based; they indicate more briefly the fuller supporting of contextual evidence which lies to hand; they take into account material which modifies or disproves the hypotheses which are emerging; and they *should* (they do not always) indicate in detail why one rather than another reading of the material seems to the analyst the most plausible way of understanding it. ..... the literary/linguistic analyst has another string to his bow: namely, strategies for noting and taking account of emphasis. Position, placing, treatment, tone, stylistic intensification, striking imagery, etc., are all ways of registering emphasis. The really significant item may not be the one which continually recurs, but the one which stands out as an exception from the general pattern-but which is *also* given, in its exceptional context, the greatest weight (Hall 1975: 15).

The text (film) analysis method is widely used in media studies. Braudy and Cohen (1999) discuss four periods in over 100 years of film analysis. The first period was basically formalist, and considered the artistic merits of film. The second period evolved during the 1960s and 1970s, as the academic study of audio-visual products

gained momentum. This period is characterized with what Stuart Hall (1982) called the 'rediscovery of ideology'. This rediscovery led, in the first instance, to a focus on the analysis of the ideological structure of factual product (mainly news), and, more generally, to a focus on the analysis of media coverage of politics, particularly media coverage of explicitly controversial issues such as industrial and race relations. These studies, by and large, mobilized concepts of ideology derived from the work of Gramsci and Althusser (discussed in Morley 1992). In the 1980s studies were framed within a more sophisticated concern with bias, introducing a variety of new interpretative approaches from linguistics and wide range of semiotic and structuralist models, including cultural anthropology, Marxism, and Freudian psychoanalysis (e.g D'Acci 1994; Wasko 2001). More recently, Braudy and Cohen (1999) observe that audio-visual analysis has become more eclectic, with attempts to merge various approaches from history, psychology, and linguistics and to draw upon feminism, neo-formalism, cognitive psychology, empiricism, and phenomenology.

Clearly, 'film' and 'television' cannot be satisfactory reduced to a textual phenomenon. As Stuart Hall notes in this respect: 'textuality in never enough' and critics must learn to live with 'the ... tension which Said described as its affiliations with institutions, offices, agencies, classes, academics, corporations, group, ideologically defined parties and professions, nations, race and genders.... questions that ... can never be fully covered by critical textuality and its elaborations' (Hall 1992a: 284).

Acknowledging such transparent limitations (discussed in Lewis 1991; Morley 1992; Couldry 2000) the text analysis method has been employed, nevertheless, in recent years, by critics working in the field of ethnicity and nationalism (e.g. Hogen 1999; Smith 2000; Lo 2001). These studies, with their focus on the construction and reflection of national identity in mediated *discourses* is, understandably, especially relevant for my own study. The emphasis on linguistic and visual devices that are employed to construct national sameness on the one hand, and differences from other national collectives on the other hand, provided me with useful guidelines for addressing my own questions: To what extent does the collaboration among the producers of the Fifty Year War project give rise to new and complex representations of shared (national) memory? To what extent do the three national/cultural products confront and challenge narratives that have tended to be associated with 'Old TV'?

Before turning to the actual analysis, I would like to outline briefly a few of the basic suppositions that I hold to be of particular relevance for this investigation[38].

I begin with the assumption that nations are to be understood as mental constructs, as *'imagined communities'* (Anderson 1983). 'They are represented in the minds and memories of the nationalized subjects, and can become influential guiding ideas with sometimes tremendously serious and destructive consequences' (De-Cillia *et al* 1999:153).

Second I assume that 'nation', far from being an age old 'primordial' condition,' is a political and ideological category (Eley & Suny 1996:9). In Michael Billig's words: 'National identities are forms of social life, rather than internal psychological states; as such they are ideological creation, caught up in the historical processes of nationhood' (Billig 1995:24).

My third assumption is that the imagining of the nation is part of an ideological, *discursive* consciousness. In other words, national identities -- conceived as specific forms of social identity -- are discursively produced, reproduced, transformed and deconstructed by means of language and other symbolic systems (De-Cillia *et al* 1999:153). Stuart Hall (1992b) for example describes nations as systems of cultural representations, the means by which an imagined community may be interpreted. People are not only citizens by law, they also participate in forming the idea of the nation as it is represented in their national culture. National cultures construct identities by creating meanings of 'the nation', which one can identify. These are contained in '.... stories, images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols and rituals which stand for or *represent* the shared experiences... which give meaning to the nation' (Hall 1992b:293, Hall's italics). The idea of a specific national community becomes reality in the realm of convictions and beliefs through reifying, figurative discourses continually launched by intellectuals, politicians and citizens and disseminated through the systems of education, militarism, sports meetings and, of course, mass communication systems.

Fourth, the discursive construction of nations and national identity always runs hand in hand with the construction of difference/distinctiveness and uniqueness (e.g. Hall 1991; Renan 1996; Eley & Suny 1996) As soon as it is elevated to an imaginary collective level, both the construction of sameness and the construction of difference

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[38] These theoretical frameworks were discussed in detail in Chapters One and Two.

violate pluralistic and democratic variety and multiplicity by the group's internal homogenization (discussed in De-Cillia *et al* 1999:54).

My fifth and final assumption is that the discursive construction of national identity is built on a common history, and history has always to do with remembrance and memory. Every nation must have its history and its own collective memory. This remembering is simultaneously a collective forgetting (Renan 1996). As Daniel Sibony (1997:248) writes: what binds a national community together is a collective willingness 'to stay silent about the same thing' (cited in Robins and Aksoy 2000: 205). The notion of national shared memory and shared amnesia is of particular interest for an analytical approach to the subjective *discursive* construction of national identity, especially regarding the question of which 'history' is told by a nation's citizens (members), what and how they recollect, and between which 'historical events' they make a connection in their subjective national narrative.

Drawing on the theoretical frameworks outlined above, a *comparative* film (text) analysis was attempted, to examine how the history (and memory) of the Arab Israeli conflict was presented and constructed in each national/cultural version of the co-produced film.

I began the analysis by examining what I had targeted as the 'key moments' of the audio-visual product (each national version): the opening segment, the first event segment[39], and the closing segment. I proceeded by examining the structure of each episode of the film (programmes One to Six). I then turned my attention to the main task, which was to provide a *detailed* account of the similarities and differences among the three nation/culture versions. I approached this task by analyzing three key moments of 'Programme One' of the series *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs* (all three versions)[40]. The decision to limit my analysis to one programme (episode) out of the six, has to do with the fact that a full analysis of the complete series would result in considerable repetition and redundancy, due to overlaps in the ways in which the Arab-Israeli conflict was constructed across programmes. But more significantly, Programme One has an analytical implication – it is seen here as a *frame* for the series

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[39] This category will be discussed in Chapter Six.
[40] The series contains six programmes each of 48-50 minutes.

as a whole (Gitlin 1980)[41]. The first programme draws audiences' attention to particular events, actors, and points in time. It thus plays a significant role in the processes of decoding the televised text (Hall 1980; O'Sullivan 1994).

The process of analysis was divided into two phases. First, 'programme one' of the film Israel and the Arabs (each national version) was divided into distinct sequences, with each sequence being labelled according to the main topic being portrayed. Once identified and labelled, these sequences were storyboarded to establish the ways various stylistic techniques were used to privilege a specific 'readings' of a given 'element' of the conflict[42]. As John Corner (1995) suggests: programme analysis involves 'looking closely at examples of 'content' as well as of "form" and seeing the interplay between the different kinds of things which television shows and the different ways in which it can show things' (Corner 1995:3). I proceeded by examining the similarities and differences among these sequences.

Drawing on solid work by prominent 'narrative theorists' notably Propp (1968) and Todorov (1981) as well on as critical writings in the field of nationalism (e.g. Billig 1995; Eley & Suny 1996; Smith 2000), I was able to identify several elements that could be associated with known conventions for portraying the 'nation' in audio-visual narratives.

1. The actors:

Who are they and what is the relevance to the national experience (e.g. Propp 1968; Smith 2000; Toplin 2000)?

2. The roles:

Who are the heroes, who are the villains (Propp 1968)? Who are each nation's 'friends' and 'enemies'?

3. Place/location:

Which places are depicted (visually and/or verbally) and what is their relevance to the

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[41] Todd Gitlin (1980:7) defined a media frame as the 'persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbols handless routinely arranges discourse whether verbal or visual'.
[42] The stylistic techniques include; technical codes (camera angles, camera movement, shot duration, lighting, depth of field, editing effects, sound, sound effects, music, special effects and framing), and symbolic codes (colour/Back-and-white, setting, location) (see Monaco 1981; Bordwell & Thompson 1997: Deacon et al 1999).

nation's history and 'rich legacy of memories' (Renan 1996; Smith 2000)?

4. Plot/story (time/issues/themes):

At which historical moments the story begins/ ends, and how do such moments relate to the nation's heritage? Which historical event (issues) will be admitted, and which will be consigned to oblivion? What are the events that the nation must remember and those that it must forget (e.g. Renan 1996; Margalit 2002)?

5. Language:

What is the language in use and what is its relevance to the national experience (e.g. Gellner 1983; Billig 1995)?

Admittedly, this categorization is a rough pigeonholing exercise, but one which nonetheless enables us to see the general patterns of representation in the documentary programme under investigation. This aspect has clear analytical implications which will be developed in Chapter Six when the actual analysis of the film is considered.

There are two further methodological points which need to be made. The first has to do with analyzing an audio-visual product in writing only. Clearly audio-visual products contain (by definition) both images and sound. In my analysis I had no choice but to limit myself to a verbal mode.

Given this limitation, I tried to provide a rigorous analysis of the material under investigation, by providing a detailed description of the different elements, namely sound (music, sound effects, and narration) and images.

The second point concerns text analysis in general. Central to such an analysis is an application of the researcher's own reading, that is, a structured approach, not only based on formula and application of models, but largely dependent on the development of skills of description and classification (e.g. Lewis 1991; Morley 1992). In such circumstances, the researcher must be aware of the risks and limitations involved in film analysis, of becoming subjective, associative, and merely descriptive and thereby losing the requisite tightness and impartially. In my case this risk in even more pronounced, as I was educated in Israel. It is because of this that the rigour of conduction the research becomes fundamental in ensuring its validity.

V. Combining different sets of data

The objective of exploring the interplay between economic, professional and cultural (national) pressures, turned out to justify the decision to combine three qualitative research methods. It is through the combination of different sets of qualitative data, namely, the production process itself, the texts produced, and my analysis of the producers' own reflective accounts as given to me, that I was able to move between theory and practice and to study the impact of recent trends towards globalization and commercialization on the ways in which national identity and shared memories are constructed and represented in televised texts.

In combining diverse sets of data, my study differs from the other studies on international co-production that I am aware of. Most empirical studies have relied either on a detailed analysis of a documentary film (e.g. Jäckel 2001, Baltruschat 2002), or have employed methodologies such as semi-structured interviews (e.g. Hoskins *et al* 1997).

This study highlights the need to explore the role of documentary filmmakers as the producers and re-producers of national narratives, and by implication of shared memory. In so doing, I hope to have prepared the ground for myself and other researchers to pursue further questions into the broader vista of the three-sided interplay of television, shared memory and national identity in an age of globalization.

Chapter Five

The Cultural Economy of the 'Television History' *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs* (1998) The Production Process

I would hear the terrible dramas with the American co-producer of demands to lose this or include that. There was a brief moment when I thought I have to get involved in that to go and talk to them when they came over here and explain our thinking and indeed we were thinking about writing a letter explaining why we thought this is a better approach and then it seemed to me who cares in the end we got what we were after, and they pay enough to say what they want or don't want (Eddie Mirzoeff, Executive Producer – BBC, Interview, February 2003)

..We had to reconcile different attitudes and different interests. We have a very different audience and very different history. They [the British] took part in the war. They created Jordan and Saudi Arabia. In some ways the history of the Middle East is British doing... they had an attitude towards it which is very different from the Americans..... there is a better intimacy and knowledge that needs to be reflected in such a programme. The notion of the Middle-East or the Near-East: it is near *London* it not near *Washington* (Dor-Ner, Executive Producer WGBH-Boston, Interview, August 2001, my italics).

The television history *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs* was produced between the years 1996-1998. At its core is the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Arabs. Filmed in Israel, in the Palestinian autonomous areas, in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Russia and in the U.S., the series is based on interviews with heads of state, prime ministers, aides, chiefs of staff, military commanders, saboteurs, terrorists on both sides, and the main power brokers around the world (Bregman & El-Tahri 1998). In order to make this documentary series possible, three funding sources (BBC, WGBH Boston and MBC) had to be secured, with each funding source given the right to use the produced footage to construct its own version of the final product. Each funding source took full advantage of this purchased privilege, and the completed series thus exists in three distinct versions, British (BBC2), American (PBS) and Middle-Eastern (MBC). Given the splitting of the final product into several 'national' versions, the Arab-Israeli conflict becomes translated into 'reality' being presented differently in the three versions of the nation/culture broadcast films.

The possibility of a co-produced television programme branching out into several versions reveals an interesting economic dynamic: despite the fact that the decision to produce this programme through a co-production arose in response to the need to lower the costs of production, its creators incurred additional cost by producing it in multiple national versions.

The following chapter examines this apparent paradox and foregrounds the tension inherent in the two conflicting elements at work: economic interests on the one hand, and cultural constraints on the other. It argues that despite this television-history having been made by broadcasters from different countries through a co-production, it was in fact, from its inception, designed to reflect and transmit unique national narratives. To establish this claim, I set out to explore the *production process* of this documentary series in detail. Starting from the pre-production phase, I note the reasons for electing a co-production structure. I then consider the economic interaction between the partners, examining in particular the nature of the financial arrangements concluded. I proceed to *scripting* and the *editing*, paying special attention to content-related decisions, so as to identify the manner in which the different funding networks established editorial control over the end product.

I. Pre-production

Commissioning

The series *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs* was initiated by Michel Jackson, the former controller of BBC2. Jackson picked 'Brian Lapping Associates', a London-based independent production company, to produce it (Lapping in Bregman & El-Tahri 1998). In an interview, the BBC's executive producer, Eddie Mirzoeff, explained why this film was commissioned:

> [The Arab-Israeli conflict] had an effect on the region and therefore on the whole world. It triggered so many things... The Holy Land. People [viewers] got involved there [in the Holy Land] from childhood, the name resonates. And because it's so emblematic to so many other conflicts. Because there was an internal feeling of unfairness. We [Britain] discovered the Holocaust and so many refugees that we have to make up for it in some way, and also people go there on holidays. There is all kind of reasons. It's a democracy which attracted students to go and work in kibbutzim in the 50s and 60s. It has always been a centre of attraction ... (Eddie Mirzoerff, Interview, February 2003)

It is very important at this initial stage of my description and analysis of the *production process* to take the time for a close reading of Mirzoeff pre-production/commissioning statement. Mirzoerff's text alludes to three of the topics critical to my discussion of the tension inherent in the global/national television landscape: the grey zone between the universal and the prism of the national, the tension between the 'us/we' and 'them' (the 'other'), and the issue of the 'national spokesperson' becoming a 'voice of authority'. Opening his interview, Mirzoeff says:

> [The Arab-Israeli conflict] has an effect on the region and therefore on the whole world, it triggered so many things... The Holy Land. People got involve there from childhood, the name resonates. And because it's so emblematic to so many other conflicts...

Mirzoeff as producer is here highlighting the relevance of this conflict to a world-wide market. He sees the Arab-Israeli conflict as archetypal, 'emblematic to so many conflicts', resonating with the global religious overtones of 'the Holy Land'. In describing the relevance of this project to a 'global' audience, however, Mirzoeff's use of the word 'we' is a flashing light: 'We discovered the Holocaust....'. While on the face of it this British producer may seem to be promoting the story of an emblematic conflict which takes place in a region holy to many, he quickly and almost imperceptibly moves in effect, to tell the story of Britain ('we'), and 'our nation'. With the word 'we,' Eddie Mirzoeff identifies himself as a member of this 'Britain', which he then calls 'my' nation (Smith 2000). This shift is, for my argument, critical. Coming from a place of authority and credibility (a BBC executive producer), Mirzoeff as interpreter, almost succeeds in masking Mirzoeff as active participant in and spokesperson for a national entity. Once he and the UK are a "we" however, it is clear that 'identity mechanisms' (internal feelings of unfairness and a sense of the need to compensate for the past), will quickly come into play at all levels of the production process. It is precisely because Mirzoeff sees his own (British) involvement as unambiguous, that he moves forward, assured of his own clarity of vision; an assurance that allows him to commit deeply to this project.

When pressed on the issue of why the film *The Fifty Year War* was suitable and significant for the BBC's audience, Mirzoeff responded:

> We [Britain] were very active during the Mandate and in Suez and the guilt feeling about Suez goes on as well. There has been always a feeling that we

have a relationship with the Middle East- Laurence of Arabia, all that sort of stuff. There has been a degree of passionate support [in Britain] at one time strongly for Israel at another time more recently for the Palestinians. So it is not exactly like East Timor where actually there is no involvement at all... (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

What clearly emerges in Mirzoeff's statement is the fact that the decision to commission a film about the Arab Israeli conflict rested in no small measure on what were seen as existing British sensibilities ('the guilt feeling about Suez), and shared memories ('We were very active during the Mandate') regarding the conflict. The producer's statement resonates with what Ernest Renan ([1882]1996:52) called [the nation's] rich legacy of memories'. Mirzoeff is less interested in documenting the 'History' of the Arab-Israel conflict – exploring what actually happened- but rather insisting on reproducing his nations' memories (the events his national community remembers in the present), (discussed in Appiah 2003).

Again, speaking of 'we' (a term, from the outset, oppositional), Mirzoeff highlights the relevance of this topic to the BBC's primary target audience, broadly speaking, British citizenry with whom he totally aligns himself. In his next sentence the producer 'finds' himself suddenly in the world of Laurence of Arabia, a striking 'Orientalism' (Said 1985). By this point Mirzoeff moves easily to speak of 'passionate support' which in his description has clearly shifted from Israel to 'more recently' the Palestinians. Finally, and with no hesitation, Mirzoeff describes the British 'we' which has no interests in East-Timor. Clearly in each of these citings, I am reading a television producer for whom the basis of national belonging and identification is self-evident, and upon whom a mantle of national assumption rests comfortably.

With the BBC agreeing to commission the series[43], Brian Lapping (its executive producer) and Norma Percy (the series producer) negotiated its overall structure with Eddie Mirzoeff, the BBC's representative. Mirzoeff's role was to facilitate the work of Brian Lapping Associates (the independent production company) and to monitor the BBC's investment. Paul Hamann of the BBC explains the rationale for appointing an 'in-house' executive producer:

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[43] The nature of the financial agreement will be discussed in the following section

[Eddie Mirzoeff] was closely involved because with such an expensive exercise we were anxious to get it right (cited in Fry, 1997).

And Mirzoeff explains:

> The BBC nominates an executive producer so that you get the best product from the independent production company. Making sure that it is accurate and responsible, but also that it tells a good story that makes the best use of resources, the best use of narrative that is the best programme you can get. My role was to represent the BBC and bring out what I thought was the best way of making this programme for our viewers (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview February 2003).

Thus, also in the appointment of an executive producer for the series (an in-house representative) an effort was made to make the film suitable for the BBC's specific viewership, its *British* audience. This is based on the assumption that an independent production company, even one based in London, would not necessarily do so on its own, having no direct or formal responsibility to cater to the specific sensibilities of BBC's natural audience. i.e, of the British citizenry. For, as Eddie Mirzoeff says:

> This series like a lot of their [Brian Lapping Associates] work is financed by other members (networks) as well as the BBC. They are trying to keep everybody happy...... (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview February 2003).

Here, again, is Mirzoeff's awareness of the existing tension between the global and the national. The producer's underlying assumption is that his target audience is well defined (British) and as such differs from 'other' national viewing publics. As an executive producer for the BBC, he sees himself, in effect, as a representative of a specific national community (British), a fully participating member, whose responsibility it is to serve this national/cultural community, to reflect its national modes of reception, decoding and interpretations.

Pitching- Stage One

The budget for *The Fifty Year War* runs approximately US$400,000-$500,000 per episode (Sue Temple, Interview January 2003; Fry 1997). Eddie Mirzoeff explains the reasons for the BBC engaging in such an expensive project:

.... 98% of the BBC are interested in ratings but there is a tiny element still that says that when we can produce things in a very very high intellectual quality it does us no harm at all vis-à-vis policy maker, politicians, people who decide the license fee and so on. So if you look at the BBC's handbook it always points to a few very high quality project, and everything that Norma [Norma Percy of Brian Lapping Associates] does gets there (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

The BBC, however, was reluctant to commission such an expensive project by itself and forced the independent production company to get on board foreign broadcasters who would join the production and share its costs. As Mirzoeff explains the rationale:

To the BBC it was important [to get foreign broadcasters] because it meant that it had to put less money into it. ...The BBC wants high quality programmes but it does not want to pay that much for them. ..... and if Brian Lapping [the independent production company] can not find the rest [of the money] it [the documentary series] won't happened. And that what happened in this case. I was present in an extremely unpleasant discussion where my bosses refusing to give Brian a bit more money and telling him go and find it somewhere else because we are not going to give it to you (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

Mirzoeff's description highlights a topic critical to my discussion regarding the tension between two conflicting forces impacting upon the BBC's executive. On the one hand the need to render quality service to their specific national audience and, on the other hand, the need to economize through international sharing of production costs. Collaboration with foreign broadcasters, with each partner securing a version for his/her specific audience, seemed to be a useful device for resolving this dilemma. It enabled the BBC to obtain a high-cost ('quality') project, aimed specifically at its British audience, while relying on cost sharing to secure a lower price for itself.

The BBC's commitment to the film's budget was substantial but partial (50%) (Sue Temple, Interview, January 2003). The independent producer, 'Brian Lapping Associates', was thus forced to come up with a film proposal with world market potential, that is, catering to a variety of foreign broadcasters. In an interview, series producer Norma Percy said that the proposal had been based on the following factors: Firstly, Palestine carries strong religious connotations which could help the film to attract Christian viewers in various countries. Secondly, the political dispute between the Jews and the Arabs is constantly being covered in Western media, so Western audiences are familiar with its context. Finally, much of the film concerns human

suffering, thus evoking emotions, which are shared by all (Norma Percy, Interview May 2002).

After formulating a rough proposal, Percy and Lapping asked Sue Temple a specialist in pulling together international finance, to 'pitch' the series outside the UK. Temple says:

> Brian [Lapping] thinks of projects and will ask me if they have international potential. Then we start working on them immediately. Brian will handle the discussions with U.K. broadcasters while I approach the broadcasters overseas (Sue Temple, Interview January 2003).

Temple's first move was to pitch the proposal in the US, a key market where Lapping had experienced repeated success in attracting co-production partners. The US market was thought to be promising, both in economic and in cultural terms. It is the richest and most active market in the world while, at the same time, sharing some notable cultural characteristics with the British market (Norma Percy, Interview May 2002). As Lapping put it:

> Our first choice was 'Discovery' in the U.S., because we had made several big series for them previously...But they were changing their programming policy and didn't want Arabs and Israelis (Fry 1997).

After Lapping's proposal had been rejected by the Discovery Channel, Sue Temple had to turn to another American network. She chose WGBH Boston. Zvi Dor-Ner, in the role of executive producer, accepted the proposal for WGBH Boston, and proceeded to sign a financial agreement with Brian Lapping Associates. In an interview, Dor-Ner discusses the reasons which led to his decision to commission this project, together with the BBC as co-player:

> We thought it's the right time to do a comprehensive story about the Arab-Israeli conflict. We were delighted that the BBC initiated it because it meant that we don't have to. It means that the budget will be substantial.... The promise was that the production will be done with the similar realistic standard, with a similar approach to history... So it was a good opportunity to do something important for smaller price (Zvi Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001).

This statement makes it apparent that Zvi Dor-Ner recognized, as did Eddie Mirzoeff, the economic advantages in a co-production: elaborate programmes at low cost. Like

Mirzoeff, he too saw the Arab-Israeli conflict as a promising topic for a documentary film:

> Conflicts, any conflict, is an interesting subject. Conflict is a material of drama. The Arab Israeli conflict is especially so because it's in the centre of the history and the experience of Western civilization. It echoes tremendously. It starts with the Bible and Christianity and the relationship between Jews and Western cultures, the Holocaust and now the Jews relationship with the Arab world. It was in the focus of the cold war. Each one of the superpower was affiliated with one side. It was an important conflict, central to current history of the world (Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001).

The American producer, like his British collaborator, is telling, on the face of it, a 'universal' story of a human drama, which evokes emotions shared by all: 'Conflicts, any conflict, is an interesting subject. Conflict is a material of drama'. However, Dor-Ner in fact moves quickly to tell the story of the American historical experience: 'It was the focus of the Cold War. Each one of the superpowers was affiliated with one side'. Here again the clear distinction between the 'we' and the 'they' comes to the fore. The American producer, while referring to some unspecified community is, in fact, targeting a specific national audience, with 'well defined' historical experiences and shared 'rich legacy of memories' (Renan 1996:52) - a superpower in the Cold War. The memories regarding the American role in the Cold War (now being reproduced by Dor-Ner) are 'delineating the national self [America] from the foreign [Britan], alien the Other' (Bell 2003:70).

While alluding to the centrality of this conflict in 'Western cultures': ('It starts with the Bible and Christianity and the relationship between Jews and Western cultures'), Dor-Ner emphasizes its relevance to his network's target audience, Americans and even points to a single ethnic minority within the national — its 'large Jewish population':

> I think there is a special interest to America in this conflict. There is a large Jewish population. Very large and very influential in America. America has been profoundly involved in the conflict in various ways...... It deals with it on a daily basis. (Dor-Ner, Interview August 2001)

What becomes even more salient in this statement, and thus crucial to my discussion on the interplay between the 'national' and the 'global', is that Dor-Ner (like his British collaborator) sees himself as an active agent, a spokesman for a specific

national community. This national community is assumed to differ significantly from 'others'- having not only 'a *special* interest' (my italics) in the conflict depicted, but requiring its own shared symbolic systems to represent that conflict.

While these very-early-in-the-production process-statements provided by the two broadcasters make it apparent that both for Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH Boston and for Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC, economizing on the costs of production was the main incentive for engaging in this international co-production. [This is consistent with earlier findings which show that pooling resources is the primary motivation for broadcasters to enter into international alliances (e.g. Hoskins *et al* 1997; Doyle 2002)]. It is striking how so early in the process, such strong cultural and identity-related words are voiced.

In the following section I shall proceed from this observation to examine the specific manner in which the financial collaboration between the two broadcasters manifests itself in the content of their co-produced documentary programme. Before that, however, I must look at the nature of the financial agreement reached by the contracting parties.

The agreement

In the contract signed between Brian Lapping Associates (the independent production company) and the two television networks BBC and WGBH Boston[44], the BBC, having agreed to assume 50% of the budget, received in return for this, total editorial control including selecting the location for the production (London), approving the script, the archival footage, the interviewee selection, and shooting locations (Eddie Mirzoeff, interview, February 2003). This meant that Eddie Mirzoeff, the in-house executive producer of the series, had unlimited access to cutting rooms and complete say over the final product. Insisting on these privileges was crucial for Mirzoeff:

> This series [....] is financed by other members as well as the BBC. They [Brian Lapping Associates] are trying to keep everybody happy. They are juggling a lot of balls in the air. As far as the BBC is concerned.... we are not interested in that. We care about the programme that we are broadcasting and so we need to be sure that this is the best programme we can get and we do everything that we

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[44] Two separate contracts were singed, one between Brian Lapping and the BBC and the other between Brian Lapping and WGBH Boston.

would have done ourselves or more (Eddie Mirzoeff, interview, February 2003).

This statement reveals a crucial issue regarding the existing tension between the global and the national. Mirzoeff makes it clear that he, and the television network he represents ('As far as the BBC is concerned.... *We... .*' [my italics]), are not interested in taking into consideration concerns of the 'others', who are in this case the participating partners in this co-production: 'We care about the programme that we are broadcasting'. The producer's major objective is to provide a programme suitable for his (the BBC's) well defined audience, the British citizenry. Repeatedly, Mirzoeff assumes the role of a 'spokesperson' for a national community and describes the BBC as having no interest in 'others' and in their views of the conflict being depicted. Mirzoeff does not want 'to keep everybody happy'; he is interested in the construction of a particular interpretation of the past.

Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH Boston committed his organization to a 25% share of the budget. He too, in return for this investment, insisted on having full editorial control over the final product as well as on being granted exclusive copyright for airing the programme in North America. In February 14, 1996 a summary of the agreement (signed by Peter S. McGhee, Vice President of National Programming at WGBH Boston) was sent to Brian Lapping, the independent producer. The contract reads as follows:

> This is to confirm my offer to participate as a co-producer in the 50 Years War on the following terms:
>
> WGBH will pay Brian Lapping Associates $50,000 to support preproduction research and development of the series, and will pay at least $150,000 per episode for not more then six episodes in exchange for the following rights:
>
> a. the right to see treatments, rough cuts, and fine cuts and to have our comments and suggestions given appropriate weight in the subsequent work on the films.
> b. the right to one weeks editing time (including editor and editing equipment) per episode to make such changes as may be required for the American version.
> c. North American broadcast rights to 6 plays in four years, including one year off-air re-recorded rights
> d. North American audio visual and home video rights.

This legal document encapsulates an issue central to my study, namely the strong bond between the nation-state and the broadcasters operating within it. The presumption of this document is clear: WGBH is a North American network which serves a distinct national community (the Americans) that differs widely from other national communities such as the British. Dor-Ner explains the rationale for WGBH, insisting on the rights outlined in the contract:

> We are trying to work with a very high standard. We work with anybody who can work with very high standards...but we don't deliver to them [Brian Lapping and the BBC] the responsibility to our air.... It is not that we are offering the air to anybody who can fill it up (Dor-Ner, Interview, December 1999).

Dor-Ner's statement is crucial to my discussion of the nature of the relationship between the nation-state and 'its' television industry. What is striking in this statement is Dor-Ner's use of the term 'air', 'our air': 'It is not that we are offering the air to anybody who can fill it up'. The term 'air' comes from the beginning of television, when the main carriers of broadcasting were the airwaves. 'Air' was and still is a national resource, and its owner is, by definition, the nation- state. It is quite evident that Dor-Ner, while engaging in a very contemporary international television co-production, still calls on the 'old' symbiosis between the nation-state and 'its' television industry. The linking of nation-state and television industry will easily move towards the construction of cultural products which promote nation-specific narratives of the past.

To sum up, the statements provided by the two broadcasters regarding the commissioning process reveal that even at this initial stage, both of them were fully aware of conflicting interests which characterize their collaboration, arising from the fact that the programme which they agree to co-produce will serve two distinct national audiences. With that bond between representation and a national identity, each audience needed to differentiate itself from the other. For, as Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH Boston notes:

> We have very different audiences and very different histories.... Great Britain was a colonial power in the Middle-East. It has a history of first level involvement. It has attitudes which were drawn from very close encounters, and so on. It has a need to explain itself and justify itself in many ways.

America has a different history, extremely anti-colonial, a very different history but substantial interests (Dor-Ner, interview, August 2001).

And Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC says:

America has a very large involvement and very strong and passionate Jewish presence in New York and so on and it is absolutely not affective here (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

With these constraints in mind, the two executives agreed that the independent production company (Brian Lapping Associates) should produce one film for both television networks (BBC and WGBH Boston) with each channel operator being granted the right to participate, on an ongoing basis, in the *decision making process*, and to use the produced footage to construct its own version of the final product. Earlier I noted (see Chapter Three, above) that this kind of arrangement could only be achieved through the co-production mode, and would have been impossible with the *cheaper* modes of international alliance, such as 'acquisition'. Co-production is the only strategy that allows partners from different countries to retain editorial control in return for one's financial contribution (Shew 1992; Blind and Hallenberger 1996:7). What becomes quite clear is that even when the primary motivation for the co-production is the need to lower the cost of production, the two broadcasters (BBC and WGBH Boston) are willing to incur the additional costs entailed in retaining editorial control over the film produced by Brian Lapping Associates, and the re-editing of a 'national/culture version out of this product[45]. The willingness to add costs to the production, I would argue, cannot be explained solely by the need to respond to consumer demands. By insisting on participating in the decision making process, and on editing a national version, these producers are, in effect, resisting the processes of television globalization through their insistence on reaffirming a national narrative[46].

Earlier I noted (see Chapter Three) that a co-production is a production situation in which two or more broadcasters (often channel operators) agree jointly to produce a programme and to share in its prospective proceeds. Each partner has the right to screen the co-produced film in its own geographic market. Each partner

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[45] As noted earlier (see Chapter Three), for a channel operator the co-production strategy is more expensive than buying a ready made programme, i.e., relying on acquisition. But it is cheaper to co-produced a programme than to 'go it alone', and sale it later through a pre-sale agreement.
[46] This issue will be discussed in the following sections.

provides support, whether monetary or in kind, and has a say in production decisions (Shew 1992; Hoskins *et al* 1997). In the case examined here, the two main co-production agents (BBC and WGBH Boston) agreed to share the cost of the production (50% and 25%, respectively). In return for their financial commitments, they obtained the right to participate in contents decisions, to create their own national versions, and to own the copyright of their versions in their respective geographic markets (the US and the UK). We are now led to ask how these economic and substantive arrangements impinge on actual work practices. I propose to consider this question as it applies to three different elements in the filmmaking praxis, namely organizational structure, operational practices and production space.

Personnel

In a straightforward national (or local) production, a filmmaker would normally work within a single organizational hierarchy, topped by an 'in house' executive producer who monitors the production company which is contracted to produce the programme. This clear and linear organizational structure no longer prevails when it comes to an international co-production. The independent producer is now required to render a service to different channel operators, with no clear hierarchy among them. In such circumstances, the independent producer is forced to move back and forth between different professional environments and to familiarize him/herself with multiple and often very different working practices (Murdock 1996). This situation imposes difficulties also on the executive producers, as they must interact with a production company that must cater to more than one set of demands.

Interacting with producers who work in different markets and with different institutions often exposes the independent producer to different and sometimes incompatible, approaches to programme making. The American producer, Leo Eaton provides an illuminating example:

> All of us have a different way of looking at the world, no matter how similar or different we seem. We also often have a different approach to filmmaking, a different approach to telling a story.... In America, we think in terms of telling a story by developing a story dramatically, following a character with dramatic story development, and using the camera and editing to enhance the story. At NHK [Japan], documentary comes from a journalism background. The facts are important, not the film, style or storytelling. The camera work is often

incidental, and includes handheld camera work with little concern about focus or extraneous movement (Eaton ([1992] 2002).

Recognizing this problem, Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH Boston explained how it affects the choice of partners in the decision to enter into a co-production agreement. In an interview, he explains his decision to work with Lapping and the BBC:

> The promise was that the production will be done with the similar realistic standard with a similar approach to history you know... it's an environment in which we feel very comfortable. I worked frequently with the BBC whether it was done in Boston or in London (Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001).

In is clear from the above that a high degree of compatibility in the basic approach to documentary filmmaking is an important factor in the producer's decision to commission a project through co-production.

Another obstacle created by co-production is the need to interact frequently with parties operating in different geographical areas. In this case it was the American broadcaster Zvi Dor-Ner, based in Boston, interacting with an independent production company located in London. This had significant financial implications. Having to travel frequently to London meant that Dor-Ner had to incur additional costs, over and above his agreed share in the financing of the project. When asked about the rationale for so much traveling, Dor-Ner said: 'This [television] history [*The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs*] is history coming from London...' (Dor-Ner, interview, December 1999). This statement makes it clear that from Dor-Ner's perspective, the fact that the film was being produced by a London-based production company working hand-in-hand with a British channel operator would have significant implications on contents, in terms of a strong bias towards a British audience and a British narrative. Dor-Ner says:

> The British have an experience of the British mandate. They took part in the war. They created Jordan and Saudia in some ways the history of the Middle East is British doing including the Balfour Declaration.... they had an attitude towards it which is very different from the Americans. America was from the beginning anti-colonialists but also there is a better intimacy and knowledge that needs to be reflected in such a programme. The notion of the Middle East or the Near East, it was *near to London* it was not *near Washington*. (Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001, my italics).

Pitching- Stage Two

Even after BBC and WGBH Boston had signed their respective co-production agreements, a significant budgetary shortfall of 25% was still to be covered. The international distributor, Sue Temple, had to look for partnerships in other markets. From Temple's perspective, there was little doubt that a documentary film about the Middle East would recoup its investment (Sue Temple, Interview, January 2003). Her predictions were proven correct. An Arabic commercial (satellite) television network, MBC (represented by a London based Saudi production company -- OR Media) agreed to fund 12% of the enterprise. However, unlike the BBC and WGBH Boston who, in return for contributing a significant percentage of the budget, were allowed to retain full editorial control at all stages of the production, MBC's rights, under its contract, were limited to adapting the BBC's film to create a version in Arabic[47]. Christine Garabedian, the producer of MBC's version, explains the network's decision to become involved in this production:

> [MBC] got a documentary series which they know they would have never been able to make anywhere in the Arab world. The fact that it was made by Brian Lapping in London, by producers who were also historians, in a sense gave it a lot more weight a lot more power. The fact that they were hearing for the first time an Israeli voice.... Because so much of Arab culture is simply about propaganda there is no such thing as democratic journalistic culture in the Arab world. Many things are suppressed, many things aren't talked about, so what justifies this kind of project is precisely the dialectic between an Arab voice and an Israeli voice which are not shouting at each other... (Christine Garabedian, Interview, July 2002).

In contrast with her British and American colleagues, who emphasize the economic motivation for engaging in this co-production, Garabedian highlights its cultural and political advantage. She realized that this mode of production can potentially provide a 'meeting point' for national/cultural communities having different political agendas and diverse views of the world '...so much of Arab culture is simply about propaganda there is no such thing as democratic journalistic culture in the Arab world'. Thus, Garabedian sees this trans-national collaboration as a site at which competing narratives can be initiated and old fashioned approaches can be challenged. Significantly, at this stage she did not perceive a global outlook as, in any way, an

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[47] In adapting the BBC's film, MBC's producers were given the right to add to their version self produced material as well as to re-assemble the existing version.

impediment to what she surely wished as well: the maintenance of a national core of allegiance and identification. Furthermore, the Arab producer, unlike her British and American collaborators, does not feel entirely comfortable with current Arab discourse: 'Many things are suppressed, many things aren't talked about'. For her, an international co-production is perceived as a tool, rather then an obstacle, a more cosmopolitan, culturally open model for challenging the more restrictive 'inward-looking' kinds of narratives (and practices) which she identifies in her culture as 'simply... propaganda'.

While aware of the advantages of an Arab-British collaboration, Garabedian nonetheless points out certain drawbacks:

> It's [the programme] very British. They [Brian Lapping Associates] are operating in a traditional documentary filmmaking which is very rooted in the British tradition..... There were various things in the script which we felt needed changing. What we tried to do is to make it in some way more neutral more historical.... (Christine Garabedian, Interview, July 2002)

Clearly, MBC's producer, like her British and American colleagues, was fully aware of the cultural obstacles involved in the proposed collaboration. For her, too, the need to offer an historical narrative suitable for her specific audience (Arabs) becomes a key factor in the decision as to whether or not to enter into this type of co-production. In this short text, another significant aspect regarding the issue of national vs. global perception of televised representation emerges. When Garabedian argues against the biased 'British' script, and for the need to make it 'more neutral, more historical', she is making a claim for an objective and scientific historical research. In the quest for a 'more neutral more historical' documentary Garabedian (and later Dor-Ner and Mirzoeff) is saying: that which for 'us' (the nation/culture) is 'our' neutral history is really the story we tell ourselves as to who we are as a nation[48].

After MBC was granted the right to produce its own version from the British version, Sue Temple still needed to line up another network, in order for the reminder of the

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[48] This issue will be discussed in Chapter Six.

budget to be covered. This was done through a series of pre-sale agreements[49] concluded by Lapping with several broadcasters, including CBC, NHK, ABC Australia, SVT, NOS, Denmark Radio, NRK and YLE. Many of these were what Temple calls 'tried and tested partners' (Fry, 1997). Later on, when the series was well on its way to completion, Temple also had a 'lively screening' at a television festival, *mipcom,* where buyers from Poland, Australia, Lithuania, Spain, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon and Egypt agreed to purchase the screening rights, with Lapping retaining the full intellectual property rights. 'When we started in 1990, we nearly always took an advance from the BBC's commercial arm and put it into the budget', says Temple. 'As we've gone on, we try to keep the rights'. In this case, the main partners (BBC and WGBH Boston) retained the copyright in their own countries, while Lapping held the rights outside the U.K. and the U.S. (Fry 1997).

II. Production

The programme's outline[50]

With the two co-production agents [51] (BBC and WGBH Boston) agreeing to commission the series, Brian Lapping and Norma Percy discussed its 'outline' with Eddie Mirzorff of the BBC:

> The scene we discussed most was Dir Yassin[52]. When they first came up with this in the first script .... I said hang on you can't do it. You are actually beginning 'Pogrammme One' of a series of the newly born state with a massacre, and it's not fair (Eddie Mirzoeff, February 2003).

Mirzoeff's first response, his opening salvo, is very significant for my argument. What we hear here very clearly, with only a bare outline written, is that in Mirzoeff's head there is already a clear concept – a concept, not yet structured alongside files of facts but surely resting on an ideological scaffolding: 'You are actually beginning

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[49] The term pre-sale describes a situation in which a channel operator, or an independent production company, produces a programme with the intention of sell broadcast rights in foreign markets

[50] This term was offered by Brian Lapping of Brian Lapping Associates.

[51] MBC jointed the production only in the last stage of the 'production'.

[52] In the months before the end of the mandate a Jewish force (*Lehi* and *Irgun*) attacked the Arab village of Dir Yassin. The Palestinian leadership attempted to make Arab governments send troops to Palestine by exaggerating the Dir Yassin atrocities in a subsequent radio broadcast. The broadcast had a devastating impact. Palestinians started to flee their villages. When the Arab states finally invaded Israel, 200,000 Palestinians had already left (see Schulze 1999).

Pogrammme One of a series of the newly born state with a massacre and it's not fair'. With this almost childish response, Mirzoeff is not yet really arguing any pro-Israel position, but is himself immediately staggered into realizing that the tone and events selected and *'framed'* in the first programme would 'set the stage' for all that would follow. In fact series producer Norma Percy easily aligns herself with Mirzoeff, explaining that the production company had its own qualms about starting with the 'massacre' in a small Arab village. These qualms however, interestingly, have nothing to do with the fair/unfair issue highlighted by Mirzoeff, but rather raised the subject which would rear its head again and again through the scripting process. This is the issue of how to bring this multi-layered story of two clearly 'other' peoples in a distant and unfamiliar geography, to their designated Western viewing public, how to make the programme readable for American and British viewers:

> We were toying with the idea of should we start with Dir Yassin. But then Eddie said that this is very small and local and you needed to know that it was an international thing, that the American president is worried about [it]. [You] need to have something that viewers can identify with, something that connects with the West before you go into a region that people don't know much about (Norma Percy, Interview, May 2003).

Percy's statement: 'something that the viewers can identify with' moves very easily to join what I shall call 'the positing of us/we'. Clearly there is no 'us/we' without a 'them'-- 'other'. What is crucial here is that even as Lapping Associates sets out to tell the story of two others, it is already clear to Norma Percy that she must be telling the story of 'ourselves', and that in order to do so, she will constantly be searching for an appropriate hook such as the involvement of a Western figure (the American President). Percy's perceptions and strategies ultimately emerge with Todorv's (1997:3) 'miniature mode', 'a map of sorts' that could and should be readable to a national/culture community (British and American in this case) and would permit them to orient themselves.

Percy 'cuts' the Dir Yassin sequence and Eddie Mirzoeff accepts the basic outline.The intense business of negotiating the 'story' has begun. With the BBC approving the initial proposal, the independent production company referred the outline to Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH Boston. Dor-Ner recalls his first reaction:

[I ask the independent producer] where did you get this specific information? Why do you think this? Why did you think about this [or that]? It's a dialogue. It is going back and forth back and forth. You exchange a lot of stuff (Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001).

And Brain Lapping provides an illuminating example:

We offered to begin the programme with the story of Count Bernadotte[53]. We found evidence showing that the suspected murderer later became a member in Ben Gurion's government. We showed them [WGBH's production team] the script. Zvi said 'if you put that in I'm not buying the series... Its all lies...'. So we had to except that. We never even interviewed anyone about it. It was cut out of the script before we even started because of his insistence that this story should not be told (Brian Lapping, Interview, May 2003).

When asked about the rationale for rejecting the programme's outline Zvi Dor-Ner said:

There was a kind of a discrepancy of attitude toward what kind of history are we 'covering'. My notion is we are covering the best history that we have, the attitude of the BBC was; 'well we would like to hear something new... we know the standard history' (Dor-Ner, Interview, August, 2001).

Dor-Ner's 'discrepancy of attitude' mirrors Mirzoeff's 'It's not fair', and Norma Percy, the series producer, gets it immediately-- Dor-Ner has his own (national) target audience to consider: Percy says:

PBS gets a lot of money from rich Jews and they are worried about doing things that upset them.... He [Zvi Dor-Ner[54]] is the person that has to make sure that there is nothing in the programme that is against Israel (Norma Percy, Interview, May 2003).

If Percy needs support for her gloss on Dor-Ner's concerns she gets it from her partner Brian Lapping:

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[53] Count Folke Bernadotte was nominated by the United Nations as mediator in the conflict between the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine. Bernadotte proposed a political compromise, calling for a Palestine Union to consist of separate Jewish, Palestinian, and Tranjordenian units. The proposal was rejected by all the parties in the conflict. Bernadotte's efforts were perceived as pro-Arab, and he was consequently shot by members of the Jewish underground organization *Lehi* on 17 September 1948 (See Schulze 1999; Fraser 1995).
[54] Zvi Dor-Ner is an Israeli born who immigrated to the US in the mid 60s. He is working as an Executive Producer at WGBH Boston since the beginning of the 70s.

The Jews were 'the sufferers' of the Second World War and the Americans were very moved by that. There was more sympathy in America for the Jews then there was in England and that was strongly manifested by Truman's support of the creation of Israel in 1948 (Brian Lapping, Interview, May 2003).

It is Lapping's statement that resonates even at this very early stage of the construction of this televised *narrative* with what will become the most polarizing issue stared down by the three nation/culture versions: who are the *actors* and what *roles* do they play in the plot (Propp 1968)?[55]

The 'proposal': the series' synopsis

Taking into consideration all these issues, arguments, and strongly held positions, Lapping's team formulated a written 'film proposal' for the two co-production agents (I shall hereafter refer to this document as the 'Ur-text'). This 'Ur-text' was divided into two sections. The first is a film synopsis featuring the 'story' of the series (Programmes I-VI).The second is a short summary of each episode and a list of selected interviewees. The first part of the Ur-text (the proposal) reads as follows:

> This series was the idea of Michael Jackson, the controller of BBC-2. In making it we will adopt the research methods we have used in our previous series, *The second Russian revolution, Watergate* and *The Death of Yugoslavia*. We aim to persuade all major surviving participants to describe the key moments in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict-and let the viewer judge between them. Thereby we are confident of producing a gripping and illuminating series.

> For the first programme we will be able to make use of the official documents released under Israel's 30-year rule. The information which these documents offer has been brought to light by recent historians, including the group of Jewish and Israeli scholars known as revisionists[56].

> Their work is conservational, and we will be cautious and thorough in our use of it. Nevertheless, they have uncovered much that Israeli spokesmen of the period covered in programme 1 tried to conceal and blur.

> During that time, Israel pursued its own interests and the interests of its citizens by what ever means it judged would work best. That is the job of

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[55] This issue will be disused in detail in Chapter Six.

[56] The events surrounding the first Arab-Israeli war (1948) have given rise to an intense debate among historians in Israel, challenging fundamental beliefs on the creation of the State of Israel. This debate has taken a highly personal character, as the 'revisionist' or 'new' historians such as Avi Shlaim, Benny Morris, and Ilan Pappe appear to some extent to have reinforced Arab and Palestinian claims (see Schulze 1999:17-19).

a state. The members of the production team are determined to set the reliable new evidence squarely in the context of that time. With Israel surrounded by sworn enemies and most Israeli voters fearful that one lost battle would be Israel's last, their government –the only real democracy in the Middle East- had to respond forcefully. Although each war proved Israel mightier than its Arab enemies, the wisdom of hindsight was never available to Israeli voters – or cabinet members- when they faced Arab taunts, threats and guns.

The irony of the 50-year conflict is that the Arab states screamed aggression when they were actually weak; Israel preached peace while pursuing its own interests aggressively. That is the kernel of the story. With the peace process now coming into its concluding phase, it is no longer necessary even for the warmest friends of Israel to suppress these truths.

It is very important at this stage of my analysis of the process involved in the writing and re-writing of the series proposal (the Ur-text), to take the time for a close reading of this document.

In the first section of the proposal the Lapping team discusses the methods to be employed in the series: 'We aim to persuade all major surviving participants to describe the key moments in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict-and let the viewer judge between them'. This method- the collection of 'testimonies' of individuals who were present at the events depicted is critical for my ensuing discussion on the relationship between common/shared memory and collective (national) identity. Earlier I cited Avishai Margalit (2002), who highlights a fundamental difference between the two terms: 'common' memory and 'shared' memory (See chapter One, above). For Margalit a common memory is an *aggregate* notion. It brings together people all of whom remember a certain episode which each of them experienced (in this case these are the individuals who witnessed historical events related to the Arab-Israeli conflict such as the declaration of the Jewish state at the UN, the first Arab Israeli war (1948) etc...). A 'shared memory', on the other hand, is a *calibrated* memory, in the sense that it integrates the different perspectives of those who remember the episode into one version (or small numbers of versions). This process allows people, who were not there at the time, to be plugged into the experience of those who were present in the episode through channels of description rather than by experience. The producers' decision to construct the series around 'selected' witnesses is directly linked to the ability of a specific witness to testify concerning a specific event. This opens up dramatic possibilities for emphasis and unique foci

hinging on the representation of the historical event depicted, namely the Arab Israeli conflict. The politics of this method is that it increases powerfully the 'storytelling' element, which, in terms of a televised text being absorbed by the viewers, is very effective. The use of a first person mode of narration ("I"), together with that person's body language, inevitably adds to a sense of 'truth' though in critical terms, it also increases the problematic nature of just what this 'truth' is.

After discussing the use of witnesses to be employed in the series (a method instantly approved by all concerned), the production team moves on to explicate what it perceives as a path to be taken in order to answer the need to provide their target audience with what it sees as the less discussed but very validated new historicism: the work of Israeli scholars known as 'the revisionists'. In the proposal Lapping's team writes:

> ...we will be able to make use of the official documents released under Israel's 30-year rule. The information which these documents offer has been brought to light by recent historians, including the group of Jewish and Israeli scholars known as revisionists.

Citing the 'new historians' the production team points to what they see as 'the kernel of the story':

> The irony of the 50-year conflict is that the Arab states screamed aggression when they were actually weak; Israel preached peace while pursuing its own interests aggressively.

This short sentence resonates even at this early stage of the production with what will become a key element stared down by the two executive producers: who is the aggressor, who is the victim, who bears responsibility for the escalation of the conflict. I cannot highlight strongly enough the fact that from the earliest stages, the producers were occupied in constructing an audio-visual narrative in which the actors and the roles the actors played would be crystal clear. The issue of defining the 'heroes' and 'villains', the 'aggressors' and 'victims' will repeat itself throughout the production process. This moment in only its beginning.

The independent production team makes it clear that in this cultural product the Arab States are 'the victims' and the Jews (and later the Israelis) are the 'aggressors', and therefore potentially responsible for the escalation of the conflict.

Having staked out this dynamic, the independent producers now make their concluding statement: 'With the peace process now coming into its concluding phase, it is no longer necessary even for the warmest friends of Israel to suppress these truths'. In this last sentence, tacit reference to the Americans (the financers and potential viewers of the series) is unmistakable.

The proposal was sent by Brian Lapping Associates to Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC and to Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH Boston who were invited to comment on it. Brian Lapping recalls: 'They [the funding networks] are concerned to get what they want and they take an active interest in proceedings. Inevitably, we have had quite animated meetings with them' (cited in Fry 1997). And, Zvi Dor-Ner explains:

> I wanted to make sure that in fact in the end of the project I will have all the material I need to create my version and that the version that they [Brian Lapping] are creating, the first version that they are creating, will be as responsive to what I think should happen as possible (Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001).

Here again, Dor-Ner is reiterating what I have described as an inherent tension between two conflicting forces; on the one hand the need to transmit a nationally informed scenario to a specific national citizenry ('I wanted to make sure that in fact in the end of the project I will have all the material I need to create my version') and, on the other, the need to economize through international sharing of production costs. Right from the start, it was clear to Dor-Ner that he would need to secure his own national version out of the product being contemplated. In order to do so, he would need to be closely involved in the actual decision-making process and to maintain an ongoing ability to affect the proposal and the contents of this co-produced documentary. Not having a clear say at this initial stage would have led either to a failure to secure the desired nation-specific cultural product or to a substantial increase in cost of production, due to the need to invest in a separate venture of his own.

And indeed the Ur-text was rejected by Dor-Ner:

> .... the BBC initiative had to do with what is new [history]- 'the revisionist history' of the Arab Israeli conflict. This is a good approach from the point of view of the BBC, it's a legitimate approach. It wasn't my approach. I am

interested in good history. I don't care whether it comes into being 50 years ago or five….. (Zvi Dor-Ner Interview, August 2001)

When Dor-Ner argues against the 'new'- a value in itself-- and for what he calls 'good history' he is making a claim for a certain kind of historical research and a certain kind of ethical commitment in the creation of a cultural product which I will return to again and again in my discussion on the production process. The shaping of the television series around 'good history' will come to mean here for Dor-Ner, what 'more neutral, more historical' meant for MBC producer Garagedian. 'Good history' is that which foregrounds national self-perception, what for us/we is tightly linked with the story of the past that we tell ourselves (in the present) as to who we are as a nation (Appiah 2003).

Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC could not remain unaware of the conflicting 'national histories' set out on the production team's table:

I would hear the terrible dramas with the American co-producer of demands to lose this or include that (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

His response is a striking example of just where the buck stops in the co-production process:

There was a brief moment when I thought I have to get involved in that, to go and talk to them when they came over here and explain our thinking, and indeed we were thinking about writing a letter explaining why we thought this is a better approach, and then it seemed to me who cares- in the end we got what we were after, and they pay enough to say what they want or don't want (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003)

There is hardly a stronger statement reflecting just where one sits when one is in the midst of the cultural economy of a television history.

The proposal: 'Programme One'[57]

The executive producers (Dor-Ner and Mirzoeff) were then invited to comment on the second part of the proposal, namely the outline of specific episodes. The synopsis of Programme One reads as follows:

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[57] As noted earlier, this discussion will be limited to 'Programme One' of the series 'The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs' (See Chapter Four, above).

> At midnight on 14 May 1948, the British mandate in Palestine was due to end. As that moment approached, the interim Jewish government had an urgent task. Surrounded by hostile Arab neighbors who had announced their intention to crush the new state at birth, the Jewish leaders had to secure support abroad. The nascent state's diplomats set out to woo the strongest power in the world. But the American administration was deeply divided. A titanic struggle between president Harry Truman, who favored recognition, and secretary of State George Marshall, who was vehemently opposed, was won by the President just hours before the British mandate expired.

This brief outline was rejected by the two co-production agent, BBC and WGBH. In an interview Eddie Mirzorff of the BBC, discusses his reservations:

> ..... they [Brian Lapping Associates] decide to start [Programme One of the series] in 1948 and that I think was the biggest problem. I felt that the British audience - the home audience - will find it very hard to be presented with a story that began with the creation of the State without any understanding of how we got to this position (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview February 2003).

For Mirzoeff, what is crucial here again is the positioning of the "we." Even as he sets out to tell the story of 'two others' in a 'far away' place, it is clear to him that he must be telling the story of 'ourselves', which will be comprehensive to 'us'- the British – 'the audience at home'. The clear distinction between the 'us' and the 'them' becomes even more pronounced in Mirzoeff's repetitive use of the word 'we' to describe the presumed reaction of the British audience '...the home audience - will find it very hard to be presented with a story that began with the creation of the State without any understanding of how *we* got to this position' (Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003, my italics).

The proposal prepared by Brian Lapping Associates was also rejected by the series' co-player, WGBH. For as Zvi Dor-Ner simply writes in a fax to Brian Lapping: 'I am troubled by the summaries that I received for the series' (Fax, Dor-Ner to Lapping May 2, 1996):

> The program starts in '48 and continues to '56, seven years after the war ends, apparently in order to accommodate the Lavon affair[58], which must have an important significance in your mind. What is it? To choose it over Partition[59] is strange. If one wants to keep this chronology, the lasting effect of this period is that Israel grew two and half fold, absorbing refugees from Europe and the Middle East. The program should start with the Partition Plan of '47, which can provide the basis for a trajectory of the series. As it is, after 50 years of war and huge sacrifices, the protagonists are coming to the solution which is startling similar to that offered by the Partition. It is almost a perfect dramatic cycle. In addition, the Partition Plan debate on both sides can provide an understanding of the issue that shaped the history of the conflict, and a better insight into the nature of the compromise now being achieved. Parenthetically, it should be of interest to the British public that G.B voted against the Partition plan in the UN and undermined any peaceful transfer of power to both communities.

Here again we confront the fundamental point of contention among the co-production agents which I outlined above: who is the 'aggressor', who is the 'victim', who bears responsibility for the escalation of the conflict. The paragraph opens with Dor-Ner's suggestion that the programme begin with the U.N Partition Plan of '47, which 'can provide the basis for the dramatic trajectory of the series'. Immediately, Dor-Ner is identifying three significant players in the conflict. The primary player is 'Israel', identified by Dor-Ner as the 'victim' of the period: '....the lasting effect of this period is that Israel grew two and half fold, absorbing refugees from Europe and Middle East'. The second player is the UN – assisting (the helper) both Arabs and Jews by offering a 'compromise' (the Partition Plan). The third active player is Great Britain, the prime candidate for the bearing of responsibility in the conflict '... .G.B voted against the Partition Plan in the UN and *undermined* any peaceful transfer of power to both communities (my italics)'. In the second section of the letter Dor-Ner rejects Lapping's proposal that America also be identified as a significant player – as helper to the Jewish aggressor:

> The opening statement is wrong. The U.S has not been Israel's patron throughout its 50 years history. In fact, in the period of Programme One,

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[58] In July 1954 a group of Egyptian Jews (in collaboration with Israeli agents) tried to sabotage British and American property in Egypt in order to create discord between the Egyptian government and the West. The operation failed when the saboteurs were apprehended, resulting in Israeli-Egyptian tension as well as jeopardizing the secret talks between the two countries in Paris. The co-called 'Lavon affair', as it come to be known, provided Ben Gurion with the opportunity to maneuver himself back into the premiership. With Ben-Gurion in power the activist approach to foreign policy returned in full force (discussed in Schulze 1999: 25).

[59] Dor-Ner refers to the UN's plan to divide Palestine into two states- one for the Arabs and one for the Jews.

> Israel was closer to the Soviet Union. It was the product of ideological affinity (the Jewish community) being mostly socialist) and its struggle to undermine British colonialism. It had practical implications. The Soviet Union was the first to recognize Israel and the first to supply it (by proxy) with weapons. Later it was France, who until 1967, would be Israel's strategic ally. France provided Israel with nuclear reactor and the weapons that made the difference in the '67 war. The U.S became seriously involved only after the war, when Israel became part of America's cold war strategy (cited from a letter sent to Brian Lapping May 2, 1996).

Dor-Ner makes it clear that the aggressors in this conflict are the colonial powers, namely France and the Soviet Union, and refuses to assign to the U.S a *negative* role of an aggressor or the helper to an aggressor.

In the remainder of the letter Dor-Ner rejects Lapping's explicit identification of the Jews (and later the Israelis) as the aggressors and the Arabs as the victims. According to him the roles should be reversed: the Arabs are the aggressors and the Jews are the victims. Let us look at three examples. The first has to do with Lapping's suggestion that 'Israel preached peace while pursuing its own interests aggressively' (cited from the series' proposal, see discussion above). Dor-Ner writes:

> Nobody believed that a state could be secured only by diplomacy. The ability of the Jews to convince others to do things for them had been adequately tested during the Second World War, when they couldn't secure refuge to people fleeing from Hitler. There were disagreements about both strategy and the tactics of dealing with the Arabs, but for many years, there were few Arabs to do diplomacy with.

Here, again, the American executive producer identifies the Jews as victims (uses terms such as 'fleeing from Hitler'), and the Arabs as the aggressor': '... there were few Arabs to do diplomacy with'.

The second example is related to Lapping's reference to the attack by Jewish forces on the Arab village of Dir Yassin:

> The idea that the war of '48 is about Dir Yassin or the assassination of Count Bernadotte is embarrassing. These were acts of terror done by a small rightist group, a group which was in a bloody conflict with the official leadership....... Making Dir Yassin central is analogous to suggesting that the second world war is about bombing Dresden. To the Israelis, the war of '48 was a survival war against a foe that was initially better armed and always considerably larger. One percent of the Jewish population was killed.

The war for survival becomes the dominant force in Dor-Ner's perception of the narrative. This is the card Dor-Ner plays in hammering for Jewish victimhood—rejecting Lapping's attempts to highlight the Arabs' tragedy - their alleged expulsion from Palestine by the Jewish forces:

> Exploring the issues of refugees on both sides is important. But how do we know that there was an "expulsion" of 750,000 Palestinian Arabs"? Is it possible that some of them became refugees because there was a war going on? Did the writer know that the Jewish settlements that were overrun by Arab armies during the war were uprooted, including the Jewish quarter in Jerusalem, populated by Jews since before there was an England?

Clearly then, even at this early stage of the 'production process', the outlines drawn of the main actors and of the roles these actors play are prominent and unarguable to the point of gross simplification. The British scenario reads: the Palestinians are the victims the Israelis, the aggressor. The American, is constructed around the Israelis as the victims with the Arabs as the aggressors. These disagreements were so acrimonious, with each side working to situate itself on the moral high-ground, that Sue Temple, the international distributor, had to be called in to 'save' the co-production agreement. Hoping to reconcile the differences, Temple called on Peter McGhee, Vice President of National programming at WGBH. In her notes[60] on the telephone conversation held on 22nd May 1996 she writes:

> PM[61] said he finds the British generally anti-Israel and that this affects BLA'S[62] ideas for the series. ST[63] replied that BL[64] and NP[65] always searched for "the truth" in their programmes, and at the moment they were concerned that this process might be hampered by Zvi's pro-Israel stance. PM said that viewers' perception of "the truth" can be manipulated by the content of the series. For example he felt it an odd, and illuminating, editorial decision to dwell so much on the massacre[66].

Time after time and here again the fundamental issue of players and their assigned roles in the televised narrative rears its head. It becomes clear in this telephone

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[60] The telephone conversation was summarized in writing.
[61] Peter McGee
[62] Brian Lapping Associates
[63] Sue Temple
[64] Brian Lapping
[65] Norma Percy
[66] The attack on the village of Dir Yassin.

conversation that the American and British producers do not see eye-to-eye on who are the aggressors, who are the victims and who bears responsibility for the escalation of the conflict. National consciousness, which by definition is ideologically directed (Billig 1995), becomes a key component in the construction of this cultural product, for as Peter McGhee says: 'viewers perception of 'the truth' can be manipulated by the content of the series'.

As in many both high level and lower diplomatic negotiations, the producers agreed to disagree. This in itself is not an uncreative solution as long as it permits the project to move forward. Here the path to progress was signified by the decision to send Lapping back to the drawing board to redefine the basic tenets of the series. In a fax sent on August 2, 1996, Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH provides Lapping with some guidelines, requesting him to add two themes to the proposal. The first is the issue of the Holocaust:

> If the holocaust is portrayed .... It might illuminate the Jewish fears in a useful way. If one walked in Tel Aviv in the fifties at night, one could hear the nightmares.

The second is the issues of the 'refugees':

> We should explore equally the fate of the Arab and Jewish refuges. We should research the expulsion of the Jewish population from Jerusalem and Gush Etzion, as well as Deir Yassin and the Arab refugee issues...... As we continue the progression after the war, we should explore the story of the refugees from Arab countries. As you know, more then half of the Israeli population comes from Arab countries. For better or worse, what has happened in the Middle East is seen by many as an unintentional population exchange.

In requesting these additions, Dor-Ner is attempting to move his position forward by re-framing: a constant interaction with the text in order to shift from an original set of 'meanings' and embedded messages. As in his previous gatekeeper function, Dor-Ner is here negotiating between the cultural product-in-the-planning and his consumers; mediating between product and public.

On the basis of Dor-Ner's comments a series' preamble was constructed by Brian Lapping Associates. The preamble reads:

> After the Second World War the Jews throughout the world understood that they needed a place of their own – a homeland. The horrors of the

Holocaust convinced many world leaders that this was indeed the right thing to do. Western countries showed but little enthusiasm to absorb the thousands of Jewish refugees and this led to many of them heading to Palestine.

The arrival of thousands of Jews to Palestine tipped the balance between Arabs and Jews there; led to growing tension between the two communities and resulted in a civil war.

After the declaration of the state of Israel a civil war between Palestinians and Israelis turned into an all-out war when 5 Arab armies invaded Israel. Thus began a 50 – year conflict between Arabs and Israelis.

The series looks at key moments which illuminate how the Jews built and then tried to secure the homeland they established on the land of Palestine. At various times they relied on a strategy of persuading friends abroad, carving out secure boundaries, negotiating with Arab neighbors, and finally coming to terms with the indigenous Palestinians.

Zvi-Dor received the Preamble on August 9, 1996. On August 14, 1996 he sends his comments to Brian Lapping:

I understand your interest in the Arab refugees and it makes sense to me as long as you research the issues relating to Jewish refuges too. In addition to researching what happened in Baghdad after the war, you should also research what happened in Baghdad before Israel became a state. There were riots there, and in several other Arab capitals, against the Jewish community.
In Gush Etzion, a Jewish village had been conquered and its inhabitants expelled, in addition to killing of soldiers. In Jerusalem the Jewish quarter was conquered and the Jewish population expelled too. I believe that, in the Jerusalem quarter the same paramilitary forces were involved in Dir Yassin – Jerusalem was the stronghold of the right.

For the executive producer of WGBH, Jewish misfortune and victimhood must be the driving force behind the narrative: 'We have to understand all the events in the context of a struggle of survival' (Fax, Dor-Ner to Lapping, August 14, 1996). In the last section of the fax Dor-Ner offers his own version of the Preamble:

It is the intention of this series to tell one of the most dramatic histories of our time – the story of the Arab –Israeli conflict – often one of the most protracted and least understood.

In six hours the series will depict the tragic failure of both sides (at different times) to size opportunities to resolve their conflict peacefully thereby subjecting its people and on occasion the rest of the world to a great suffering and grave danger.

> We aim to tell the stories principally through the participants in important decisions that were taken by all sides during the conflict i.e., go to war ... negotiate.... make peace. Yet this approach will be subservient to the task of depicting the theme and the central events of the historical narrative.

> We will explore each story with a variety of viewpoints, making good use of new sources just made available.

> We intend to depict this story with meticulous balance, with clarity, honesty and a sense of reality.

> To do all that in well crafted compelling narratives which are the hallmark of the producers.

Dor-Ner's comments conclude the planning, researching, and scripting phase of the production. The differences between the 'initial' version of the 'Ur-text' (written by Lapping Associates) and its 'final' version (revised by Dor-Ner) remain most striking in their focus on the three issues I have been exploring above. While in both versions (the 'Ur-text' and Dor-Ner's revised preamble) the players/ actors in the 'story' are clear and identical: the Jews (later the Israelis) and the Arabs the roles, however, assumed by the players differ pronouncedly from one version to the other. In Lapping's initial proposal the Arabs are the victims and the Israelis are the aggressors (and hence a significant contender for agency and responsibility for the conflict's escalation):

> The Arab states screamed aggression when they were actually weak; Israel preached peace while pursuing its own interests aggressively[67].

In Dor-Ner's revised preamble he is attempting 'a shift'; a move to an arena where there are no clear heroes and/ or villains. The emphasis he suggests, should be on a joint Arab/Jewish responsibility for 'great suffering' in the world. No argument was made for one side or the other, for the irresolvability of the conflict:

> In six hours the series will depict the tragic failure of both sides (at different times) to size opportunities to resolve their conflict peacefully thereby subjecting its people and on occasion the rest of the world to a great suffering and grave danger[68].

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[67] A series' proposal written by Brian Lapping Associates, sent to the BBC and to WGBH Boston. See synopsis, above.

[68] Dor-Ner's revised preamble sent to Brian Lapping (see text above).

Editing

Dor-Ner's shift was not insignificant, and his proposal was approved by all concerned. With this, the editing phase began. In this stage a 'rough assembly'[69] or 'Ur-film', was constructed by the production team, followed by the creation of an Ur-script[70] produced by Norma Percy. It must be made clear that the Ur-script followed upon the creation of the Ur-film rather than preceding it. The Ur-script was, in effect, a notation of the Ur-film.

After the Ur-film and Ur-script had been prepared the executive producers of the two television networks (BBC and WGBH Boston) were invited to attend viewing sessions in Lapping's London office. Dor-Ner of WGBH would not think of being absent:

> I will not release [relinquish] my responsibility as a broadcaster to my partners. They have their responsibilities I have mine. My audience is different from theirs. I don't plan to deliver or to suspend my responsibility in a co-production. So this issue of editorial control of the final product.., the final product to my audience I want to have the control, I want to be able to affect it... (Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001).

Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC is likewise committed:

> The BBC is happy to have a substantial share ... but they demand complete editorial control (Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

Examining these statements, it becomes clear that the reason for both executives insisting on active participation in the actual editing was to ensure that specific national versions, suitable for their respective viewerships (national audience), would be forthcoming.

Four (documented) viewing sessions are held and comments are recorded as the representatives of the channel operators - Mirzoeff (BBC) and Dor-Ner (WGBH) sit with Norma Percy and Brian Lapping in their office watching the Ur-film and reading the Ur-script.

In the following sections, I examine the discussions among the players involved in this co-production: Mirzoeff, Dor-Ner, and and Brian Lapping Associates. I pay special attention to content-related decisions and on an attempt to identify the

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[69] The 'rough assembly' will be called hereafter, the Ur-Film.
[70] The script will be called hereafter, the Ur-Script.

manner in which the two partners (BBC and WGBH Boston) are able to influence the content of the film being co-produced[71]. Examining the decision making process at the 'viewing session', I demonstrate how *national consciousness* (Duetsch 1966) continues to be a key component in the construction of this 'television history'[72].

The viewing sessions

Sitting in the viewing sessions, series producer, Norma Percy wrote the producers' comments on the Ur-script itself. Percy's notes are an invaluable primary document in tracing the development from Ur-film to Master Text (the broadcast text). Writing on the Ur-script she had in front of her as the viewing sessions proceeded, her comments are first of all to herself as creator/producer and are therefore emotional, pithy, and central, seeking at each critical moment to set down some clues, some key words that will, in the re-editing, allow her to recall what she had thought and felt at any particular moment (Norma Percy, Interview, May 2003).

I feel at this point in my own analysis that to proceed sequentially from comment to comment of the Percy's notes would only burden the reader and not clarify. I have decided therefore to proceed by grouping Percy's comments under three main analytical categories:

1. The actors: who are they and what is their relevance to the national (British or American) experience?

2. The roles: who are each nation's friends and enemies: who are the heroes, who are the villains?

3. The events that the nation must remember and those that it must forget (Renan 1996): How will national specificity demand which historical events will be admitted, and which will be consigned to oblivion?

Viewing session with the BBC

In the first viewing session, dated June 2nd 1997, Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC (the chief financier of the series) was the first to respond, confronting the opening segment

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[71] As I read through the script (and the notes) as a whole it is immediately clear that not all of the segments were commented upon equally either in term or quantity of substance. Some sections are the recipients' notes of language and expressions other of cinematic style, some are not commented at all.
[72] See a detailed discussion on the decision to limit the examination to Programme One in Chapter Four.

of the film[73]. He asked Norma Percy to add two minutes about the Balfour Declaration and to consider the political arena in the 1930s, notably the British mandate for Palestine[74]. In making these demands of the film's opening, the BBC executive is clearly not only highlighting the role of Britain as a significant actor in the narrative, but is staking out the strongest possible claim for his "we" in the film's first frames. Mirzoeff's Britain plays a significant role in the 'plot,' and this must be manifested in the beginning of the film text. For Mirzoeff, the historical 'hook' will be the British mandate and the Balfour Declaration.

Mirzoeff's insistence on highlighting the role played by Britain in the conflict was ongoing and unrelenting. In the third sequence[75] (titled 'Dir Yassin') he asked the production team to mention the fact that the Jewish force, which attacked the Arab village of Dir Yassin, was responsible for blowing-up the British headquarters at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem (22 July 1946). The same request was made regarding the sequence that follows (titled 'The War of 1948'). The Ur-script reads: 'The Arab armies invaded on 15 May, the day after Israel was born'[76]. Mirzoeff asked the production team to place this commentary in the historical context of Britain's departure from Palestine. Mirzoeff as producer, again, is putting great store in accomodating Britain in the televisual space of the series.

Mirzoeff's insistence on playing up Britain's role in the conflict became especially conspicuous in the second viewing session. In a (documented) session held on 20 June 1997, the BBC executive said to Norma Percy that she must provide an explanation as to 'why the Brit' left [Palestine]?[77]'

In the sequence that follows (Dir Yassin), the production team did make the changes demanded by Mirzoeff in the first session, so that it was now stated explicitly in the commentary that the two Jewish forces which had attacked the Arab village (the *Irgun* and the *Stern Gang*) 'had waged a campaign of terror against the British'[78]. Here, again, Mirzoeff asks the production team to provide specific information regarding the nature of the 'terror against the British'. Mirzoeff sets out from an ideological site in which the nation he identifies with, the dominant player, must be

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[73] See Appendix: A.1
[74] Cited from Percy's Ur-scrip (2nd June 1997)
[75] See Appendix: A.2
[76] See appendix: A.4
[77] Cited from the Ur-script (written by Brian Lapping production team).
[78] See appendix: A.3

situated upfront (Billig 1995; Smith 2000). Interestingly, here 'upfront' does not mean as hero but as victim. As victims the British are much less in the position of responsibility for either the onset or the escalation of the conflict. This is the part of 'forgetting' (Renan 1996; Robins & Aksoy 2000): Britain's colonial past is given a wash of grey so that it may be perceived in a preferred victim status. It is this that Mirzoeff called the 'even-handed programme' (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

Having established the Jews as aggressors ('campaign of terror against the British') it is then but a simple step to Mirzoeff's demand to highlight the second level victimhood of the Palestinians, asking the production company to add archival footage of Palestinians in refugee camps. Here Mirzoeff refers to the current British discourse regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict: 'There has been a degree of passionate support [in Britain] at one time strongly for Israel at another time more recently for the Palestinians' (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

Viewing sessions with PBS

In the first (documented) viewing session, dated 2 June 1997, the producers of WGBH[79], like their British colleague commented on the opening segment[80], asking Percy to highlight the role the United States played in the fifty year conflict. On the Ur-script Peter McGhee, the chief producer of WGBH wrote: 'Don't you think that the role the US played in 50 years is imp?'[81] This almost rhetorical question resonates very well with my argument regarding the interplay between national perception and televised representation. For the American producer it is clear that the US (his nation) is a significant player in the Arab-Israeli conflict (Billig 1995). In his comment he urges the production company to 'flag' this role in the opening sequence.

From the notes of the viewing session with only this one comment ascribed to the Americans it would seem that the Americans had gotten what they needed, period. However, in a conversation with Brian Lapping, the producer revealed that the anger of the Americans was only made clear after the sessions. 'Zvi [Dor-Ner] watched the film... he was so mad...I was afraid he'll hit someone' (Brian Lapping, Interview,

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[79] Zvi Dor-Ner the executive of WGBH Boston was accompanied by Peter S. McGhee, Vice President of National Programming
[80] See Appendix: A.1
[81] Cited from the Ur-script (2nd June 1997)

May 2003). Where the Americans did elect to express themselves was in an exchange of letters to Brian Lapping. In a letter dated October 4, 1997 Peter McGhee writes:

> ... the program [Programme One] still appears in an inexplicable way to begin unraveling the threads of history in the 50 Year War.
>
> For all kinds of reasons, cost among them, I have wanted us to narrow our differences, if any must exist, to minor adjustments in narration. It doesn't appear that this can be the case on program one.
>
> It may be tempting to see our difference as making a political purpose, on your side or on ours. I reject the temptation and urge you to. What I see and believe is that the things that aren't said in that program give what is said a skew and a naiveté that impeach the program and the program makers to knowledgeable audience.
>
> Now, we have not persuaded you to our view, and yet we can not broadcast or put our name on the program you plan without it being made quite different.
>
> So one thing to put on the agenda when we meet is how we can do the work which we feel is necessary with least disruption and cost, hoping, as I do, that when we have made manifest what we think is needed by doing it, you will understand and agree that it has not put your reputation at risk.

I could not hope for a more insightful analysis of the tensions and pitfalls involved in an international co-production then what Peter McGhee described in his letter. What is clear for McGhee is very clear indeed: Money is significant (the rationale for engaging in a co-production is to limit the cost), a strongly defined political narrative that is accessible and expectable to the target (national) audience must be set in place, and the element of forgetting (what Robins and Aksoy (2000) referred to as the nation's 'point of silence')[82], is as essential as that of remembering (Renaan 1996): '... the things that aren't said in that program give what is said a skew and a naiveté that impeach the program and the program makers to knowledgeable audience'. A few days later McGhee and Dor-Ner sent a fax to Brian Lapping (dated October 23, 1997) in which they offer 'a schematic of the material/information' which they believed Programme One is lacking. The producer's first request was to begin the programme with the UN's partition plan (1947) and add the following information.

> UN general assembly votes to partition Palestine. Palestine is to be divided into two states – one Arab and one Jewish, with Jerusalem designated as an international city. The Jews accept the plan and the Arabs reject it.

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[82] See Chapter One, above

> The British government votes against the partition. It decided to evacuate Palestine instead of implementing the plan. The British retain a lot of power until their departure

In adding this information, the producers of WGBH are, in effect, calibrating the role of four players: the US, the British, the Arabs and the Jews. The US is implicitly identified as the helper and a 'peacemaker (hosting the assembly). Britain, in contrast is clearly presented as the villain ('The British government voted against the partition. It decided to evacuate Palestine instead of implementing the plan'). As an active player it is also identified as a significant contender for agency and responsibility for the conflict's irresolvability: ('The British retain a lot of power until their departure'). The Jews are presented as the heroes (the peacemakers), while the Arabs are identified as the villains who hold responsibility for the escalation of the violent conflict: 'The Jews accept the plan and the Arabs reject it'. In the comments that follow, McGhee and Dor-Ner were still insisting on playing up these roles of the two parties to the conflict. A good example is their comment on the sequence of 'The War of Independence' (Winter 1947-Spring 1948):

> In the initial stages, the Arabs were able to block Jewish transportation all over Palestine, and the skirmishes are over the ability to use roads.

> The Jewish forces go on the offensive to gain control over the road to Jerusalem. It is a protracted and bloody battle. First Arab villages are conquered and the population is removed. The massacre in Dir Yassin occurs within this context, and the beginning of the refugee's story.

And finally:

> Regular forces of Egypt, Trans Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Syria invade Palestine with the declared aim of liberating it. At this stage the Jews have only light arms. The Arab armies have 150 field guns, 150-160 armored cars, 30-40 tanks and 55-59 fighter aircraft. The Arab states are tremendously self assured.

In a letter attached to these editorial comments (dated October 23, 1997), Peter McGhee writes to Brian Lapping:

> I hope as you do that we have all had all the passionate speeches we need to have. I welcome your assurance that you would like to be able to have us broadcast the same program and will try to make it so, but if we can't come to agreement on that, I'll put it down to one of the various ways in which the US and British information needs simply are different.

This strong statement reflects just where one sits when one is constructing a 'television history' through an international co-production. The collaborating producers (Dor-Ner and McGhee in this case) while maintaining their commitment to a single master product were pushing for the national (and the particular) through their demand that the sensitivities of their specific audience (the American citizenry) be addressed in the produced footage.

With these cultural (national) discrepancies is mind, the producers at WGBH decided to come to London to watch over the revised programme in person, in an attempt to make it suitable for their target audience - the American viewers. In a viewing session held in Lapping's office on 29, October 1997 the producers of WGBH described their main demands: a focus on the UN Partition Plan (1947), a discussion on the British hostility towards the Jews, an emphasis on the Arab aggression against the Jewish population in Palestine and in the Arab countries, and on Jewish victimhood[83]. These demands were rejected by Brian Lapping, claiming that 'putting all the blame on the Arabs is a distortion of history' (Brian Lapping, Interview, May 2003). Again the parties agreed not to agree. Lapping's version of the film (approved by Eddie Mirzoeff) was transmitted on BBC2, and the WGBH version was taken by Zvi Dor-Ner back to the cutting room. Brian Lapping summarized this final stage of the production process:

> I gave up on the American version. We had an agreement that they can make editorial changes. They had a right to make changes to suit their need. That was the term on which we got the money so we had no choice (Brian Lapping, Interview May 2003).

Lapping's statement glaringly states the 'core elements' regarding the co-production process: He that holds the purse holds the power to 'make up the story', i.e., to construct a history.

III. Transmitting the three film-texts

After the series had been aired, the two executive producers were asked whether effective editorial control had indeed been achieved. Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC said:

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[83] Cited from U-script (written by Norma Percy 2nd June 1997).

I knew that they [Brian Lapping] had to do these versions but it did not reflect in what we got. I completely ignored that in my demands. I didn't care of what anybody else was saying. And that what they expect they don't except us to say; oh well I realize that there [is] a problem here, so o.k we won't do that or cut it that way. If somebody else wants something else its their problem. So we get effectively the complete control (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

And Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH said:

I'm happy with the American version. Its not that I was forced to broadcast the BBC's version. I've done what I thought was necessary to do and I did not compromise in that (Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001).

Clearly, both executives were satisfied that an effective national narrative had indeed emerged from the material collected for both of them by the independent production company. It seems, therefore, that from the commissioners' point of view, the fact that the film had been produced by a single independent production company, as a co-production, did not detract from the possibility of endowing the final product with a specific national character.

Once the British and American versions were finalized, the secondary player, MBC, was allowed to come in and design its own version of the film, the one that would be transmitted by cable systems in the Arab World. As already mentioned, MBC's financial commitment was set at 12% of the overall budget. In return for this limited share, the network acquired the right to re-edit the BBC's version to suit its needs. This stands in contrast to the status of the main players, who had participated actively in the production process. When asked about the rationale underlying this re-editing of BBC's version to produce an Arab version of the film, the producer of MBC's programme explains:

We [...] worked on the assumption that some of those things would be either obscure to an Arab audience or be offensive to an Arab audience. They were various things in the script which we felt needed changing (Christine Garabedian, Interview, July 2002).

Garabedian then summaries the actual re-editing process:

We watched it and then we looked at the script and we felt that in some cases it needed to be simplified. It was not an accurate history. It was not objective. ... [there] were triumphal elements in it. I remember feeling that there was an implicit praising of the West and of Israeli actions (Christine Garabedian, Interview, July 2002).

Like the British and American producers, the creators of the MBC version began the re-editing process by making changes in the script. The Arab partner, in contrast to the British and the American co-producers, did not obtain the right to participate in the actual production process. Still, this apparently did not affect MBC's ability to create its own national version, incorporating their viewership's specific narrative[84].

[We had to change] the structure and the interpretation of what actually happened. It's interesting because you realize how subtle the changes are. If you put in one sentence [and] you can change the whole meaning of the piece regardless of what the interviewees are saying, regardless of the content of the archive.... You can foreground something simply by adding a word.

IV. The production process *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs*- some concluding remarks

I hope in this chapter to have begun to lend some credence to my contention that the creators of television histories should be counted among the significant agents that fulfil the role of interpreting the nation's past as a coherent and meaningful entity. At the very least, each of the three nation/culture producer has, from the project's very inception, fought (and I do not choose that word lightly), to give thickness and substance to the visualization and the telling of the 'story' that would accord with his/her target audience's national perspective, common knowledge and shared memory. What is interesting to point out here is that none of the producers even entertained the notion that its target audience might be willing or able to accept a cultural product that, while affirming a singular national self-identity, might at the same time allude to a more broad and diverse system of inter-national differences. The concept of 'difference' within one's own target audience, of diverse national viewpoints, is wholly ignored in favour of a clearly constructed selective

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[84] This point will be illustrated in Chapter Six

appropriation of unique nation/culture historical knowledge and existing 'rich legacy of memories' (Renan 1996:52).

My detailed examination of the process which have lead to the emergence of the three (national) film texts, leads to three notable observations. First, the primary conceptual idea that motivates the whole initiative rests on the assumption that the topic which the proposed film will be exploring falls within the historical experience and shared memory of the film's envisaged (national) target audience. Second, the decision to commission the film via co-production is based on the national and cultural sensitivity, interests and shared memory which the commissioning parties identify within their separate and specific national constituencies. Third, throughout the production process, notably in the scripting and editing stages, each one of the collaborating producers insists on presenting the event being depicted through the lens of the national/cultural susceptibilities, indeed the prejudices, of the specific collectives to which they wish to cater. To an examination of these three cultural/national texts, I now turn.

Chapter Six

Editing Nation/Culture: The Three Final Cuts

.... I think that the BBC should make absolutely even- handed programmes
(Eddie Mirzoeff, Executive producer, BBC)

We are telling a historical narrative and we are telling the best narrative ... and
history is not necessarily done in a uniform, what we want to do is to do good
history... (Zvi Dor-Ner, Executive producer, WGBH Boston)

We just worked on the assumption that some of those things would be either
obscure to an Arab audience or be offensive to an Arab audience they were
various things in the script which we felt needed changing. What we tried to do
is to make it in some way more neutral more historical (Christine Garabedian
producer, OR Media for MBC).

Thus far, I have investigated the production process of the documentary film *The Fifty*
Years War: Israel and the Arabs. I have examined in particular the processes, which
led to the decision to commission this film through a co-production, and the impact of
this decision on the script, on the selection of interviewees, and on the choice of
footage. In this chapter 'Editing Nation/Culture: The Three Final Cuts', I shall
observe the manner in which the interactions among the producers of this film find
reflection in the visual form and narrative content of the three programmes produced.

In what follows I shall offer a close reading of the three nation/culture
versions of the co-produced film, *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs*, as
transmitted by the three main producing/funding sources of the programme: BBC,
PBS and MBC. The existence of the Lapping Ur-text, the Ur-film and Ur-script all
produced by Brian Lapping Associates, of the recorded comments in the four
documented viewing session which led to the 'Master Film' broadcast by the BBC—
all of these documents/texts allow for a close reading and analysis of the final film-
texts broadcast by PBS and MBC, and their relation to the BBC Master Film. It is
only through the existence of all of these primary materials that a final reading of
three differing nation/culture film products can be pursued—an analysis to be carried
out under conditions close to those of a controlled experiment.

The three nation/culture versions of the documentary programme *The Fifty*
Years War: Israel and the Arabs, feature key moments in the Arab-Israel conflict
(Norma Percy, Interview, 2002). All three versions were divided into six-parts, each

episode lasting between 46-50 minutes, each constructed around a particular war between Israel and the Arabs.

> '[T]he 1948 War that followed Israel's independence; the Suez War of 1956; the Six Day War of 1967; the War of 1973 (known as the October War by the Arabs and the Yom Kippur War by the Jews); and the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982' (Lapping in Bregman & El-Thtri,1998:13).

The programmes consist of archival footage and 'testimonies' of interviewees (notably decision-makers), who were present at the events depicted. The testimonies and archival footage were accompanied by a voice over which I, invoking other critics writing on documentaries, (e.g. Rabiger 1992) will call the 'voice of authority'.

The simplest statement of 'the story' which all three broadcast film-texts follow is: The Jews struggle for statehood in Palestine. The Arabs attempt to prevent it. There are violent confrontations between Jews and Arabs, then between Israel and the Arabs. The War of Independence (1947) is the first major confrontation, the Suez War (1956), the second. The behind-the scenes events leading to the Yom Kippur War (1973) are presented, followed by the processes which led to the Camp David peace accord between Israel and Egypt (1978). The history of the Palestinian National Movement is traced, looking in particular at the struggle of the Palestinian Liberation Organization for statehood. The films conclude with the Palestinian *'Intifada'* uprising in 1987, the Oslo agreement between Israel and the Palestinians in 1993, and the attempts to consolidate a shaky reconciliation.

In what follows I provide a synopsis of each narrative ('the story') of the six programmes of the three broadcast film-texts. It is critical to my study that I here make clear that it was possible to write one 'common story' for all three network versions. What will be crucial is to confront and analyse the ability of the three versions to move away from this joint narrative ('the story') to create their own very clear and clearly different nation/culture statements.

I. Voices

1. My voice

I seat myself in front of a bank of three video monitors. Monitor #1 displays the BBC 'Master Film' broadcast. Monitor #2 displays the PBS 'film-text' broadcast. Monitor

#3 displays the MBC[85] 'film-text broadcast'. I watch each of the three versions, in turn, from beginning to end (programmes I to VI—about five hours of viewing time) - beginning with the British BBC version, next the American PBS version, finally the Arab MBC version. As I watch, I take written notes, formulating a verbal text which will, to the best of my abilities, describe the 'story,' of each episode in each version. What becomes immediately apparent is that the series share significant characteristics:

(i)   format (six part series, screen duration 50 minutes x 6)

(ii)   time frame, topic (the fifty years of conflict between Israel and the Arabs)

(iii)   basic 'story' structure[86]

Inasmuch as possible, I attempt, at this stage of my process, to waft above the nation/culture differences between the versions, although they are immediately evident. I attempt to trace 'the story,' being told. What emerges as astonishing is how from 'the story', agreed to by all three co-producers, three strikingly different/distinct versions ensue. Over and above their significant similarities, the three broadcast film-texts (BBC, PBS, MBC), differ dramatically, each film-text in fact, offering a significantly different reading of the Arab-Israeli conflict; each activating an extremely different 'script' or interpretive framework in its presentation, despite the fact that all have pursued a common 'story' structure. What emerges clearly is that each film-text (nation/culture version) acts as a conduit for a 'shared memory' (Margalit 2002). As memories (testimonies) of individuals, archival footage, historical 'facts' and narrated words are selected, these televised texts come to frame three distinctly different national/cultural experiences. They, both produce and are produced by grant national/cultural narratives, and must therefore be understood in the particular nation/culture context(s) out of which they emerge.

I return to work intensely on Programme One of the three versions, of which a considered analysis will follow. In order to indicate and describe the often bold/often minute differences between the three nation/culture film products of Programme One, I must first set down a 'narrative' of each sequence. In this much more specific

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[85] All translations from Arabic (MBC version) to English were made by Dina Matar.
[86] This issue will be discussed in the following sections.

description, it is even more evident to me, as I take my notes, that I am constantly making choices; where to set the borders of the frame of each sequence, what words to use in my own narrating of 'the story'. It is clear to me, that immediate with my description of the story of the three nation/culture versions, I have become a 'player' in the presentation of the three film-texts. While it is overwhelmingly clear that my critical analysis will be subjective even as it attempts to rise above partial and particular readings, I find it important to signal that from the moment my pen hits my paper, I can in no way claim objectivity. My effort then has been, at best, to neutralize the vocabulary of my description inasmuch as possible.

2. 'The story'

Programme One

The Jews decide to create their own state in Palestine. The Arabs are determined to stop them. This conflict leads to a violent civil war between Arabs and Jews. Britain announces its intention to withdraw its forces from Palestine in May, 1948. Before this deadline, the newly established United Nations tries to put an end to the conflict by offering a partition plan, whereby Palestine would be divided into two separate states, one Jewish (Israel), the other Arab (Palestine). The plan is rejected. The civil war that follows the UN's decision does not prevent the birth of the State of Israel. But it is President Truman's recognition of the new state which rescues it from a stillbirth. After the departure of British troops on 15 May 1948, five Arab armies, those of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq invade the previously mandated Palestine. The Jews win a victory. After the war, violent confrontations between Israel and the Arabs continue. Behind the scenes, secret contacts between Egypt and Israel attempt to find a common ground on which they may be able to build a peace.

Programme Two

In 1967, after eleven years of reasonable quiet between Israel and the Arabs, Egypt deploys its troops in the Sinai. On 5 June 1967, Israel launches a pre-emptive strike against the Egyptian Air Force. It then attacks Jordan and Syria. In six days, Israel wins a military victory and is in possession of large territories: the West Bank, the Golan Heights, the Sinai, Gaza and East Jerusalem. With the end of the war, the Israeli government offers Egypt a land-for peace proposal. The offer is rejected by the

Egyptian leadership, and Israel refuses to withdraw from the territories it has taken (captured).

Programme Three

In 1970 President Nasser of Egypt dies. His successor Anwar el-Sadaat offers to make peace with Israel. He is not taken seriously by the Israeli leadership. He embarks on a war against Israel, called the 'October War'. The Israelis call it the 'Yom Kippur War'. Though Sadat loses the war, he has won a battle against Israel in the Sinai. Feeling that he could use this military achievement to talk to the Israelis as 'equals', he re-embarks on his land-for peace proposal, and makes his historic visit to Jerusalem. On 17 September 1978, following negotiations at Camp David mediated by the American President Jimmy Carter, a peace agreement is signed between Israel and Egypt. Three years later, Sadat is assassinated by an Egyptian officer who had opposed the President's pro-Western stance, and the peace accord with Israel.

Programme Four

The War of Independence (1947) resulted in hundreds of thousands of Arabs (Palestinians) fleeing the country – most of them to Gaza, others to the West Bank, Lebanon and Syria where they lived in refugee camps. In 1948 the Israeli government decided not to allow them to return to what was now a Jewish state. This decision meant that those who had fled had become permanent refugees. Between 1948 and 1967, the Palestinian refugees hoped that a coalition of Arab armies would liberate what they now called 'Palestine'. But following the defeat of the Egyptian, Jordanian and Syrian forces in the Six Days War, they lost hope. This despair gave momentum to Yasser Arafat's *Fatah* movement and the other eight factions of the umbrella organization, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to take direct action to liberate Palestine. They launched their 'armed struggle' attacks on Israel from Jordan. In 1970, however, when the armed struggle caused chaos in Jordan, King Hussein drove Arafat and the PLO out of his kingdom. They fled to Lebanon and continued their attacks on Israel from there. Throughout these years, the 'Palestinian problem' began to attract word-wide attention. In 1974, Yasser Arafat, by then the Chairman of the PLO, was invited to address the UN General Assembly. From Lebanon, the Palestinian 'armed struggle' on Israel continued. In 1982 the Israeli ambassador to London was shot in the head. The Israeli leadership held Araft, leader of the PLO,

responsible for the assassination. The next morning, Israeli troops marched into Lebanon. Over the course of twelve days, thousands of Palestinians fled the country. Arafat left for a new exile in Tunis.

Programme Five

In 1987 the Israeli Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres and Hussein, King of Jordan draft a "blueprint" for a peace agreement. The draft was rejected by the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir. On October 1987, Palestinians are killed in a road accident between an Israeli vehicle and a car carrying Palestinian day-labourers. At the funeral, an eighteen-year-old Palestinian throws a stone at one of the Israeli soldiers. The soldier fires back and the youth is killed instantly. The road accident and this death provoke riots all over the Gaza Strip. Activists from the various PLO factions believed that if the *Intifada* remained strong and lasted long enough, it could exert real pressure on Israel. Contacts between the Palestinian leadership in Tunis and activists in the refugee camps encourage resistance. The situation begins to effect Israeli morale. The Israeli cabinet approves an operation to kill Abu Jihad, one of the most influential Palestinian leader in Tunis, hoping that the assassination will end the Palestinian uprising. Behind the scenes, secret contacts between Israel and the Palestinians, mediated by the American government attempt to find common ground on which a peace agreement could be reached. But while the talks are going on, a Palestinian group of one of the PLO factions, carries out a terrorist attack in Tel-Aviv. This puts an end to the initiative to end the conflict. Two years later Saddam Hussein, president of Iraq, occupies Kuwait. President Bush is determined that Saddam's act of aggression will not be tolerated. On the night of 16-17 January 1991, the American (Western) – Arab coalition attacks Iraq from the air. Saddam loses the war. President Bush, having led an international and regional coalition to a victory, knows that this is the moment to honour his promise by bringing the Middle East leaders to the same negotiating table. In October 1991 the Israeli and Arab delegations meet in Madrid. The Israelis hoping that a local Palestinian leadership would gradually gain status, and conclude a deal with Israel sideline the PLO leaders in Tunis. But the local Palestinian leadership remained dependent on the PLO's instructions.

Programme Six

Yitzhak Rabin comes to power in 1992, and promises to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians within nine months. At the same time secret talks are held in a London hotel, between an Israeli university professor and a Palestinian politician. The talks are mediated by a Norwegian academic. This meeting opens the way to series of discussions between Israel and the Palestinians. As a result, in the summer of 1993, on the White House lawn, a peace agreement between the Palestinians and the Israeli is signed. Israeli forces withdraw from Gaza and from many West Bank cities and villages. At the same time bilateral talks between Israel and Syria are held. On 4 November 1995, at a rally in support of Rabin's policy, he is assassinated by a Jewish right-wing fanatic. Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres is appointed to the top post. A few weeks later an American delegation arrives in Jerusalem and the talks continue. In Israel, a movement of Palestinian extremists, *Hamas*, renews a bombing campaign, leaving scores of Israelis dead and wounded. In May 1996 general elections are held in Israel. Prime Minister Peres loses his position to Benjamin Netanyahu, who finds that implementing the agreement that the previous Labour government had signed with the Palestinians, is a bitter pill.

3. What's in a name?

The title, *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs*, was suggested by Brian Lapping, who produced the series for all three networks. In a book which accompanied the series, Lapping explains his suggestion:

> When I suggested the title: 'The Fifty Years War,' for the television series…I was of course, referring aback to the Hundred Years War that ravaged Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Brian lapping in Bregman & El-Tahri, 1998:13)

It is quite apparent that this British producer who was hired by the two co-production agents (BBC/London and WGBH/Boston), implicitly targeted the networks' viewers as Europeans and therefore made reference to a Euro/Christian heritage. There is a message implicit in this title regarding the significance of a conflict that takes place in a far away region (the Middle East), whose resemblance to 'Europe' and its 'Christian' wars, then renders it more familiar and therefore more relevant. It should come as no surprise that the British and the American commissioning editors readily

adopted Lapping's suggestion, while the commissioning editor of the Arabic version (who signed on to the co-production agreement at a later stage), rejected it. The producers of the Arab MBC version opted for the title *Israel and the Arabs: Fifty Years of Conflict*, thus directing their audience (the Arabs) to the main actors in what for them is an ongoing conflict, namely the Israelis ('them'), and the Arabs ('us'). Furthermore, in replacing the word 'war' with the word 'conflict', the producers of the Arab version highlighted the fact that at the time of transmission (the year 1998), Israel and the Arabs were not in a state of war[87]. In both cases, the title was used as a technique to draw a specifically targeted audiences' attention to a familiar arena, by highlighting assumed shared concerns and local knowledge.

4. The 'Voice of Authority'

A 'voice of authority' commentary was used in all three versions. This technique, as described by Michael Rabinger in his book *Directing the Documentary* (1992), is widely used in television documentaries because it can rapidly and effectively introduce new characters, summarize intervening developments, and give a concise version of new facts. Narration can also prepare the viewer to notice aspects of an upcoming situation (Rabinger 1992 :235-236). It is quite evident that while adopting the narration technique, each producer opted for a different 'language'. The British commissioning editor hired an English (British!) speaker. The American preferred an American narrator, while the Arab producer favoured an Arabic speaker. This decision is particularly significant because common language is critical in defining (demarcating the boundaries of) collective identity groups, especially of 'nations'. Moreover, the commissioning editors of both the American and the Arabic versions, dubbed those interviewees who were speaking in a 'foreign' language (the Arab producer dubbed the English and the Hebrew speaker, and the American dubbed the Hebrew and the Arabic speakers). This decision can not simply be explained by the producers' attempt to 'assist' their audience. As Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH Boston noted : 'Americans don't read sub-titles' (Interview, August 2001). However, it cannot be ignored that the dubbing technique created a dominant voice (language), which situates the film in a particular national context. It goes without saying that the Arabs would wish to use an Arab (or Arab-language) narration. What I wish to stress

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[87] Israel signed a peace agreement with Egypt in 1978 and with Jordan in 1994.

here is that the Americans, who could have made-do with the British (English language) narration, insisted on hiring an American, despite the fact that this would and did increase the cost of production.

5. Interviewees: common witnesses and witnesses-of-choice

In selecting what the producers (Brian Lapping and Associates) called their 'Interviewees,' the criteria were that the persons chosen would have witnessed the event, that they would be 'good storytellers' in the 'story' of the conflict, and in most cases, that they would have been 'decision-makers' (Norma Percy Interview, May 2003). The three co-production agents (BBC/PBS/MBC) agreed to agree on a common list of interviewees, and with few exceptions, these were the filmed 'witnesses'. In my critique, it is the 'few exceptions', those I call 'witnesses-of-choice,' who make the crucial difference in forging the three versions.

The common list of witnesses includes:

Shimon Peres, Yitchak Navon, Meir Pail, Ben, Dideon Rafael, Zion Cohen , Abu Ali Shaheen, Abu-Ala, King Hussein of Jordan, Abu Mahamud, Clifford Clark, Evgeny Pyrlin; Elliot Richrdon, Jimmy Carter

The witnesses-of choice include:

PBS version: Yair Zaban, Uzi Narkiss

MBC version: Sabir Aalmonier, Shafiqel-Hout

In attempting to describe further the criteria for the choosing of the common witnesses, it is clear, that these persons would have to, in some ways, be acceptable to all three co-production agents. This immediately eliminates all persons at the far edges of any political spectrum. Agreed upon as well, was the mathematical number of equal representatives of Israelis, Arabs and 'others' (others were defined as Americans, British, Russian, etc). I want to make clear here, that inasmuch as the BBC version was the master-text, the common witnesses were the total witnesses of that British series. The option to increase in number the witnesses on the common list, and/or to eliminate some of them, was an option eagerly adopted by both the

Americans and the Arabs. Reflecting on her decision to add Arab interviewees to the Arab (MBC) version, its producer Christine Garabedian notes:

> I think it was important to hear the Israeli point of view because in Arab culture there isn't this tradition of documentary filmmaking so this for them was very new and also in many cases they don't have the access to Israelis so this was a novelty. But in order to justify the presence of Israelis in such a heavy sort of way, we had to balance it out with some more Arab interviewees (Christine Garabedian, Interview, July 2002).

This choice is critical for my ensuing discussion on the relationship between common/shared memory and the representation of national identity. The decision to select particular individuals as witnesses-of choice is directly linked to the ability of a specific witness to testify concerning a specific event-of-choice. This opens up various possibilities for dramatic emphasis and unique foci hinging on the representation of a politics of common/shared memory and national identity.

The film-language choices made in shooting the interviewees are significant. All witnesses were shot in a piece-to-camera framing: the interviewer is absent, neither seen nor heard. The problematic with this method of interviewing is that in an editing process, selected texts may be presented out of a broader context. The politics of this method is that it increases powerfully the 'storytelling' element, which, in terms of a text being absorbed by a public, is very effective. The interviewees were instructed to speak in an 'I' voice, increasing the sense of 'being there'(Norma Percy, Interview May 2002, May 2003). This, inevitably adds to a sense of 'truth', and in critical terms, increases the problematic of just this 'truth' aspect of the telling.

All choices made in shooting the interviewees were accepted as to be identical for all three versions. This included applying the same technical choices to the additional witnesses-of-choice interviews, shot after the completion of the BBC programme. All the piece-to-camera interviews were shot in mid-close-up, in politically neutral settings such as sitting room, offices, none of which included distinctive identifying markers. The background was consistently dark with light focused on the witness. The feeling was of an intimacy, with the lighting adding a sense of the importance of the witness. A witness neutralized from external affect could be experienced by a broad audience as a credible, 'uninfluenced', and therefore, again more, 'truthful' speaker.

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The witness segments were equal in the balance of interview/newsreel materials for each program and each version.

II. Players/Roles/Issues

1. Introduction to a taxonomy of players/roles issues

Throughout all three nation/culture versions of the series, the players/actors in the 'story' are clear and identical: the Jews (later, the Israelis), the Arabs, the British, the American, The Russians, and the International Community (usually referring to the UN). All of the above players, break-down into subsidiary players, for example, the Israelis become 'Israeli troops', Begin, Rabin, Peres, etc. the Arabs segue to Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the Palestinians (who themselves become Arafat, the PLO, etc.). The British are referred to as: the British rulers, Lord Mishkon, His Majesty, etc. the Russians are referred to as the Soviet Union, the Soviet Foreign Ministry or Moscow. The Americans, are America, the American Administration or Truman, to name but a few designations. The players are the 'dramatis personae' of 'the story', with the central duo, Israel and the Arabs. This would be clear even to someone who has no inkling as to 'the story', first of all because of the title of the series, and then because of the repetitive narrative focus on these two players. The significance of the lesser players, varies and shifts from version to version. The Russians and the International Community for example feature more prominently in the American version while the British are most prominent in the British version.

The roles assumed by players differ pronouncedly from version to version. Though each version must assign the generic roles of the hero, the aggressor, the defender, the victim, the helper, clearly different players wear the masks of these roles in the three different nation /culture versions. The Jews in the American version are the victims, while in the British version they are the aggressors. The clarity with which the masks and therefore the roles, are identifiable in the different versions, is crystal in the extreme. One might even say that the masks, as in a theatre of generic types such as the Italian Renaissance *comedia dell'arte*, are a simplification of the role, making the role instantly and easily legible. Here is where the mask/role of 'the other' is situated, and here as well, is where issues and dynamics of power come to the fore. It is this power of the mask/role, of both 'the Other' and the us/we that is

critical for my exploration of the way national identity issues always play themselves out.

The explication of my broad conclusions here will find its substantiation in the following close reading of three critical segments from each of the three versions; the opening, the 'first event', and the ending.

2. Us/we/them; A close reading of the opening, first event, and ending segments of program one of the three broadcast film-texts

In this section I describe and compare how players and assigned roles have set the stage for the creation of three distinct nation/culture broadcast films. In this section the issue of 'responsibility' for the escalation of the conflict will be highlighted.

Programme One - The Opening Sequence

The BBC version:

The opening sequence of the BBC version begins with the caption '1947' superimposed on a view of the Wailing Wall of the old city of Jerusalem (with Jews praying at it), and David's Citadel. Over this image, the entire frame is filled with writing in Hebrew and Arabic script (Figure 1).

Figure 1- David's Citadel

The designation of the year makes clear that in this version the Arab-Israeli conflict began, fifty years before the film was transmitted. The following frame and the 'voice of authority' narration, introduces the main players/actors in 'the story': the Jews and the Arabs, and the main conflict - both people's claim for rights over a particular territory, Palestine.

> To the Jews Palestine is the traditional and spiritual home, the promised land, but the majority of the inhabitants in Palestine are Arabs, they too regard Palestine as their rightful home.

My reading of this British voice-of-authority[88], situates the Jewish claim for their homeland in Palestine as historical ('traditional'), and inextricably connected to their ancient religion ('spiritual home', 'the promised land').

The Arab claim is situated first of all in a present demographics ('the majority of the inhabitants in Palestine are Arabs'), and, as strongly, in a present 'locus of habitat': they are literally the in-habit-ants of the land. Both claims are reinforced by a 'dissolve' from the image of the two Jerusalem landmarks (the wall with its devout, praying, and the citadel - both reading Jewish Jerusalem), to a shot of an Arab populated Jerusalem present in the roadways around Wall and citadel. Arabs and Jews are equally present in the space/in the frame. The British immediately set up as well, the 'otherness' of these two populations by presenting them in 'indigenous' garb. They are 'other' from each other, as well as from 'us' (as British). Using the name 'Palestine' to describe the geography on whose soil the conflict will be acted out, the BBC opts out from the many other designation used for this site : Zion, The Holy Land, the land of Israel. Each term carries a weight of clear political associations and allegiances. The BBC choice of 'Palestine' sets the series, in these opening moments of the first programme, clearly, not only with the Palestinian camp, but also within the contemporary discourse of the Israeli/Arab conflict.

> .... but with the end of the war into Palestine's port came ship after ship with illegal immigrants, refuges from recent persecution in Germany Austria Poland, Belzen and Dacau. The Arabs fear from becoming a minority pressured the British to limit the Jewish immigration. Jewish extremists attacked British troops, wrecked governments buildings, blow up trains and ships and so Palestine remains a place of Martial law, where all go their ways only under watch, with the innocent suffer with the guilty.

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[88] All voice-over narration, what I have called ,the 'voice-of-authority' will hereafter appear indented, bold and in special font as in this first insert

The word '*but*' in the beginning of this narrative segment, marks a critical moment in the opening narrative. It is the arrival of Jews from a devastated Europe in the aftermath of WWII that will destroy the balance and provoke what the voice-of-authority calls 'the Arab's fear of becoming a minority'. These 'illegal immigrants', a designation made by the British mandatory government at the time (and here used to subtly but decisively introduce we/us/Britain/Britishness into the BBC programme in a fore- grounded position), will now be shown to not only flout a legal justice (and therefore 'just') system, but will be portrayed as the instigators of violence as well. The voice-of-authority continues: 'Jewish extremists attacked British troops, wrecked government buildings, blow up trains and ships'. Here, the British actors, move to centre stage, instantly promoted to significant players in 'the story': now themselves victims of the 'violent Jews' targeting attacks. This was intended to activate an Arabs-and-British against the Israelis-script in the mind of British viewers, an attitude again consistent with contemporary British discourse about the political situation in the Middle East. For, as Eddie Mirzoeff, the producer of the BBC version says:

> There has been a degree of passionate support at one time strongly for Israel at another time *more recently* for the Palestinians (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003, my italics).

I continue to highlight the two-part issue of shared memory and shared forgetting, which I discussed earlier. In the opening segment, the British producer chooses to let lie the wider historical context of the conflict, namely, why the British were in Palestine in the first place.

The opening musical theme now announces the 'beginning' of the programme (and of the series as a whole). The title *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs*, appears for the first time, as still images of iconic places and persons are rhythmically collaged onto different parts of the frame: David Ben Gurion, Moshe Dyan, Anwar Sadat, Yasser Arafat etc. These images are covered over with a blurry written text in both Hebrew and Arabic, echoing the writing in the first frame of wailing wall and citadel. The letters of both languages reinforce the sense of two peoples, while succeeding in widening the scope of the conflict from one of geography to a much broader based cultural (linguistic) site: diasporic Jews aligned with Israelis and an entire Arab culture world.

An old and impressive tree fills the foreground of the next frame, rising on a sand slope with desert hills in the background (Figure 2)

Figure 2 - Lone Tree

This image, a photograph, is reminiscent of canonical 19th century painted images done by travellers to the Holy Land. Christian pilgrims would evoke a Biblical Israel, and the visual referent work to arouse devout sentiments for a Christian viewing public. The conflict takes place in a 'far away' region, the strategy of the filmmakers says, its Christian holiness can render it more familiar, evocative and therefore relevant. The landscape is still, but suggests hazard; the tree is dark and bent, and shadow fills the bottom third of the landscape, traditionally reserved for 'refuge' in landscape painting. The voice-over, voice of authority narration underscores the portending hazard.

> Palestine -one land two peoples.
> Fifty years ago, the British rulers washed their hands of Palestine. The Jews saw their chance to declare their own state – the Arabs were determined to stop them.

Here again is the film's central conflict: two peoples claim for political rights over one land, and, in this BBC version, the positioning of the British at the centre: the moment of the end of the British mandate, the centrality of Britain in the conflict (the Arabs and the Jews are mentioned only in the third sentence). Yet while Britain remains central and significant, it is presented as passive, and in fact, on-the-way-out : '…the British rulers washed their hands of Palestine'. The Jews, on the other hand, continue to be active, in fact to be opportunist 'the Jews saw their chance…'. Moving from being 'inhabitants', the Arabs are now becoming 'resistors';'…the Arabs were determined to stop them'. Here again, while flagging the role that the British Empire

played in this conflict, the BBC chooses to ignore the wider historical context of British involvement in the region. No further description is provided as to why the British 'washed their hands of Palestine'.

This is the end of the opening segment. What follows moves into a new part of 'the story'.

The PBS version:

PBS version begins with what is easily recognizable to all its US audiences, as a PBS beginning:

> Funding for 'The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs' was provided by the corporation for public broadcasting, and PBS viewers like you.

This slogan, which precedes the opening of all PBS programmes is more than an acknowledgement of financial support received (Figure 3).
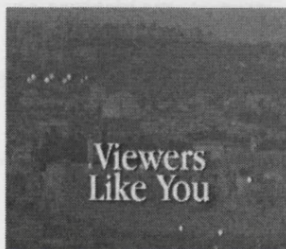
Figure 3 - 'Viewers Like You'

It strongly positions its audience of viewers as participants in the public broadcasting system. Since this series (like all PBS's programmes) is accessible within the geo-political borders of the United States (PBS has transmission rights only in North America), the slogan targets a specific group, namely Americans. The use of this slogan and the message it conveys project a strong connection between the series and its audiences: this programme was made for American citizens, was funded by the American public (tax or voluntary contribution) and has been designed with you, the nation, in mind.

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The image of the tree in the desert appears as in the British version. The American producer makes no mention of the year '1947' nor does he find it necessary to make reference to any specific point in time. The PBS commentary presents the conflict between Israel and the Arabs as 'timeless':

> Palestine-A land divided.
>
> A Holy place. A battle-ground.
>
> A homeland claimed by Arabs and Jews.

And so: a conflict between two nations over one land, a specific place, Palestine, which then becomes the subject of the three sentences that follow. In using the image of the tree, the PBS producer (like his British collaborator) makes similar reference to Christian Holy-Land iconography and the evocation of an emotion reinforced by the phrase 'a holy place' (the latter, a phrase inclusive of Jews as well). Furthermore by using the term 'holy place,' the American producer is framing the conflict as an ideological/religious struggle between Israelis-cum-Jews and Arabs-cum Muslins. What is striking here however is that the Americans have situated Arabs and Jews as equal under the homeland claim 'a homeland claimed by Arabs and Jews'. There is no power positioning here, as exists in the British version, no arguments made at this stage for one side or the other, legitimacy and 'right' are positioned as equal.

The opening clip of the beginning now appear, the same used in the British version, the series title, the iconic places and persons, the written text in both Hebrew and Arabic. The voice of authority narrative speaks:

> By 1947 the lines were drawn

The transitivity of the language in this commentary, downplays the role of specific players in the conflict. We are not told who drew the line nor why. In contrast to the British version (foregrounding the final days of the British mandate), no information is given regarding the historical origins of the conflict, nor why the year '1947' was chosen to mark the beginning of this historical event. 'To the Jews, Palestine is the traditional and spiritual home...' The voice-of-authority narrative here continues exactly as in the British version.

The American producer, however, in contrast to his British colleague, superimposes on the newsreel clip which runs under the narrative voice, the words 'British newsreel'. It is in this way, and in the single sentence of narrative text which quickly follows 'Great Britain had ruled Palestine for three decades' (a sentence notably absent in the British version), that the Americans identify Britain as a serious player in the conflict, and even at this early stage in the six part programme, a significant contender for agency and responsibility for the conflict's escalation. Lord Cadogan announces Britain's decision to withdrew from Palestine (Figure 4):
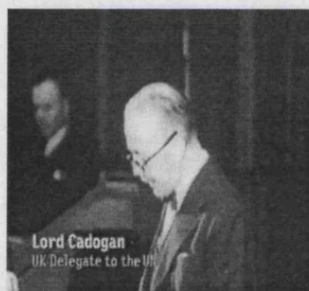
Figure 4 - Lord Cadogan

After years of strenuous but unavailing efforts. His Majesty's government has reached the conclusion that they are not able to bring about a settlement in Palestine based on consent of both Arabs and Jews, and that the Mandate is no longer workable.

The most prominent aspects of the American version as I move to a comparison mode is the upfront presence of the British, situated as prime candidates for the bearing of responsibility in the conflict (their presence as a colonial power in the region), the conflict itself is ideological/religious, and both Arabs and Jews are equal contenders at this stage of the programme.

The MBC version:

The producer of the MBC version opted for an entirely different beginning, that of the BBC 'Master film': a close-up of the Dome of the Rock, a Jerusalem mosque built in the 7th century, a dominant symbol of Islam and the Muslim presence in Palestine. The Dome of the Rock is the third holiest site in Islam (after Mecca and Medina), and it was there that the prophet Mohamed was supposed to have bathed his feet. The

commentary accompanying this image (a contemporary photograph of the Dome of the Rock in colour, gradually dissolving into a black-and-white archival frame of the same site), serves to strength the ancient Muslim presence in the Holy Land (Figures 5,6).
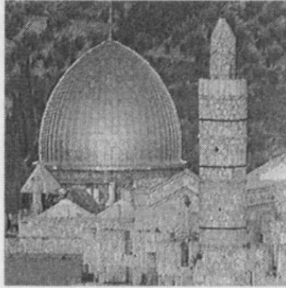
Figure 5 - 'Dome of the Rock'
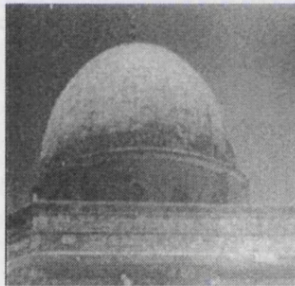
Figure 6 - 'Dome of the Rock' b/w

To this, the voice-of-authority narration adds the British mandate presence, and the older, Arab-linked Ottoman regime.

> Palestine: A land in dispute, between Arabs and Jews, a dispute which has been going on for more then 50 years. In 1917 Britain was granted the mandate over Palestine, following the collapse of the Ottoman regime after World War One.

The message here is clear. MBC is saying: we have been here longer than any of you. Our current claim for Jerusalem is historically sound. You British came, and we were here. You British left (1947/8), and we are still here. And it is immaterial to us where or that you Americans decide that you at all might want to draw any line.

As for the two-part issue of shared memory and shared forgetting, in contrast to the British and American versions, the producers of the Arab film do not mention any historical Jewish presence in Palestine at all, nor do they mention any Jewish religious or other affiliation to Palestine. Over the British newsreel images of Jews at the Wailing Wall, David's tower and Arabs filling the streets, used by both the BBC and PBS versions, the MBC version offers the following commentary:

> The British had promised the Jews a Jewish state in Palestine. The numbers of Jewish immigrants to Palestine started to increase. Because the British promised the Arabs inhabitants to maintain their rights with the Second World War the British control started to be challenged by the Jews arriving from Europe and escaping from the Nazi oppression and the concentrations camps. The Palestinians started to feel the danger.

This voice-of authority narrative clearly situates the British as bearers of enormous responsibility for the conflict, as well as helpers to the Jews. Having staked out this dynamic, the MBC team now edit-in a striking archival moving image segment of British police beating Arabs in a Palestinian street scene (Figure 7).

Figure 7 - Police in Street

What the visual indicates is that 'The British [who] had promised the Jews a Jewish state in Palestine', would not be averse to hitting Arab civilians in order to promote that end. Such an image works to establish what is an early aim of the MBC version - the Arab as victim vs. the Jews and the British as active aggressors. This script, in the minds of MBC's contemporary audience of Arab viewers, is consistent with current Arab discourse on the political situation in what is referred to as 'the occupied territories'. I want to stress here, that in contrast to the American version which framed the conflict as ideological/religious, in the MBC version, the conflict is

presented as a political struggle. This is reinforced by the use of the term 'Palestinians' to describe the Arab 'inhabitants of Palestine', a term which is, again, consistent with current discourse regarding the Palestinian struggle for nationhood today.

In the three opening segments, stark differences emerge. Although the same players are introduced, although many moving images are repeated, and although the site of the conflict is clearly identified in the same place, striking repositioning of roles and assigning of responsibility are, within so little as two minutes of television time, set in sharp focus.

Programme One -The first event: the moment of Britain's departure from Palestine

The first 'event' in all three versions, is shaped through a number of visual and narrative segments which combine to present the moment of Britain's departure from Palestine.

BBC version

In the BBC version, the event is described as follows:

> In the month before the British left, Arabs and Jews turned on each other, Palestine turned into civil war. Desperate for allies, the Jews appeal to the word's greatest power to help them realise their dream of a state of their own.

The commentary is accompanied by a dramatic music sound track, and archival footage of Arabs and Jews fighting in city streets. This is the first presentation of violent confrontations between Jews and Arabs and both players are identified as aggressors. It is striking however, that still no mention is made of British involvement in these violent acts. As 'the Jews turn to the Americans for help,' the British are, in BBC-history, simply absent. Jews and Americans then are instated as the active actors, and therefore potentially responsible for the escalation of the conflict

PBS version

The moment of Britain's departure from Palestine is presented quite differently in the American version. The American producer introduces his viewers to an episode entirely missing from the British version, namely the involvement of the international community (the UN) in the conflict. A black- and- white archival newsreel of the UN committee landing in Palestine, runs under the narration:

> The UN committee considers the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state. But the Arabs did not want to talk to the committee. They wanted nothing to do with the Jews.

The UN is identified in this version as a 'helper' to both major players (the Arabs and the Jews). The PBS version is clear, however, in presenting an un co-operative Arab player: '...the Arabs did not want to talk to the committee.' This is the beginning of a strong implication of the Arabs, as responsible for the escalation of the conflict. The UN is surely to be seen as a worthy and objective peacemaker. To reject its efforts is therefore, a negative action. An interview with Hazem Nussibeh, a Palestinian who 'remembered the event', serves to confirm the American reading of the situation. In a mid-close-up shot, Nussibeh says:

> Sbit Adib was an eloquent speaker. And he said 'If the Jews want to take Palestine from us we swear that we will throw them into the sea'. And he pointed to the Mediterranean, which was a few hundred meters from the place in which we had gathered.

While the interview is not included in either the British or the Arab versions, for the Americans, Nussibeh is the first interviewee, emphasising his testimony, and the significance of the interview. The American editorial decision draws attention to the aggressive role of the Arabs in the conflict and hence, to Arab responsibility for its violent outcome. The British and Arab editorial decisions clearly weigh in at the opposite pole. In the American version, Nussibeh's testimony is even reinforced by the voice-of-authority comment that follows:

The Arab leadership believed that if a partition was imposed they could reverse it by force. Jamal Hoseini the chairman of the Arab committee said that only four to five rifles can easily take over Tel Aviv.

The Americans as well work to downplay the role of the Jews; there is no mention of the Jewish reaction to the UN plan.

The scene which follows in the PBS version (again, absent in both the British and Arab versions), shows Jewish immigration to Palestine in the mid 1940s. Archival footage shows the ship Exodus, entering a port, and the voice of authority comments:

While the committee was still in Palestine, a ship called Exodus arrived in Haifa loaded with Jewish Holocaust survivals.

The commentary is accompanied by images of British soldiers beating Jewish immigrants (Fig 8,9).

Figure 8 - Refugees

Figure 9 - Casualties

The juxtaposition of British "aggressors" and Jewish "victims", reinforces the message conveyed earlier: the Arabs (together with the British) used force against the helpless - 'Holocaust survivors.' It is important to note that the term 'holocaust survivors', a term dramatically connoting/denoting Jewish victimhood, was used only in the American version.

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The segment that follows, black-and-white archival footage of UN delegates witnessing the violent confrontation between British soldiers and Jewish immigrants (Figure 10), as Jewish casualties are forced to re-board the ships on which they had just arrived, is narrated to heighten the awareness already established of the ill treatment of the Jews.

Figure 10 - UN Committe

The UN committee saw first hand the immigrants' despair when they were forced to return to Europe. The Jews argued that the refugees need a home and they will not be welcomed by an Arab state. The UN committee agreed. They recommended that Palestine be partitioned when the British pull out.

Two Arab interviewees, Mohsein Abdek Khalek, and Adel Sabit are presented by the Americans to attest to the virulence (and therefore potential violence) of the Arab cause:

Mohsein Abdek Khalek (A Palestinian student): We felt that what had happened to the Palestinians was unjust. And the partition of Palestine was not fair.

Adel Sabit, King Faruk's cousin, Egypt: We had a man called Mustafa Machsin who managed to penetrate literally into the security council to read a letter written in the blood of several Egyptian Muslim brothers denouncing Israel and the support of Israel and so on.

By highlighting the active role of the 'Muslim Brothers' in the event, the American producer once again frames the conflict in terms of an ideological struggle between Muslims and Jews. This was intended to activate the 'anti-Islam' script in the minds of the American viewers, as it was consistent with current discourses regarding the

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perils (as the Americans saw it) of Islamic fundamentalism to the 'Free World' and this event before 9/11/2001).

Three more segments conclude the American version of the 'First Event': the UN Declaration of the State of Israel, the Arab reaction to the UN declaration and the riots which followed in Palestine (Figure 11).

Figure 11-UN Assembly

It is not difficult to understand that granting visual and narrative space to the Assembly chamber in the UN and to interviewees who testified to their highly emotional responses at the vote for Israel, would further emphasise the legitimacy of the State of Israel—Jewish claims, supported by the international community. We are given the Chairperson of the Assembly:

> You now have to vote; those who are in favour say yes, those who are against will say no.

The testimony of an Israeli who was a high school student at the time:

> No one relied on the calculation made by the President of the Assembly. Each person held his own pen and a piece of paper, and calculated whether or not there were 2/3 for the partition or not....toward the end, USA, Venezuela, etc. we found there were 2/3 we jumped from our places with joy. We wept we hugged, we kissed.

of two Jews who have born and grew up in Palestine, Meir Pail,

> I was glad I was very glad because for me it was important that the UN according to the decree of nations was giving, granting the Jews, I'll say , the Zionists, an independent country on the land of Israel.

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And Yitzhak Navon:

> And I thought in my heart, history is turning a huge page.

Finally the voice-of-authority provides the tally:

> The resolution of the committee for Palestine adopted by 33 votes, 13 against, 10 abstain.

None of this appears in either the Arab or British version.

The UN vote was not only a vote for the legitimacy of the new State, it was a vote carried out within a legal system, the opposite of what the Americans had begun to present as Arab street violence and disorder.

What the Americans present next is the Arab reaction, in words,

> Hazem Nusseibeh, a Palestinian Arab: The news was broadcast at 8 :00 PM. The Palestinian people listened to it everywhere and there was a feeling of frustration and sadness

and in deeds:

> Riots and demonstrations started everywhere. Arabs attacked Jews and the Jews hit back. Cities and neighbourhoods were divided along religious lines. In Jerusalem, an Arab car bomb destroyed the Jewish Agency offices. Seven were killed, more than a hundred were wounded. The fifty year war was on the way.

Repeatedly, the American producer is hammering away at the aggressive role played by the Arabs, and hence their responsibility for the escalation of the conflict. 'Arabs attacked Jews' (aggressors), and 'Jews hit back' (defenders). Furthermore, the American version focuses on an Arab car bomb, and on Jewish casualties. As for the two-part issue of shared memory and shared forgetting: no information is given

regarding Jewish attacks on Arab targets, nor is it reported how many Arabs died or were injured in these assaults. By downplaying the role of the Jews and promoting the negative role of the Arabs, the PBS version activated the already present anti-Arab script in the minds of American viewers.

MBC version:

The MBC version (in contrast to the PBS version) left out any UN declaration sequence, yet, it did pay attention to the UN's partition plan:

> In November 1947, the United Nations put forward a plan for partition, one land into two states and two peoples. But the plan was met by refusal.

The use of a transitive sentence structure to describe the rejection of the UN's partition plan, is exploited in the MBC version. This sentence simply mentions that both sides refused to accept the UN proposal (the partition plan), but no one was told who rejected the UN plan (the Arabs, the Jews or both) nor why it was rejected.

As in the British version, and in contrast with the American one, the producers of the MBC version highlight the negative role of the Jews and identify them as the aggressors. However, in contrast to the British version in which the target of Jewish aggression is Britain, in this version, no 'victims' are mentioned'

> The Jews started 'destructive' (terrorist work') against public buildings and trains and ships. So the British imposed a state of emergency and everything was ready for the first Arab Israeli war.

In this version too, the final days of the British mandate (1948) mark a key moment in the story (the violent confrontations between Arabs and Jews turned into a civil war).

> At the beginning of 1948, The British were preparing to leave Palestine and the Jews saw their chance to announce their state and the Arabs were insisting on preventing that.

The message here is clear. The Jews are the aggressors, provoking the conflict by announcing their own State. The Arabs on the other hand, are, the resisting victims insisting on preventing this act.

The last sentence in the MBC voice-of authority narration highlights a critical event, decidedly absent in both the British and American versions.

> With the beginning of the battle to take over Palestine the land started to be drawn into civil war. A lot of the Palestinians started to leave their towns.

Here again it is Jewish aggression that will make the Palestinians displaced persons. Shafiqel-Hout, a Palestinian resident of Jaffa) whose testimony is absent from both the American and the British versions), testifies:

> The city of Jaffa was subjected to an attack by mortar fire which for us was a heavy weapon which we were not used to before. We found the bombs exploding here and here and here. This increased the desire to empty the city of Jaffa. We for example. I left with my parents and my siblings who were younger then me. As a result of an increase of the bombardment of the city of Jaffa and the beginning of the feeling that the city alone and the Palestinians forces alone could not defend the city and we had to evacuate and await the arrivals of the Arabs armies.

And so it will be violent confrontations once again that will conclude the First Event:

> The Palestinian fighters began to attack the Jewish settlements and the convoys of supply. While the Israeli military organization the Hagana increased its operations to force the residents of Palestine out

It is evident that the producer of the MBC version, in contrast to his American colleague, has decided to say very little about these confrontations. No information is given regarding the nature and consequence of these attacks, nor is it made known how many people (Jewish or Arab) were injured in them.

Time after time, the producers of MBC version are highlighting the aggressive role played by the Jews, and hence their responsibility for the escalation of the

conflict. 'The Jews started 'destructive' ('terrorist work') against public buildings and trains and ships' and '..the Israeli military organization the *Hagana* increased its operations to force the residents of Palestine out.' By promoting the negative role of the Jews - 'the aggressors', and endorsing the positive role of the Arabs, 'the resisters,' the MBC version activated the already present anti-Israeli script in the minds of its Arab viewers.

Programme One - The final sequence (The Suez War)[89]

The events which have led to the Suez War

The final sequence in all three versions is constructed around the second Arab-Israeli war; Suez. The sequence in all three versions begins with archival footage of a panoramic view of the Suez Canal, followed by archival footage of David Ben-Gurion and his Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan, inspecting Israeli soldiers in an army base in the desert.

The BBC and MBC versions narrate the circumstances leading to the onset of this war as:

...Ben-Gurion waited for the opportunity to deal with Egypt.

'Deal' is a harsh word suggesting vengeful reprisals. It is therefore Israeli aggression here that is being fore-grounded, and thereby downplaying Egypt's responsibility for the war. Here, Egypt is the passive scapegoat of Ben-Gurion's aggressive strategies. The American producer declines to use this text, and instead, discusses the circumstances which led to the onset of the Suez war:

> General Moshe Dayan wanted to strike at the Egyptian army before it could arr[90] its new weapon, but Gen-Gurion felt Israel could not fight alone.

Here Israel engages in violent behaviour, but in contrast to the BBC version, it is Egyptian aggression that is highlighted. It is Egypt that is identified as the potential threat to Israel, while the Israeli military aggression is drawn as necessary, in self

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[89] For clarity, this sequence (The Suez War) will be divided into four sections (I-IV)
[90] The combination of these three letters 'arr' was used by the production team to indicate a missing word.

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defence, and therefore justified. Gideon Rafael, an Israeli diplomat, reinforces this American claim (this testimony was not used in both the British and the Arab versions):

> Ben-Gurion became more and more convinced that there is no diplomatic solution for the conflict and because of the accumulation of arms in Egypt, we have to forestall any second major war triggered by Egypt.

The Suez War: 'first event'

In the BBC version, the audience is introduced to the event which triggered the Suez war and to two more players, Britain and France:

> A few weeks later President Nasser nationalized the Suez canal. Unexpectedly Ben-Gurion finds himself with two new allies, Britain and France who jointly own the Canal. He sent an emissary to a secret meeting in Paris.

Yet, while introducing Britain and France, little is made of their involvement in the war. I argue here again for the two-part issue of shared memory and shared forgetting. In this segment, the British producer chooses to let lie the wider historical context of this event, namely, what it means for Britain and France to 'own the canal', and why, in such circumstances, it has been nationalized by Nasser. It is important to note that despite highlighting Britain and France's active roles in this war, the Israeli leader is the (only) one presented as an aggressor: '[Ben-Gurion] sent an emissary to a secret meeting in Paris.' The testimony of Shimon Peres, then Ben-Gurion's assistant, serves to confirm this notion:

> The French Defence Minister told me Britain and France were planning an operation to take the Suez Canal back from Nasser. And he asked me: Would Israel join them? How long would it take Israeli troops to reach the Canal?

> Ben-Gurion asked me:' Well what did the French say?' so I began to tell him about their plan. He interrupted and said:' OK, this changes everything. We'll go with them.

The American producer (PBS version), in contrast to his British collaborators, highlights the role played by Britain and France in the Suez war.

> A few week later President Nasser nationalized the Suez canal. Unexpectedly Ben-Gurion found himself with two new allies. Britain and France had jointly own the canal *and wanted it back.* (my italics)

The message here is clear: Britain and France are two colonial powers in the region. It is in this way, and in the single sentence of narrative text (a sentence notably absent in the British version), that the Americans identify Britain and France as critical players in the conflict, as significant contenders for agency and responsibility for the conflict's escalation.

In the PBS version (as in the BBC version), this commentary is followed by Shimon Peres's recollection of his meetings with French and British diplomats in Paris. However by highlighting the allies' role in the conflict, the American producer offers a somewhat different reading of Peres's diplomatic mission. He promotes the negative role of Britain and France 'who had jointly owned the canal and wanted it back', and in so doing downplays Israel's aggressive act.

The producers of the MBC version make some minor changes to the British version (the Master Film):

> In July 1956 President Nasser nationalized the Suez canal, jointly owned by Britain and France. Ben-Gurion sent an emissary to a secret meeting in Paris.

The MBC version points to a specific point in time – the year '1956'- the year when 'Nasser nationalized the Suez canal.' The emphasis in this version is on Nasser's (Egypt's) role in the conflict. The Egyptian president is presented as an active and hence as a significant player. However in focusing on Nasser's role, the producers of the MBC version (like their British colleagues) do not bring to light the economic and political impact of Nasser's act. No information is given as to why the Canal was nationalized. Nor is it made known why this act triggered Ben- Gurion's aggression.

The Suez War

In the BBC version the Suez War is described as follows: black-and-white archival footage of combats in the Sinai desert is narrated to heighten the awareness already established of the Israeli aggression.

> Israel invaded Egypt, secretly supported by Britain and France. Within a week the Israeli troops had captured the Sinai Desert, and come within ten miles of the Suez Canal.

The negative role of Israel (the aggressor who 'captured the Sinai Desert') is highlighted by the use of two techniques: The construction of the sentence in which Israel appears as its 'subject' (The secondary player is introduced in the second part of the sentence), and the use of the verb *'to invade'* – a harsh word suggesting an act of vengeance.

The producers of the MBC version chose to use the same archival footage (Black-and –white footage of combats in the Sinai desert) but to decline the text. The voice-of- authority narration adds Britain and France's violent acts:

> Israel invaded Egypt, secretly supported by Britain and France. On the 29th of October Israel launched the attack and on the next days Britain and France issued an agreed warning to stop all military operations. Egypt refused to stop the fighting. On 31st of October, British and French forces attacked Egyptian positions.

In contrast to the British version in which attention is paid to Britain and France's passive role: 'Israel invaded Egypt, secretly *supported* by Britain and France'(my italics), the producers of the MBC version promote the active role Britain and France. The message is clear: Britain and France, two colonial powers, attack Egyptian positions. By highlighting Britain and France's negative role, the Arab producers activate the 'colonialism versus Arab sovereignty' script in the mind of their Arab viewers. This is consistent with current Arab discourse and in what is referred to as 'Orientalism' (Said 1985)

The American producer (PBS version), like his Arab colleagues, uses the archival footage from the BBC 'Master-Film' and declines the text. Instead he offers the following voice-of-authority narration:

Israel invaded Egypt, secretly supported by Britain and France. Within a week Israeli troops had captured the Sinai Desert. Britain and France tried to retake the Suez Canal until international pressure forced the to withdraw. But for Israel it was a triumph.

Constantly, the American producer is hammering away at the aggressive role played by the two colonial powers. Britain and France 'tried to retake the Suez Canal,' but were 'forced to withdrew' by the international community - the anti colonialist power. In this voice-of-authority commentary Israel's aggression ['Israel invaded Egypt'], and its victory ['... for Israel it was a triumph'] is highlighted. But it is Egypt that is identified as the potential threat to Israel, while the Israeli military aggression is drawn as necessary, in self defence, and therefore justified. Archival footage (missing in both the British and the Arab versions) of Ben-Gurion, reinforces this American claim.

Ben-Gurion: We achieved our main purpose, was free navigation in the Straits of Eilat which is rather vital...now. The second objective was secure safety for our settlements near Gaza strip, I cannot say that we've got it entirely but they are more safe than they were before.

The last segment (of all three versions) features the aftermath of the Suez War.

The Aftermath of the Suez War
This segment in all three versions features the aftermath of the Suez War. It begins with archival footage of Ben Gurion and his Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan, standing on a deck of a military ship (Figure 12).

Figure 12 - Ben Gurion on ship

In the BBC version, this image is accompanied by a voice-of- authority comment:

> The Suez war ended with humiliation for Britain and France. But for
> Israel it was a triumph. Ben-Gurion had shown the world that Israel was
> here to stay.

The claim made in this final segment is clear: Israel has won its struggle for nationhood, but this struggle was violent and hence unjust.

The aftermath of the Suez War is presented quite differently in the PBS version. The same archival footage of Ben-Gurion and Moshe Dayan, used in the British version, is followed by archival footage of UN army base and a UN flag (Figures 13, 14). Over these images runs the narration:

> The Israeli forces withdrew from Sinai, and the position along the Israeli
> border in the Straits of Tiran were guarded by UN forces. For ten years
> there was peace along the Israeli-Egyptian border, under the UN flag.

Figure 13 - UN car

Figure 14 - UN flag

In the PBS version, the active and positive role of the UN is promoted. The UN is presented as a natural force, as a 'helper' for both Arabs and Jews/Israelis. The American producers, by consistently emphasizing the role of the UN, led its viewers, to some extent, to confuse the separate roles of the UN and the US.

In the MBC version there is no mention of the role the UN played in this conflict. In contrast to the British version which focuses on British humiliation, and to the American version which emphasis Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai, the

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producers of the MBC version highlighted Egypt's position. Over archival footage of an army parade in Egypt followed by an image of President Nasser and Vice President Sadat (Figures 15,16), the voice-of-authority narration recounts:

> The Egyptian forces withdrew to the West Bank and closed the canal. Washington and Moscow imposed a cease fire. The Suez crisis was a victory for Israel. It proved it had become a regional power. President Nasser came out of the crisis convinced that he had a big victory against foreign forces in the Middle East. But the conflict between Israel and Egypt remains as before and continued for many years.
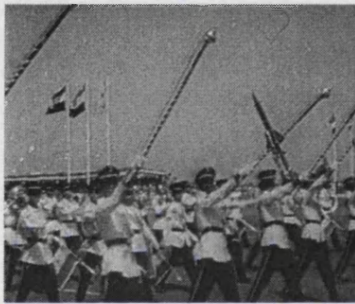
Figure 15 - Egyptian forces

Figure 16 - Naser and Sadat

By focusing on the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops, the producers of the MBC version downplays the negative role of the Arab state. Nasser is identified as a victim of the new colonialists powers (USA and the USSR), which forced him to withdraw from his land. In this last segment (missing in both the British and the American versions), the producers of the MBC version direct the viewers to a different place – to Egypt. The sequences 'ends' in an Arab country. It is quite evident that the

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producers of the MBC version are targeting Arab viewers and therefore make references to Arab sentiments of an Arab country (Egypt).

In the three final segments significant differences emerged. The British producers highlight Israel's victory and at the same time draw attention to the British misfortune 'The Suez war ended with humiliation for Britain and France. But for Israel it was a triumph.' The American, producer focusing on the significant role the UN played in the conflict, ends the series with an 'happy ending'- 'For ten years there was peace along the Israeli-Egyptian border, under the UN flag'. The Arab producers, for their part, conclude by reminding their viewers that the conflict 'remains as before for many years', thereby withholding judgment as to who won the war.

Examining the three sequences (the opening, the 'first event', and the closing), stark differences come to the fore. Although the same players are introduced, although many moving images are repeated, and although the sites of the conflict are clearly identified in the same places, salient repositioning of roles and assigning of responsibility are set in sharp focus. In the BBC version, the Jews/Israelis are the aggressors, the Arabs are the victims of Jewish aggression, and the British, are victimized by both the Arabs/Palestinians and the Jews/Israelis. Throughout Programme One of the series the British become absent-observers, and as such bear no responsibility to the escalation of the conflict.

In the PBS version the Jews/Israelis are the victims, the Arabs suffer, yet they are clearly presented as the aggressors. – As aggressors, the Arabs are those responsible for the escalation of the conflict and its continued insolvability. The PBS version also sees Britain as a serious player in the conflict, a significant contender for agency and responsibility for the conflict's escalation. In this version, America is the helper, with the UN - often inhabiting a grey zone between US/UN—as helper-as-well.

In the MBC version, the Jews/Israelis and the British are the aggressors (the Jews attack the Arabs, the British are the 'helper' to the Jewish attacker). Both the Jews and the British are, therefore, prime candidates for the bearing of responsibility in the conflict. The Arabs, on the other hand, are clearly identified as the innocent victims.

3. Us/we/them; An analysis of the series The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs[91]

In the above comparative reading of the three key moments in Programme One of the three national/cultural film texts I have shown that the players and their assigned roles remains constant, continuous and stable. This stability, in effect, proscribes a situation in which I can now turn to say that with an equivalent stability, the roles of the players, once established in Programme One of each of the national/culture film-texts, will remain as constant as the players themselves. What is inextricably intertwined with these designations of roles is the overriding issue of 'responsibility': who bears the brunt of responsibility for the onset, process, escalation and eventual ire solvability of the conflict. Assigned roles and the issue of responsibility will now determine the clear and clearly different points of view of each of the three film-texts.

The actors and their roles, the issues and topics presented and developed within the *frame* of Programme One are reiterated throughout the series. What is especially striking is with what clarity we are re-introduced to these actors and roles within the framing and the flow of the opening segments. Certainly there is no surprise here that the design of each new programme must permit a new viewer - 'reader' to enter quickly and easily into the narrative of each cultural product. This ease of entry is essential for the successful telling of the nation narrative: heroes and villains, victims and aggressors must immediately be evident.

It would be unnecessarily heavy to go through an extended reconstruction of this pattern for the opening sections of the Programmes Two-Six. I do, however, wish in order to make clear the repeatedly teaching mode of the narrative structure to present an expended discussion of the opening segments of Programme Three (the mid point) and Programme Six (the final point).

Programme Three: The opening segment[92]

In the BBC version, the Jews/Israelis are the aggressors, the Arabs are the victims. These roles are highly visible in the opening sequence of Programme Three. Over an

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[91] As noted earlier, the series The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs was broadcast on MBC network under the title Israel and the Arabs: Fifty Years of Conflict.
[92] See appendix B.1-3 for a detailed transcription of the film-text.

archive footage of Palestinian refuges crossing the Jordan River, the voice of authority comments:

> Palestinians made homeless by the Six Days War crossed the Jordan river, fleeing from the Israeli army which have just overrun parts of the kingdom of Jordan.
> One of the camps they came to lies just across the river from the territory that Israel has taken.
> Six weeks later, while the Arab world stood numbed by the scale of its defeat, a small band of Palestinian guerrillas left its hide out in Syria and came to the camp of Karame. From the bank of the river they could see the Israeli petrol now occupying their Palestinian homeland.

The juxtaposition between the attacker (the occupier) and the victim (the homeless) in this segment is striking. Israel is identifies in this opening sequence as the villain (Israeli Army overrun part of the kingdom of Jordan and patrols the occupied Palestinian homeland). The Palestinians, on the other hand, are the victims (homeless people fleeing from the Israeli army). Israel as the 'powerful' player is thus the contender for agency and responsibility for the conflict's escalation. This construction also justifies the Palestinian guerrillas' violent acts (act of despair) which will be discussed in the sequences that follow.

In the PBS version the Jews/Israelis are the victims, the Arabs suffer, yet they are clearly presented as the attackers/ aggressors. The Arabs then are those responsible for the escalation of the conflict and its continued insolvability. In contrast to the BBC version in which footage of homeless Palestinians opens the programme, the third episode of the American series begins with images of combats. Over these pictures we hear the following voice of authority:

> At the Suez Canal, now the border between Egypt and Israel the Egyptian launched a war of arr and the Israelis fought back.
> Inside Jordan the Palestinians were busy building up their forces Their charter called for the replacement of Israel by a Palestinian state and the expulsion of all the Jews who arrived after 1948.In 1967 a small band of Palestinian Gurillas set out a camp in Karame in the Jordan river valley.

From the bank of the Jordan they could see the Israeli soldiers patrolling the West Bank

The message here is clear: the Arabs are the attackers 'Egyptian launched a war' and Israel is the defender 'and the Israelis fought back'. In this version the Israelis not only that they are not occupying the 'Palestinians homeland' they are under constant danger because 'Inside Jordan the Palestinians were busy building up their forces. Their charter called for the replacement of Israel by a Palestinian state and the expulsion of all the Jews who arrived after 1948'.

In the MBC version, the Jews/Israelis are the aggressors. The Arabs are the 'resistant' victims. Episode three in this version opens with an archive footage of Palestinian refugees crossing the River Jordan (the footage used in the BBC version). The narration, however, differs widely:

Six weeks have passed and the Arab world was still in shock of the immense defeat. A group of fighters moved from Syria to Al-Karame. From the bank of the river they could see the Israeli petrol.

In contrast to the BBC version (the master film) in which the Palestinians in Karame were identified as 'Guerrillas', 'In 1967 a small band of Palestinian Gurillas set out a camp in Karame in the Jordan river valley.' in the MBC version they were described as 'fighters': 'A group of fighters Moved from Syria to Al-Karame'. The word 'fighters' in the opening paragraph marks a critical moment in the narrative. Unwilling to represent themselves in a documentary film of their own making, as 'mere' victims, the MBC team created a narrative of 'resistance' which, in image and verbal text, runs alongside the common story outlined for all three versions. 'Resistance' then becomes the driving force behind the MBC version.

The internally stable role structure in each of the three nation/culture film-texts becomes highly visible throughout the series. A good example is the opening sequence of the final episode i.e., Programme Six.

Programme Six: The opening segment[93]

The BBC version opens with an archive footage of the Israeli election day in 1992. We see and hear the elected Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's at a press conference. The entire frame is filled with writing in Hebrew and Arabic script and the episode's title- 'Programme Six.

Yitzhak Rabin says:

> Rabin: I believe that an agreement will be reached in less then one year. In less the one year.

The BBC programme, however, officially begins with an archive footage of the Palestinian 'old' leader Yasser Arafat steering at the sky. This image of a lonely leader is covered by the following voice of authority:

> Israel's old enemy Yasser Arafat still claim to lead the Palestinian people but exile in Tunis he was cut off from his homeland and excluded by the Israelis from the peace negotiations in Washington.

In this final episode the Arabs are identified as victims of Israeli aggression. The Arab leader, Arafat is in Tunis (exile) and 'cut off from his homeland and excluded by the Israelis from the peace negotiations'. There is an explicit message in this text: Arafat was victimized by the Israelis but is willing to negotiate peace.

Small, yet significant changes were made in the PBS version. Programme Six of the American version opens with the archive footage of the Israeli elections in 1992 (used in the BBC version). Over the image of Prime Minister Rabin, we hear the following commentary:

> Yithak Rabin's stunning election victory brought the labour party back into power. Rabin had promised to accelerate peace talks with the Arabs.

And then Rabin's speech:

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[93] See appendix B.4-6 for a detailed transcription of the film text.

> I believe that an agreement will be reached in less then one year. You can say 9 months. Between nine and twelve

The segment that follows, a footage of Arafat looking at the sky (used in the BBC version) is covered by a voice-over commentary which underscores Arafat's misfortune:

> Israel's old enemy Yasser Arafat still claim to lead the Palestinian people. But exile in Tunis he was cut off from his homeland Arafat was more willing to compromise with the Israelis.

Unlike the British version in which Arafat (as a symbol of the Arab community in general and the Palestinians in particular), is identified as a potential 'peacemaker' – 'a dove', in the American version he is presented as a weak leader 'is willing to compromise with the Israelis'- the 'peace makers'.

The production team of MBC version opted for an entirely different beginning, an image of a London neighbourhood at night. Over the image a voice-of authority comments:

> In London in December 1992 a man from Tunis was on a assignment for Arafat, Liberation organization.

And 'the man' testifies:

> Abu Ala: I had never met an Israeli before – not one. All the way to the meeting I was looking left and right and behind me. I was afraid of being seen.

The editorial decision to begin the final programme of the series with this segment (appears in both the British and the American version as the second sequence) is crucial. Unwilling to represent the Arabs, as victims, the MBC producers highlight the role of the Palestinians (and their leader, Arafat) as the 'peacemaker'. By 'cutting out' from the master film, Rabin's victory speech, and the footage of 'lonely Arafat', the producers of MBC version construct a narrative in which the Palestinians (and only

the Palestinians) act as heroes. 'Palestinian seeking for peace', then becomes the core element of this version.

Although it may be self evident I allow myself here to paint with the broadest brushstroke the link between the opening sequence of each of the three cultural products and the ultimate agenda of each of the three film-texts. The British version sees the Israelis as the aggressors who are responsible for the escalation of the conflict. For the Americans it is essential to present the Israelis as victims and the Arabs as the aggressors. In the MBC version the core of the narrative is: Israel the aggressor, Arabs the 'peacemaking' resistors.

Such stable role structure in each of the 'three nation/culture film-texts is significant in being able to represent (from the point of view of the channel operator), to read (from the point of view of the viewing public), and to critique (from the point of view of the researcher), a national/culture visible filmed product. For the BBC and its UK audience, the six part programme will provide its best shot at a transparency of Britain and the Israel/Arab conflict, all within a visual/narrative construct of 'Britishness'. British is identifies as a significant player- a victim in this conflict. For the Americans, America-as-helper reads America. For MBC, there is an 'Arab' viewing public, not defined by nation-states but by culture. For this Arab public, the cultural umbrella demands the fierce representation of a resistance.

III. National identity and shared memory in the three texts

Earlier I cited Ernst Renan ([1882]1996) Karl Deutsch (1966), and Anthony D. Smith (1991) in situating the nation as a community of shared memory and shared forgetting (see 'Introduction' and Chapter One above). Smith specifically described it as 'a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories....' (Smith 1991:14). Writing in his study *Images of the nation: cinema, art and national identity* (2000), Smith addresses this issue even more pointedly, in relation to film, and draws a conclusion critical to my own study:

> ...in all historical films as well as in the texts from which they stem, the sequence of events provides the essential framework, not for a detached and 'truthful' account of *wie es eigentlich war* ['how it really was' translation mine], but to convince the spectator of the epic grandeur of the nation, that is to say, in the first place, his or her nation (Smith: 2000:52)

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What on the face of it seems to be, for the British and the Americans, the telling of the story of two 'others' (Arabs and Israelis in a far away 'foreign' place), is, in effect a move to tell the story of themselves- ('us' and 'we'). Clearly, when the Arabs (MBC) joins the production (at the later stage), they are joining in order to tell the story of themselves. This is what Smith calls 'his or her nation.'

The first bold aspect of this telling of my-nation is that the representational means employed (visual and narrative) will be clearly readable by one's own nation/public, strongly resonant for that public, and will create a 'feeling at home' for that citizenry (Billig 1995:126). This is so crucial as to have been the basis for the decision to commission this film in the first place. The producer himself/herself is part and parcel, a full participating member of this national/culture, an embedded citizen within the citizenship of what he/she can rightfully call 'my' nation. The experience of the nation needs no adjusting lens or refining filter to be shaped by the producer. As Eddie Mirzoeff, the executive producer of the BBC version says:

> *We* were very active during the mandate and in Suez and the guilt feeling about Suez goes on as well. There has been always a feeling that we have a relationship with the Middle East- Laurence of Arabia all that sort of staff (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003, My italics).

The choices made by the producers (especially prominent in a comparative study), have been set in place to delineate just those loci (in space or in narrative), of which the nation is proud, to minimize or eliminate entirely those which national shared memory wishes to effectively made disappear. For, as the historian Ernst Renan (1996:45) writes: 'Forgetting .... is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation...'. Thus, each edited version in its way exhibits what Daniel Sibony (1997) refers to as the group 'point of silence', allowing its specific nation/culture audience to become that *'collection of people who are resolved to stay silent about the same thing to protect that things, and to protect themselves from it by means of it'* (Sibony 1997:248, cited in Robins and Aksoy 2000:205, Sibony's italics). This is the negative description of the process: on agreement on what will not be spoken. Each version, also performs the defence of another mechanism – valorisation – allowing its specific national/culture audience to imagine itself as a collective that is worth belonging to (Robins & Aksoy 2000:206). The British, by playing down their role as the

mandatory power in Palestine, the impact fullness of their sudden departure, and their active participation in the conflict once it had erupted, allow themselves to emerge as a neutral, objective and benign power. This objectivity is meant to be read as a critical eye at a sufficient distance to be a just, valid and therefore valuable narrator. The Americans, highlight their role as the world's greatest power, while downplaying their role as active-supporter of the 'aggressive' Israelis. Emphasizing their position as 'helper' to all sides (yet anti- colonial), they work to emerge as, the case of the British, objective, knowledgeable and wise. The American producer Zvi Dor-Ner notes:

> Great Britain was a colonial power in the middle east it has a history of first level involvement it has attitudes which were dawns from a very close encounters and so on it has a need to explain itself and justify itself in many ways. *America* has a different history extremely anti colonial very different history... (Dor-Ner Interview, August 2000, My Italics)

The Arabs emphasized their complex role as victim/resisters while marginalizing their role as aggressors.

> There were various things in the script which we felt needed changing. What we tried to do is to make it in some way more neutral more historical. So some references to ... some words that were used in reference to *Palestinian hijackers* which we felt needed to be more neutral. More matter of fact (Christine Garabedian, Interview, July 2002, My italics).

All of these strategies employed by the three production agents are clearly moving towards what Anthony D. Smith (2000:52) describes as 'provide[ing] the essential framework, not for a detached and 'truthful' account of *wie es eigentlich war*, but to convince the spectator of the epic grandeur of the nation'. Even if we are here, rarely within the sphere of Smith's 'epic grandeur' we are very much in the territory of *wie es eigenntlich war*, the problemed site of the telling of 'truth' in history.

A third and crucial area for investigation here is the way in which all three 'television histories' work to provide an historical map of a national *past* which will move to link a national audience to a *present* and actual national identity (Todorov 1997:3; Smith 2000:52). And '...facilitate a society's ongoing negotiation with its useable past by portraying those parts of the collective memory that are most relevant at any given time to the producers of those programs as well as the millions of individuals who tune them in' (Edgerton 2001:8). The producer of the BBC film-text

was very clear in describing the impact of the current discourse in Britain regarding the Palestinians on the primary decision to commission the film:

> There has been for many years a widespread feeling that things are falling into place. There has been a degree of passionate support at one time strongly for Israel at another time more recently for the Palestinians. So it is not exactly like East Timor where actually there are no involvement at all... there is an element here of taking a side that goes on much more then in other [conflicts] (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

This discourse, favourable to the Palestinian cause, impacts in an essentialist way on the narrative thread that runs through the BBC version: the Palestinians are the victims of Jewish aggression and their claim to sovereign state in Palestine is justified. If there were to be any doubts as to this point of view being the critical one for the BBC, the closing segment of the BBC version, brings a voice justifying the Palestinians claims into sharp relief[94].

> Fifty years after it foundation Israel is still split. Half of its people supporting the peace makers and half fearing that concisions to the Arabs endanger its survival. The Palestinians still do not have a sovereign state to which they aspired [Narrated in Programme Six: the final segment].

Describing his decision to commission the film, Zvi Dor-Ner, the American producer, made clear the importance of the Middle East to *current* American foreign policy:

> America has been profoundly involved in the conflict in various ways... This country is very important also very interesting but very important to [the] American public and to American foreign policy (Zvi Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001).

The closing segment of the American version encapsulates the significance of America-as-helpmate on the world scene and specifically in the Middle East conflict, as we are taken to the signing of a Peace Agreement between President Clinton,

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[94] See Appendix B.7 for description of film text

Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu and King Hussein of Jordan on the White House lawn (1998)[95].

The *current* discourse of the Palestinians focuses on their legitimate claim to a national homeland in Palestine, their presentation of themselves as a national entity. This claim is set out from the opening segment of their version in which they change the BBC phrase 'the inhabitants of Palestine,' to 'the Palestinians'. This is strengthened in the closing segment of the film, in which the Palestinians are still fighting for their homeland 'The Palestinians still do not have a sovereign state to which they aspired', above an archival moving image clip of Arab refugees, crossing a bridge into Jordan in 1967[96].

The above comparative reading of the three National/Cultural versions of the documentary *The Fifty Year War: Isreal and the Arabs* exemplifies how similar footage are used to create divers 'stories'. Television histories, it is suggested, can be viewed as frames that makes sense and produce meaning conceivably only within particular cultural (national) boundaries/setting and ideological environments. In other words, stories of the past that television producers tell to their 'imagined' (national) audiences in the present must be is some way 'nationalised' and, hence, diversified.

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[95] See description of film text in Appendix B.8
[96] See description of film text in Appendix B.9

Chapter Seven

TV 'Tension': Globalization vs. Nationalism, Shared vs. Cosmopolitan Memory in Co-Produced Television Documentaries

> [A] timeless global culture answers to no living needs and conjures no memories. If memory is central to identity, we can discern no global identity in the making, nor aspirations for one, nor any collective amnesia to replace existing 'deep' cultures with cosmopolitan 'flat' culture (Smith 1995:24).

This study has looked at the political and cultural consequences of globalization, upon television representations of national identity, notably 'shared memory' (Margalit 2002). I have focused on the production of television documentaries, a field that has been marginalized in critical studies. The specific mode of production I have foregrounded, however, international co-production, has recently attracted increased critical attention, (e.g. Hoskins *et al* 1997; Baltruschat 2003). I have demonstrated that international television co-production emerges as a significant media site where the global and the national interact with one another in a complex and distinct manner. It thus emerges as a *strategic lens* for the study of the impact of processes of globalization on the construction and representation of national identity and shared memory, a locus of major macro-social transformation.

In this concluding chapter I argue that international co-production is a manifestation of an inherent *tension* between the global and the national, between national memory (e.g. Smith 1999; Bell 2003) and cosmopolitan memory (Levy & Sznaider 2002) in the television landscape. On the side of the global are economic forces, stemming mostly from newly imposed tight budgets that force producers to get on board foreign broadcasters for supplementary funding sources, which, in turn, force them to accommodate those outside sources in terms of style, narratives, memories and standards. On the side of the national are cultural forces stemming from the fact that virtually every broadcaster operates in some specific national environment and belongs to some specific national entity. This places obvious constraints on the broadcaster's (hence on the producer's) conceptions of audience and adequacy of contents, constraints that are inevitably tied to the shared (national) memories and sensibilities of some specific national group. In my analysis of both

the production process and the cultural product(s) of the international co-production, this tension has been impossible to discount, and has come to the fore exactly in that place where the nation proves itself *resistant* to the global and the cosmopolitan.

I. Accommodating international co-production: acts of globalization/acts of resistance

My research has focused on the processes involved in the production of a co-produced documentary *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs*. My goal of studying the production process leading to the emergence of the 'master text', and its subsequent three nation/culture film texts, was pursued by exploring the reasons for the film having been commissioned as a co-production, by going on to investigate the interaction between the three different national broadcasters (BBC, PBS and MBC) who were jointly involved in this documentary, and finally by analyzing the manner in which the economic interactions among the different (national) broadcasters are reflected in the contents of the three separate end- products. This empirical research of both processes and products has revealed two seemingly opposite interactions central to the formulation of my thesis regarding the relationship between the global and the national in the television landscape: co-production as a *manifestation* of processes of globalization, and co-production as an act of *resistance* to processes of globalization.

At its most basic level, entering into a co-production is, in and of itself, a manifestation of processes of globalization. The collaboration between partners of different countries is a move in the direction of the global, with global financing and working across national boundaries resulting from economic necessity. At a more subtle, level, we see globalization coming into play in the product itself. Unlike the case of coffee for Country A that is being produced in Country B, the motivation for television co-production resides in a pursuing of the global: partnerships which span national borders, and a product that has global significance. Thus we see the partners who commission and finance a co-produced programme remaining jointly responsible for its broad, content contributing to the script, to the choice of interviewees, to the selection of archive footage committed to endowing the product with a global flavour.

At a second level, however, globalization raises the spectre of constraints that impel collaborating parties to protect themselves against a uniformity (read as a loss of national identity), that would result from allowing unrestricted global readability to

prevail. Such a perspective, perceived as 'from above' (the global), would, it is feared, filter out indigenous narratives and shared memory, leaving only 'information' which home-audiences would experience as (at best) scant and indirect, at worst, fallacious. We see the collaborating (national) networks therefore, struggling to retain as much editorial control as possible and insisting on exposing their respective audiences to an exclusive (national) version of the final product that conforms to what is perceived to be the (national) audience's cultivated 'history'.

It is within this co-existence of elected joint responsibility and creative partnering alongside a topic trans-nationally impactful, and a whole set of concerns regarding the representation of the 'nation' within this partnering, that I wish to identify the crucial 'tension' which I claim remains to be addressed in the theoretical work on television co-productions —a body of work which has continually moved to present a politics of dichotomy: either this or that, either the global or the national.

Critics on the one side (e.g. Strover 1995; Baltruschat 2003) suggest that co-productions have led to global modes of knowledge-production and knowledge-representation, resulting in a global product in which 'deep nation' characteristics (Robins & Aksoy 2000) will have withered away or been filtered out. These critics emphasize the pull towards the global through the pressure to lower the costs of production by sharing them with 'partners' of different markets (e.g Hoskins *et al* 1995,1998; Strover 1995), and highlight the nature and characteristics of the *end product* of this mode of production, its content, as apart and at-a-distance from the national. The construction of the television co-production scene they maintain, has led to products in which national attributes are increasingly being neglected or suppressed (e.g. Murdock 1996; Baltruschat 2003). The opposing camp sees co-production as a tool for resisting globalization and pays special attention to the manner in which this strategy may actually contribute to the upholding of national identity by preserving and protecting national industries (e.g. Taylor 1995; Bergfelder 2000).

Neither group though has noticed that a necessary tension exists between the global and the national. I would suggests that it is because neither the 'globalization school', nor the 'nation- upfront' approach has committed itself to tracing the *co-production process*, that neither has been compelled to confront the tension I have described above, to shift from a politics of dichotomy (either this or that), to one of integration.

The 'globalization' approach does not account for the rationale of producers who choose international co-production over other, cheaper, modes of trans-national collaboration, such as acquisitions. It fails, in other words to acknowledge a distinctive feature of international co-production, namely that alongside the need to economize on programming costs, producers are in fact willing to incur *additional* costs in order to have a say in the production process and to make the final product suitable for their national audiences. For the globalization approach theorists, it was a 'failure' to recognize the fact that the existence of distinct national versions of a given co-produced documentary (each version enjoys an absolute exclusivity in its own national domain), is evidence of the role played by the television industry in actually *resisting* globalization. Theorists of the 'national approach' are, of course, quick to observe that co-produced films often come in several national versions (showing us how the 'official' nation could and wanted to imagine itself), as this provides evidence that reinforces their basic claim. However, the scholars who subscribe to this line of inquiry tend to overlook the fact that when different broadcasters, representing different nationalities, engage in a particular co-production, they still remain *jointly responsible* for the contents and characteristics of the film as initially produced. In other words, the individuals who finance these films (usually the commissioning editors) contribute to the script, to the choice of interviewees, to the selection of archive footage, etc., thus agreeing to endow the film with a 'global' flavour. The very interaction among the different partners involved in the making of a particular co-production is a move in the direction of the global.

To better understand the persistence of this dichotomous split in the critical literature, it is important to note that the small amount of research that has been pursued surrounding the subject of television co-productions has based itself on major theoretical work in the globalization debate and has therefore been much influenced by it. As this debate is dominated by two contrasting approaches — a dichotomy stance, so economists and media critics working in the arena of international co-production have adopted a dichotomy position as well: either, within the processes of globalization the nation (and hence national identity) are withering away (Hobsbawm 1990; King 1991; Castells 1996), or, the nation still functions as the primary socio-political community, and the state elites '... instill in their populations common values, sentiments, and belief, especially if these are 'national' in character' (Smith 2001:124).

II. The national and the global – an accommodation approach

My own research positions me at the site of what I have described as a theorizing of the interplay between the global and the national in the co-production process. Though I do not situate myself entirety in a critical desert, I do stand alone in my description of the tension inherent in *television co-productions*. For this, I find support in the solid critical works of contemporary critics such as Sassen (2000), and Beck (2000;2002). Saskia Sassen (2000) for example argues against the dichotomy stance, undermining '[the] key duality running through many of the methods and conceptual frameworks prevalent in social sciences, that the national and the non-national are mutually exclusive' (Sassen 2000:145). It is only with Ulrich Beck's (2002) work, however, that I sense a real partner for my argument (see discussion in Chapter Two). Beck's emphasis on a 'non-linear dialectic[al]' (Beck 2002:17) relationship between the global and the national is crucial to my study. In his writing Beck argues that processes of globalization involve not only interconnections across boundaries, but transform the quality of the social and the political inside nations[97](Beck 2002:17). This process Beck defines as 'cosmopolitanism' which for him means 'internal globalization' where 'issues of global concerns are becoming part of the everyday local experiences and the moral life worlds of the people' (Beck 2002:17).

The shape of Beck's argument regarding the nature of processes of globalization and his critical new term 'the internalized global' are fundamental here. They have provided a solid launching pad for an analysis of the nature and characteristics of shared (national) memory in an era of globalization. It is Beck himself who poses the question central to this discussion:

> ... what do globalization and cosmopolitan society mean in the dimension of *time* and *(collective) memory* (Beck 2002:27)?

Building on Beck's conceptualization of the nature of processes of globalization, I can now return to my own research topic-- the consequences of processes of (internal) globalization on the representations of shared (national) memories. Focusing on the

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[97] See discussion in Chapter Two

role of the media in this process, notably television, I return to the study's primary questions: To what extent do economic interactions among television co-producers of different countries give rise to new and complex representation of shared memory? To what extent do those cultural products confront and challenge narratives that have tended to be associated with 'Old TV' (nation rather than global-situated)?

In addressing my own questions I shall depart from the site of television (if only to return to it latter) and return to Daniel Levy's and Nathan Sznaider's (2002) pioneering work regarding the role television plays in the construction of shared memories[98].

III. Television and the emergence of cosmopolitan memory

Daniel Levy and Nathan Sznaider have recently argued that *alongside* nationally bounded memories, a 'cosmopolitan memory' emerges (Levy & Sznaider 2002) In conceptualizing the term 'cosmopolitan memory', Levy and Sznaider are building on Ulrich Beck's definition of 'cosmopolitization' (Beck 2002): [a] 'globalization *from within* the national societies.... [in which] issues of global concern are becoming part of the everyday local experiences and the 'moral life-worlds' of the people (Beck 2002:17). Applying Beck's (2002) conception of 'cosmopolitanism' to the study on collective memory, Levy and Sznaider claim that the 'national container' in which collective memory is embedded is being slowly cracked by processes of 'internal globalization' (Beck 2002). National memories, their argument goes, are transformed in the age of globalization rather then erased (Levy & Sznaider 2002:89). Examining the formation of cosmopolitan memories, the authors point out the significant role played by mediated representations in this process. It is precisely the electronic (global) media, they claim, that facilitate a shared consciousness and cosmopolitan memories that span national borders: 'In global times, the media becomes ... a mediator of moral affairs' (Levy & Sznaider 2002:91). Building on Daniel Dayan's and Elihu Katz's seminal study *Media Events: the live broadcasting of history* (1992) Levy and Sznaider suggest that it is through televised events (Dayan & Katz 1992) that 'the world is transported into the local. Distant others can be part of the strong feeling of everyday life...' (Levy & Sznaider 2002:91).

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[98] See discussion in Chapter Two

Levy and Sznaider's arguments regarding the role played by television in the creation and reflection of universal (moral) values and cosmopolitan memories is crucial to my study on international television co-productions. Examining their claims in the context of co-produced television histories, I can now *return* to my central argument regarding the critical connection between the globalization of the television industry and the shaping of shared (national) memory. It is precisely at this meeting-point that my own concerns are situated: do the interactions among television producers of different countries give rise to new representation of shared memory? And to what extent do those 'new' representations 'transform' (Levy & Sznaider 2002:92) narratives that have tended to be associated with 'Old TV'?

Before addressing these questions in relation to my research site, I would like to offer some critical observations regarding Levy and Sznaider's (2002) conceptual framework.

Though Levy and Sznaider (2002) dealing as they do with the emergence of cosmopolitan memory, have clearly concerned themselves with the mixture of the global and national, they have surprisingly left unnoticed a grey zone in which the specific issue of that very *tension* which is the emphasis of my own work has neither been raised, much less discussed or resolved. In their joining of what have been the polar points of the national and the global they experience no strain. For me then it becomes even more critical to describe and defend the *tension* which I experience as inevitable. Furthermore, the two critics pointed out the significant role global television play in the emergence of cosmopolitan memory, but they observed television globalization from a macro perspective, thereby ignoring the ways in which specific sectors within television and/or specific television programmes 'contribute' to the emergence of cosmopolitan memories. Also, Levy and Sznaider (2002) referred to the end result of television production, i.e., to global televised concerts (Levy & Sznaider 2002:91), while disregarding the processes by which these television artefacts (whether ending up local or global) came into being.

In my own looking at the production practices of *television documentaries* (especially on the mode of international co-production), and at the *processes* involved in the making of such programmes, the tension between the national and the global and between shared and cosmopolitan memory has been impossible to discount, and has come to the fore exactly in that place where the national proves itself *resistant* to the global. The essential next step is to explore the manner in which this tension

between the national and the global is reflected in one specific dimension of the television cultural product: shared (national) memory and 'cosmopolitan memory'.

IV. TV tension: the push and pull between national memory and cosmopolitan memory

In Chapter Five I have provided a detailed analysis of the production process of the co-produced television history *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs*. In this close examination the tension between economic forces and cultural (national) constraints and between the global and the national comes into clear relief. Tracing this television tension through the *production process* reveals its presence in every stage: the discourse surrounding the commissioning, the decision to co-produce, the actual production process, and the final cut.

Commissioning

The producers' frameworks for decision making and the strategies they employ are affected by their position within the media space of public television production. In other words, Mirzoeff and Dor-Ner's (the main co-production agents) decision to commission the series *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs* was influenced by various factors: the model of programmes they tend to appreciate and adopt, the methods and techniques they had employed in previous projects, their own cultural/national identity, and the social/cultural space of the institution for which they work (and which they represent i.e. BBC and WGBH Boston). Both Mirzoeff and Dor-Ner work within the institutional hierarchies and constraints (as well as the freedoms) of public television networks (BBC and WGBH Boston). At the time when *The Fifty Year War* project was commissioned, public television's history and operating conditions created a situation where both networks greatly valued the kind of programmes that this series represents – high quality with high production values, supported by distinguished advisors, with a subject having the potential to attract a large, mainstream, national audience. These "needs", dictated largely by the systems in both countries, meant that in order to complete such an ambitious project, a large sum of money had to be secured. In the case of *The Fifty Year War*, a substantial financial investment was required in order to cover the extra costs involved in acquiring expensive archival footage, paying for extensive travel, payments to local

crews (producers, camera and sound people), and translators. But, although both networks (BBC and WGBH Boston) "wanted" the series, they were reluctant to devote extensive resources to a single series. These financial constraints had a profound effect on the executive producers − it forced them to find ways to negotiate the tension between the need to economize on production costs on the one hand, and the desire to provide their imagined (national) audience with a high-quality product on the other. The need to manouver between two conflicting interests was channelled, eventually, into the producers' decision to commission a film a about a dramatic conflict between two 'others' (the Israelis and the Arabs) in a 'far away' place (the Middle East), through co-production. In an interview Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC, the primary player in this co-production, explained that a series about the Arab- Israeli conflict seemed to be a suitable topic for a co-production because of its relevancy to world-wide viewers: 'It has an effect on the region and therefore on the whole world', and unlike other conflicts in takes place in the Holy Land- a familiar location (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003). Mirzoeff's collaborator, Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH Boston (PBS), provided an analogous statement: '....Conflict is a material of drama [and], the Arab Israeli conflict is especially so because it's in the centre of the history and the experience of Western civilization' (Zvi Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2002). For Dor-Ner as for Mirzoeff, the target audience's shared memory regarding this conflict is an essential 'hook'. However, in contrast to Mirzoeff who referred to a world-wide audience, Dor-Ner zooms-in to describing the relevance of the Arab-Israeli conflict to a more *specific* group, namely to 'Western civilization'.

The statements provided by the two co-production agents correspond to Levy and Sznaider's (2002) arguments regarding the emergence of cosmopolitan memory:

> ... Cosmopolitan memory implies some reorganization of the history (and the memories) of the 'Other' (Levy & Sznaider 2002:103)

Indeed, both Mirzoeff and Dor-Ner committed their television networks (BBC and PBS) to a television history which features 'a history' of two clear 'Others' (Arabs and Israelis) which takes place in a 'far away place' (the Middle- East). This decision could be seen as a distinct manifestation of what Ulrich Beck (2002) called: 'globalization *from within* the national societies.... [in which] issues of global concern are becoming part of the everyday local experiences and the 'moral life-worlds' of the

people (Beck 2002:17). This is precisely what Levy and Sznaider's (2002) meant when they suggested that through television programmes 'the world is transported into the local. Distant others can be part of the strong feeling of everyday life...' (Levy & Sznaider 2002:91). A close reading of the producers' testimonies however reveals the existing tension between the global and the national and between cosmopolitan memories (Levy & Sznaider 2002) and national memories (Smith 1999). The producers, while highlighting 'non-national' (Sassen 2000) memories regarding the events depicted (religious sentiments, childhood memories of the Holy Land), are in fact continually referencing the history of their own nation/culture. As Mirzoeff (BBC) puts it: 'We were very active during the Mandate and in Suez ..... [and] there has been always a feeling that we have a relationship with the Middle East- Laurence of Arabia, all that sort of stuff' (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

What clearly emerges in this statement is the fact that the decision to commission a film about the Arab Israeli conflict rested in no small measure on what were seen as existing British sensibilities (and shared memories) regarding the conflict depicted. Mirzoeff highlighted the relevance of this topic to the shared past of those he perceived to be his network's target audience, broadly speaking, British citizenry. Laurence of Arabia, a cultural and historical figure, is presented as an icon for a British colonialist experience of the Middle East (Said 1985). Clearly I am reading here a television producer insisting on framing the 'global' television series he had commissioned within the exciting national narrative and historical experience of his target (national) audience- the British.

Zvi Dor-Ner, at WGBH provides us with a similar statement, highlighting the historic and present involvement of American in the Arab-Israeli conflict: 'America has been profoundly involved in the conflict in various ways...... It deals with it on a daily basis'. Dor-Ner is targeting his nation's unique historical experience regarding the region—an American narrated past filled with shared memories: 'America has been profoundly involved in the conflict'. For Dor-Ner, as for Mirzoeff, emphasising the national (historical) experience and reproducing national memories (rather then transforming them), becomes a key concern in his decision to commission the *Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs* documentary project.

In contrast to Dor-Ner and Mirzoeff who committed themselves to a film about two 'others' (Arabs and Israelis) in a 'far away place' (Palestine), a history in which they play a peripheral role, Christine Garabedian of MBC got herself involved

in a project about a history in which her target (national) audience (the Arabs), played/plays a central role. The global aspect of the project, an opportunity to challenge existing Arab narratives about the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, became an important factor in her network's decision to become involved:

> [MBC] got a documentary series which they know they would have never been able to make any where in the Arab world. ....The fact that they were hearing for the first time an Israeli voice.... Because so much of Arab culture is simply about propaganda there is no such thing as democratic journalistic culture in the Arab world: Many things are suppressed, many things aren't talked about, so what justified this kind of project is precisely the dialectic between an Arab voice and an Israeli voice which are not shouting at each other... (Christine Garabedian, Interview, July 2002).

Garabedian's statement could easily serve as testimony to Levy and Sznaider's (2002) conceptualization of the emergence of cosmopolitan memory, and the role television play in this process. Garabedian's goal is to challenge the traditional Arab narrative '[which] deploys historical events to promote foundational myth' (Levy & Sznaider 2002:103) and to confront it with a critical narrative that recognizes 'the history (and the memories) of the 'Other''' (Levy & Sznaider 2002:103):

> Because so much of Arab culture is simply about propaganda..... Many things are suppressed, many things aren't talked about.

It is precisely a trans-national collaboration that enabled her to attempt this objective. Garabedian, sees the British–American co-production as a site through which her (national) audiences' perceptions and 'memories' can be challenged:

> ...what justified this kind of project is precisely the dialectic between an Arab voice and an Israeli voice....

What follows in Garabedian's statement however, reveals a somewhat different position:

> It's [the programme] very British..... There were various things in the script which we [MBC production team] felt needed changing..... We [...] worked on the assumption that some of those things would be either obscure to an Arab audience or be offensive to an Arab audience..... What we tried to do is to

make it in some way more neutral more historical.... (Christine Garabedian, Interview, July 2002)

Here, the voice of what I have been calling the *tension* inherent in the process of creating the international co-produced film text sounds loud and clear: the contractions, the moral puzzle, and the conflicting demands. The reasons for joining the co-production team are clear and compelling:

> The fact that [we] were hearing for the first time an Israeli voice.... Because so much of Arab culture is simply about propaganda there is no such thing as democratic journalistic culture in the Arab world.

It is exactly these aspects of the BBC 'master-text', however, that become what Garabedian then describes as: '...obscure to an Arab audience or offensive to an Arab audience'. Here is the quandary; here is the tension. Garabedian must now enter a zone of creative cultural interaction which will allow her to 'modify' one historical narrative in order to, in her terms become 'more neutral more historical'.

The decision to opt for a co-production

This tension between the national and the non-national, so clearly inherent in the commissioning stage of the production process, manifests itself in the following phase, i.e. in the producers' decision to produce this film through an international co-production.

It will be clarifying here to return to my working definition of international-production, in order to elucidate the tensions inherent in the decision to co-produce. International co-production is a situation in which two or more broadcasters agree jointly to produce a programme and to share in its prospective proceeds. Each partner has the right to screen the co-production in its own geographic market. Each partner provides support, whether monetary or in kind, and has a say in production decisions (Shew 1992; Hoskins *et al* 1997).

Alongside this definition, international co-productions can be used as a valuable illustration of Levy and Sznaider's (2002) argument regarding the emergence of cosmopolitan memory which calls (by definition) for trans-national partnerships and which typically results in a product that is '... neither spatially nor temporally bound' (Baltruschat 2003:151). As such international co-productions '[have] the

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potential to address global issues....' (Baltruschat 2003:151), and hence 'create new cosmopolitan sensibilities and moral-political obligations' (Levy & Sznaider 2002:103).

In *The Fifty Year War* project, the two contracting parties (Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC and Zvi Dor-Ner of PBS) committed themselves to the concept of a single product and to a joint responsibility for this product's content (they contribute to the script, to the choice of interviewees, to the selection of archive footage, etc.,). By agreeing to incorporate each other's '... memories, habits and values' (Deutsch 1966:75) in their co-produced product, they were in fact agreeing to, in some way, transcend psycho-national, historico-national boundaries, contributing to the emergence of cosmopolitan memory – a memory which, according to Levy and Sznaider's (2002:103) 'implies some reorganization of the history (and the memories) of the 'Other''. Still the picture is not so simple. As demonstrated in Chapter Three, for any channel operator (BBC and PBS included) the co-production strategy is more expensive than buying a ready made programme, i.e., relying on acquisition. The reason for the extra costs has normally to do with the financing sources (usually channel operators) wanting to have a say in the production process and to retain editorial control over the final product (see a detailed discussion in Chapter Three). It is in this willingness to incur additional costs (by opting for the international co-production strategy) that the tension between the global and the national, ignored by both Beck (2002) and Levy and Sznaider's (2002) come into clear relief. We thus see the two broadcasters (Mirzoeff and Dor-Ner) protecting themselves against the uniformity that would result from allowing unrestricted 'cosmopolitanism' to prevail, by insisting on acquiring content-control over the product they have commissioned. Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC explains his rationale for this insistence:

> This series [....] is financed by other members as well as the BBC. They [Brian Lapping Associates] are trying to keep everybody happy. They are juggling a lot of balls in the air. As far as the BBC is concerned.... we are not interested in that. We care about the programme that we are broadcasting and so we need to be sure that this is the best programme we can get and we do everything that we would have done ourselves or more (Eddie Mirzoeff, interview, February 2003).

Mirzoeff's articulation for his network's need for content-control finds expression as well in the financial agreement[99] that has been signed between WGBH Boston (PBS) and Brian Lapping Associates in February 14, 1996:

> WGBH will pay Brian Lapping Associates $50,000 to support preproduction research and development of the series, and will pay at least $150,000 per episode for not more then six episodes in exchange for the following rights:
>
> a. The right to see treatments, rough cuts, and fine cuts and to have our comments and suggestions given appropriate weight in the subsequent work on the films.
> b. The right to one weeks editing time (including editor and editing equipment) per episode to make such changes as may be required for the American version.

The presumption of the both the legal document and of Mirzoeff's statement is clear: The BBC and WGBH Boston serve two distinct national communities, having unique sensitivities, needs, historical experience, and shared memories. By insisting on creating separate *national* versions of the 'Ur-film', the two producers are, in effect, addressing the inherent tension in negotiating the inclusion of 'the otherness of the other' (Beck 2002:18), and the concomitant tension in any attempt to challenge their own existing national narrative (Levy & Sznaider 2002:103).

The actual production process

The tensions in the co-production project became ever more salient when the actual production commenced. As noted earlier (see Chapter Five) the two co-production agents committed themselves to a single product (an 'Ur-film') to be produced by a single independent production company. They agreed, furthermore, that each funding source (BBC and PBS) obtain the right to make editorial 'inputs' in the script writing processes, in the selection of interviewees, and in the choice of archive footage. This commitment for a joint responsibility over the film's content can be seen as a clear manifestation of 'cosmopolitanism', which, according to Ulrich Beck is an '[inclusion of] the otherness of the other' (Beck 2002:18). Eddie Mirzoeff (PBS) agreed to incorporate Dor-Ner's (PBS) sensitivities and predispositions regarding the historical event depicted. Dor-Ner, on his part, agreed to integrate Mirzoeff (BBC) concerns. In

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[99] See agreement in Chapter Five.

so doing the two broadcasters, in effect, '[recognize] the history (and memories) of the 'other' (Levy & Sznaider 2002:103)'– the 'British' point of view in the case of Dor-Ner, and an American perspective in the case of Mirzoeff. But here again, the inherent tension between the global and the national rears its head. While maintaining the commitment to a single master product, the contracting parties were constantly pushing for the national and the particular through their persistent demand that the sensibilities of their specific national audiences be properly addressed in the produced footage[100]. As Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH argued:

> My *audience* is different from theirs [the BBC] I don't plan to deliver or to suspend my responsibility in a co-production. So this issue of editorial control of the final product.., the final product to my audience I want to have the control, I want to be able to affect it... (Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001, my italics).

And Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC was no less emphatic:

> My role [as an executive producer] was to represent the BBC and bring out what I thought was the best way of making this programme for our *viewers*. America has a very large involvement and very strong and passionate Jewish presence in New York and so on and it is absolutely not affective here.... (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003, my italics).

These statements make it clear in that in the producers' heads there is a clear conception regarding the nature of the specific collectives they wish to cater. Both of them think that they know their (national) audience and address them to separate them form the chaff of people (viewers) who are not part of this national community. In doing so, they are imagining a community of like-minded audience having similar memories, interests and even feelings. By highlighting the common features of their (national) target audience the three producers, each in his/her own way is drawing a clear line between his/her audiences and 'other' national communities which are in his/her mind differ from his/hers.

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[100] See Chapter Five for a detailed discussion.

Editing: The final cut

In the last stage of the production, the editing phase, the tension I have been describing between the global and the national and between national memory and cosmopolitan memory becomes ever more pronounced. Using the 'Ur- film' produced by Lapping, the parties were busy developing clearly separate versions, each version designed to serve their specific national audience. By the end of this phase we have before us a film text titled *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs* existing in two different national versions. Each version enjoys a life of its own, independently of the others, and – more importantly – it enjoys absolute exclusivity in its own national domain (the BBC version transmitted in the UK, the PBS version in North America). The 'history (and the memories) of the 'Other'' in Levy and Scnaider's by now familiar phrase (2002:103), remain in the background, allowing the national and particular to carry the day. It is the voice of Eddie Mirzoeff again that provides us with a clear example of the national rejection of otherness:

> I didn't care of what anybody else was saying…. If somebody else wants something else its their problem (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

With Zvi Dor-Ner of WGBH echoing him:

> I'm happy with the American version. Its not that I was forced to broadcast the BBC's version (Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001).

Clearly, both executives were satisfied that they had succeeded in 'birthing' a national narrative from the basic materials collected for both of them by the independent production company. Yet each network had in fact, successfully and on its own terms, channeled a cultural product with potentially broad communicative capacities down the narrow end of a funnel of national need. In so doing, it provided its target (national) audience with Todorov's (1997:3) 'miniature model', his 'map of sorts' which was readable to a community that conceives of itself as worthy of belonging to (Renan 1996; Robins & Aksoy 2000).

The added-on player in this co- production (MBC) did not sign the original co-production agreement. MBC's rights, under its contract, were limited to adapting the

BBC Master Film produced by Brian Lapping to create a version in Arabic[101]; a version to be transmitted through satellite in various Arab states. This is in contrast to the co-production agents (BBC and PBS) who were allowed to retain full editorial control at all stages of the production. The decision made by MBC's production team to re-edit the 'master-text' (to their own financial detriment) is, I argue, a clear manifestation of a nation/culture protecting itself against processes of globalization. We see the production team of MBC insisting on retaining full editorial control over its version, and on exposing its target (Arab) audiences to a specialized national/cultural narrative that conforms to what is perceived to be the (national) audience's established memories and historical knowledge.

Garabedian provides an illuminating example of a substantial change that she and her team had made in the script[102]:

> We took it back to the First World War. We felt the need to do that because if you start a series like that with the de-facto existence of Israel you are overlooking many of the issues which actually matter in the Arab-Israeli conflict. By assuming that Israel exists and its not questioned and it isn't challenged you are excepting its existence. You are excepting the legitimacy of its existence which to the Arabs to many Arabs.... many Arabs feel it can not be taken for granted. So I think we felt a little more backup a little bit more explanation into how it came into existence what were the historical dynamics that work before May 1948.

These responses by the three series' producers are essentially 'reports from the home front' raised to a strong level of consciousness. Both experience and judgment now tell them that *time* (fast or slow, full or empty, exciting or dull) and *place* (near of far, 'home' or 'away') to be meaningful to their partisan audience may not be global. The heightened sense of belonging is essential to their project and must frame *nation*.

All three edited versions, working under the tension inherent in the international co-production scheme, ultimately must emerge with a national/cultural film product. Each version, in its way exhibits what Ernest Renan ([1882] 1996:52) refers to as the nation's 'common rich legacy of memories' and its willingness to continue to maintain and posses it. Because today, contemporary media of

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[101] In adapting the BBC's film, MBC's producers were given the right to add to their version self produced material as well as to re-assemble the existing version.
[102] See discussion in Chapter Six.

reproduction and representation make our past[s] part of our present[s] in way unimaginable in earlier centuries, within the mediated global culture of memory, are we actually being held hostage to our agreed-upon past[s] (Hoskins 2003)? As problematic aspects of a nation's past are always at stake in its narratives, within what global/national contexts will television be able to embrace less reconciled visions of history? Or, is there no way out of Ernest Renan's pithy declaration: '... historical error, is a crucial factor in the creation of nations ....' (Renan[1882]1996:45).

V. The Tension between the Global and the National, between Shared and Cosmopolitan Memory − Some Concluding Remarks

I hope to have made clear that it is only upon examining both the process and the product of international co-production that the tension which is central to my argument come into clear relief. This tension manifests itself in the struggle between economic interests and cultural constraints, between the global and the national, and between shared and cosmopolitan memory. In my own looking at the co-produced series *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs* this strain has been impossible to overlook and it has come to the fore exactly where the *national* proves *resistant* to the global. This phenomenon foregrounds a fundamental question central to my study: why do producers insist on exposing their audiences exclusively to a specialized (national) version of the final product that conforms to what they perceived to be the (national) audience's established memories? Why do they reject diverse viewpoints and cosmopolitan memories in favour of appropriating existing national narratives? And more broadly, why when making a television programmes, do producers still call on the 'old' symbiosis' between television and the nation?

In an attempt to address these questions I shall touch upon two interrelated issues: 'If memory is central to identity, we can discern no global identity-in-the-making' (Smith 1995:24): Challenging national specific memory'. And 'My audience is not global it's from New Jersey' (Dor-Ner, Interview 1999): Television production practices and the construction of a national audience.

In beginning with the 'challenging national specific memory' I am moving away briefly from my focus on the nature of the televised co-production (the micro) to make some comments on the much broader area of global culture, nation, and

memory. In addressing my second issue of 'television production practices and the construction of a national audience', I will be returning to the field of television to discuss production practices in the broadest sense of the word and how they relate to the 'imagining' of a national audience. I will then zoom in on what I feel has been a critical and neglected contact point, namely the television producer and the embedded nature of the relationship of that producer to his/her nation, culture, target audience.

Challenging national specific memory

In previous chapters (notably Chapters One and Seven) I have cited critics who emphasise the fundamental connection between memory and the nation. Smith for example argues that: 'memory, almost by definition is integral to cultural identity, and the cultivation of shared memories is essential to the survival and destiny of such collective identities' (Smith 1999: 10) ...... [O]ne might almost say: no memory, no identity; no identity, no nation' (Smith 1996: 383). This transparent link between memory and the nation has led many theorists to the belief that one of the reasons why nationalism will not disappear in an (allegedly) globalizing world, is the fact that globalism is so deracinated, so lacking in exactly that communal memory essential to nation building (Bell 2003). Anthony D. Smith presents this argument fiercely in his book *Nation and Nationalism in a Global Era* (1995) when he writes:

> a timeless global culture answers to no living needs and conjures no memories. If memory is central to identity, we can discern no global identity in the making (Smith 1995:24).

Globalization conjures no memories because timelessness it of its essence:

> This artificial and standardized universal culture has no historical background, no developmental rhythm, no sense of time and sequence .... alien to all ideas of "roots," the genuine global culture is fluid, ubiquitous, formless and historically shallow (Smith 1995:22)

Thus, shared history and memory is, according to Smith, embedded in a specific time and place:

> A global culture of the kind envisaged, at once scientific, affectively neutral and technical would have to be placeless, timeless and memoryless. An eternal virtual present would remove from view the vistas of past and future, just as the

capacity for virtual ubiquity removes all thought of place and location. The coordinates of time and place, so central to nations and nationalism, become meaningless, a compression accelerates to a single point, that of the immediate viewer. The world conjured by technical discourse is here and now, anywhere and everywhere; there is no further need for memory or destiny, ancestry or posterity. Or, for that matter, for direct community; only for the shadow play of participation a the remove (Smith 2001:136)

Appling Smith's argument to the creation of television co-production, I can move part way towards a possible explanation to the challenging question of why do producers still insisting on designing nation specific television histories (and shared memory) and rejects historical narratives of 'other', namely cosmopolitan memory. In discussing this issue I would like to turn here specifically to frame the programme I have been examining, *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arab*, as a television history in which the conflicting tendencies (national specific memory and cosmopolitan memory) become particularly prominent.

Television production practices and the construction of a national audience
Many of the issues regarding the construction of television narratives (and media production more broadly) tie to producers' presumptions about the nature and characteristics of their audience, as well as their anticipation of audience response to the produced programmes (e.g. Ang 1991; Dornfeld 1998). The production documents of *The Fifty Year War* and the producers' statements after its transmission provided many examples of the "prefiguring" of reception and of the audience.

The *Fifty Year War*'s executive producers oriented themselves towards a preconceived target audience, and often debated such questions as which demographic segments (age, class, and level of education) will watch the series, and what knowledge, memories, interests and sensitivities these groups will bring to their encounters with the programme. In the case examined here, the co-production agents (the producers of BBC, WGBH Boston, and MBC) assumed that their viewers share similar characteristics: Anglo-American, in their 50s or 60s, upper middle class and highly educated. These assumptions guided the producers in selecting the modes of articulation and the strategies to be employed to sustain the viewers' interest and attention. All three producers agreed that an elite group, highly educated and not representative of the general population in the respective countries, would make up the core of the expected audience for the proposed series. These suppositions

regarding the resemblance of their potential viewers impinged on the producers' decision to produce the programme thorough a co-production and guided practical decisions about the programme's content: what subjects to include, how much expository material to introduce, and how much time to spend on these topics[103]. For instance, early in the production period the two co-production agents (BBC and WGBH Boston) rejected Lapping's offer to begin the series with the massacre in Dir Yassin. Norma Percy of Brian Lapping recalls Mirzoeff's reaction to her written proposal:

> We were toying with the idea of should we start with Dir Yassin. But then Eddie said that this is very small and local and you needed to know that it was an international thing, that the American president is worried about [it]. [You] need to have something that viewers can identify with, something that connects with the West before you go into a region that people don't know much about (Norma Percy, Interview, May 2003).

And Do-Ner's reaction in a fax to Percy on May 2, 1996

> The program should start with the Partition Plan of '47, which can provide the basis for a trajectory of the series.

Yet, while catering to the common historical knowledge of their audiences, all three producers were keen to point out the fundamental differences between them. These differences had to do mainly with their perceived viewers' 'national consciousness' (Deutsch 1966), namely their separate sensitivities, memories, and the prior knowledge they bring to the programme. Zvi Dor-Ner for example said:

> We have very different audiences and very different histories.... Great Britain was a colonial power in the Middle-East. It has a history of first level involvement. It has attitudes which were drawn from very close encounters, and so on. It has a need to explain itself and justify itself in many ways. America has a different history, extremely anti-colonial, a very different history but substantial interests (Dor-Ner, interview, August 2001).

And Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC echoes him:

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[103] See a detailed discussion in Chapter Five.

America has a very large involvement and very strong and passionate Jewish presence in New York and so on and it is absolutely not affective here (Eddie Mirzoeff, Interview, February 2003).

In becomes apparent from these testimonies that in the producers' heads there was a clear conception regarding the nature of their target audience. The producers, each in his own way, thinks that he knows who his viewers are and address them to separate them form the chaff of people (viewers) who are not part of this national community. In doing so, he/she is imagining a homogenous community having similar memories, knowledge and sensitivities 'We have a very different audience and very different history.' (Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001). By highlighting the common features of a specific (national) target audience, Dor-Ner and his collaborating producers, are drawing a clear line between their target (national) audiences and 'other' national communities which are in their minds differ from theirs.

The producers' constructions of their (national) target audience shared a great deal with processes that Benedict Anderson (1983) identified when describing nations as imagined communities forms through mediated communication:

[The nation] is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of the fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communication (Anderson 1983:6)

Mirzoeff (BBC), Dor-Ner (PBS) and Garabedian (MBC) do not know the individuals who will be watching the series that they have co-produced. But, as we can clearly see in their testimonies, they have a vivid conception of the nature and characteristics of this audience. What becomes clear here that in the process of production the producers act to a large extent 'as surrogate audience members, putting themselves in the place of their potential audience as they react to the material they are shaping into the programs' (Dornfeld 1998:87). In producing the programme, the three producers rely on their own subjectivity, reacting to material they collect, as their (imagined) viewers themselves, and often falling back on their subjective responses to defend theses reactions. Imagining the audience the producer is in fact doing two crucial things: he/she perceives him/herself as part of his/her national community which is exactly what enabled him/her to imagine it; he/she assumes total insider knowledge of what his/her national community feels, knows and remembers – should remember- should forget (Robins & Aksoy 2000; Smith 2000; Margalit 2002).

By focusing our attention on producers' practices, we can learn a great deal about the memories, knowledge, and values of specific national/cultural communities and especially about how these national/cultural dispositions work to produce and reproduce a distinct interpretation of 'history'.

Chapter 8

Conclusions

> Cinematic images have created a technological bank that is shared by many and offers little escape. It increasingly shapes and legitimises our perception of the past. Memory in the age of electronic reproducibility and dissemination has become public; memory has become socialized by technology. History itself, so it seems, has been democratised by these easily accessible images, but the power over what is shared as popular memory has passed into the hands of those who produce these images (Kaes 1990:112).

The purpose of this study has been to explore the extent to which recent trends towards globalization and commercialization affect the ways in which national identity and shared memories find expression in the media.

Television was chosen as the main research site for the reason that this medium [is] '...the most important medium of historical reflection in the twentieth century' (Kansteiner 2002: 193) '[It] make[s] a unique contribution to historical discourse because [it] allow [s] viewers to recover the "liveliness" and richness of the past – to see and feel what it must have been like to be a part of history' (Anderson 2001:24).

The natural setting for exploring this topic was the world of documentary programmes. This study shares the view of documentary as a highly contested and manufactured media form that operates with a historically shifting set of conventional codes and formats and at the same time relies on the viewers' perception of its transparency and truth value (e.g. Winston 1995; Corner 1996;1999; Ellis 2000). Producers and viewers of these works seem to 'encode' and 'decode' them in a frame markedly different from that employed by the production and reception of fictional work (discussed in Dornfeld 1998:17). The conventions and construction of the narrative, the authorial voice, the point of view, and the very circumstances and purpose of producing (and watching) documentary films are separable from fictional film as are the specific elements of practice and production through they are made.

In my case, the broad area of investigation is that of 'television histories'. Gray R. Edgerson argues that '... television is the principal means by which most people learn about history today' (Edgerton 2001:1). If so then the documentary material 'on television' represents a culturally rich and significant 'technological bank that is shared by many' (Kaes 1990:112) which needs to be analyzed to better

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understand how practices of producing this media form contribute to the framing and reflecting of collective national identity and shared memory.

I. TV Tension in International Co-production of Television Documentaries

Over the past 10-15 years we have witnessed the explosion of publications in the social sciences which proclaim that we are living in an era of increasing globalization. There has been a mini-publishing industry cantered on analyses of the intensified globalization of production and trade in goods and services (especially finance, communication services and 'information'), and the rising dominance of a new global space of flows (Castells 1996). Enthusiasts of the globalization thesis claim that contemporary changes are weakening the nation-state and the salience of national identity (discussed in Preston & Kerr 2001). In this context it has been argued that globalization, driven by powerful economic forces, tends to breed products (cultural products included) having little or no national characteristics. In Stuart Hall's often cited sentence:

> ...... the concentration of capital, the concentration of techniques, the concentration of advanced labor in the Western societies, and the stories and the imagery of Western societies: these remain the driving powerhouse of this global mass culture. In that sense, it is centered in the West and it always speaks English (Hall 1991: 28).

This is certainly true for many culture products (such as films, computer games, and magazines) as well as other consumer goods (such as hamburgers, soft drinks, or trainers)[104]. But, is this the case also for the culture product known as the television documentary? The present study shows that the answer to this question is far from an unqualified "yes". Looking at the documentary sector, it offered a critical reappraisal of the two polar views, namely that globalization threatens national/cultural specificities on the one hand, and that national character plays a deterministic role in television contents even under globalization on the other (see Chapter Two). Inasmuch as this study sees these two views as necessarily interwoven, the development of a theory that will support an integration of the two dichotomous

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[104] See discussion in Chapter Two.

stances becomes a key concern. Pursuing this approach (See Chapter Seven), the study looked at the impact of a television documentary on the emergence and continuity of the national identity in the age of globalization, paying primary attention to the production practices being adopted. The chosen site of investigation was that of international co-production. International co-production constitutes a principal site within the documentary sector where the complex interplay between the global and the national, between shared (national) and cosmopolitan memory, and between the standardized and the particular becomes particular prominent and is therefore a useful arena for exploring this issue (see Chapter Seven).

In considering the nature of the interplay between the global and the national and between shared and cosmopolitan memory in international co-production, the study offers a close examination of the processes involved in the making of documentaries, as well as the contents of the product(s) emerging from such collaborations. It is only upon examining both the *process* (Chapter Five) and the *product* (Chapter Six) of international co-production that the interaction between the global and the national, so central to my argument, comes into clear relief.

A detailed examination of the process/product complex of television co-production reveals that *underlying* the interaction between the global and the national is a basic *tension* between two sets of opposing forces. On the side of the global are economic forces, stemming mostly from newly imposed tight budgets that force producers to look beyond their national boundaries for supplementary funding sources which, in turn, forces them to accommodate those outside sources in terms of both contents and standards. On the side of the national are cultural forces stemming from the fact that virtually every broadcaster operates in some specific national environment and belongs to some specific national entity. This places obvious constraints on the broadcaster's (hence on the producer's) conceptions of audience and adequacy of contents, constraints that are inevitably tied to the shared (national) memories and sensibilities of some specific national group.

The push-and-pull between economic forces and psychological/cultural constraints, and between the national and the global, find reflection in the various sets of data collected in this study. Only by looking at the producers' own reflective accounts (given to me in interviews), at their statements in production documents, and at the contents of the three versions of the final product, that the inherent tension described above, could be identified and analysed. Based on my analysis of the three

sets of data, I think we can reappraisal the strained conditions in international co-production by explicating what were the decisions the producers made (and did not make), and by extension what co-produced television history is, should, and could be.

To do so, I return to some of my observations from previous chapters to contextualize the logic of the production practices employed by the co-production agents of the television history *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs*. I indicate how analysis of both process and contents of this series can help to illuminate the tension between economic forces and cultural constrained, between the global and the national, and between shared (national) and cosmopolitan memory. I consider the push-and-pull between these conflicting forces, looking at the various stages of the production process. I show that this tension (or even in the struggle) in this co-produced documentary, arises at all stages of the process but the balance of the opposing forces is different at each stage.

Commissioning: At this preliminary stage of production, the forces that tend towards the global (and towards the standardized) work primarily through economic considerations inherent in the imperative of cost effectiveness. These considerations dictate that the search for entrepreneurial initiative be as broad as possible, and that the initial product description be as general as possible. The opposing forces, that tend towards the national (and the particular) express themselves primarily through the opting for the co-production mode, where some control over the final product is retained by the contracting parties (BBC and WGBH Boston), over such modes as acquisition, where cost effectiveness could be even greater. At this stage, the balance tends towards the former, that is, the 'global' and the standardized forces tend to gain the upper hand.

Production: When actual production commences, the global and standardized manifest themselves through joint responsibility being shared among the contracting parties and, more generally, through the joint commitment to the concept of a single product. The countervailing forces, pushing for the national and the particularized, then come into play through the insistence, by each of the contracting parties, on retaining content-control and through their demand that the sensibilities of specific national audiences be properly addressed in the produced footage. Neither side seems to gain an upper hand at this stage.

Editing: At this stage of production, the balance begins to shift. While maintaining the commitment to a single master product, the parties are now busy developing several separate versions, with each version designed to serve a specific national audience. Cost considerations take on secondary significance, behind the need to cater to some specific constituency. We must remember, however, that cost considerations did enter in the prior decision on whether to purchase the rights to develop one's own version directly from the (commonly produced) raw footage, or merely to adapt a version that had already been developed by one of the other parties.

Airing and Broadcasting: The final product(s) which emerged from this co-production exists in three versions; each version enjoys absolute exclusivity in its own national domain and has a life of its own, independently of the others. The present study explored the differences and similarities among the different versions in some detail, to find that while basic footage is shared, differences between versions are, in effect, reflections of differences in historical narratives and shared memories between the separate national/cultural constituencies. The global, the cosmopolitan and the standardized remain in the background, allowing the national and the particular to carry the day.

The ideas and practices described above have exposed and foreground a tension and the sources of a tension, which inevitably articulates itself throughout the production process to emerge not surprisingly in the completed product. What often seems to be at issue here are questions of balance: small vs. larger doses of non-canonical representation, of what might overwhelm local enculturation processes. It is in the balance as well that the 'tension' I have described, resides. Tracing this phenomenon in the television landscape has been an activity of observing, inquiring, conversing and noting, and would not have taken place without my enforced decision to examine both the process and the product of international co-production.

In conclusion, I remain with a number of challenging issues which are beyond the scope of my present study. While I have emphasized the fact that all three producers, while engaging in the joint production (and construction) of a novel televised narrative, were, in effect, constantly insisting on reproducing those narratives that their specific nation/culture communities were familiar with, I have refrained from asking: to what extent has each of these producers, in his/her broadcast

cultural product, actually assumed the major required task of any society today: to take responsibility for its past. Rather than challenging existing shared (national) memories regarding the events depicted, the three co-players in the film project were 'flagging' those memories that their perceived (national) audiences had already agreed to remember. While every act of memory carries with it a dimension of betrayal and amnesia, which Kwame Anthoney Appiah (2003:37) acknowledges when he writes: 'to change those memories is to change the community', he also throws down the challenge when he adds '—to expand its compass, perhaps' (Apppiah 2003:37).

II. The relevance of this research and ways forwards

In this study I explored the processes involved in the construction of an historical event in a television documentary as well as the representation of this event in the produced texts. Tracing the practices of television production and the representations that derived from them, my aim has been to illuminate the role television producers play in interpreting, framing and reflecting historical awareness and shared (national) memory. Indeed I hope that this study on television producers as a mnemonic agent (e.g. Smith 1976; Ferro 1988; Rosenstone 1988; 1992; 2000; 2002; Sobhack 1996; Loshitzky 1997; Edy 1999; Hesling 2001; Baer 2001; Keene 2001) demonstrates the value of pursuing a more nuanced view of the critical position of television producers and the 'encoding' process, both recognizing their agency in the communication process and situating the constraints of their work (cultural, geographical, institutional and financial) in relevant historical and sociological context. Examining these multilayered dimensions in the site of television production I attempted to move between practice and theory, to observe and analyze the cultural and economical frameworks that motivate (and limit) the practices of television documentaries while investigating these practices themselves. By analyzing producers' interpretations of their behavior, their constructions of their target audience, the work process itself, and the texts produced, I hope to have contribute to a broader discourse in media studies. A discourse that challenges the dominate debate by moving beyond the binaries of media power versus resistance, ideology versus agency, and production versus reception. The argument presented here however, is above all an argument about

social agency, an argument to restore the agents of production to a more central place in media theory.

Studying media production (both processes and products) offers a different kind of understanding of how history and shared memory are mediated in media forms, one that forces us to confront both the symbolic and the material conditions and practices of production. The negotiation producers engage with their fellow producers, with their target audience and with their own memories (and the memories of others) represent act of mediation that result in media text. The forms of mediation that result in the production of these texts are socially and historically situated in relation to other national/cultural forms. Television, in this sense, is not just a form of media but a format through which a (national) society articulates its differences in relation to 'other' national/cultures while at the same time searches for some forms of commonality (Dornfeld 1998).

The national and the global, shared and cosmopolitan memory, economic constraints and cultural forces: these are the overarching elements which have occupied centre stage in this study of the production of a co-produced television documentary. In this I have moved away from the dominant path in media studies - the study of 'audiences'. I am not suggesting, of course, that these studies are unimportant; on the contrary, they are necessary in thinking about the manner in which socio-cultural structures on the one hand, and individuals and their minds and choices on the other work in relation to each other in the *reception* of televised text (Gripsrud 1995:9; Wasko 2001). It would be interesting, for example, to study how the interviewees for the co-produced documentary, namely the 'witnesses' who's personal 'memories' were 'encoded' in the *Fifty Year War* project, 'decode' the different national/cultural shared narrative as transmitted in the three different television networks (BBC, PBS and MBC).

A research of how these 'decoding' processes play out in the act of consumption could provide us with nuanced insights regarding the under theorized interplay between 'common memory', (a memory which is based on individual carriers), and 'shared memory' (a memory that can exist independent of its carriers)[105] (Margalit 2002).

The adaptation of 'audience reception' tools and methods could add another significant dimension to the theorization of 'collective memory processes' (Kansteiner 2002:179). As noted in Chapter One most studies on 'collective memory' (including my own) focus on the representation of specific events within particular chronological, geographical, and media settings without reflecting on the consumers (viewers, listeners, readers) of the representations in question. This choice results in a situation in which the wealth of new insights into past and present nation/cultures could not be linked conclusively to specific social collectives and their historical consciousness. This gap can be 'filled' through the extensive contextualization of specific strategies of representation, which links representation with reception. As a result, 'the history of collective memory would be recast as a complex process of cultural production and consumption that acknowledges the persistence of cultural traditions as well as the ingenuity of memory makers and the subversive interests of memory consumers' (Kansteiner 2002:179). Focusing on the communications among the memory makers (who selectively adopt and manipulate common and shared memories), memory users (who use, ignore, or transform such artefacts according to their own interests) and the visual and discursive objects of traditions of representations, could provide a reliable guidelines to distinguish between the abundance of failed shared memory initiatives on the one hand, and the few cases of successful shared memory construction on the other (Kansteiner 2002: 197).

The techniques developed in 'audience reception' studies could usefully be applied to the field of co-productions. As we have seen the 'decoding' of co-produced films were explored previously in Anne Jäckel's *The Search for the National in Canadian Multilateral Cinematographic Co-productions* (2001)[106]. This study (in

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[105] As mentioned earlier (see Chapter One) a common memory is a memory of individuals who remember an event which they have witnessed. These are, in this case, the subjects/interviewees of the Fifty Years War project. A shared memory, by contrast is a process by which the memory of individuals are integrated with those of others to form a shared version (a televised narrative) of a particular event (the Arab-Israeli conflict) (Margalit 2002).

[106] See discussion in Chapter Three

common to many existing studies on audience reception) was conducted in a particular national context, i.e. in Canada. However, given that co-produced programmes are (by definition) aimed at audience of different national/cultures, the research on audience reception of co-produced texts could benefit from analyzing the potential meanings produced by a diversity of (national) audience watching these programmes. *The Fifty Year War* project is a useful site for studying these issues. It could be interesting to examine the manner in which audiences in the separate national/cultural constituencies (Britain, USA and Arabs countries) 'decode' the different cultural/national 'version' (BBC, PBS and MBC). This research could move in a different (yet interrelated) path and investigate how a specific national/culture audience (the American, the British or the Arabs) 'interpreted' the two versions of the film which were designed for the 'other' and were not transmitted in their own geo-political/cultural borders.

Additionally, since the *Fifty Year War* television series (and other co-produced documentaries like it) circulate outside the national borders[107] of its three main funding sources: Britain (BBC), the US (WGBH Boston) and Arab countries (MBC), the manner in which the 'decoding' processes by a multiplicity of audience watching the series could be investigated too. How do 'television histories' imported from outside national borders contribute to the imagination of national identity and shared memory?

Nevertheless, even if we limit ourselves to an analysis of television production there are still various questions (briefly touched upon in this study) that could be explored more thoroughly in future research. For example, a research could shift from the micro perspective of television production, namely analyzing the processes involved in the production of a *specific* programme, to the macro perspective, exploring international co-production on an organizational level. Put it in other words, rather then focus on the processes and outcomes of international co-production for a single television programme, we can examine cases where a channel operator was formed through an international co-production. An interesting research site is the television network ARTE. ARTE is a public television station created as ARTE C.E.I.E. (a consortium of European economic interests) between the French

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107 As noted earlier (Chapter Three) the completed series (the 'master text') was bought through a pre-sale agreement by various television networks like CBC (Canada), NHK (Japan), Telad (Israel), ABC (Australia), and YLE (Finland).

government and the German federal states on April 30, 1991. The channel began broadcasting in May, 1992[108]. Madeleine Avramoussis, an executive producer at ARTE summarized the network's aims and objectives[109]:

> We are trying to create Europe... ARTE was created ten years ago.... We have created this channel to create a European audience, a common European audience

In discussion the network's 'ambitious' mission, Avramoussis pointed out some crucial aspects regarding the interplay between the global and the super-national, and the international and the national in the television industry. How do ARTE producers negotiate the inherent geographical, linguistic differences among the two nations/cultures they aim to cater? Do they highlight the similarities between the different groups in the processes of production or do they reinforce the differences between them? In what way does this international (and super-national) venture (ARTE) challenges or confronts the production practices and representations that are associated with 'old TV' in Germany, in France and in Europe more generally?

Finally, the research on international co-production could take a completely different path, thus enriching the existing studies on 'collective memory processes' (Kansteiner 2002:179) in general and on the memory-nation nexus in particular. Rather then observing the manner in which national narratives (and shared memories) are produced and reproduced in co-produced texts, we can examine the manner in which the co-production strategy is applied in order to challenge these narratives. Building on the large body of work on 'minority media' (e.g Hall 1991; Gillespie 1995; Robins 2001; Madianou 2002) we could, for example explore how minorities groups (religious sectors, diasporic groups and age specific groups, to mention but a few) living within the geo-political borders of particular nation-states, collaborate with similar groups living in different national constituencies. A good example for

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[108] Originally a 'French-German' collaboration with programmes provided by La Sept ARTE in France and the two German public channels ZDF and ARD. ARTE has since 1993 welcomed various European partners: RTBF, a Belgian public radio and television company, SBC, the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation and TVE, a Spanish public television company. ARTE's official languages are French and German, but many programmes from other countries are often broadcast in their original language, with German or French subtitles. ARTE is broadcast free in Germany and France seven days a week without advertising.
[109] Madeleine Avramoussis delivered her presentation at conference session entitled 'international co-productions: to version or not to version', part of an annual conference for 'history producers', held in Boston USA ,October 2001.

television co-production among minority groups is a Jewish television network operating in Paris and New-York. What are the characteristics of this collaboration? What are the conditions (cultural, technological and financial) that enable it to come into being? And, in particular, if and how, this collaboration 'results' in forms of representations that confront or challenge historical (and mnemonic) discourses in the host nations?

This study might provide a useful point of departure for addressing these issues, it does not, however, pretend to be the final word on the construction and representation of history and memory in co-produced documentaries. If there is any ambition in this thesis it is to offer a possible launching pad for future research regarding the three-sided interplay between television, memory and the nation in an age of globalization. More specifically, I hope that this study will be a contribution towards an understanding of how a co-produced 'television history' is instrumental in binding together, as historian Tony Bennett puts it: 'the occupants of a territory that has been historicized and the subjects of a history which has been territorialized' (Bennett, 1995:141)? To what extent and how exactly do co-productions for the making of television documentaries contribute to the kinds of imaginings and remembering that sustain national cultures?

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Appendices

Appendix A

A.1 First segment- Israeli independence (Ur-Script 2nd June 1997)

ARCHIVE	Eastward the Arab Legion poised for invasion on the Trans-Jordan border.
	Abdullah's army, though small, is accounted the strongest striking force in the entire Middle East.
	In his hands appears to lie the key to the riddle that had puzzled the entire civilised world – how far would the Arabs go to prevent the partitioning of the Holy Land?
	Meanwhile, in Jerusalem, Haganah mobilised all men and women between the ages of 18 and 35 to fight for the new Jewish state to be formed the minute the mandate ended. While the United Nations sought means to head off war, events piled relentlessly towards a final showdown in the Holy Land.
COMM	In May 1948, as British rule in Palestine drew to a close, both Arabs and Jews looked to the American, the world's greatest power, to back their claims to Palestine. US Secretary of State, George Marshall, received the leader of the Arab League Azzam Pasha and his aide, Adel Sabit.
Adel Sabit	Azam went to see Marshal and had arr about an hour and half's talk with him, presented arrr the Arab case arr emphasized the danger of war, said that the Arab League already had voted a military intervention
	And threatened that the whole affair would get out hand and that the Arab world would find itself at war with arr arr with the Israelis in Palestine
	Marshal was on our side, that he understood and appreciated the problem
COMM	Six Days before the British quit, the Jewish Agency sent Moshe Sharett to Washington in a last ditch attempt to win even Marshall's support for a Jewish state. Gideon Refael accompanied Sharett.

A.2 Dir Yassin Segment (Ur-Script 2nd June 1997)

COMM	Dir Yassin was not a hostile village. But two groups of Jewish determinists –rival to Haganah – decided to attack it.
TO CAM Meir Pail (Haganah officer)	By chance I met with an old friend in Jerusalem, who used to be in the Haganha. He suddenly said to me
	that the Irgun and the Stern Gang had received permission from the local Haganah chief to attack the village of Dir Yassin in a few days, and he was very excited.

A.3 Dir Yassin Segment (Ur Script 20th June 1997)

COMM	The Haganah did not classify Deir Yassin as a hostile village. But two other Jewish Groups were fighting the Palestinians – the Irgun and the Stern Gang. They had waged a campaign of terror against the British. Now they wanted a part of the war against the Palestininas.
TO CAM Meir Pail (Haganah officer)	By chance I met with an old friend in Jerusalem, who used to be in the Haganha. He suddenly said to me that the Irgun and the Stern Gang had received permission from the local Haganah chief to attack the village of Dir Yassin in a few days, and he was very excited.

A.4 The War of 1948 (Ur-Script 2nd June 1997)

COMM ARCHIVE	The Arab armies invaded on 15 May, the day after Israel was born Jamal Husseini at UN (Palestinian leader): The troops of the states of the Arab League who have crossed the borders of Palestine from neighbouring countries on the termination of the mandate have therefore done so by the invitation of the people of Palestine.

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Appendix B

B.1 Programme Three: The PLO - The opening sequence (BBC)

COMM ARCHIVE Palestinian refugees crossing the Jordan River Sunset in desert Jordan- Valley	Palestinians made homeless by the Six Days War crossed the Jordan river, fleeing from the Israeli army which have just over run parts of the kingdom of Jordan. One of the camps they came to lies just across the river from the territory that Israel has taken. Six weeks later, while the Arab world stood numbed by the scale of its defeat, a small band of Palestinian guerrillas left its hide out in Syria and came to the camp of Karame. From the bank of the river they could see the Israeli petrol now occupying their Palestinian homeland.

B.2 Programme Three: The PLO - The opening sequence (PBS)

COMM ARCHIVE Fights at night casualties helicopters Overview Jordan valley Israeli soldiers in desert Sunset in desert Jordan- Valley	At the Suez Canal, now the border between Egypt and Israel the Egyptian launched a war of (arr) and the Israelis fought back. With growing casualties' political attitudes in both countries hardened. There were renewed conflicts sin the Jordan Valley as well. Israeli forces were in constant persuading of Palestinians who crossed into the West bank to attack Israeli targets. There was no talk of peace. Inside Jordan the Palestinians were busy building up their forces Their charter called for the replacement of Israel by a Palestinian state and the expulsion of all the Jews who arrived after 1948. In 1967 a small band of Palestinian Guerrillas set out a camp in Karame in the Jordan river valley. From the bank of the Jordan they could see the Israeli soldiers patrolling the West Bank

B.3 Programme Three: The PLO – The opening sequence (MBC)

COMM ARCHIVE Palestinian refugees GRAPHICS A map River Sunset in desert Jordan- Valley	Six weeks have passed and the Arab world was still in shock of the magnificently of the lost .A group of fighters Moved from Syria to Al-Karame. From the bank of the river they could see the Israeli petrol.

B.4 Programme Six: Negotiations–The opening sequence (BBC)

COMM ARCHIVE Yaser Arafat (by himself) sits	Israel's old enemy Yasser Arafat still claim to lead the Palestinian people but exile in Tunis he was cut off from his homeland and excluded by the Israelis from the peace negotiations in Washington.

B.5 Programme Six: Negotiations– The opening sequence (PBS)

COMM ARCHIVE Yaser Arafat (by himself) sits	Israel's old enemy Yasser Arafat still claim to lead the Palestinian people. But exile in Tunis he was cut off from his homeland Arafat was more willing to compromise with the Israelis.

B.6 Programme Six: Negotiations– The opening sequence (MBC)

COMM ARCHIVE London at night	In London in December 1992 a man from Tunis was on an assignment for Arafat, Liberation organization.
TO CAM Abu Ala (PLO leadership)	I had never met an Israeli before – not one. All the way to the meeting I was looking left and right and behind me. I was afraid of being seen.

B.7 Programme Six: Final Segment (BBC)

COMM ARCHIVE Rabin's memorial "spot" Demonstration in Israel (people holding Rabin's portrait dressed in "SS" uniforms.	50 years after it foundation Israel is still split. Half of its people supporting the peace makers and half fearing that concisions to the Arabs endanger its survival.
Palestinian refuges (from Deir Yassin) walking	The Palestinians still do not have a sovereign state to which they inspired.

B.8 Programme Six: Final Segment (PBS)

COMM ARCHIVE An American flag An American Security An Hotel	In October 1998 under considerable American pressure Israelis and Palestinians met in a hotel outside Washington. On the table was a proposal for an Israeli withdrawal from additional territories on the West Bank, in return for new security guaranties and the annulment of all closes in the Palestinian charter calling for the distraction of Israel. One peace maker was General Ariel Sharon whose reputation as a warrior helped provide credibility for the process. Nine days of diplomatic urging intervening and arm twisting by president Clinton finally produced results
ARCHIVE Clinton in White House	This agreement is good for Israel's security. The commitments made by the Palestinians were very strong, stronger that we have ever seen.
ARCIVE Netanyahu in White House	We are more secure today because for the first time since the signing of the Oslo Accord we will se concrete and verifiable commitments carried out.
ARCHIVE Clinton in white House	This agreement is good for the political and economic well being of Palestinians. It significantly expends areas under Palestinian authority to some 40% of the West-Bank.
ARCHIVE Arafat in white House	We will never go back. We will never leave the principles but we will never go back to violent and confrontations. No return to confrontations and violence
COMM ARCHIVE Hussein walks	To support the agreement King Hussein left his hospital bed where he was treated for cancer. He went right to the heart of the matter.
ARCHIVE Hussein in White House	We quarrel we agree we are friendly we are not friendly but we have no right to dictate through irresponsible actions or narrow mindedness the future of our children and their children's' children. There has been enough distraction enough death enough waste and its time that together we occupy peace beyond our self -- for our dissidence - the children of the land.
ARCHIVE A tree in the desert	After fifty years of war and suffering a tentative partition of Palestine was under way

B. 9 Programme Six: Final segment (MBC)

COMM ARCIVE Rabin's memorial "spot" Demonstration in Israel (people holding Rabin's portrait dressed in "SS" uniforms).	In Israel there were still many who hoped that Rabin's efforts will be successful and others who supported Netanyahu's tough stand towards the Palestinians and the Arabs.
Palestinians crossing the Jordan River in 1967 Palestinians walking	Fifty years after the foundation of Israel, millions of Palestinians are still refugees living in camps, while the Israeli settlements are expending. The Oslo agreement between Israel and the PLO has resulted in national Palestinian authority responsible for Gaza and parts of the West- Bank. But the negotiation for a final solution and co-existence between the two sides is still difficult and the Palestinians are still waiting to return.