

The London School of Economics and Political Science

Post Mortem: Death-related Media Rituals

Tal Morse

A thesis submitted to the Department of Media and Communication of the London School of Economics for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, London, December 2014

Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. Quotation from it is permitted, provided that full acknowledgement is made. This thesis may not be reproduced without my prior written consent.

I warrant that this authorisation does not, to the best of my belief, infringe the rights of any third party.

I declare that my thesis consists of 96,753 words.

Statement of use of third party for editorial help

I can confirm that my thesis was copy edited for conventions of language, spelling and grammar by Juliette Birnhack and Jean Morris.

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to study whether and how death-related media rituals construct and reconstruct a global cosmopolitan community. The performance of the media at the occurrence of mass death events, may cultivate expressions of grief aimed at reinforcing a certain understanding of the social order. These rituals facilitate a sense of unity and solidarity between members of an imagined community. What kind of community does the enactment of death-related media rituals construct? What is the sense of solidarity they foster?

By focusing on the performance of transnational media organisations following mass death events, the thesis studies the ways in which these ritualistic performances function as a social mechanism that informs the audience of the boundaries of care and belonging to an imagined community. Drawing on theories from sociology, media anthropology and moral philosophy, the thesis develops *the analytics of mediatised grievability* as an analytical tool. It aims to capture the ways in which news about death construct *grievable death*, and articulate the relational ties between spectators and sufferers.

The thesis puts *the analytics of mediatised grievability* in play and employs it in a comparative manner to study and analyse the coverage of three different case studies by two transnational news networks. This comparative research design captures the complexity of the mediatisation of death in terms of geopolitics, cultural proximity, legitimacy of violence and the morality of witnessing death.

The analysis of the three case studies by the two transnational news networks enables to account for different propositions that two of the networks make for their audiences in comprehending remote mass death. These propositions contain different ethical solicitations, each articulating a different understanding of the relational ties between spectators and distant others – some promote a cosmopolitan outlook, and others maintain a communitarian outlook.

Acknowledgements

This thesis is an outcome of a long process of study and exploration. After dedicating the past few years to representation of death, some friends granted me the title “master of disaster”, but in fact there are greater masters, and I was fortunate to work with two of them. I am entirely indebted to Prof Lilie Chouliaraki and Dr Shani Orgad who supervised me in my work. It was a great privilege for me to learn from two leading scholars in this field. Their broad intellectual horizons and profound and extensive knowledge in the study of representation and suffering inspired me and guided me in my way. I admire their devotion and diligence, and want to thank them for creating a stimulating intellectual environment. Their contribution to my work is evident in every single sentence of this thesis, and for this I am grateful.

I want to thank my family – my parents, my brothers and my sister – for being there for me. Their encouragement and support helped me throughout the years, and their faith in me motivated me to pursue this work.

I wish to express my gratitude to The Kenneth Lindsay Scholarship for their kind and valuable financial support. Financially, living in London is not always simple, but they made it simpler.

I am also thankful to Prof Tamar Katriel of Haifa University for teaching me the bread and butter of an academic work. The lessons she had taught me were useful and valuable, and her support throughout the years is something I greatly cherish.

Juliette Birnhack helped me with proofreading and English editing. I am thankful for her dedication and insightful comments and suggestions. I also appreciate her tolerance towards the peculiar ways in which I manipulated the English language.

Authoring a thesis is a lasting process. Sometimes it is tedious, and sometimes it is delightful. I want to thank Keren Darmon, Rafal Zaborowski, Daniel Kardefelt-Winther and Marco Scalvini, my friends and colleagues from the Department of Media and Communications at LSE for sharing with me the moments of joy and excitement and for encouraging me through the difficult moments.

Lastly, I want to thank my dearest Michael. If it wasn't for him, this thesis would never have been possible. His unconditional love and support encouraged me in moments of crisis (and there were many of them), and his wisdom and experience helped me to overcome the difficulties. He is a true survivor of my freaky interest in death, and he coped with it without any complaint, and I dedicate this thesis to him.

List of table:

- Table 4.1: Case studies sampling
- Table 4.2: Axes of comparison
- Table 4.3: The analysed reports
- Table 8.1: Typology of mediatised grief

List of photographs:

- Figures 5-1—5-9: Screen captures from the BBC report B1 titled “Massive Israeli air raids on Gaza”
- Figures 5-12—5-23: Screen captures from the BBC report B2 titled “Israel strike 'kills 30' at Gaza school”
- Figures 5-24—5-29: Screen captures from the BBC report B3 titled “Israel to vote on Gaza truce”
- Figure 5-30: an infrequent image of dead (covered) bodies from BBC report B3
- Figure 5-37: “A badly injured man recites the Muslim prayer for those about-to-die” (B1)
- Figures 5-31—5-33: Screen captures from the BBC report B2
- Figures 5-34—5-36 Screen captures from the AJE report A2
- Figure 5-38: symbolic representation of indignation and insurgency against injustice
- Figures 5-39—5-47: Screen captures from the BBC report A1 titled “Israel launches missile attacks on Gaza”
- Figures 5-48—5-56: Screen captures from the BBC report A2 titled “Israel's attack on UN-run school in Gaza”
- Figures 5-57—5-65: Screen captures from the BBC report A3 titled “More children among Gaza dead”
- Figures 6-1—6-5: Screen captures from the BBC report B4 titled “Norwegian capital hit by large explosion”
- Figures 6-6—6-11: Screen captures from the BBC report B5 titled “Death toll of at least 80 in the shooting on the island of Utoya in Norway”
- Figures 6-12—6-23: Screen captures from the BBC report B6 titled “Norway mourns those killed in Friday's attacks”

- Figures 6-24—6-26: Screen captures from the BBC report A4 titled “Breaking News – Bomb blast in Oslo”
- Figures 6-27—6-30: Screen captures from the BBC report A5 titled “Norway witnesses recount Utoya attack”
- Figures 6-31—6-39: Screen captures from the BBC report A6 titled “Interview Norway shooting witness”
- Figures 6-40—6-48: Screen captures from the BBC report A7 titled “Norway mourns victims at memorial service”
- Figures 7-1—7-12: Screen captures from the BBC report B7 titled BBC News Reports 12.01.2010
- Figures 7-13—7-24: Screen captures from the BBC report B8 titled “Haiti - the place where hell is the new normal”
- Figures 7-25—7-30: Screen captures from the BBC report B9 titled “Earthquake misery in Haiti hospital”
- Figures 7-31—7-39: Screen captures from the BBC report B10 titled “Looking for survivors online”
- Figures 7-40—7-48: Screen captures from the BBC report A8 titled “Haitians struggle to cope amid aftermath of earthquake”
- Figures 7-49—7-57: Screen captures from the BBC report A9 titled “UN confronts 'worst ever disaster'”
- Figures 7-58—7-66: Screen captures from the BBC report A10 titled “Quake victims buried in mass graves”
- Figures 7-67—7-78: Screen captures from the BBC report A11 titled “Haiti quake survivor's story of despair and loss”
- Figures 7-79—7-87: Screen captures from the BBC report A12 titled “Haiti quake UN's most fatal incident”
- Figure 7-88: pre-death agency – an encounter with the dead prior their death (A12)

Table of content

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	12
1.1 <i>The structure of this thesis.....</i>	18
Chapter 2: Solidarity, rituals, death and the media	12
2.1 <i>Introduction.....</i>	22
2.2 <i>Solidarity and social cohesion.....</i>	23
2.2.1 <i>Dimensions of solidarity.....</i>	23
2.2.2 <i>Imagining solidarity.....</i>	26
2.3 <i>Solidarity beyond similarity</i>	27
2.3.1 <i>Solidarity as a moral stance</i>	27
2.3.2 <i>Solidarity and risk.....</i>	30
2.4 <i>Rituals, solidarity and community.....</i>	34
2.4.1 <i>Rituals and community formation in pre-modern societies.....</i>	34
2.4.2 <i>Rituals and community in modern societies.....</i>	37
2.5 <i>The mediatiation of rituals.....</i>	39
2.5.1 <i>Media rituals.....</i>	42
2.6 <i>Death rituals.....</i>	48
2.6.1 <i>Liminality.....</i>	49
2.6.2 <i>Death rituals and the imagined community.....</i>	53
2.7 <i>Conclusions.....</i>	54
Chapter 3: The mediatiation of death.....	22
3.1 <i>Introduction.....</i>	57
3.2 <i>Death-related media rituals in a global age.....</i>	58
3.3 <i>Death and the media.....</i>	61
3.3.1 <i>Mundane death in the news.....</i>	62
3.3.2 <i>Death-related media events.....</i>	65
3.3.3 <i>Managing the visibility of death.....</i>	71
3.4 <i>The moral concerns of the mediatiation of death.....</i>	77
3.4.1 <i>The moral implications of mediated suffering.....</i>	78
3.4.2 <i>The moral implications of mediatied death.....</i>	82
3.5 <i>Conclusions.....</i>	85

Chapter 4: Research design and methodology	87
4.1 <i>Research design</i>	87
4.1.1 Methodological cosmopolitanism.....	89
4.1.2 Comparative analysis of transnational media.....	90
4.1.3 Sampling.....	96
4.1.4 Data collection and recording.....	99
4.1.5 Data analysis	101
4.2 <i>The analytics of mediatised grievability</i>	103
4.2.1 Conditions of mediatised grievability	104
Chapter 5: Judgemental grief and condemnatory grief – the case of the 2008-09 Gaza War ..	121
5.1 <i>Introduction</i>	121
5.1.1 The Gaza War.....	122
5.2 <i>BBC coverage of the Gaza War</i>	122
5.2.1 The sampled reports	123
5.2.2 The construction of the dead as human	125
5.2.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality	131
5.2.4 Producing a witnessable account.....	137
5.2.5 Ethical solicitation	143
5.3 <i>Al-Jazeera English coverage of the Gaza War</i>	144
5.3.1 The sampled reports	145
5.3.2 The construction of the dead as human	147
5.3.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality	151
5.3.4 Producing a witnessable account.....	153
5.3.5 Ethical solicitation	158
5.4 <i>Conclusions</i>	159
5.4.1 Judgemental grief	163
5.4.2 Condemnatory grief	164
Chapter 6: Empathising grief – the case of the 2011 Norway attacks	165
6.1 <i>Introduction</i>	165
6.1.1 The Norway attacks.....	165
6.2 <i>BBC coverage of the Norway attacks</i>	165
6.2.1 The sampled reports	166
6.2.2 The construction of the dead as human	169
6.2.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality	172

6.2.4 Eliciting a witnessable account	176
6.2.5 Ethical solicitation	180
<i>6.3 AJE coverage of the Norway attacks</i>	<i>182</i>
6.3.1 The sampled reports	182
6.3.2 The construction of the dead as human	185
6.3.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality	187
6.3.4 Producing a witnessable account.....	188
6.3.5 Ethical solicitation	189
<i>6.4 Conclusions</i>	<i>191</i>
Chapter 7: Moving grief – the case of The 2010 Haiti Earthquake	195
<i>7.1 Introduction</i>	<i>195</i>
7.1.1 The Haiti Earthquake 2010.....	196
<i>7.2 Disaster news and the paradox of humanitarian discourse</i>	<i>196</i>
<i>7.3 The BBC coverage of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake</i>	<i>198</i>
7.3.1 The sampled reports	198
7.3.2 The construction of the dead as human	203
7.3.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality	210
7.3.4 Producing a witnessable account.....	213
7.3.5 Ethical solicitation	216
<i>7.4 The AJE coverage of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake</i>	<i>217</i>
7.4.1 The sampled reports	218
7.4.2 The construction of the dead as human	222
7.4.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality	226
7.4.4 Producing a witnessable account.....	227
7.4.5 Ethical solicitation	228
<i>7.5 Conclusions</i>	<i>229</i>
Chapter 8: Mediatized grief and the fallacy and promise of cosmopolitanism	233
<i>8.1 Introduction</i>	<i>233</i>
<i>8.2 Typology of mediatized grief</i>	<i>233</i>
8.2.1 Empathising grief or grief as empathy from within	235
8.2.2 Moving grief or sympathy and responsibility from outside	239
8.2.3 Judgemental grief or grief as an aloof judgement	243
8.2.4 Condemnatory grief or grief as an inclusive commitment.....	246

8.3 <i>Mediatized grievability and the call for cosmopolitan solidarity</i>	249
8.3.1 The possibility of non-grief	250
8.4 <i>Grievable death by AJE and BBC – similarities and differences</i>	252
8.5 <i>Conclusion</i>	257
Chapter 9: Conclusions	259
9.1 <i>Main contributions</i>	260
9.2 <i>Limitations and suggestions for future research</i>	265
References	269
Appendix A1: Israel launches missile attacks on Gaza	283
Appendix A2: Israel's attack on UN-run school in Gaza	284
Appendix A3: More children among Gaza dead	286
Appendix A4: Breaking News – Bomb blast in Oslo	287
Appendix A5: Norway witnesses recount Utoya attack	289
Appendix A6: Interview Norway shooting witness	290
Appendix A7: Norway mourns victims at memorial service	292
Appendix A8: Haitians struggle to cope amid aftermath of earthquake	293
Appendix A9: UN confronts 'worst ever disaster'	294
Appendix A10: Quake victims buried in mass graves	295
Appendix A11: Haiti quake survivor's story of despair and loss	296
Appendix A12: Haiti quake UN's most fatal incident	297
Appendix B1: Massive Israeli air raids on Gaza	298
Appendix B2: Israel strike 'kills 30' at Gaza school	299
Appendix B3: Israel to vote on Gaza truce	301
Appendix B4: Norwegian capital hit by large explosion	302

Appendix B5: death toll of at least 80 in the shooting on the island of Utoya in Norway	303
Appendix B6: Norway mourns those killed in Friday's attacks.....	305
Appendix B7: BBC News Reports 12.01.2010.....	307
Appendix B8: Haiti - the place where hell is the new normal	309
Appendix B9: Earthquake misery in Haiti hospital	311
Appendix B10: Looking for survivors online.....	313

Chapter 1: Introduction

In Israel, every year, on *Yom HaShoah v'HaGevurah* (Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day) a ritual is performed with the title "Everyone has a name". In this ritual, Israeli citizens read out the names, places of birth and places of death of their relatives who perished in the Holocaust. The title of the ritual is taken from Zelda's poem by the same name. The last verse of the poem reads: "Everyone has a name/ that the sea gives/ and /one's death gives" (Mishkovsky & Falk, 2004). The purpose of this ritual is to commemorate the death of Holocaust victims and to recall their names and personal histories and, in so doing, to bring to the fore the personal aspect of this catastrophe. It is a ritual designed to remind people that each death counts and to ensure that each person is remembered, even if he or she had the misfortune to die violently in a mass death event. By stating the names of those who died, participants in the rituals are able to grieve for the death of their ancestors and declare their belonging to their community. It is an act of remembrance designed to give meaning to the death of an individual and also to remind the participants of the bond that holds them together as a community.

"Everyone has a name" rituals capture the notion of *grievability*, which Judith Butler introduces in her recent work (2004, 2009). This concept deals with the ways in which death is registered and the social, political and ethical meaning ascribed to it. This concept holds the idea that the death of every person should be acknowledged by society and serve as a reminder of the ties which form communities. These ties are informed by the solidarity and mutual commitment that individuals have for one another. "Everyone has a name" rituals also illustrate the significance of ritualistic performance in giving meaning to death and eliciting grief as a motivation for community formation. This thesis draws on the concept of *grievability* and uses it as a prism through which to reflect on questions of solidarity and community formation in relation to news of death.

Nowadays, we more and more engage with the world through the media. The world and its inhabitants appear in front of us in the newspapers and on our television screens and mobile devices, and this engagement with the representation of "the other" establishes our relations with him or her. The engagement with the world and with the other through the media becomes even more significant with the occurrence of (violent) death. These are times when the sense of personal and collective security is eroded and the ties between individuals and groups come to the fore. The collective engagement

with death reflects the mutual commitment and interdependency people share and so they learn how they belong together, why and with whom. *The central argument this thesis develops is that death rituals elicit grief which informs the solidarity that is the basis for community formation, and that the media are central players in selectively producing and performing death-related rituals which reach global audiences and thus cultivate a sense of belonging to a cosmopolitan community.* This argument is based on literature on solidarity and social cohesion, death rituals, media and rituals, and media and death. The thesis brings together theories from sociology, media anthropology and moral philosophy, which shed light on these concepts and set the ground for establishing this argument. Let me briefly unpack this argument into smaller pieces in order to reconstruct it.

The function of death rituals in relation to community formation has long been studied (Hertz, 1960; Huntington & Metcalf, 1991; Turner, 1969; Van Gennep, 1960). Rituals play a role in cultivating solidarity and the occurrence of death is an occasion which sets in play rituals that present an understanding of the values and ties that hold society together. Death and solidarity are also central themes for informing the social imaginary which facilitates a perception of an imagined community to which its members believe they belong and to which they are willing to commit (Anderson, 1983; C. Taylor, 2002). Imagined communities are formed and maintained by summoning their members in shared public spaces where the members can engage with one another and deliberate and negotiate their values and narratives (Calhoun, 2002a, 2002b). The media are the technology that positions us vis-à-vis faraway others and allows this communication; the media are the institution that shapes our understanding of “order” and “disorder”; and the media are the space where these participatory collective actions take place (Carey, 1992; Couldry, 2002; Dayan & Katz, 1992; Rothenbuhler, 1998; Silverstone, 2006).

Literature on the construction of imagined communities in the contemporary age recognises the role of imagination and representation in informing a collective perception of community (Anderson, 1983; C. Taylor, 2002). But, while national communities utilise death in order to maintain the perception of a shared past, contemporary imagined communities are constituted and reconstituted in light of the construction of present vulnerability and future risks (Beck, 1992, 2011). In this respect, current disasters or the fear of future death facilitate the reflection on interdependency which encourages solidarity between individuals and informs the consolidation of

communities based on proximity to risk. As risks overflow national boundaries, the notion of risk cultivates the formation of communities that extend beyond “the nation”. These are cosmopolitan communities which form and are reconfigured in response to the suffering of others who do not readily belong to one’s own community (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 196). However, while the literature on risk society admits that it is “the *staging* and the perception of global risk—that creates imagined communities across all kinds of boundaries” (Beck, 2011, p. 1350, emphasis added), it gives little attention to a central actor which engages with the staging of risk and shapes its perception as such. This actor is the media.

This thesis brings together death and the media. In this regard, it joins a body of literature that studies the mediated encounter with death (Hanusch, 2010; Seaton, 2005; J. Taylor, 1998; Walter, Littlewood, & Pickering, 1995; Zelizer, 2010). Yet, while most of the literature on death and the media focus on the function of the media from the perspectives of political communication and journalism studies, this thesis refers to this literature while taking a broader sociological and cultural approach to considering the role of death and the media in organising social life in a global age. By combining theories on cosmopolitanism with theories and concepts from media anthropology (Sumiala, 2012), this thesis examines whether and how the performance of the media at the occurrence of mass death events informs solidarity and interconnectedness on a cosmopolitan level. Namely, this thesis draws on the ritual approach to communication and studies the function of *death-related media rituals*.

Another important theoretical thread that drives this thesis comes from moral philosophy. Alongside the sociological reasons for imagining and constructing cosmopolitan community, there is also a moral justification for forming social bonds which encompass all human inhabitants of the earth. The motivation for individuals to come together in times of crisis is a moral imperative which derives from shared human vulnerability and joint commitment to the wellbeing of the other on the basis of common humanity (Butler, 2004; Rorty, 1989). This understanding brings together cosmopolitanism as a sociological reality and as a philosophical ideal (McRobbie, 2006). And, again, the media have a central role in introducing human suffering and portraying the other as worthy of solidarity (or not). The literature on media and morality and on the mediation of suffering (Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2006b; Frosh & Pinchevski, 2009b; Silverstone, 2006) offers a fertile ground for engaging with questions related to

the moral work of the media in mediating suffering. This framework is useful and telling, and also engages with questions regarding the mediation of death, while acknowledging the differences between the two.

Hence, death rituals, media and community go hand in hand. So far the academic discussion on the meeting point of these three has focused mostly on local or national communities. This thesis strives to point to the significance of death also in a global context and shows how the performance of the media, following mass death events, functions as a mechanism which can cultivate transnational solidarity and facilitate the formation of cosmopolitan community. By focusing on the performance of transnational media organisations following the occurrence of mass death events, the thesis studies the ways in which these ritualistic performances function as a social mechanism that informs the audience about the boundaries of care and belonging to an imagined community. What do the media tell their audiences about how they should feel and act in relation to the death of distant others?

In order to address this question, the thesis draws on Chouliaraki's analytics of mediation (2006b) and develops an analytical framework that aims to capture the ways in which news about death constructs a *grievable death*. Drawing on the work of Butler (2004, 2009), this thesis understands grief as a moral-political stance that requires the spectator to morally assess the circumstances of death and express empathy, pity or condemnation accordingly. Grief is a form of expression through which we can understand and measure our responsibility for the misfortune and the wellbeing of the other. Based on this understanding of grief, the thesis lists a number of conditions whose coming together facilitates the construction of an ideal grievable death: one that positions the spectators and the sufferers as belonging to a consolidated community based on common humanity; one that articulates the commitment of spectators to care for and be in solidarity with sufferers. These conditions are the construction of the dead as human, the constitution of spatiotemporal commonality, and the production of a witnessable account.

However, the thesis does not assume that these conditions are always in place. Rather, this thesis considers death rituals and media rituals as manifestations of symbolic power which reflect the contestation of power and dominance. It is by acting on representations of death and by managing its visibility that various institutions wish to act upon reality and establish their worldview. Accordingly, death-related media rituals

are an arena where power struggles over boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, care and solidarity take place. Especially in a global age, death – or, more precisely, the representation of death – is utilised to promote competing worldviews, and the media rituals performed following violent death often reflect that. Thus, this thesis seeks to offer a nuanced understanding of the various propositions which death-related media rituals make in defining the interrelations between spectators and distant others. The thesis operationalises these conditions and introduces the *analytics of mediatised grievability* which offers an analytical framework for the study of news on death.

The thesis puts the *analytics of mediatised grievability* in play and employs it in a comparative manner to study and analyse the coverage of three different case studies by two global news networks, Al-Jazeera English and BBC World News. These two networks cater for a Western, English-speaking audience, but portray a different picture of the world and offer a different perspective of global power dynamics. The three cases selected for this thesis are the 2008 Gaza War, the 2010 Haiti Earthquake and the 2011 Norway Attacks. These events represent the three main types of mass death event (wars, natural disasters and terror attacks) and each entails a different “genre” of media ritual. This comparative framework offers a multi-dimensional approach that captures the complexity of the mediatisation of death in terms of geopolitics, cultural proximity, and the legitimacy of violence and the morality of witnessing death.

The analysis of the three case studies on two global news networks enables a mapping of the mediatisation of mass death events and an accounting for the different propositions these two networks make for their Western audiences in comprehending mass death events. These propositions contain different ethical solicitations that utilise grief to elicit various combinations of the following dispositions: compassion, responsibility (or accountability), mourning, fear and denunciation. Each proposition articulates a different understanding of the relational ties between spectators and distant others – some promote a cosmopolitan outlook, and some maintain a communitarian outlook.

Three remarks before introducing the structure of the thesis:

This study focuses on representations of death on television as *death-related media rituals*. The centrality of television in generating and circulating news (and news about death) is immense. The engagement with television, in terms of the arrangements of viewing, captures its ritualistic function in summoning large and diverse audiences that

simultaneously consume the same audio-visual materials. It is a medium which organises space and time within conventions of production and consumption. Audiences turn to television to engage with the reality “out there” and to get a sense of “order” and “disorder”, “here” and “there”, “us” and “them” through engagement with the medium. Especially in times of crisis, television often serves as the centre to which everybody turns. And yet, contemporary media ecology offers multiple platforms for engaging with the world and engaging with the news. The internet and the social network it hosts allow a richer and more complex experience of engagement with the world. Mobile devices allow the consuming of news everywhere, not only at home, and the interactivity of the internet and its social networks enable their consumers to be “users” and not only passive spectators. This brings a range of new possibilities and challenges for the public that consumes the news, some of them of great significance in relation to questions of action and participation (Chouliaraki, 2010a; Madianou, 2012). In this thesis I focus solely on television for the reasons stated above, and I do not study the internet, although this medium is indeed also fascinating.

The second remark refers to the notions of spectatorship and cosmopolitanism. This thesis aims to explore the possibilities for the construction of cosmopolitan community by viewing the news and participating in death-related media rituals. However, it would be fair to admit that the understanding of the cosmopolitan spectator whom this thesis has in mind is limited mostly to Western spectatorship. The decision to focus on English-speaking news channels which cater mostly to Western audiences requires a qualified understanding of cosmopolitanism, which extends beyond a single nation-state, but is still not all-encompassing. Accordingly, when I use the pronoun “we” throughout the thesis, this term usually refers to Western spectators.

The premise of Western spectatorship prioritises various cultural perceptions which refer also to death-related issues, and to contested questions regarding the presentation of death and its relation to common perceptions of human dignity (or respect for the dead). The appropriate way to publicly present death images is contested and varies across cultures and times. I have tried to be as reflexive as possible when engaging with these issues, and yet there is still an inherent bias in the ways in which these issues were addressed. The analysis considers these issues from the perspective of Western spectators and examines whether or not they follow prevailing Western journalistic practices and perceptions.

1.1 The structure of this thesis

The thesis begins with an exploration of the meeting points of solidarity, rituals and the media and their role in the construction of communities. Chapter Two introduces the research question that motivates this thesis and begins with an exploration of the concept of solidarity and its accounts in sociology, political theory and moral philosophy. This discussion considers the centrality of solidarity to community formation and the various motivations for cultivating solidarity. The chapter then turns to discussing the role of rituals as a mechanism which brings communities together and informs their sense of solidarity. The chapter proceeds to the meeting point of rituals and the media and discusses the role of media rituals in summoning communities of spectators and constituting the bond between them. The chapter ends by exploring the function of death rituals. This exploration helps to explain why death is a useful prism through which to account for questions of solidarity and community ties.

Chapter Three connects the threads introduced in Chapter Two and takes these forward. The chapter begins by exploring how contemporary global media ecology constitutes a mediated public sphere where power struggles take place. The chapter then considers the engagement with the world and with the other in the light of deadly and violent events and its social and moral meaning. Deadly events are the times when members of the community reflect on their solidarity with one another (Collins, 2004; Hawdon, Oksanen, & Räsänen, 2012; Hawdon, Ryan, & Agnich, 2010; Turkel, 2002). The occurrence of death invites responses by various social institutions, including the media. These mechanisms draw the boundaries of who belongs to a community – and who is excluded – in the past and in the future. These reflections on community ties and solidarity have some moral bearing, especially when death is at a distance. The literature about the mediation of suffering has dealt with these issues, and in this chapter I adapt this thinking to the mediation of death.

Chapter Four explains the research design employed to address the thesis's research question. The chapter begins with a short exploration of the emergence of the *cosmopolitan moment* and introduces Beck and Sznaider's (2006) call for the use of a *cosmopolitan outlook* in social science. This perspective also explains the study of global news as part of a framework defined as *methodological cosmopolitanism*. The chapter then moves on to explain why we need a comparative framework to account for the different claims expressed in relation to the construction of cosmopolitan community,

and how such a framework is used in this research. The chapter then explores the sampling strategy and the rationale for conducting case study research. It introduces the sampled materials and explains the methodology used. In its second part, the chapter introduces the *analytics of mediatised grievability* as an analytical framework which I developed to study death-related media rituals, while taking into account the moral implications of the mediatisation of death and the ritualistic properties for the reporting of mass death events.

After introducing the theoretical framework, the thesis moves to the analysis of the coverage of three kinds of mass death events – war, terror attack and natural disaster. It does so by focusing on three case studies: the Gaza War, the Norway Attacks and the Haitian Earthquake.

Chapter Five is the first analytical chapter. This chapter studies the 2008-09 Gaza War (known in Israel as "Operation Cast Lead"), while employing the *analytics of mediatised grievability* to study mediatised war. The chapter explores the coverage of war as an *asynchronous media event* and analyses the various tropes used to represent death in wartime. The analysis addresses the implications of this mediatised encounter with war with regard to the propositions offered to spectators regarding their relations with distant others. The analysis shows how the BBC coverage maintained the economy of taste and decency (D. Campbell, 2004) and protected its audiences from the horrors of war in a way that failed to fully account for the human cost of war. The chapter argues that this performance is a manifestation of *judgemental grief* which issues an invitation to morally judge the actions at the scene of death from the safe zone of the spectators. The analysis of Al-Jazeera English (AJE) coverage of the war shows how AJE confronted its audience with war "as is", and advocated for moral investment in the encounter with the Gazans' death. AJE's coverage manifests a *condemnatory grief* which insists on transforming grief into political consciousness, and works to turn sympathy into a denunciation of the evildoers.

Chapter Six studies the 2011 Norway attacks as a case study of a mediatised terror attack. The chapter explores coerced participation in a universal *disaster marathon*. The analysis focuses on the technological affordances and the verbal tropes for introducing the spectator to the experience of an unbelievable terror attack that resulted in mass deaths. It further explores the ways in which vulnerability becomes shareable, and its contribution to cultivating identification on the basis of similarity between spectators

and distant others. This type of coverage invites the spectators to identify with the vulnerability of the distant others and to empathise with their pain and loss on the basis of commonality. Yet, inasmuch as such coverage is inclusive, it still offers a communitarian outlook rather than a cosmopolitan outlook. Thus, the coverage of the Norway Attacks by both the BBC and AJE is an example of what I call *empathising grief*, which invites the spectators to identify with the other on the basis of commonality.

Chapter Seven studies the 2010 Haiti Earthquake as a case study of a mediatised natural disaster. The chapter explores the coverage of the disaster as an *asynchronous media event* and its employment of two contradictory humanitarian discourses – that of common humanity and that of hierarchies of power. The analysis addresses the various tropes used to account for the massive death and argues that such coverage construes a *moving grief*, which reasserts the “humanness” of those who were cast out of the category of “the human”. *Moving grief* is comprised of two contradictory sets of tropes – one that dehumanises the dead and reduces them to “refuse”, and another that humanises the dead in various ways. The duality of these two sets of tropes makes the ethical solicitation of *moving grief*, which uses emotionality to mobilise global aid for those worthy of being rescued but cannot do this on their own. The chapter addresses the continuous process of dying and the articulation of a moral demand that its witnessing entails, as it constructs the spectators as potential benefactors.

Chapter Eight brings all the empirical materials discussed in the previous three chapters together with the theoretical framework discussed in the first chapter. Each type of grief introduced at the end of each analytical chapter is further developed. In addition, the discussion makes an argument regarding the role death rituals play in contemporary mediatised global society, while taking into consideration the various variables which shape the media coverage of mass death events. This discussion allows a multidimensional comparison of news channels, types of event, and “genres” of media coverage.

The concluding chapter (Chapter Nine) offers an overview of the thesis and highlights its main contributions. It discusses the mediatisation of death as a reflexive moment in which we reassess questions of interdependency, mutual commitment, moral agency, and collective identity, and the extent to which the mediatisation of death serves as a means of constructing cosmopolitan community in a global age. Furthermore, the

chapter points to the challenges the study of the mediatisation of death faces, and offers new directions for future research.

Chapter 2: Solidarity, rituals, death and the media

2.1 Introduction

The main argument of this thesis is that death rituals elicit grief, which informs the solidarity that is the basis for community formation, and that today the media produce death rituals that facilitate the construction of community on a global level. Accordingly, the research question of the thesis is *how do death-related media rituals function as a cultural mechanism of inclusion or exclusion, and to what extent do they selectively foster solidarity and a sense of cosmopolitan community?* In order to address this question, the current chapter introduces the theoretical building blocks of the thesis, which are *solidarity, rituals, and community*, and discusses the role of the media in enhancing, producing and constructing these. These building blocks will set the ground for a discussion of the media rituals surrounding mass violent death events, as a mechanism that can create social solidarity and facilitate community formation on a global level.

The chapter begins by engaging with the question: “what holds people together as a community, if anything does?” and searches for answers in theories of social cohesion and community formation. These theories identify solidarity as a sense of interconnectedness and mutual commitment that establishes social ties and facilitates social cohesion. Rituals are a means of cultivating solidarity, justifying, and maintaining it. Rituals manifest the reasons why individuals need to be in solidarity with others and to function together as a community. Accordingly, this chapter explores theories of rituals and their functions, including the production of symbolic systems and the use of representations in informing social imaginaries. Some of the theories on solidarity and community consider vulnerability and risk as central motivations for societies to hold together on a global level, and thus I explore how these concepts stand in relation to *cosmopolitan solidarity*.

Today, the media serve as a social institution that performs rituals and as the space where some rituals take place. This chapter considers the mediatisation of rituals and the role of the media in the constitution of social life. This framework grounds the discussion of contemporary global social life in terms of social processes, political dynamics and moral values, and so provides a rich and solid basis for exploring the constitution of a cosmopolitan community.

Lastly, this chapter explores the function of death rituals. These rituals give meaning to the death of the deceased and offer an understanding of society's structures and continuity. Therefore, coping with death through rituals is not only a private process that the individual partakes in, but also a public one that summons collective engagement with society's fundamental values and structures (Huntington & Metcalf, 1991).

2.2 Solidarity and social cohesion

"In its most general term, solidarity is a feeling of connection whereby other human beings are seen as 'one of us'" (Cooke, 1995, p. 337). However, the term is much richer and more complex than this inceptive definition, as theorists of solidarity – both sociologists and political philosophers – explicate (Calhoun, 2002a, 2002b; Cooke, 1995; Durkheim, 1960; Ferguson, 2004; Hollinger, 2006). There is more than one way to define solidarity and capture its function. While sociology points to the significance of solidarity for society's functioning as a collective unit, political thinking points to the normative dimension of solidarity, and moral philosophy refers to solidarity as a moral imperative. Yet, all threads stress that solidarity is a basic component in facilitating the formation of social and political allegiances. This chapter, then, begins with an abridged exploration of solidarity and the various accounts that sociology, political theory and moral philosophy give of it. I begin the discussion with theories of (mechanical) solidarity in pre-modern societies and proceed to theories of (organic) solidarity in modern, industrial societies and its function in facilitating imagined communities. The discussion of solidarity concludes with contemporary accounts that consider its function in a global, post-industrial society. These accounts point to the moral dimension of solidarity and the claims it makes in light of vulnerability and in times of crises. These "late-modern" theories serve to define *moral cosmopolitan solidarity*, which is a central concept for addressing the research question of this thesis.

2.2.1 Dimensions of solidarity

According to Durkheim (1995), solidarity motivates social cohesion and encourages individuals to function together as an integral unit. Solidarity is the common perception individuals share, which gives reasons to how they belong together and why they should remain united (Calhoun, 2002a; Durkheim, 1995; Hollinger, 2006). The sense of solidarity that individuals share informs their commitment to one another and their mutual reliance on one another's resources. In order for society to hold together as an integral unit, Durkheim contends, it needs to uphold and reaffirm the collective sentiments and

collective ideas, “which make[s] its unity and personality” (Durkheim, 1995, p. 427). Campbell (2000) associates solidarity with the sentiment that holds individuals together as a community: “It is the sense of togetherness and the norms of trust and reciprocity they share with each other” (in Hawdon & Ryan, 2011, p. 1364).

Durkheim identified two types of solidarity: *mechanical solidarity*, the term he coined to refer to the similarities and interchangeability in small, pre-modern communities; and *organic solidarity*, which is based on a division of labour and interdependency in large, complex, modern communities (Durkheim, 1960). Whereas in pre-modern times communities were formed on the basis of common beliefs and shared values, modern communities are heterogeneous, yet their members come together and function as a collective since they are dependent on one another. Calhoun (2002a) enriches, refines and updates Durkheim’s original account in order to better capture solidarity in contemporary society, and mentions four dimensions of solidarity, on which I will expand next: (1) categorical identities, (2) functional interdependency, (3) direct social relations, and (4) public sphere.

A basic dimension of solidarity that Durkheim identified as *mechanical solidarity* refers to questions of homogeneity and similarity amongst members of the community, which often manifests itself as shared identity or shared values. According to Hollinger (2006), shared identity and trust are important dimensions of solidarity, and also bear an intrinsic demand for mutual accountability: “To share an identity with other people is to feel in solidarity with them: we owe them something special, and we believe we can count on them in ways that we cannot count on the rest of the population” (Hollinger, 2006, p. 23). Cooke (1995) refers to solidarity as pertaining to boundaries of belonging. She points to esteem-based solidarity as a sense of belonging to a community whose members share values and characteristics which distinguish them from other communities:

“Solidarity in this sense refers to bonds that link the members of groups that share an orientation towards shared normative demands that emanate from beyond the self, whereby the irreplaceability of each members of the group is recognized” (Cooke, 1995, pp. 344–345).

Calhoun describes the similarity associated with mechanical solidarity in terms of *categorical identities*. These are categories of identity that are perceived as common and shared by all members of the community, and so define them as similar to and

committed to one another. These categories also define members of the community as different from others who do not belong to these categories of identity.

Another important dimension of solidarity is its capacity to regulate a functional community. Durkheim coined the term *organic solidarity* to capture the orchestrated operation of various branches of society. The division of labour in modern society means that these branches are dependent on one another, and therefore need to operate in coordination in order for society to function as an integral unit. Calhoun (2002a) refers to organic solidarity as *functional interdependency* and argues that variance in the means of production plays a pivotal role in forcing various individuals and groups to collaborate and so to function as an integral unit. He explains that, in contemporary global society, solidarity is shaped by various forms of integration that include markets, the material power of corporations, and state regulation. These factors shape the ties that individuals and institutions form, while substantiating a shared vision of society and its proper functioning.

Together with the first two dimensions above, which derive from Durkheim's work, Calhoun (2002a, 2002b) adds two other dimensions of solidarity in modern societies. In addition to cultural similarities and functional integration, he suggests that "concrete social networks, and mutual engagement in the public sphere are also sources or dimensions of solidarity" (Calhoun, 2002a, p. 156). While direct social relations are important for forming small communities based on personal encounters, harmony and willed affiliation, Calhoun explains that publics are self-organising fields of discourse that are open to strangers and can facilitate solidarity beyond familiarity and fixity:

"A public sphere comprises an indefinite number of more or less overlapping publics, some ephemeral, some enduring, and some shaped by struggle against the dominant organization of others... Engagement of people with each other in public is itself a form of social solidarity. This engagement includes, but is not limited to, rational-critical discourse about affairs of common concern. Communication in public also informs the sharing of social imaginaries, ways of understanding social life that are themselves constitutive of it" (Calhoun, 2002a, p. 162).

Thus, according to Calhoun, appearing in public and engaging with others on matters of common concern is another dimension of solidarity, which suggests the importance of (voluntary) participation in public deliberation for community formation (Calhoun, 2002b, p. 880). In this regard the question of access to the public sphere is of great

importance, as it delimits who can socialise and who cannot. Moreover, since the public sphere is created and reproduced through discourse (Calhoun, 2002a, p. 159), the capacity to communicate is crucial, a point which I will develop throughout this thesis.

Calhoun further argues that solidarity should be conceived “not only in terms of common economic interests, but also in terms of a range of relations of mutual interdependence, including engagement in shared projects of imagining a better future” (Calhoun, 2002a, p. 171). Communication and public discourse are a means to deliberate, negotiate and reach a consensus on what is in the community’s best interest, and what resources guarantee a secured collective fate. This corresponds with Hollinger’s (2006) account of solidarity, which, while accepting the importance of shared identity in cultivating a sense of solidarity, further considers agency as another dimension that motivates a conscious commitment to establishing willed affiliation, based not only on shared identity but also on shared destiny. This understanding of solidarity takes us into the realm of the political. Solidarity, according to Hollinger, is understood as a conscious, active, performative act of affirming affiliation for the sake of a shared cause or a better destiny. In this regard, similarity and shared identity are not necessarily based on categories one is born into, but on the cultivation of historical and political consciousness and an informed choice to become a member of a certain group.

2.2.2 Imagining solidarity

The four dimensions of solidarity that Calhoun mentions allow us to consider solidarity as a product of imagination. Solidarity refers not only to the interrelations we have with people in our immediate surroundings, as suggested in Durkheim’s original account of *mechanical solidarity*, but also to wider circles of people that we do not know and will never meet. In modernity, solidarity refers to a shared consciousness that is imagined as common and shared amongst a determinate group or confined category like nationalism, race, class or religion. Dispersed strangers can become united as members of, for example, the same national community, if they perceive that they share the same narrative, values and identity with others whose existence they can only imagine. Unlike pre-modern communities which were small and confined and allowed their members to maintain a concrete social network (Calhoun, 2002a), nation-states are imagined communities because “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of the communion” (Anderson, 1983, p. 6). Thus, modern communities are

constituted and maintained by the faculty of imagination, and this is what inspires solidarity - we are in solidarity with others not because we know them, but because we imagine them, and more importantly, we imagine the ties we have with them and the mutual commitment and expectations we have. This is what Taylor (2002) defines as social imaginaries:

“Our social imaginary... incorporates a sense of the normal expectations that we have of one another, the kind of common understanding which enables us to carry out the collective practices that make up our social life. This incorporates some sense of how we all fit together in carrying out the common practice. This understanding is both factual and ‘normative’; that is, we have a sense of how things usually go, but this is interwoven with an idea of how they ought to go, of what missteps would invalidate the practice” (C. Taylor, 2002, p. 106).

What informs social imaginaries? According to Calhoun, communication in public informs shared social imaginaries, and communication is a product of representation. This brings in the role of the media as the public space where communication takes place and as the institution that produces and circulates the representations (Orgad, 2012), as will be discussed later.

2.3 Solidarity beyond similarity

Thus far, the discussion of solidarity has focused on willed affiliation and consensual agreement to forming social bond(s) between similar individuals who believe they share an identity, destiny or cause. Solidarity at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century is often based on affiliation between strangers or dissimilar groups, and is inspired by moral principles and an agreement on the rules of engagement. The coercive dimension of solidarity can be found, for example, in Beck’s work on the *risk society* (1992, 2009a, 2009b, 2011), Habermas’s work on the *global public sphere* (see Calhoun, 2002a, 2002b; Cooke, 1995; Ferguson, 2004), and moral-philosophical accounts of attending to human suffering (for example, Butler, 2004, 2011). Such an understanding of solidarity encourages us to consider it as a moral imperative that impinges on us. This sets the ground for later discussion and cosmopolitan solidarity in the light of deadly reality.

2.3.1 Solidarity as a moral stance

In a post-industrial global society, solidarity is not necessarily a matter of similarity, but a matter of political consensus on rules of engagement with moral questions. According to

Habermas, in contemporary society there is no longer agreement on what is in the public interest, and therefore solidarity should not be understood as pertaining to shared interests or destiny (see Calhoun, 2002a; Cooke, 1995; Ferguson, 2004). Instead, solidarity should be understood as a consensus on what is right. Therefore, solidarity, for Habermas, refers to the commitment to discourse as a means of reaching an agreement on what is – and what is not – moral. Cooke explains:

“Solidarity, for Habermas, is the bond that links all those members of modern societies who share a commitment to the idea of communicative rationality... for Habermas, solidarity is primarily a moral phenomenon for it is based less on shared substantive convictions than on shared insight into the validity of universal norms and principles and into the need for discourse in the regulation of moral, legal and political affairs” (Cooke, 1995, pp. 347–348).

This account of solidarity takes us a step forward towards linking solidarity and cosmopolitanism, as it downplays the question of categorical affiliation as a basis for solidarity and identifies every human as a potential participant in the public discourse.

Drawing on the work of Habermas, Cooke, Calhoun and Nussbaum, Ferguson (2004) defines *cosmopolitan solidarity* as “a universal bond that can be shared across the worldwide community of human beings, regardless of nationality, language, race, culture, creed, etc.” (Ferguson, 2004, p. 180). This definition captures the philosophy of cosmopolitanism and alludes to the moral and political vision it fosters.

While Habermas advocates a communicative rationality as a means of forming solidarity, Chouliaraki (2013) asserts that insistence on the capability of speaking and articulating rational argument limits the possibility of forming cosmopolitan solidarity, since it excludes the voiceless and those who cannot engage in rational deliberation, yet they still have valid claims to solidarity. Solidarity also needs to emerge in relation to vulnerability and suffering, and these can be better expressed by aesthetics and emotions (Orgad, 2013; Orgad & Seu, 2014). In other words, there is an aesthetic and performative aspect to solidarity, as images and stories on vulnerability can cultivate an imagination which encourages the expression of solidarity towards vulnerable others. In this thesis I intend to show how solidarity is evoked through representations of vulnerability and death.

The argument regarding the association of vulnerability and solidarity rests on Rorty’s (1989) account of solidarity, which highlights the moral dimension of the term. Similarity

between members of a community is unnecessary as a justification for social cohesion or mutual responsibility. Instead, what matters is the ability to feel for and identify with the other. Rorty introduces into his understanding of the term a moral dimension of caring for the other in times of trouble. He defines solidarity

“as the ability to see more and more traditional differences (of tribe, religion, race, customs, and the like) as unimportant when compared with similarities with respect to pain and humiliation – the ability to think of people wildly different from ourselves as included in the range of ‘us’” (Rorty, 1989, p. 192).

Thus, for Rorty, solidarity is a moral stance, and as such is not something we can choose. It derives from a moral imperative to care for others in their misfortune, regardless of already established categories of identity. This sense of solidarity is triggered, according to Butler (2011), by representations of death and suffering which function as a particular form of ethical solicitation:

“[There] are times when, in spite of ourselves and quite apart from any intentional act, we are nevertheless solicited by images of distant suffering in ways that compel our concern and move us to act, that is, to voice our objection and register our resistance to such violence through concrete political means” (Butler, 2011).

Butler further argues that ethical obligation towards the other is something that is imposed on us without any pre-contractual consent and constitutes reciprocal ties of mutual dependency and responsibility:

“... there are others out there on whom my life depends, people I do not know and may never know. This fundamental dependency on anonymous others is not a condition I can will away” (Butler, 2004, p. xiii).

Human vulnerability, then, reveals unchosen dependency on others. This dependency can potentially define or redefine the ties we have with one another in a way that enables the construction of (political) community. McRobbie (2006) explains:

“Recognition of this dependency on others can be the basis for new forms of political community. Vulnerability reminds us of our dependency on others. Callousness to one who is dying or to the already dead calls into question the basis of ‘our’ humanity. Thus our vulnerability, the fact that we can be so easily injured or harmed, gives rise to recognition of dependency, which in turn can be productive of new forms of sociability” (McRobbie, 2006, p. 78).

This is, in fact, the discourse of human rights that speaks in the name of common humanity and identifies every “human” as worthy of showing solidarity with (Calhoun, 2002a; see also Hollinger, 2006). This moral position echoes the notion of *cosmopolitanism* that is the basis of a *cosmopolitan solidarity* advocating for the constitution of cosmopolitan community composed of all humans as citizens of the world.

Nussbaum reminds us that “the very old ideal of the cosmopolitan” refers to a “person whose primary allegiance is to the community of human beings in the entire world” (Nussbaum, 2002, p. 4). Yet, belonging to a cosmopolitan community does not mean relinquishing other circles of affiliation. Instead, the goal of cosmopolitanism is to be inclusive:

“We need not give up our special affections and identifications, whether ethnic or gender-based or religious. We need not think of them as superficial, and we may think of our identity as in part constituted by them... But we should work to make all human beings part of our community of dialogue and concern, base our political deliberations on that interlocking commonality, and give the circle that defines our humanity a special attention and respect” (Nussbaum, 2002, p. 9).

To recap the discussion thus far, solidarity in the contemporary global age emerges not only through sentiments of similarity or pre-contractual allegiance. Rather, it can emerge as a response to the appearance of others who share nothing with us besides human vulnerability. It is the representation of vulnerability as it appears and is disseminated by the media which advocates solidarity and the commitment to cosmopolitan ethics.

2.3.2 Solidarity and risk

The understanding of solidarity as an affiliation which occurs in relation to pain and suffering resonates with the explanations Giddens (1990, 1991) and Beck (2006) offer for social cohesion in an era they define as *late modernity* and *second modernity*, respectively. Giddens and Beck characterise this period as an age of uncertainty, in which individuals constantly reflect upon their identity, and the social ties between individuals and groups are re-negotiated time and again. This reflexivity shapes the understanding of collective identity and becomes even more salient in times of crisis, when stability is questioned and the interdependency between dissimilar individuals and groups is more apparent. The instability and uncertainty in times of crisis invite a reconsideration of the ties between people and their commitment to mutual security and wellbeing. Giddens

and Beck both argue in their work that in late or second modernity there emerges an alternative explanation for social cohesion, which is the notion of *risk*. According to these accounts, mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity become only secondary to unwilling consolidation, based on mutual *trust* that reflects the interdependency of people when dealing with threats to their wellbeing (Giddens, 1990).

Risks in a global world overflow the boundaries of local communities and of nations, and therefore require coordination between individuals and groups that do not necessarily share any common ground except their exposure to risk. Vulnerability, according to Beck, shapes and motivates the constitution of a *cosmopolitan community*, which he describes as *risk society*: “It is global risk—or, more precisely, the staging and the perception of global risk—that creates imagined communities across all kinds of boundaries” (Beck, 2011, p. 1350). Global risks, Beck argues, require us to acknowledge our vulnerability as well as the vulnerability of others, and the mutual dependency involved in coping with such conditions:

“Global risks tear down national boundaries and jumble together the native with the foreign. The distant other is becoming the inclusive other. Everyday life is becoming cosmopolitan. Human beings must find a meaning of life in the exchange with others and no longer in the encounter with the like. This is what I call ‘enforced cosmopolitanization’: global risks activate and connect actors across borders, who otherwise don’t want to have anything to do with one another” (Beck, 2007, p. 287).

Global terrorism, natural catastrophes, nuclear disasters and financial crises are examples Beck mentions of threats that exceed national boundaries, and as such call upon a cosmopolitan community of action. Similarly, Delanty (2006) argues that crises are moments of openness and reflexivity that inform a cosmopolitan imagination and tie together the local and the global; the self, the other and the world (Delanty, 2006, pp. 26–27). Thus, moments of (global) crisis can turn into cosmopolitan moments, as they can potentially open up the possibility of revealing or establishing the interconnectedness and mutual dependency which is the basis for cosmopolitan community (Kyriakidou, 2009).

When examining Anderson’s (1983) national community and Beck’s cosmopolitan community, we find remarkable differences, namely in relation to the motivations for each to form. In both cases these are imagined communities, yet, unlike national communities, the formation of an imagined cosmopolitan community is not motivated

by the imagination of a shared history, identity or culture. Rather, its members imagine that they belong together because this allegiance is more likely to ensure a shared future. The cosmopolitan community associated with Beck's risk society integrates in order to prevent a deterioration of on-going conditions and so as to minimise future harm and secure survival. The reflection on the interdependency among distant others becomes most apparent when risk becomes real, and the threat to survival is actual; when the need to respond is not theoretical and prospective, but urgent and concrete. So the moments when the cosmopolitan community is urgently summoned are moments of awareness of common vulnerability, when potential members are encouraged to imagine their mutual dependency, like in cases when catastrophes have already happened and caused mass violent deaths. Accordingly, this thesis empirically examines how mediated engagement with deadly catastrophes facilitates the construction of cosmopolitan community.

2.3.2.1 Competing visions of cosmopolitan solidarity

Beck (2011) acknowledges that, despite the utopian promise embedded in the concept, cosmopolitan community does not necessarily include all. Cosmopolitan community is socially constructed and its construction involves the use of (symbolic) power which envisions some groups as belonging, while excluding others. Moreover, there are multiple ways of thinking about and constructing cosmopolitan communities. According to Delanty, "cosmopolitanism refers to the multiplicity of ways in which the social world is constructed in different modernities" (Delanty, 2006, p. 27). The boundaries of the cosmopolitan community are contested and constantly change, on the basis of power dynamics and competing cultural models. Drawing on Touraine (1977), Delanty suggests studying society as a system of social relations that undergoes processual change, as a result of on-going debates and conflicts between competing claims and ideologies:

"One dimension of cosmopolitanism that is critical and not adequately recognized is the construction of peoplehood around competing visions of the social world: peoplehood is increasingly being defined in and through global communication with the result that the 'we' is counterposed not only by reference to a 'they' but by the abstract category of the world" (Delanty, 2006, p. 30, emphasis added).

The construction of a cosmopolitan community is a process of shaping the social world through engagement with and negotiation over its representations, including in times of crisis. It is a process of making sense of the social world, while recognising alternative readings of human history and multiple ways of understanding the social order. Social

science needs to be conscious of this plurality and to consider the various claims being made in this regard. In relation to this thesis, Delanty's argument invites a comparative research design that will account for the multivocality of the claims being made regarding the constitution of cosmopolitan community. I shall discuss this point later, in introducing the research design (Chapter Four).

2.3.2.2 Solidarity: towards a working definition

To recap the discussion on solidarity thus far, we have seen how solidarity is grounded in social theory *and* in moral-political philosophy. It is a complex term that refers both to functional aspects of community formation and to its political and moral motivations. Solidarity has a functional dimension that refers to the need of individuals to form social connections in order to maintain themselves. It has a political dimension that refers to the political allegiances that promote perceptions of similarities amongst members of a group and its distinction from other groups (as in the case of national communities). And solidarity has a moral dimension that concerns shared human vulnerability and the obligation to care for the other – any other – in recognition of mutual dependency and as a manifestation of responsibility. Some forms of solidarity are voluntary, as in the case of political movements. Other forms of solidarity are coercive, as in the case of the *enforced cosmopolitanisation* associated with the *risk society*. In addition, solidarity is based on a social imaginary and is a product of public deliberation on society's best interest and the engagement of its members with one another.

We can now see how cosmopolitanism as a sociological account is linked to cosmopolitanism as political and moral philosophy. Global risks are the occasions when the moral philosophy of cosmopolitanism, i.e., mutual commitment amongst citizens of the world, turns into a *cosmopolitan moment* that shapes social reality: "The idea of cosmopolitanism includes the idea that the self-reflexive global age offers space in which old cosmopolitan ideals could and should be translated and re-configured into concrete social realities and philosophy turned into sociology" (Beck & Sznaider, 2006, p. 6). Thus, Global risks are the occasions when social imaginaries regarding how citizens of the world fit together are cultivated and inspired through representations of vulnerability, suffering and death. In this regard, Cottle (1998) advises us to consider the media as central players in creating and shaping the cosmopolitan moment. Cottle points out the function of the media in facilitating the processes of claim-making regarding the nature of the cosmopolitan community and contestations around this. Today, the space of deliberation over the various propositions for imagining cosmopolitanism is the media.

The media is “a key arena in which such social contests over definitions, knowledge and risk consequences are played out” (Cottle, 1998, p. 8). This resonates with Silverstone’s (2006) work on the media as a space where global audiences come together. The media, according to Silverstone, is a space of appearance where the vulnerability of the other becomes visible and so potentially motivates the formation of a cosmopolitan community.

As this thesis focuses on the cultivation of cosmopolitan solidarity following mass violent death events, the working definition of solidarity in this thesis refers to *a sense of moral obligation to the wellbeing of vulnerable others on the basis of common humanity that is imposed on us when the other’s vulnerability appears in public*. This definition captures the moral imperative associated with the term, its inclusiveness and applicability to all humans and its dependence on engagement with the other in a shared public sphere. It also embeds the notion of representation as a means of appearance in a mediated public sphere.

This thesis is interested in the mechanisms the media use in order to engage publics with mass death events and cultivate solidarity with faraway others. This mechanism is the *ritual*. Accordingly, I now discuss the function of rituals and their performance, including in and by the media.

2.4 Rituals, solidarity and community

2.4.1 Rituals and community formation in pre-modern societies

“Ritual is a mechanism that coordinates living together by proposing some vision of how society is – or should be – ordered” (Rothenbuhler, 1998, p. x). The discussion of rituals goes back to the early days of anthropology, and focuses on the symbolic actions social institutions perform which put social life in order and offer reasons for why individuals belong together as a community. Rituals manifest what is perceived to be the communality of a group of individuals and so facilitate their imagination as belonging to a unified whole and having solidarity with one another. The rituals operate in two intertwined fashions – their actual performance and practice produces meaning in its own right, and this meaning is reinforced by the affirmation of a symbolic system. Together, these two aspects organise the community in space and in time and present to the community an image of itself (Couldry, 2002; Rothenbuhler, 1998; Sumiala, 2012). In other words, rituals have a dual function – they organise space and time and produce a

symbolic system during which codes and rules interplay with signs and symbols. The study of rituals requires the analysis of both content and conduct, both text and context, since they are not only how language and text represent concepts, but also the setting in which such representation appears; it is not only about what is being communicated, but also about the situation in which things are being communicated.

I first discuss below the meaning produced by the performance of rituals and then proceed to consider their production of a shared symbolic system.

2.4.1.1 Performativity

According to Durkheim (1995), rituals are symbolic participatory actions that summon individuals together in order to establish relationships between them and articulate their commitment to one another while drawing the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. Focusing on religious rituals, Durkheim argued that the performance of such collective activities “may serve the common function of drawing people together... [and] make them aware of their common dependency on the society of which they are part” (Durkheim, 1960, p. xviii). By creating a shared experience for participants, rituals encourage these participants to “reaffirm in common their common sentiment” (Durkheim, 1995, p. 427). Furthermore, rituals manifest the narrative of the community – how it came about, what it aspires to, and why its members will benefit from its maintenance. The rituals inspire devotion and loyalty to that social bond in the minds of every member of the community, and convince them that together they are more than just the sum of their parts. In other words, rituals work to shape the collective understanding of the essence of society – its identity, its values, its narrative and its boundaries (Couldry, 2002; Durkheim, 1995; Pantti & Sumiala, 2009; see also Cottle, 2006b; Rothenbuhler, 1998; Couldry & Rothenbuhler, 2007; Sumiala, 2012).

Another important condition for creating and maintaining solidarity is having a shared *space* where members of a community can directly engage with others. Durkheim (1995) argues that in small, pre-modern societies the totem was the space individuals gathered around, and that this gathering, which was reserved for special occasions, created the opportunity to form and manifest the bond between all members of a community. In this regard, rituals make a distinction in *time* between *sacred* and *profane*. This distinction is fundamental to establishing “the most important categories through which social life is organised” (Couldry, 2002, p. 6). Accordingly, Rothenbuhler (1998) explains that the shift from daily routine to the sacredness of holidays puts social life in order:

“Holiday and holy days require a break in the normal social routine. That time is usually used for reunion and reflection. People gather together and spend time thinking about their relations and about ideals and moral principles – about the way their world ought to be. By periodically requiring a timeout, assembling the disparate social members, and engaging in a celebration of the affective bonds and moral principles they share, ritual functions to reinvigorate the social order. All involved return to their daily rounds, strengthened and refreshed, reminded of their social role, the rules of their social order and their dependencies on one another” (Rothenbuhler, 1998, pp. 41–42).

Thus, the performance of rituals is a symbolic statement in itself. It creates a specific setting which bears symbolic meaning. As such, Rothenbuhler argues, rituals are communication without information. Later we shall see how death generates rituals which proclaim sacredness and encourages reflection on community ties.

2.4.1.2 Symbolic systems

Together with the performative function, rituals also have another important role, which is the production and confirmation of a shared symbolic system. According to the constructionist approach, as Orgad (2012) explains, “how we understand and experience ‘the world’ is inseparable from its construction in images and stories” (2012, p. 25). Means of representation such as language, images and sound carry meaning about “the world” or “reality” out there. Textual representations are assigned a meaning which claims to stand for so-called reality. Such representations function as signs or symbols as they become objects of signification which stand for mental or abstract concepts. These symbolic systems constantly surround us, enabling us to communicate with one another, yet the meaning they ascribe is contingent upon the context in which these signs appear. This meaning is not haphazard or arbitrary, especially when symbols and signs appear in a ritualistic context. When a textual representation appears in the context of a ritual, it acquires an additional meaning, which captures more than its indexical meaning (Hall, 1997, p. 22).

The production of text and its employment in the confined setting of ritual aims to fix its meaning and establish its symbolic assets. The process of association of concepts and code into a consensual sign is a process of power manifestation, as every such linkage is a rejection of alternative meanings or codes. By acting on representations of reality in the course of rituals, social institutions possess the power to act on reality itself (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 119). However, this use of symbolic power serves the purpose of the ritual, which is to achieve social solidarity. According to Durkheim, social solidarity

depends on the sharing of a symbolic system, and on the process of meaning-making which occurs throughout the rituals' attempts to reach a consensus on this system. Such consensus allows better coordination and integration. Bourdieu explains:

“Symbols are the instruments par excellence of ‘social integration’: as instruments of knowledge and communication, they make it possible for there to be a consensus on the meaning of the social world, a consensus which contributes fundamentally to the reproduction of the social order” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 166, emphasis in original).

Social order, as used in this thesis, refers to the structure of society and the power dynamics between individuals and groups as proposed to them by different social institutions. This includes the values and beliefs that a society holds, and the boundaries of legitimacy and belonging. The social order is established and maintained by the enactment of rituals that shape the ways in which individuals think, feel and experience themselves as social beings who are part of a social whole. I shall expand on this next.

2.4.2 Rituals and community in modern societies

Durkheim's arguments regarding the function of rituals refer to their performance by religious institutions in small communities. In modernity, it is the nation that has taken over the role of religion in manifesting the idea of “community” to its members (Thompson, 1995). Durkheim's approach to the function of rituals has been updated as a neo-Durkheimian account, which captures the changes in the scope of rituals and the communities they assemble. National rituals, like those performed during national holidays, national celebrations and collective memorial services, are performed simultaneously at various sites and their goal is to inspire the imagination of members of the community and make them aware of their dependency on one another while committing them to “the values which bound them all together” (Shils & Young, 1953, p. 74; in Lukes, 1975). These rituals also take advantage of a shared symbolic system, as they reiterate the community's symbols (like flags, hymns and national narratives), and the values they represent (Orgad, 2012).

The neo-Durkheimian account of rituals, which considers the function of rituals in modern communities, is often criticised for serving a functionalist understanding of society (Cottle, 2006b; Couldry, 2002; Lukes, 1975). According to the functionalist approach, societies are ordered by nature. Yet, while the functionalist approach considers rituals as promoting a “natural order” and so enabling harmonious function of society, critics of this approach recognise that there is more than one understanding of

the social order and consider rituals as a means of maintaining the prevailing social order, while silencing every attempt to change this order. The vision of the social bond, which is promoted by rituals, does not represent the “natural” order of things. Rather, it is the product of a deliberate political enactment of rituals as a manifestation of symbolic power. By producing and presenting a system of symbols, social institutions offer a representation of reality which serves as a means of establishing what is perceived to be the natural social order (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 119). The employment of symbolic power by social institutions aims to perpetuate their dominance and disguise the fact that society is organised – to the extent that it is – according to unequal relations of power (Alexander & Jacobs, 1998; Bourdieu, 1991; Couldry, 2002; Lukes, 1975; Thompson, 1995). This understanding of rituals in relation to power is *post-Durkheimian*. It understands society as essentially disordered and chaotic, yet put in order by the work of various social institutions that operate rituals to establish that very order (Couldry, 2002, p. 5).

Lukes (1975) is one of the critics of the neo-Durkheimian account. He argues that different political forces utilise rituals to underpin a particular proposition of the social order and to undermine all other competing propositions. Lukes contends that rituals showcase this to their participants through

“particular models or political paradigms of society and how it functions... [The ritual] helps to define as authoritative certain ways of seeing society: it serves to specify what in society is of special significance, it draws people’s attention to certain forms of relationships and activities – and at the same time, therefore, it deflects their attention from other forms, since every way of seeing is also a way of not seeing” (Lukes, 1975, p. 301).

In other words, rituals promote a selective presentation of the ties that hold society together and how it is ostensibly ordered. Values and the “social order”, according to the post-Durkheimian approach, are not fixed, and are the product of cultural negotiation. Moreover, by maintaining “*the* social order”, rituals work to establish “*a* social order”, while disguising a range of other possibilities. And so rituals maintain a social hierarchy that benefit some groups at the expense of others. For example, national celebrations usually present a very specific national narrative and hide any attempts to introduce alternative narratives; sports events are often a manifestation of dominant values (like competition or national heritage); the calendar is organised according to a very specific distinction between the sacred and the profane, which usually reflects the prevailing

national collective memory and religious practices, but, of course, there are competing calendars and other ways of marking religious and national holidays.

This corresponds with the constructionist approach according to which what is perceived to be the “natural” meaning of symbols and signs is the product of social construction. Means of representation do not have an intrinsic reference to the meaning they carry. Rather, the association of signs with meaning is a manifestation of power which reflects power dynamics and dominance, since every act of fixing meaning is also an act of rejecting other possible meanings (Hall, 1997; Orgad, 2012). Hence, social science needs to hold a critical view of rituals and their function, and to study them as a reflection of the power dynamics within society (Couldry, 2002).

Despite the differences, there is agreement between neo-Durkheimians and post-Durkheimians that the rituals performed in modern, complex communities are on a large scale and require some means of mediation. Both approaches, then, consider the role of the mass media in summoning vast imagined communities and facilitating communal gathering.

2.5 The mediatisation of rituals

Central to Durkheim’s theory of social integration is the understanding of the ritual as a means to put society in action. The ritual is a mechanism of social cohesion which achieves this goal by the practice of assembling all members of a community together in a shared public space, as a participatory activity that marks the distinction between sacred and profane and creates shared experience. In a modern community, the media fulfil this function. The media are the objects which individuals gather around to participate in religious, national or secular rituals (Cottle, 2006b; Sumiala, 2012). The emergence of technologies of communication enables us to overcome “the presumption that people must be physically gathered together to celebrate a ritual” (Rothenbuhler, 1998, p. 27). The congregation of audiences around media of communication establishes a shared centre where the community comes together to engage with its values and narratives (Couldry, 2002). This also resonates with the importance of a shared public sphere for cultivating solidarity, as discussed earlier (Calhoun, 2002a). And so engagement with the media and the information they deliver is a modern incarnation of pre-modern rituals, and this participatory action manifests and maintains the image of a community. How is the image of a community engendered and how is it maintained? By the abstract imagination of others participating in the same act *and* by representational

means which reiterate the narratives and values of the imagined community (Becker, 1995; Cottle, 2006b; Couldry, 2002; Dayan & Katz, 1992; Rothenbuhler, 1998; Sumiala, 2012).

Thus, the media, as an institution, have taken over the role of bringing people together in the light of a shared and common experience, a role that was previously assigned to religious or state institutions (Thompson, 1995). Hjarvard (2006) describes the emergence of the media as a prominent social player as a process of *mediatisation*:

“In earlier societies, social institutions like the family, school, and the church were the most important providers of information, tradition and moral orientation for the individual member of society. Today, these institutions have lost some of their former authority, and the media have to some extent taken over their role as providers of information and moral orientation, at the same time as the media have become society’s most important story-teller about society itself” (Hjarvard, 2006, p. 5).

Similarly, Livingstone (2009) argues that the concept of *mediatisation* captures the power claimed by the media to establish themselves as a dominant institution which shapes the social world. The process of mediatisation is a process in which

“the media not only get between any and all participants in society but also, crucially, annex a sizeable part of their power by mediatising – subordinating – the previously powerful authorities of government, education, the church, the family and so forth” (Livingstone, 2009, p. 6).

The concept of mediatisation is relatively new in media and communications research. It is defined in more than one way and it is still debated (Couldry, 2008; Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Deacon & Stanyer, 2014; Hepp, Hjarvard, & Lundby, 2010, 2015; Hjarvard, 2006, 2008, 2012). According to the *institutionalist* tradition, mediatisation refers to the processes society undergoes as social institutions interact with the media and negotiate their authority through the media, while adapting to the logic of the media. Within this approach, mediatisation applies mostly to journalism and the traditional mass media. According to the *social-constructivist* tradition, mediatisation refers to changes within society – namely everyday communication practices – which occur in the light of changes in technologies of communication. According to this approach, mediatisation applies mostly to digital media. However, in recent years the two traditions have opened up to each other, accepting and adopting each other’s ideas: the *institutionalist* tradition rethinks the concept of media logic and the *social-constructivist* tradition looks also at the institutional dimension of mediatisation (Hepp, 2013, p. 618).

In this thesis I draw on Hjarvard's (2006, 2008, 2012) observations regarding the process through which social institutions like family, school or religion lose their authority and the media become providers of information and moral orientation:

"Mediatisation designates the process through which core elements of a social or cultural activity (e.g. politics, teaching, religion etc.) assume media form. As a consequence, the activity is to a greater or lesser degree performed through interaction with a medium, and the symbolic content and the structure of the social and cultural activity are influenced by media environments which they gradually become more dependent upon" (Hjarvard, 2006, p. 5).

While, in his earlier definition, Hjarvard referred to mediatisation as a process where other institutions submit to media logic (Hjarvard, 2008, p. 113), his recent definition of the concept downplays the importance of media logic (Hepp, 2013):

"Mediatisation generally refers to the process through which core elements of a social or cultural activity (e.g., politics, religion, and education) become influenced by and dependent on the media. As a consequence, the activity is to a greater or lesser degree performed through interaction with various media, and the symbolic content and the structure of social and cultural activities are influenced by the *modus operandi* of the media, i.e., their institutional, aesthetic, and technological affordances" (Hjarvard, 2012, p. 30).

According to this approach, mediatisation applies not only to the experience of the world through practices of engaging with media of communication, but also to the construction of reality through the distribution of information and symbolic representation. In this regard, the media, as producers and disseminators of information and symbolic representation, possess the authority to impose meaning on events taking place in the world. This resonates with the *Post-Structuralist* approach, which argues that things in the world do not have any meaning as long as they are not represented (or that things come to mean something only when and as long they are represented). Our knowledge of the world is contingent upon how it has come to be represented, and therefore, whoever controls the means of producing representations possesses power over our knowledge of the world (Orgad, 2012). Later I develop this point in relation to the ways in which we come to know about the other and his or her fatal condition through the ways in which this reality is represented.

A prerogative which once was reserved for social institutions like the state or religion is the performance ritual. Focussing on news, Cottle (2006b) points to the *mediatisation of*

rituals and describes how the performance of the news media bears ritualistic properties which transcend the basic function of transmitting information about events taking place in the world. The mediatisation of rituals refers to the process by which the media have moved in and taken over the role of performing rituals, and in so doing, invoke and sustain “public solidarities based on ideas and feelings (collective sentiments) about how society should or ought to be” (Cottle, 2006b, p. 416). Cottle defines *mediatised rituals* as follows:

“[Mediatised rituals] are those exceptional and performative media phenomena that serve to sustain and/or mobilise collective sentiments and solidarities on the basis of symbolisation and a subjunctive orientation to what should or ought to be” (Cottle, 2006b, p. 415).

Thus, by producing and circulating (exceptional) news, the media do more than reporting or representing. Rather, the media perform an active role of promoting normative values and shapes or sustaining prevailing perceptions of how a community is or should be ordered and how it should function. Cottle outlines a typology of mediatised rituals which includes media disasters, and Sumiala echoes this and argues that “one of the prominent areas of mediatized rituals in modern media-saturated society is death” (Sumiala, 2014, p. 943).

Given my interest here in the function of the media in summoning solidarity and providing moral orientation, I find the concept of mediatised rituals constructive for the purpose of this thesis, and it invites a further consideration of the performance of rituals in and through the media, to which we turn next.

2.5.1 Media rituals

The discussion of the performance of rituals in and by the media refers to various media performances which vary from mundane, everyday media rituals to exceptional mediatised ceremonies (Cottle, 2006b; Couldry, 2002; Dayan & Katz, 1992; Rothenbuhler, 1998; Sumiala, 2012). There are various terms associated with rituals and the media. There are also some controversies between different scholars regarding the definitions of these terms (see, for example Cottle, 2006b, 2008; Couldry & Rothenbuhler, 2007). However, scholars engaged in this discussion seem to agree that the media create an important space where social life forms, and that engagement with the media and with the content they deliver is a contemporary manifestation of the

function of the totem, i.e. an act of connecting to society's centre and engagement with its values and members.

Couldry (2002) explains that:

“The term ‘media rituals’ refers to the whole range of situations where media themselves ‘stand in’, or appear to ‘stand in’, for something wider, something linked to the fundamental organisational level on which we are, or imagine ourselves to be connected as members of a society” (Couldry, 2002, p. 4).

The term *media rituals* refers, according to Couldry (2002), to the various forms of media performance that deliver the world to us, while presenting a certain understanding of the social order. It also captures the centrality of the media to engagement with the world and with its inhabitants. News, for example, is a genre which reinforces the social order, as its consumption is an ordinary matter while its content usually points to transgressions of the order. In addition, the news media have the authority to switch from profane to sacred and vice versa (see also Becker, 1995; Cottle, 2006b; Sumiala, 2012).

Thus, Couldry's definition points to the function of news in giving meaning to events taking place in the world and how these rituals nourish the imagination of the connections between members of a society. This definition of media rituals draws on Carey's (1992) approach of *communication as ritual*: “a ritual view of communication is directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared belief” (Carey, 1992, p. 18). The production and circulation of information and other symbolic means draws the boundaries of legitimacy and transgression, of inclusion and exclusion, and establishes hierarchies of significance and belonging. The boundary work of mediated rituals is the result of an aspect which refers to the possibility of connecting to the media and participating in the ritual by consuming its content. It also refers to the boundary work of representation, which draws on the marking of difference between objects and concepts that fix their meaning in association with mutually exclusive categories like “us” and “them”, “here” and “there” (Chouliaraki, 2006a). Rituals promote a certain understanding of the world that is intelligible to some but not to others (Orgad, 2012, p. 22).

This boundary work fosters an understanding with regard to who is part of society and who is not. Media rituals inform the sense of belonging while delimiting the boundaries of solidarity. They articulate who deserves to be a member of society and enjoy its privileges, and whose membership is illegitimate. As such, rituals foster not only consolidation, but also excommunication (Alexander & Jacobs, 1998; Carey, 1998). Hence, the study of rituals needs to consider rituals not only as a means of cultivating solidarity amongst members of a community, but also as a mechanism which excludes certain groups and positions them outside the boundaries of care and belonging. For example, the marking of certain religious celebrations by the media, while disregarding other religious celebrations, works to integrate one religious group and exclude others.¹

The ritual approach to communication is not limited to special occasions or to celebrations, and applies also to mundane engagement with the media. The latter is the *everyday media ritual*, and the former is the *exceptional media ritual*, often referred to as a *media event*.

2.5.1.1 *Everyday media rituals*

The experience of the everyday has immense importance for the ways in which we understand the world – and the social setting – we live in. Silverstone (2006) explains:

“Everyday life is the realm of experience. It is where lives are led, where bodies are born and die, where humanity is constructed: identity, community, connectivity, the relationships between self and other. The everyday is the common ground. It is where the social emerges, where values are tested, and beliefs fought over. It is where action takes place. It is where the struggles for existence, both material and symbolic, are waged, where certainties are sought and securities protected... And now the everyday includes media. And the media’s presence in everyday life... is not neutral” (Silverstone, 2006, pp. 108–109).

Everyday engagement with the media can (sometimes) enhance profound social and political changes, like the emergence of nationalism. In his work, Anderson (1983) shows how the development of printing technologies and the emergence of the press industry inspired the imaginations of readers as belonging to an imagined community due to their engagement with everyday media. Readers of newspapers not only learned the same information about the world, but, more importantly, shared the same “ceremony” of news reading. This, according to Anderson, facilitated their imagination of being part of a

¹ See, for example, a recent debate around placing a Menorah in news studios in Israel during Chanukah (Ronen, 2013; Sharir, 2013; Shemesh, 2013).

large community whose members they did not know, “yet in the mind of each [member of the community – TM] lives the image of the communion” (Anderson, 1983, p. 6). Accordingly, Carey (1992) views “reading a newspaper less as sending or gaining information and more as attending a mass, a situation in which nothing new is learned but in which a particular view of the world is portrayed and confirmed” (Carey, 1992, p. 20). This was accelerated with the invention and development of electronic media – namely television – that condensed space and time and offered a multi-sensual simultaneous experience for large audiences based on connectivity and media consumption rather than on shared physical space (Dayan & Katz, 1992; see also Volkmer, 2003).

The media are not only the modern totem around which people come together as a community on special occasions; the media are also the modern “campfire” people gather around every day to engage with the world and be part of their peers’ experiences. The content delivered by the media – the representations they produce and circulate – manifests the values it holds and narrates its narrative(s). It is the media performance that maintains community (Couldry, 2002). This engagement with the media is, in fact, a participation in a mundane, *everyday media ritual*. Everyday media rituals refer, then, to the ways in which engagement with the media occurs in daily life. They refer to the role the media play in bringing the world to us and giving meaning to it through practices, language, and images.

Everyday media rituals are sometimes hidden or go unnoticed, but their very existence is part of the construction of the “familiar” and therefore the safe and the stable (Carey, 1992). Everyday media rituals maintain a “comfort zone” for their audience. The media “provide a framework for the resolution of ambiguity, the reduction of insecurity, and the creation of a degree of comfort” (Silverstone, 2002a, p. 764; see also 2002b). In this respect, news consumption is “a custom serving a feeling of security in which the content of news lacks importance” (Nordenstreng, 1972, p. 391; in Becker, 1995).

Everyday media rituals maintain an everyday routine, however the media, as an institution, have the authority to define the transition from daily routine to the extraordinary, and this is most evident when performing media events.

2.5.1.2 Media events

Following Carey (1992), Couldry argues that if the media have a role in maintaining society through time, “then media events are the times ... when the media does this

most actively” (2002, p. 55). *Media events* are exceptional media rituals that are, more often than not, ritualised events that take place outside the media, and with which the public engages through the media. Such events “are instances of cultural performance ... recognizable for participants and observers as expressing societal values through symbolic forms” (Becker, 1995, p. 629).

The term *media events* is mostly associated with the seminal work of Dayan and Katz (1992), who coined it to describe the “festive viewing” of television when the nation, or the world, comes together in front of the television set. The term refers to those events that “audiences recognize as an invitation – even a command – to stop their daily routines and join in a holiday experience” (1992, p. 1). Dayan and Katz define “media events” as a television genre that interrupts the daily routine of television broadcasting, and is monopolistic, i.e. all the channels cover the same event at the same time. Media events are broadcasted live and follow events that are organised outside the media. They are pre-planned and usually celebrate reconciliation and not conflict. Media events summon a vast audience that acknowledges that viewing the event on television is mandatory.

The function of this television genre is demarcating the transition from ordinary to extraordinary and bringing society together, not only as a community of spectators but also as a community of participants concentrated around the same centre and taking part in a common experience. “These broadcasts *integrate* societies in a collective heartbeat and evoke a *renewal of loyalty* to the society and its legitimate authority” (Dayan & Katz, 1992, p. 9, emphasis in original). In this regard, what matters more is the switch into the media event mode, whereas the question how the event was represented becomes secondary.² Dayan and Katz identify three types of media events: (1) *contests*, such as sports matches or elections, when two or more parties compete; (2) *conquests*, in which the protagonists reach new frontiers and accomplishments like the first man on the moon; and (3) *coronations*, which are the “changing of the guard” or the rites of passage of the great. These types of event are historic in nature and the masses feel as if they must take part in them, and do so by logging on to the media.

As we shall see throughout this thesis, the concept of media events is central to the discussion of the coverage of mass death events, and therefore we need an up-to-date

² Take, for example, the media coverage of the terror attacks of September 11, 2001 – the format of the coverage (live continuous reports from the scene) established the importance of the events and this mattered more than how the events were represented.

understanding thereof. Since the concept of “media events” was coined and theorised, Dayan and Katz have revisited their initial account (Dayan, 2009; Katz & Liebes, 2007), and other scholars have come up with their own accounts of “media events” (Alexander & Jacobs, 1998; Carey, 1998; Couldry, 2002; Couldry & Hepp, 2009; Liebes, 1998; Weimann, 1987). These qualifications are especially relevant to death-related events, since they pertain to the planning of media events, their function as integrative or disruptive and the media ecology in which they are performed. I introduce these points here briefly, and will further develop them in the next chapter.

According to the original definition of the term, media events are pre-planned, and the notice of their time and place – inside and outside the media – is circulated in advance. Yet, this aspect of the definition has been played down in recent years as various scholars have pointed out that, despite the fact that certain events are not pre-planned by the media, their coverage by the media is formulated and scripted, and they function as media events even though they were not pre-planned (Liebes, 1998; Liebes & Kampf, 2007; Weimann & Winn, 1994). This point has been raised specifically in relation to death events like terror attacks, but it is equally valid in relation to armed conflicts and natural disasters.

Media events, as mass rituals, delineate the boundaries of a community, but inasmuch as these rituals consolidate those included, they also work to estrange those excluded. Whereas the original account of “media events” focused on the television genre as cultivating integration and reconciliation, later accounts have pointed to its conflictual aspect, and the opportunity it creates to counteract hegemonic perceptions and narratives (Couldry & Hepp, 2009; Dayan, 2008; Price, 2008). Special attention has been given to disruptive events such as terror attacks, wars, and natural disasters that pose a threat to society and expose its fragility (Katz & Liebes, 2007).

In some cases, some rituals operate to challenge the prevailing social order. In some cases, media events reflect the power struggle between elite and non-elite groups, between those authorised to exercise power and those challenging the prevailing power structure (Cottle, 2006b). Examples of such media events are demonstrations and protests, which, by definition, aim to alter and undermine the prevailing social order and promote an alternative way of organising society. In some (rare) cases the media are a central player in constituting the “eventness” of the protest and giving voice to its

claims.³ In such cases we find more than one narrative that expresses society's story and values, and more than one proposition for how to make sense of society (see also Alexander & Jacobs, 1998).

Since the publication of Dayan and Katz's work on media events, the media landscape has changed dramatically. At the time when this term was introduced, there was a fairly low number of television channels, most of them operated within a national territory, and only a few with global services. Television channels were, literally, broadcast services (as opposed to "narrow-cast"), transmitting their relay to a broad audience confined within national borders. At that time, most of the households with television had only one set, usually installed in the living room. Since then, the number of television channels has increased, the variety of voices they represent has become richer, and the emergence of cable and satellite television and of the internet has introduced new rules to the field. In addition, today, there are new technologies and new devices that offer new ways of consuming mediated material. If, in the past, families gathered around the television set in the living room to watch the news, today we can—and many do—watch the news also on personal computers and mobile devices. The updated understanding of media events will serve me later in this thesis in relation to the coverage of mass violent death events.

2.6 Death rituals

Earlier, I offered a definition of solidarity as a sense of moral obligation to the wellbeing of vulnerable others, on the basis of a common humanity imposed on us when the other's vulnerability appears in public. Violent death – and, more precisely, the representation of violent death – exposes human vulnerability and reminds us that this vulnerability is a common and basic feature that can bring – or ought to bring – people together, as a manifestation of solidarity (Collins, 2004; Hawdon, Oksanen, & Räsänen, 2012; Hawdon, Ryan, & Agnich, 2010; Turkel, 2002). In this section, then, I discuss the significance of death for reflecting on questions of solidarity and community.

The occurrence of death, and especially mass, violent, unexpected death, creates insecurity, confusion and fear which demonstrate the fragility of the social fabric. Therefore violent death creates special conditions that facilitate consolidation in ways

³ The so-called "Arab Spring" protest, the 2011 social justice protest in Israel, the "Occupy movement", and the "England riots" are only a few examples of such cases, in which the event took place simultaneously on the streets and in the media.

that are less feasible under any other circumstances (Sumiala, 2012). Coping with death through rituals is not only a private process the individual partakes in, but also a public one, a process that summons collective engagement with society's fundamental values and structure:

“The study of death rituals is a positive endeavour because, regardless of whether custom calls for festive or restrained behaviour, the issue of death throws into relief the most important cultural values by which people live their lives and evaluate their experience” (Huntington & Metcalf, 1991, p. 25).

What concerns me in this thesis is not how individuals cope with death or how the collective coping with death helps individuals in processing and overcoming their loss. Rather, I am interested in the function of death rituals in giving meaning to death and facilitating social processes. I am interested in whether and how death rituals hold society in times of crisis, as they offer society a reflection of itself, as they manifest and reinforce the interdependency between its members and their commitment to one another; or as they challenge prevailing social order and allow ruptures which evoke and enhance instability and disorder. These functions are products of ritual performance and therefore the study of these issues requires an analysis of the ways in which social institutions manage engagement with death in terms of the rituals they perform and the texts they produce.

2.6.1 Liminality

Van Gennep (1960) suggests that we study death rituals as *rites of passage*. These rites usually mark the transition of an individual (or a group) from one status to another, while demonstrating society's values and strengthening its institutions. However, unlike other rites of passage such as those that mark coming of age, weddings and births, which are constructed as positive events, death rituals follow tragedies or traumas and are not considered felicitous events.

Rites of passage, according to Turner (1969), are composed of three phases: *separation*, *liminal phase* and *reintegration*. The first phase is a detachment from the old status and a move into the liminal phase where the conventions related to the old status are suspended. In the last phase, the new status is established and the individual and the community are reorganised and reintegrated in the light of the transition.

At face value, death rituals assemble a community in order to separate from the dead. The participants accompany the dead in their trajectory from dying to afterlife. Yet, death rituals are for the living and not for the dead. Unlike other rites of passage that follow a transition and reintegration of living members of the community, death rituals are a separation from the dead member of the community and its reintegration without the dead member: “It is a transitional period for the survivors, and they centre it through rites of separation and emerge from it through rites of reintegration into society” (Van Gennep, 1960, p. 147). Thus, death rituals, as rites of passage, follow the transition of the community as a whole:

“The livings pass through a liminal phase during which society is reintegrated without the lost member. The liminal phase has both a sociological dimension, concerned with rents in the social fabric, and a symbolic or psychological one, having to do with society’s image of itself” (Huntington & Metcalf, 1991, p. 29).

These, then, are the main functions of death rituals:

2.6.1.1 The healing process

The performance of death rituals plays an important role in facilitating a healing process in the aftermath of death. These rituals guide their participants in processing pain and coping with the loss – personally and collectively. The rituals are performed by various social institutions, including the media (Kitch & Hume, 2008; Reimers, 2003; Sumiala, 2012). The ritualised engagement with death evokes grief as a collective sentiment of pain and sorrow. The public manifestation of grief expresses the damage caused to the social fabric and the collective efforts to mend it.

On the personal level, death rituals equip the bereaved with a framework for managing their emotions and processing the loss. They help the bereaved to undergo the various phases of grief and mourning, as they ease their farewell to the dead, recognition of the loss and acceptance of the new situation (Averill, 1979; Malkinson, 2001; in Duncan, 2012). Death rituals also help the living to handle fear of death as they work to “tame” death by juxtaposing the chaos and uncertainty associated with death and the rigidly scripted death ritual (Hertz, 1960). Hence, the shared experience of grief and mourning of those attending death rituals strengthens the remaining members of the community and encourages them to carry on despite the separation from the missing members (Hanusch, 2010; Hawdon & Ryan, 2011; Walter, 1994)

2.6.1.2 *Establishing boundaries of inclusion and exclusion*

Death rituals are a last gesture to honour the memory of the person who has died. The performance of death rituals establishes the value of those who have died and puts death within a broader historical and social context. Death rituals introduce the dead to the community for the last time and articulate reasons for why their death matters to their community. In this regard, death rituals do much more than just easing the coping with loss – they organise the social world by delineating boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. Death rituals offer an understanding of who belongs to the community (and who does not), while stressing the continuation of the community in time, from one generation to another (Walter, 1994). The performance of death rituals informs the imagination of their participants as to how and why they hold together as a community. It reminds them of the bond that holds them together.

By performing death rituals, society breaks through from profane to sacred and responds to the “eventness” of death. This acknowledges that something distinctive has happened. Death rituals mark death as something that requires attention. They make it something important, something we cannot ignore, and something that cannot go unnoticed. By the performance of such rituals death is registered. This symbolic gesture confirms the worthiness of the dead and the validity of their community membership. Put differently, when death rituals do not take place, death is not registered; and when life that ceased to exist is not registered as death, such life loses its qualification as a meaningful life, as a life that matters for the community. The lack of response to someone’s death places him or her outside the boundaries of the community. It denies the recognition of the dead person as a worthy member of the community. Thus, the response to death – how society reacts in light of death, whether it performs mourning rituals or not, is a mechanism that defines who qualifies as a member of the community and who does not.

2.6.1.3 *Confirming solidarity*

The rituals following death events restore security and reaffirm social bonds and solidarity amongst the members of the community (Hertz, 1960). They summon the community together and provide “an opportunity for the different strands of a community, potentially fragmented by a crisis, to stand together and publicly demonstrate their fundamental unity” (Doka, 2003, p. 180 in Hawdon and Ryan, 2011). By creating a sense of togetherness and rearticulating the interdependency among members of a community, the rituals serve as a reminder of the unwritten commitment

members of a community have to one another in saving and securing the lives of their peers. These collective gatherings remind their participants that they are not alone; that they are part of a community that cares for its members and works together to protect them. Additionally, the performance of death rituals articulates a moral stance vis-à-vis criminal acts (whether intended or the outcome of negligence) and the demand to respond to them (Reimers, 2003; Seale, 1998).

How do death rituals claim solidarity? By summoning the community and directing its attention to the vulnerability of its members. The appearance of death and its representations in public signals the other's vulnerability and encourages participants to position themselves in relation to it (Chouliaraki, 2013). This point will be further developed throughout this thesis.

2.6.1.4 Self-reflection

The liminal phase is a phase of self-reflexivity, of detachment from the prevailing order and re-examining questions of identity and solidarity. During the liminal phase the community is encouraged to reflect on the ties that hold it together and to engage with questions about who they are and what their relations to one another are. According to Butler (2004), when we engage with death, "something about who we are is revealed, something that delineates the ties we have to others, that shows us that these ties constitute what we are, ties or bonds that compose us" (2004, p. 22). Furthermore, death invites an opportunity to reflect on human vulnerability. It creates the condition for us to manage our feelings of fear and dependency as we experience pain and grieve for the loss. In this regard, the engagement with feelings of grief and mourning guides us to identify our own vulnerability and to locate potential benefactors. We understand our dependency on others and others' dependency on us.

2.6.1.5 Negotiating the social order

And yet, inasmuch as rites of passage reinforce the prevailing order, the liminal phase can bring an opportunity for a change. According to Turner (1969), the liminality associated with death and other moments of crisis is indeed a moment when the prevailing social order is suspended and well established social categories are blurred and set aside. This is a moment that prescribes the re-examination of the prevailing order in light of a new reality. The liminal phase allows the emergence of an alternative social order in which the hierarchies are eroded and all members of society become equal. Turner calls this temporal reorganisation *communitas*, and suggests thinking about such moments of crisis as opportunities for the emergence of a more egalitarian

society (Turner, 1969, p. 96; see also Couldry, 2002, p. 33). Based on the understanding of the social order as a social construction, it follows that death rituals are not simply a restoration of what is perceived as *the order*, but a negotiation over it; they open up the possibility of introducing a new order.

Moreover, a violent and “unnatural” death suggests some negligence and inadequate functioning of society, or of some institutions within society, which led to a failure in protecting the lives of individuals or groups. This failure creates mistrust and destabilises society, and the rituals that follow work to regain trust, repair the “social fabric” and reassert the commitment to common survival (Hawdon et al., 2010; Hertz, 1960). Yet, such occasions can also expose the unequal measures allocated to protecting lives and the differences in the symbolic meanings given to various deaths. This inequality can evoke tensions and catalyse unrest. Thus, the collective engagement with death is a defining moment, as it can enhance social solidarity and downplay tension and contestations, on the one hand, or it can galvanise social instability, on the other hand (Cottle, 2006b; Couldry & Hepp, 2009). It is a fragile moment that can strengthen society in its efforts to overcome trauma, but it can also be an explosive moment when tensions erupt and coherence is eroded.⁴

2.6.2 Death rituals and the imagined community

Death bears another important function in organising society, which is the formation and maintenance of large imagined communities such as nations. The formation of modern nation-states is based on a cultivated solidarity that people share with one another through – amongst other things – the public representations of death. Anderson (1983) provides a vivid example of the centrality of death to the construction of the national imagined community in his argument regarding the symbolic meaning of the *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*. This public monument represents all the citizens of the nation-state who died on behalf of their nation. The tomb is a symbol that binds individuals into a sense of belonging and sacrifice. This is the fundamental idea behind the imagined community that invites individuals to feel as part of a greater whole, as part of a community whose members they do not personally know, yet they are willing to sacrifice their life for them and for the communion that holds them together. This is, perhaps, the ultimate act of solidarity – a willingness to die for the sake of (unknown) others and to secure the continuity of “the nation”. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier illustrates the

⁴ For example, the Tunisian uprising (2010) and the Palestinian Intifadas are example of death cases that have ignited unrest.

way death is utilised by societies to confirm their cohesion and the commitment their members have to one another.

By the same token, national memorial days are another example of the link between mass, public death rituals and community construction (Kitch & Hume, 2008). National death rituals like those performed during memorial days or following the deaths of national leaders are occasions that bring all members of a (national) community together. These are high days of national “celebration” and commemoration. Rituals like those during memorial days present and reaffirm the national narratives and values that ostensibly unite the members of a national community, while disregarding competing narratives and values. Other national death rituals, such as those enacted following the deaths of national leaders, often commemorate the deceased leader and his or her legacy and highlight how this legacy is embedded in the national legacy. Such rituals work to constitute collective memory and reinforce a national narrative that underpins the continuity of the community in time (Peri, 2000; Zelizer, 1992).⁵ These rituals often take place near national monuments or landmarks, and in order to reach vast publics they also take place in the media. The rituals are often ceremonial, and the public participates in the ceremony by logging on to the media. The next chapter further explores the role of the media in engaging the public with death.

2.7 Conclusions

This chapter began with possible answers to the question of what holds societies together, drawing on several works on solidarity as a central explanation. The chapter explores the various dimensions of solidarity and how rituals facilitate solidarity in pre-modern times and in contemporary society, when the media become a central player in performing rituals at national and global levels, and as the space where these rituals take place grows. Nowadays, we increasingly engage with the world through the media. The media bring representations of the world to our living rooms (or mobile devices), informing our imagination, and enabling us to see ourselves as part of a broader social structure. The media constitute a public space where relationships between “us” and the other are negotiated and come to terms. These relations with the other are not contingent (only) upon physical proximity or pre-fixed categories. Rather, they are fluid and contingent on connectivity and engagement with the media. This engagement with

⁵ Other occasions when ceremonial death rituals take place in the media are the deaths of celebrities like pop or rock stars and other leading public figures (Sumiala, 2012).

the media (the technology and the rituals they perform) creates a distinction between “order” and “disorder” and between sacred and profane; it gives meaning to the world and offers a way for the individual to understand the world around him or her; it positions the individual vis-à-vis others and defines his or her relations to them on the basis of different circles and hierarchies of belonging; and it creates the basis for social solidarity (Calhoun, 2002a; Collins, 2004; Couldry, 2002; Sumiala, 2012). The engagement with the other through the media transcends national boundaries, as contemporary media ecology informs our cosmopolitan imagination, reminding us of the existence of other groups who inhabit the world and their connection to us, and so enables the construction of a cosmopolitan community. Silverstone (2006) brought all these dimensions together in his argument about the mediated public space where contemporary social life is shaped and takes place:

“The mediated public space [is] where contemporary political life increasingly finds its place, both at national and global level, and where the materiality of the world is constructed through (principally) electronically communicated public speech and action... [The mediated public space is a space] of appearance in which the world appears and in which the world is constituted in its worldliness, and through which we learn about those who are and who are not like us. It is through communications conducted through... [the media] that we are constructed as human (or not)...” (Silverstone, 2006, p. 31).

The media creates a public space where individuals come together as a community, and this “coming together” is subject to political struggle. This mediated public space is where the unfamiliar becomes, to a certain extent, familiar. This is where the relationships between groups and individuals are negotiated and articulated. Drawing on the points made earlier by Calhoun (2002a) and others, the maintenance of a shared space of deliberation is central for nourishing solidarity, and the media is precisely such a space. This is the space where the other appears before us; this is the space where he or she can voice their views and feelings and engage in deliberation over the prevailing values, narratives and concerns of society.

In the contemporary global sphere, engagement with the world takes place in and through the media. The ways in which we make sense of the world and give meaning to its happenings is open to discussion and contingent upon a multidirectional symbolic exchange and information flow. The media, as a political arena, is not limited to national boundaries and local players, but is a multinational arena with both local and global

players. And so what goes on in the media reflects the power dynamics between the global and the local, between the mainstream and the margins (Silverstone, 2006, p. 30).

The present thesis draws on three theoretical threads – sociological, political, and ethical – to explore the ways in which death is mediatised and the extent to which such mediatisation promotes the construction of a cosmopolitan community. The thesis focuses on the mediatisation of death as a means of cultivating solidarity while acknowledging the power struggle that takes place over the meaning of death by producing and performing death rituals. Moreover, it explores the moral implications of the representation of death and the ethical solicitation that *death-related media rituals* make. Hence, the next chapter focuses on *death-related media rituals* as a prism through which to reflect on questions of power and solidarity in a global age.

Chapter 3: The mediatiation of death

3.1 Introduction

The current thesis focuses on death rituals as a prism through which to study the power dynamics within society and the extent to which these rituals promote solidarity and social cohesion. The previous chapter explored the role news media play in contributing to constituting communities. Today, technologies of communication operate beyond the nation, facilitating the construction of a mediated public space whose boundaries are not based on national or even cultural identity, but on connectivity (Cottle & Rai, 2008). The mediated public sphere is cacophonous and observes a multidirectional, uneven, information flow (Rai & Cottle, 2007). It serves as a site of contestation where a power struggle takes place. In this chapter, I focus on the mediatiation of mass violent death events in order to give an account of questions of (de)humanisation, identity, solidarity and power on a global level. Through the prism of crisis journalism, we can discern the prevailing ideologies and perceptions regarding the global social order and the propositions concerning hierarchies of place and human life that the news promote by privileging some disasters and disregarding others (Chouliaraki, 2010a; Cottle, 2009; Joye, 2009). In other words, it is precisely through the prism of news on death that we can capture the power struggle and the political and ethical claims regarding the solidarity, care and responsibility that citizens of the world should have for one another.

This chapter explores the mediatiation of death, and proposes an adaptation of this theoretical grounding to the study of news about death. Drawing on Butler (2004, 2009), this thesis takes grief as a moral-political stance that reflects accountability and ethical relations. As such, grief is a telling prism through which to reflect on how death is registered and on the meaning that rituals ascribe to various deaths. Based on this understanding of grief, the present thesis uses the concept of *grievability* (ibid) to reflect on questions such as whose death counts as *death* and how grief informs a sense of responsibility and belonging. This concept inspired the analytical framework which I will introduce in Chapter Four. It unpacks the ways in which remote death becomes meaningful and the extent to which death-related media rituals demand moral judgement and construct solidarity on a global level.

The chapter begins by exploring the mediated public sphere as a terrain of global political contestation, and explains why the study of the mediatiation of death in a global age requires a comparative framework. It then discusses the *mediatiation of*

death and the role of the media in performing death-related rituals. It deals first with the performative aspects of these rituals and then proceeds to the representational aspects. The chapter concludes with the moral questions that arise in relation to the mediated encounter with death, and their social and political consequences.

3.2 Death-related media rituals in a global age

Events which receive simultaneous global media attention can potentially facilitate the emergence of a global public sphere and lay the foundations for cosmopolitan citizenship (Volkmer, 2003). Since the notion of cosmopolitanism is contested, we need to consider the media rituals that follow mass death events as a reflection of a power struggle between different worldviews. In the global age, inasmuch as these media rituals bear the potential of global integration amongst citizens of the world, they also bear the potential for contestations. The media, as a global political arena, is not a univocal sphere, dominated by one discourse and one narrative. Rather, it is a multi-vocal, heterogeneous sphere. The emergence of relatively new media organisations and technologies has the potential to give voice to the voiceless. These voices present counter narratives to the already prevailing ones, in the hope of setting up a balanced global agenda and a balanced media sphere (Couldry & Hepp, 2009; Figenschou, 2010; Sakr, 2007; Thussu, 2007; and others).

Couldry and Hepp (2009) advise us that when we examine media events from a global perspective we need to keep in mind that these media rituals do not necessarily affirm shared values, since there is not always a consensus on the meaning that events embody. An event may be constructed in different ways by different actors on different platforms, even if its coverage is based on identical sources (Hafez, 2011). The meaning ascribed to events and the values they appear to validate may vary across cultures and as times change. Therefore, media events as grand media rituals cannot be perceived only as an integrative mechanism, but also as a means of manifesting competing values and perceptions and an ideal social order. In fact, Couldry and Hepp express a rather disenchanted view of the functions of media events – and especially negative events – in a global age:

“When we consider outstanding media events in their transcultural character it becomes obvious that this performativity cannot be related to just *one* power centre. Especially if we consider conflict-oriented media events such as terror attacks and wars... we reach an understanding of the

variety of interest groups and power discourses related to the performance of these events” (Couldry & Hepp, 2009, p. 11; emphasis in original).

In the same vein, Dayan (2008) mentions that when he and Katz wrote “Media Events” (1992) they thought of broadcast television as “the medium of national integration”, but that today, “as new media technology multiplies the number of channels, television has become a medium of segmentation, and television-as-we-knew-it continues to disappear” (Dayan, 2008, p. 393). Katz and Liebes concur: because of the multiplicity of television channel and the competition amongst them, “they are less likely to band together, or to join hands with the establishment – as once they did – in national celebrations” (2007, p. 159).

Technological developments have changed the ways in which we, in the West, watch news. Today, not only can we watch news everywhere, we can watch the news from everywhere. Satellite channels, global media organisations, citizen journalism, and the internet permit us today not to be confined to watching “national” channels, and hence the experience of watching the news is something that transcends national borders (Cottle & Rai, 2008; Rai & Cottle, 2007). Accordingly, media events summon communities of spectators that stretch beyond the nation, communities of spectators that share the same means of communication regardless of their national affiliation and geographical location. This is what Couldry and Hepp (2009) call the “deterritorialisation” of media events, which they link with processes of globalisation (2009, p. 10; see also Kyriakidou, 2008). The distribution of media products is no longer bound to a geographic territory, but to connectivity.⁶ The changes in the media sphere are not only technological, but also content-laden. The emergence of new transnational television channels has created a more diverse and multi-vocal media sphere. The flow of information is no longer unidirectional, and non-Western television channels challenge the (former) hegemony of Western channels (Figenschou, 2010; Painter, 2008; Samuel-Azran, 2009; Thussu, 2007).

Even in cases when the whole world is watching the same event, its representation may vary across cultures or channels, and even if the means of representation are similar (different channels often use the same raw materials), their meaning and contextualisation may still differ according to cultural and political factors (Hafez, 1999, 2011). In other words, in a global age, the same event, represented by similar materials,

⁶ For a more conservative account, see Hafez (2007).

can acquire different meanings in different media outlets.⁷ Couldry and Hepp contend, then, that “it seems highly unlikely that a ‘global we’ in a media event might exist” (2009, p. 11). Instead, they propose, that we should consider media events as a process of construction and reconstruction of many “we”. Thus, following Dayan’s revisited proposition, television, and the media in general, can enhance segmentation and not necessarily integration.

This assertion echoes Silverstone’s argument that the mediated public space is a contested space: “The presumption of uniformity or homogeneity within global mediated culture is palpably absurd. It is a cacophonous space” (Silverstone, 2006, p. 12). Similarly, Thussu argues that “the global media landscape in the first decade of the twenty-first century represents a complex terrain of multi-vocal, multimedia and multi-directional flows” (Thussu, 2007, p. 12; see also Hafez, 1999).

The flow of news is dominated by Anglo-American media organisations, but in recent years we have witnessed the emergence of non-Western media organisations that engender a contra-flow of information (Cottle & Rai, 2008; Rai & Cottle, 2007). The multi-directional flow of information is reflected not only in the proliferation of a variety of news outlets, but also in the appropriation of materials from one news organisation by another (though only to a limited extent) (Samuel-Azran, 2010; Wessler & Adolphsen, 2008). According to Sakr (2007), “contra-flow in its full sense would seem to imply not just reversed or alternative media flows, but a flow that is also counter-hegemonic” (2007, p. 117). The transnational non-Western media organisations “set up with the explicit intention of challenging the ‘BBC/CNN approach’ to world events” (Painter, 2008, p. 1). Thus, the significance of this phenomenon is not only due to the multi-directional flow, it is also because of the new voices that it brings into the public space (see also Figenschou, 2010). And indeed, in the global media environment we can identify at least two dominant voices that tell the leading narratives of the global sphere: the Western world and the Arab world (Sakr, 2007; Thussu, 2007). These voices are rooted in the geopolitics of the post-imperialist and post-colonial era and reflect the negotiation over power and dominance.

Death events like terror attacks, wars and armed conflicts, or (natural) disasters are mass death events that bear the potential to turn into global *media events* (Hafez, 2011; Katz

⁷ Arguably, the most well-known example of this is the media coverage of the terror attacks of September 11, 2001.

& Liebes, 2007) or global *mediatised rituals* (Cottle, 2006a, 2006b). Since such events are loaded with political meaning, they elicit competing views, voices and proposals regarding ways of engaging with the events. In El-Nawawy and Powers's words: "Narratives guiding the public's understanding of events are increasingly and more easily contested, and thus the 'battle' to control the flow of information has become intense, particularly during times of conflict" (El-Nawawy & Powers, 2010, p. 64). The ways in which news organisations give voice to these narratives and represent death can reveal the claims they make regarding the global social order (Fahmy, 2010; Samuel-Azran, 2010).

It is through the prism of news about death that we can understand global power dynamics. In fact, sometimes it is exactly the tensions around the circulation of images of casualties which capture a political divide. Therefore, the study of the mediatisation of mass violent death events invites a comparative analysis of global media events in such moments of crisis, which will include an account of the different claims to power invested in these death-related media rituals (Cottle, 2011; Hepp & Couldry, 2009). Accordingly, this thesis compares and contrasts the coverage of mass death events like a war, a terror attack or a natural disaster by two global news organisations. The thesis focuses on a Western and an Arab-Muslim ("Southern") news organisation and juxtaposes their perspectives on the world when giving meaning to mass death cases. This is a point I shall further develop in the next chapter.

In the following sections I explore the issue of death and the media or, more accurately, the issue of death in the news. I shall first discuss the performative aspects of the mediatisation of death. Then, I shall move on to the representational aspects of death – how death is presented and represented. Lastly, I will discuss the meaning of witnessing death and suffering, and how this stands in relation to questions of cosmopolitan solidarity.

3.3 Death and the media

Most of the public's encounter with death happens through the media on a daily basis, while consuming news about exceptional deaths (Duncan, 2012; Hanusch, 2010; Morse, 2014; Seaton, 2005; Walter et al., 1995). Based on the ritual view of communications (Carey, 1992), the daily engagement with death in the news is *an everyday "media ritual"*, which can turn a community of viewing into an imagined community of feelings and actions (Chouliaraki, 2010a). The formats in which news about death are framed and

circulated establish whose death matters for whom, and so make a distinction between social categories and hierarchies of belonging (Seale, 1998; Seaton, 2005). In order to better understand the significance of death in organising social life and the symbolic meaning of public engagement with death, we need to account for both mundane and extraordinary encounters with death in the media.

I shall first discuss the formats through which death becomes a matter of public concern that receives media attention and the performative aspects of death in the news. Later I shall proceed to discuss representations of death and the meanings ascribed to these.

3.3.1 Mundane death in the news

Today, the prime encounter of Western citizens with death is through the media, as death has become a mediated experience. News about death creates a symbolic space of mourning and enable ties to be established between audiences and the bereaved (Duncan, 2012; Kitch, 2000; Kitch & Hume, 2008). Most death cases are not reported by the media and do not receive any public attention. And yet, “the subject of death and dying is a source of public fascination and hence is central to the news agenda” (Seaton, 2005, p. 192). Moreover, news about death “often make[s] the front page of our newspaper or are the leading items in the news bulletins” (Hanusch, 2010, p. 2).

The death cases that make it into the news are mostly those of “the public violent death – the one that no one would want, the ‘bad’ death that is unexpected and shocking” (Seaton, 2005, p. 192). Murders, accidents, natural disasters, wars and terror attacks manifest the collapse of “order” and so the reports on them frequently appear in the news as a transgression of “order”, while emphasising the attempts made to restore order. Thus, although news about violent death reveals an insecure reality, it also helps to restore order, while drawing the boundaries of security (Silverstone, 2002b; see also Seaton, 2005). Violent death, the public death of private people or the death of a public figure are negative events that destabilise society, and therefore they are newsworthy matters and in accordance with the prevalent understanding of news values (Harcup & O’Neill, 2001; Walter et al., 1995). In addition, the images that emerge from death scenes offer viewers a an exciting and voyeuristic glimpse of a “theatre of violence” (Griffin, 2010, p. 8), and the fascination with such images is another factor that makes such stories “fit to print” (Sontag, 2003).

In contrast, “natural deaths” – like hospital deaths or deaths of elderly people – are hidden. Such deaths are constructed as an ordinary matter. The media almost never report such cases and so dismiss their ability to “break the order”. Accordingly, non-violent death cases usually have a relatively low “news value”, and so do not receive any media attention. Keeping such death cases away from the public eye maintains the social order. It classifies such deaths as part of the “order” and so diminishes their ability to threaten the sense of security associated with “the ordinary” (Seale, 1998).

Another explanation for the appearance of (violent) death in the news comes from the study of news production. Death generates action by a number of institutions, namely the police, rescue teams and hospitals. Their response to death generates news in a way that is easy for journalists to pick up. Moreover, a violent death story is usually confined in space and time, and as such is identified by news organisations as “an event”. Unlike cases of violence or suffering that do not result in death, an exercise of violence or an on-going state of suffering that results in death usually becomes “news”. Such happenings are identified by various social institutions as “an event” that requires their action. For example, domestic violence can be ignored by society, until one member of a family kills another. The killing elevates the exercise of violence to the status of “an event”. As long as the relationships within the family were “only” violent, but not deadly, this stays away from media scrutiny. But once a death takes place it becomes a news item (and also a case for police investigation). Azoulay (2008) describes this condition as living “on the verge of catastrophe”, and applies this not only to domestic violence. In her view, the Israeli occupation of the Palestinians territories is another example of life on the verge of catastrophe. The Palestinians live in on-going conditions of suffering, but their conditions do not qualify as “news” as long as they do not suffer violent death. Azoulay explains:

“Catastrophe, as it is usually understood emerges, erupting as an event, sharply drawing the line between before and after, manufacturing its emergence as a riddle... but the verge of catastrophe, does not emerge, is not exactly an event, and has no power to create a difference.... There is nothing to distinguish it from the surroundings in which it exists. Its counters are indistinct... it is a nonevent or an event that never was and never will be” (2008, p. 291).

Azoulay does not address the question of death directly, but I believe this observation is applicable to death events and the media, and this point will serve me later in the discussion on the construction of “emergency”. The occurrence of death elevates the

event beyond the verge of catastrophe, into the “catastrophe zone”, and makes the event newsworthy. The occurrence of death provides a clear demarcation of an event – in time and in space – and renders it easier for the media to cover it. Death-free cases of suffering and violence are less easily identified by the media as “events” or as “stories”, and therefore are less likely to make it into the news. In other words, more often than not, death cases follow the media logic of news production and thus become news.

In addition to the above explanations of the making of news about death, there are also some professional perceptions of what leads to the appearance or disappearance of death stories in the news. Cultural affiliation and geographic locations, for example, are two variables that guide journalists when evaluating the newsworthiness of a news item: the closer the death is to “us”, in culture or distance, the greater its chances of becoming “news” (Hanusch, 2010; J. Taylor, 1998). Some Western journalists even came up with the rather cynical calculus according to which: “one dead fireman in Brooklyn is worth five English bodies, who are worth 50 Arabs, who are worth 500 Africans” (in Moeller, 1998, p. 22; see also Cottle, 2013). This statement reflects the prevailing Western perception of the value of life in various places and the bias it holds. This statement also shows that the occurrence of violent or public death is insufficient in itself for a death case to be reported.

These technical and professional explanations as to why such cases become news stories bear cultural meaning that extends beyond the technicality of news production. These explanations reflect perceptions of global social order and news values, and they reinforce and construct hierarchies of lives and places. The ways in which news about death is produced and circulated tell audiences whose life matters and whose death counts; whose life is sacred (and secured) and whose not. Moreover, these perceptions and practices teach us what “order” is and what it is not. In other words, news about death reflects a profound worldview and constructs the most fundamental categories for assessing and engaging with events taking place in the world. This is why it is important to study news of death – it tells us something about questions of hierarchy and power and the ways in which these shape identity and solidarity.

The above discussion has focused on the mundane encounter with death in the news. This encounter is a media ritual that maintains news about “disorder” within the realm of “order” and so endows us with a sense of security and control. Most of the death cases that make it into the news are “disciplined” and governed by the ordinariness of

the news edition. They are “permitted” to become “news”, but they do not disrupt the news routine. These are stories about transgression of order, but the way in which they are reported reinforces order. The “ordinariness” of such news about death makes redundant the need to restore order. However, some death cases break the media routine and become *media events*.

3.3.2 Death-related media events

The news stories about death that become *media events* are usually violent mass death events whose scale and unexpectedness make them eligible to disrupt routine and to mark the transition from the everyday to the extraordinary. These death-related media events are usually associated with terror attacks, wars and (natural) disasters (Katz & Liebes, 2007), but they can also relate to the deaths of leaders (Zelizer, 1992). The assassination of the Israeli Prime Minister Yizhak Rabin in 1995, the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, the 2003-2011 war in Iraq and the 2004 Asian tsunami are only a few examples of high-profile death events that turned into media events.

When covering mass violent death events, the media not only transmit the happenings. They also function as a dominant actor which gives meaning to the event. The media is one of the institutions “authorised” to make the switch from the profane to the sacred, from the ordinary to the extraordinary. In many respects, it is the media’s performance during and after the breaking of the news that sets the tone in interpreting the event as such. In Silverstone’s words: “what makes a catastrophe a catastrophe... is when reports of its occurrence are allowed to interrupt the otherwise seamless schedules of broadcast radio and television” (Silverstone, 2002b). The media possess the power to define an event as disruptive and as threatening the social order. The media’s performance also plays a role in order restoration.

The active role the media play in engaging the public with extraordinary death-related events is an example of the process of *mediatisation*, in which social phenomena become subject to interaction with the media, and the media take over a role which used to be associated with other institutions, as provider of information and moral orientation (Hjarvard, 2006, 2008, 2012; Livingstone, 2009). By mediatizing death, the media transcend their function as a technology of transmission, and become the institution that sets the terms of engagement and the meaning of the events they transmit (Sumiala, 2012, 2014). Cottle (2006b, p. 411) coined the term “*mediatised rituals*” to capture the performative role of the media in summoning solidarities and

moral ideas of the 'social good'. By performing mediatised rituals, the media exert common action and mobilise collective sentiments in an attempt to reinforce values and political power (see also Pantti & Sumiala, 2009). *Mediatized death rituals* refer, thus, to the media performance at the time of the actual death or to the mourning rituals that follow it. These mediatised rituals facilitate the transformation of the public from passive bystanders into active and involved participants. *Mediatized death rituals* can be *disaster marathons* which the media perform in response to the occurrence of (some) mass death events (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002; Liebes, 1998) or to the mediatised mourning rituals and ceremonies enacted by the media and delivered by them (Sumiala, 2012, 2014). These media performances are occasions when death rituals and media rituals coincide. But these can also be what I shall later call *asynchronous continuous media events*, which go beyond the confines of time and space.

Katz and Liebes (2007) point to three types of event that are not pre-planned, but that bear other characteristics of media events, and therefore should be considered as such. These are traumatic events that can be categorised as *terror attacks*, *wars*, and (*natural disasters*).⁸ Such events do not fit the original definition of "media events" because they are not pre-planned (at least not by the media) and they are disruptive – rather than integrative – in nature. Yet, terror attacks, wars and disasters share other crucial characteristics that qualify them as media events: these are events that take place outside the media, but are disseminated through the media; they are considered as defining moments and therefore allow the breaking of the media's everyday routine and proclaim that viewing is obligatory. These events summon a community of spectators who come together in front of the television (or any other digital device). The public, the community of spectators, shares the experience of "being there" by watching the media. Weimann (1987) proposes labelling media events of this type as *coercions* (in addition to *contests*, *conquests* and *coronations*), since the media is "forced" to cover these. I intend to study the three types of event, as death is central to each.

3.3.2.1 War as a media event

For various reasons, Dayan and Katz did not include wars as a sub-genre of media events in their original definition of the term. Wars are not pre-planned by the media and the media cannot prepare for their coverage. More importantly, unlike the original account of the genre as integrative and reconciliatory, wars are disruptive events that expose the

⁸ In fact, Katz and Liebes point to another type of media event, the protest event, but they do not discuss these in detail.

fragility of society, rather than its unity and consolidation. Wars are not joyful festivals and viewing wars is not a celebration. And yet, Katz and Liebes (2007) suggest considering wars as media events since they do have some of the characteristics of media events: wars generate media rituals that play a role in organising the audience around them in a shared experience of viewing; wars receive wide media attention and their coverage may take over the media's pre-planned agenda; and the enactment of media events, as we recall, marks an event as extraordinary and as bearing historic significance which viewers feel they cannot miss (Dayan & Katz, 1992). This notion emerges in relation to significant events like wars. When such events happen, it is (usually) clear both to the media and to the public that they are newsworthy, and therefore the public gathers around the media to engage with what is happening (see also Carruthers, 2011; Cottle, 2006a; Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010).

Not all wars are reported by the media and not all wars become media events. Some wars do not receive extensive and immediate media attention and some wars do not receive any media attention at all.⁹ Moreover, even the wars that do receive exceptional media attention and do break the media routine – do not neatly fit the definition of a media event if they last for more than a certain amount of time. Wars are not limited in time and space and, more often than not, they go on for weeks or months. In addition, the media are not free to reach the battlefields as there are significant logistical and political constraints that make it difficult for the media to function on the battlefield (Carruthers, 2011; Hoskins, 2005). Thus, we need a nuanced understanding of wars as media events that takes into account the characteristics of war and its coverage. These characteristics include the continuation of war in spite of the discontinuity of its coverage, which produces what I define as *an asynchronous continuous media event*. In Chapter Five, I propose that discursive means such as *non-closure* (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2008) and *phatic actions* (Frosh, 2011) enable the mediatisation of war to be split into separate but continuous reports so it remains a high-profile story that is part of the media agenda even when it is not presented as a media event. This mode of media event maintains a hidden or dormant channel that comes back to the fore from time to time, especially when something important happens. The analysis in Chapter Five will demonstrate this point in relation to the 2008-2009 Gaza War.

⁹ Consider, for example, the media attention given to events like the Iraq War in comparison to the attention given to events like the Syrian War and other wars that have raged in Africa.

3.3.2.2 Terrorism and the media

Terrorism is another type of mass death event which usually entails extensive media coverage. Terror attacks have at least two circles of audience and victims (Weimann & Winn, 1994). The act of terror strikes a number of immediate victims who suffer harm and damage, but then there is a wider circle of potential victims who learn about the events from the media. These potential victims do not suffer any physical harm, but their engagement with the events through the media leaves them terrorised and frightened. The notion that “this could have happened to me” spreads fear and anxiety among wide publics, which is the impact terrorists hope to gain. This is what makes media-oriented terror attacks so powerful and effective.

Thus, on the one hand, the dissemination of news on terror attacks generates anxiety, but on the other hand, engagement with the media becomes a source of comfort:

“When disaster strikes it brings the anxiety of being left out on a limb, with nothing sure to hold on to. People turn to television when they have lost their sense of personal safety for themselves and their families, and when they feel that it is still an unresolved condition, that is, that terror may strike again” (Liebes, 1998, p. 81).

The manipulation of the media for the benefit of terrorist organisations has led some scholars to question the coerced cooperation of the media with terrorists and to suggest that the media should take extra caution when reporting such attacks (Liebes, 1998; Weimann, 2004).

Terror attacks, of course, are not planned by the media, but as the terrorists “crack” the “operating system” of the media, they manage to use the media to deliver their messages (Weimann, 2004, 2008). This message goes beyond the mere act of killing and destruction. Rather, it sets a public agenda and draws public attention to the cause of the terrorists. Major terror attacks often bear historic significance and receive extensive media coverage that “glues” spectators to the television screens. Watching television becomes a form of collective participation in the event. Moreover, large-scale terror attacks become inescapable, since even when spectators zap they are still confronted with the media coverage of the attack and its aftermath on other channels. The uniform media attention reinforces the mandatory viewing and participation.

3.3.2.2.1 Terror attacks as disaster marathons

Like wars, terror attacks do not fit Dayan and Katz’s (1992) original definition of the *media event*. However, other scholars argue that the coverage of terror attacks by the

media – namely by television – should be considered a sub-genre of the media event, as the event takes over – or “hijacks” – the media and coerces its coverage. The coverage of the attack plays a performative role that brings society together (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002; Chouliaraki, 2006b; Katz & Liebes, 2007; Liebes, 1998; Weimann, 1987; Weimann & Winn, 1994). Much like in the case of media events, when covering terror attacks:

“... television moves from its position of wallpaper to centre stage in the home and in the society, when private and public become one. Ordinary routines of work and play come to a halt, and people gather in front of the screen, seeking for ways of staying in touch with the collectivity, at a highly charged moment. For their part, the media interrupt their own planned schedules to devote all available air time to the event” (Liebes, 1998, p. 72).

Liebes (1998) calls the live, on-going coverage of terror attacks *disaster marathons*, and defines this as a sub-genre of media events which consists of a live “non-stop, open-ended broadcasting mode” (Liebes, 1998, p. 71) of recycled horror images, initial orientation and information collection, testimonies of victims and eyewitnesses, interviews with official security personnel and reports on public mourning, funerals and memorial services.¹⁰ This mode of coverage is reserved for unplanned, surprising events with a large number of victims, which erupt and tear through the ordinariness of the everyday, causing chaos and uncertainty (see also Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). And yet, once these events break, there is a known and rather rigid script for media coverage, which includes the features noted above. During disaster marathons:

“television takes charge with live marathonic broadcasting from the moment when the disaster strikes (or immediately after) until the redressive ceremonial closure, which mobilizes the political establishment of the country or the world” (Liebes, 1998, p. 74).

Thus, the media – namely television – is an active player that shapes the engagement with the event and facilitates the participation of the spectators in coping with its consequences.

The enactment of the disaster marathon mode construes not only the narrative that frames the events. The disaster marathon genre brings spectators together and introduces them to the victims and their stories. The mediated encounter with the

¹⁰ Liebes based the concept of the *disaster marathon* on the media coverage of terror attacks in Israel during the 1990s. For a journalistic critique of the scripted media rituals after terror attacks in Israel see also Kazin (1995) and Alpher (2001) (in Hebrew).

victims and the communal act of viewing establish the bond between spectators and sufferers and create a sense of solidarity and belonging. Despite the disruptive nature of events like terror attacks, such events bear the potential to reunite and console the public and manifest its integration rather than its disintegration. Especially when we consider large-scale events of global importance, such integration can be wide and inclusive, as Chouliaraki (2006b) argues in relation to the type of news events she defines as *ecstatic news*.

3.3.2.2.2 Ecstatic news

Ecstatic news is news about extraordinary events that “cannot be contained in an ordinary news broadcast” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 157). What makes such events ecstatic is the ways in which their coverage overflows the regular patterns of news reporting and interrupts the ordinary viewing. This mode of coverage shakes and undermines the “regular” dimensions of time and space in an indefinable manner: “In terms of space, the event is mediated simultaneously as a local tragedy and as a global political fact. In terms of time, the event is mediated simultaneously as contingent, as news, and as making history” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 158). These events gain their historic significance, among other things, due to their surprising nature and the shock of their actual occurrence. These are highly unlikely events whose very happening is astounding. As such, the coverage of these events “captures the spectator’s shock and disbelief” (ibid).

When ecstatic events happen, the media switch to live transmission of what is happening as events unfold. The switch to this mode of coverage has a dual effect– it manifests the importance of the event as eligible to break the media routine, and it calls the immediate attention of spectators to the misfortune of distant others. The “constant flow of images and verbal narratives ... enables the spectators to engage in multiple topics of suffering and so empathize, denounce and reflect on the suffering” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 158). The simultaneous coverage of ecstatic news by various global news organisations realises the possibility for “the whole world” to watch, and so such events become “universal”, although this “universality” may turn out to be rather exclusionary. I shall return to this point later.

Chouliaraki’s example of ecstatic news is the September 11, 2001 attacks in Manhattan and Washington. In Chapter Six, I argue that the 2011 Norway attacks are another example of ecstatic news – this was a surprising and shocking story of historic significance that was picked up simultaneously by news channels around the world.

3.3.2.3 Disaster news

Natural disasters fall into the category of a struggle of *Humankind* with *Nature*, and the coverage of natural disasters is often a *mediatised ritual of media disaster* which gives stage to this struggle (Cottle, 2006b). Like in the sub-genre of contest media events (Dayan & Katz, 1992), the question is “who will win – *humankind* or *nature*?”. The media coverage of natural disasters is another sub-genre of the media event and, like wars and terror attacks, natural disasters also have the potential to “hijack” the media and take over the media schedule with live, on-going reports from the scene (Katz & Liebes, 2007). Orgad sums up the importance of the media performance in covering disasters:

“The live twenty-four-hour coverage of disasters by the global media play an important role in turning such events into constitutive moments in the global imagination – moments that evoke global ‘cosmopolitan outlook’, a sense of ‘humanity’ as a universal identity” (Orgad, 2012, p. 57).

However, not every disaster manages to generate *disaster news*. Disaster news is the media’s response to *a state of emergency* and this state, as Calhoun (2010) contends, is socially constructed. A state of emergency is a product of the work of various social institutions, including the media, and the understanding of certain conditions as a state of “emergency” varies across space or time. One place’s state of emergency can be another place’s routine. The media are one of the institutions that can declare a state of emergency. By switching to disaster news mode, the media claim that certain living conditions are disastrous and catastrophic. The switch to disaster news juxtaposes the peace and order of the everyday and extraordinary conditions that undermine our security. This switch not only calls our attention to the extraordinariness of the events taking place, but also makes a call for humanitarian response in light of insecurity and instability.

3.3.3 Managing the visibility of death

Thus far, I have explored the performance of death-related media rituals in terms of the broadcast format. We also need to consider how death appears, or how death is represented, since, in a global age, it is *inter alia* through questions around the visibility and invisibility of death that we can understand power dynamics and claims on solidarity.

Contemplating pain has been a common practice in Western culture throughout history, from Greek tragedies and gladiator fights, Biblical scenes, the images of Christ, all the way to contemporary action movies and news reports. The portrayal of pain and

suffering is not a cause in itself, but serves as a means of achieving other goals. Seaton stresses that “showing pain is almost never neutral – it always has a purpose, and is part of arguments and strategies” (Seaton, 2005, p. 84). The public presentation of death is meaningful and purposeful, and different social institutions are involved in managing the presentation of death by controlling the means of production, circulation and representation of death imagery, in order to make a claim on a broader social and cultural context that extends beyond the mere display of the image.

Today, in Western culture, the public presentation of non-fictional death is controversial and is even considered a taboo:

“Death poses particular problems for visual culture. The imperative of visual media is to show rather than tell, but death confounds this agenda in significant ways... Further, within Western culture, documentary (‘real’) images of the dead are conventionally taboo in public space, and their publication or screening subject to a nuanced economy of ethics, aesthetics and propaganda” (Tait, 2009, p. 333).

Images of death almost always evoke strong emotions, or at least they are considered to have the potential to do so. The production, circulation and presentation of death images is often associated with issues of (de)humanisation, justice, pity, patriotism, dignity, privacy, freedom, religious beliefs and even political economy. In this sense, managing the visibility of death, i.e. managing the conditions of its appearance and the means of its representation, is a manifestation of symbolic power which serves as a lever in negotiation over power and control by different social institutions. For example, in the United States the issue of death images from the battlefield has come to represent broader issues of military superiority, patriotism, humiliation and dignity (Sontag, 2003). Since World War II and up until 2009, images of casualties of war or images of American soldiers’ coffins were regarded as undermining war efforts and weakening the public’s resilience by reminding them of the human price of war, and therefore the circulation of such images was forbidden (Aubert, 2008; Bumiller, 2009; Cottle, 2006a; Hanusch, 2010; Samuel-Azran, 2009, 2010). By the same token, it is not by chance that when Al-Jazeera circulated horrific images from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq this was perceived in the US as anti-American (Samuel-Azran, 2010; Zayani, 2005). In this regard, it is important to note Seaton’s comment that “what we make emotionally and intellectually of the portrayal of death depends not on the horror of the imagery itself, but on how the death is shown and identified” (Seaton, 2005, p. 193). As the American example illustrates,

even sublime and symbolic images of death (like flagged coffins), which hide any indexical reference to the horror of death itself (i.e. corpses) can become controversial.

Images depicting disasters and catastrophes are usually considered highly spectacular (Griffin, 2010). In times of crisis, when wars, disasters and catastrophes occur, the media tend to use more images than in times of non-crisis (Zelizer, 2010). Such events often have a historic significance and the media use images to convey and enhance the feeling of a defining moment. As death is inherent in such events, the images that emerge from the scene often depict death, in explicit or implicit ways. Moreover in some disastrous cases death images become iconic and stand for much more than the specific incident they depict: the images of the 1968 My Lai massacre became a symbol of the American military presence in Vietnam (Griffin, 2010); the 2000 death of the Palestinian boy, Mohammed al-Durrah, became a symbol of Palestinian suffering under Israeli occupation (D. Campbell, 2004); the image of the incinerated Iraqi soldier became one of the icons of the first Gulf War (Griffin, 2010); and the footage of the dying Iranian student, Neda Agha-Soltan, became the icon of the Iranian protest in 2009 and a symbol for women's rights (Zelizer, 2010). Images of death are often perceived as powerful and dramatic and a relatively large number of award-winning photographs are, in fact, images depicting death (Hanusch, 2010).

What is, then, the power of death images? Cottle (2006a, p. 95) explains that common perceptions regarding the effect of exposure to images of body horror are largely mistaken. There is no clear answer to the question of whether seeing death images indeed changes perceptions, and in what way. Such an effect depends on the context and framing of the image and on many other factors (Domke, Perlmutter, & Spratt, 2002). Seaton asserts that: "pictures of suffering often have a powerful effect on people, and have many kinds of results – perhaps compassion in the case of the innocent victims of a disaster; perhaps a change in the political opinion in the case of victims of a military conflict" (Seaton, 2005, p. 89), yet she qualifies this: "an image of a corpse is not self-explanatory, but requires interpretation. Such interpretations may have considerable consequences" (Seaton, 2005, p. 193). In relation to the Vietnam War, for instance, the conventional wisdom is that the images circulated during the war turned American public opinion against the war. However, there is not sufficient evidence to support this claim. Moreover, there are several careful studies that, in fact, suggest the opposite (Griffin, 2010).

Even if we cannot determine the effect of images of death and suffering, the perception of such images as able to shape public opinions has changed the way in which death scenes are controlled and managed (Moeller, 1998; Samuel-Azran, 2010). The existence of a death image, the fact that the death was documented, is sometimes as powerful as the image itself. Regardless of the visual elements that compose the image, the very fact that it depicts a fatal event turns the image into a powerful tool. Hence, restricting access to the scene of death is an integral part of the management of the visibility of death. "Although restricting how or what we see is not exactly the same as dictating a storyline, it is a way of interpreting in advance what will and will not be included in the field of perception" (Butler, 2009, p. 66). This resonates with Sontag's claim that "if there is no photographic evidence there is no atrocity" (in Butler, 2009, p. 69).

Thus, political actors such as governments and military authorities are actively engaged in blocking or unblocking access to the scene of death and thus controlling the flow of information. An example of this consideration is the images of American soldiers torturing Iraqi prisoners in Abu-Ghraib prison. The release of the images caused enormous embarrassment to the American administration, which was interested in concealing them from the public eye. In this sense, the power of the image is not only a matter of semiotic analysis, but also a matter of access and control of the flow of information, which can also be discussed in terms of the power of the gaze: "who watches who?". This is what Thompson (2005) describes as "the new visibility" that gives power to citizens to scrutinise actions of governments:

"In this new world of mediated visibility, the making visible of actions and events is not just the outcome of leakage in the system of communication and information flow that are increasingly difficult to control: it is also an explicit strategy of individuals who know very well that mediated visibility can be a weapon in the struggles they wage in their day-to-day lives" (Thompson, 2005, p. 31).

The management of the visibility of death is, then, first of all a question of control over the production and circulation of death imagery, regardless of the aesthetic properties of the imagery itself. Yet, the question of what we see when we see images of death remains. I turn to this next.

3.3.3.1 The economies of regulation

Campbell (2004) and Chouliaraki (2009) mention four economies that regulate the appearance and disappearance of death images in the media. These economies draw on

various forms of representation in order to shape engagement with the death of remote others and establish hierarchies of significance and belonging.

3.3.3.1.1 The economy of indifference

Some deaths do not make it into the media even if they are “bad” and violent deaths. The reasons for the lack of interest by the media are geo-political. These deaths are usually associated with deprived groups which have limited access and appeal to the media (like marginalised racial groups or countries that are culturally or spatially remote from the affluent West). Despite the newsworthiness of these deaths (often associated with war crimes) the media do not consider them as important or interesting, and do not allocate resources to covering them. By leaving such cases outside the space of appearance, the media construct the people who died as at the bottom of hierarchies of place and of human lives (Chouliaraki, 2008a). Campbell (2004) refers to the practice of non-coverage in terms of *horrific blindness*, since the media turn a blind eye and ignore these deaths as if they had never happened. In this regard, the public remains unaware and ignorant about the circumstances of death and therefore cannot position itself in relation to them.

3.3.3.1.2 The economy of “taste and decency”

The term “economy of taste and decency” refers to the self-regulation of the Western media in presenting horror images that leads to the disappearance of such images from the screen (Campbell, 2004). This is an old and common practice which can be traced back to the Crimean War (1853-1856), which was the first photographed war (Boudana, 2013; see also Samuel-Azran, 2009). In such cases, the media possess horrific images, but these are kept away from the public eye due to industry standards designed to shield the public from images of violence. This regulation is often referred to as the “breakfast cereal test” (Zelizer, 2010), and stems from the tension between information and sensationalism. According to this test, the images should tell the horror story, but should not evoke feelings of horror or repulsion in readers or viewers. The public is thus kept both informed and undisturbed. However, the norms of “taste and decency” are not always maintained, and images of dead bodies do make it into the news from time to time. This is, according to Campbell (2004), the economy of display.

3.3.3.1.3 The economy of display

When death images do appear in the media, they are regulated by framing and contextualisation. The horror of the image is filtered by the use of titles and captions

that give meaning to the image. The media can enhance or mitigate the horror of the image and of the story it represents by using language and framing the image in a given context. Since “the same pictures can mean different things at different times because of different concerns” (D. Campbell, 2004, p. 71), the media can shape the engagement of readers and viewers in relation to the reported event. The power of the image is synthesised within a broader context in a way that shapes the meaning of the image.

In this regard, it is important to note the association between the public display of death images and questions of (de)humanisation. Contemplating death images is sometimes considered in Western culture as objectifying the person who died and as violating his or her privacy and human dignity (Gross, Katz, & Ruby, 1991; Morse, 2014; Orgad, 2013; Tait, 2008, 2009; Wischmann, 1987). Accordingly, death images in the Western media are usually images of dead foreigners (Fishman, 2001; Fishman & Marvin, 2003; Hanusch, 2010; J. Taylor, 1998; Zelizer, 2010), a pattern that maintains the power relations between Western spectators and non-Western dead (Campbell, 2004). In other words, the economy of display is subordinated to questions of nationality, ethnicity and geography, which reflect power relations.

3.3.3.1.4 The economy of witnessing

Chouliaraki (2009) offers a nuanced version of the economy of display, which she calls the “economy of witnessing”. The economy of witnessing is politically driven and works to sublimate the atrocity that is represented. The display of atrocities can be aestheticised in terms of either pathos or phantasmagoria. In so doing, “witnessing produces forms of pity that primarily rely on the beautification or sublimation of suffering” (p. 218). By using cinematic tropes like slow motion and zooming in/out, the footage becomes an artistic spectacle that blurs the distinction between fiction and non-fiction. This regulation displays the atrocity, but in an indulgent rather than disturbing manner. The public display of human death “becomes legitimate only on the condition that it is elevated to beautiful suffering” (Chouliaraki, 2009, p. 224).

The economy of witnessing reaffirms global hierarchies of place and human life, since it cultivates different imagined communities of care and action. The choice of images and words proposes different ways of engaging with the distant sufferers that are in line with already established power relations. The imagery of death is embedded into a broader articulation of solidarity and moral stance. Hence, it is through the practice of witnessing that questions of the representation of death and of good citizenship come together

and, in this regard, the media function as providers not only of information, but also of moral orientation (Azoulay, 2008; Chouliaraki, 2010a). The remainder of this chapter explores the moral questions of witnessing death in conjunction with questions of solidarity and global citizenship.

3.4 Moral concerns with the mediatization of death

The previous chapter discussed the social and political significance of contemporary mediated space. Silverstone argues that, in addition, we need “an understanding of the global media as a moral space” (Silverstone, 2006, p. 28). The mediated public sphere, as Silverstone contends, is the space of appearance where the world appears to us. More importantly, it is the space where the other appears to us and the space where the means of representation constructs the other as “human”, or not human. This is where we encounter the other and learn to know him or her as similar to or different from “us”. Drawing on the work of Hannah Arendt and Emmanuel Levinas, Silverstone argues that this encounter with the other and his or her reality brings with it a moral demand, as it requires attentiveness and responsiveness. Seeing the other as human compels us to acknowledge his or her presence and to articulate our relationships with them. It makes it necessary for us to account for them as co-habitants of the earth, together with us:

“When things appear, when images of suffering of crisis or joy, or indeed the banality of everyday life’s stuff, surface on page and screen, they are brought to our attention. And without our attention they can have little meaning and little effect. The mediation of the world requires its audience; but to be an audience it is not enough to sit back, pumping the key pad, clicking the mouse. It requires our participation, our engagement. It requires us to take responsibility for our part in the process, one way or another” (Silverstone, 2006, p. 27).

The ethical relationships between spectators and distant others are constructed in and through the media on a daily basis, but they are most needed in the light of human suffering. The encounter with the suffering or death of others compels us, the spectators, to respond to these representations and the reality they represent. Cohabitation of the earth presupposes some kind of solidarity – precommitment – between humans that is called upon in times of despair (Boltanski, 1999; Butler, 2011; Chouliaraki, 2006b). This is the *moral cosmopolitan solidarity* discussed in the previous chapter, which is based on sensitivity to the misfortune of the other and the moral demand this poses in terms of accountability. According to Rorty (1989), “[solidarity] is created by increasing our sensitivity to the particular details of the pain and the

humiliation of other, unfamiliar sort of people” (Rorty, 1989, p. xvi). The encounter with the misfortune of the unfamiliar other invites or compels us to identify the similarities we share despite our differences, and thus to see the other as “one of us”, or at least as someone we should care for.

Drawing on Silverstone (2006), the present thesis considers the media as a moral space where engagement with death takes place, and the extent to which this engagement calls for cosmopolitan solidarity. The appearance of mass violent death in the media poses ethical demands for spectators to respond to it. What are, then, the ethical ways of engaging with mediatised death? What are the ethical demands that the mediatisation of death makes? And how are they articulated in terms of language and images? The answers to these questions derive from moral-philosophical discussions of the mediation of *suffering*. I explore below the moral implications of the mediated encounter with suffering and then proceed to discuss the similarities and distinctions between suffering and death and the implications of these.

3.4.1 The moral implications of mediated suffering

The (unmediated) encounter with suffering bears an ethical obligation for bystanders to step in and respond to the suffering of others. When we encounter someone in despair, there is a moral duty to help that person, or at least to alleviate and minimise his or her suffering. As witnesses of someone’s suffering, we become potential benefactors, and so we are responsible for that person’s recovery. Rejecting that duty is considered immoral; it makes us complicit in the misfortune of others (Margalit, 2004). Yet the demand to act upon the suffering of others faces some difficulties when suffering is at a distance and the encounter with it is mediated (Boltanski, 1999). What is it that we can do when the suffering of others is beyond the “here” and “now” of our daily lives, and we have become acquainted with it merely through the media?

3.4.1.1 Witnessing suffering

Drawing on Arendt, Boltanski (1999), Silverstone (2006) and Butler (2011) all remind us that the mediated encounter with distant suffering bears an ethical solicitation. Even if suffering takes place far away, witnessing suffering through the media still makes an ethical solicitation. In Butler’s (2011) words: “images and accounts of war suffering are a particular form of ethical solicitation, one that compels us to negotiate questions of proximity and distance”. The encounter with mediated suffering is what Boltanski calls “the paradoxical treatment of *distance*” (1999, p. 12 emphasis in original), in which

technological means face us with the misfortune of others in a way that compels us to reflect upon questions of belonging and of solidarity with others we do not necessarily know, with others we did not necessarily choose (see also Beck, 2011; Butler, 2011; Silverstone, 2006, p. 10). This articulation of witnessing associates witnessing and solidarity, as it spells out the moral imperative to be accountable for the wellbeing of the other: once we see the misfortune of the other, we cannot ignore it. And once we recognise that the other depends on us, we cannot reject the moral imperative to care for him or her. As Tait puts it, “looking at atrocity or its representation a moral duty: we must look, and we must take responsibility for what we see” (Tait, 2009, p. 336). This is the moral burden of witnessing that we cannot will away by simply saying “we did not know” (Ellis, 2000). Once we witness suffering, this excuse is no longer valid. The mediated encounter with the devastating reality “out there” forces us to respond to it, whether we like it or not:

“The media names any mode of presentation that relays to us some version of reality from the outside that impinges on us, making it possible to register a reality, and so to be moved by it toward some responsive action. In this sense, ethical obligation imposes itself upon us without our consent, suggesting that consent is not a sufficient ground for delimiting the global obligations which form our responsibility” (Butler, 2011).

This commitment to the wellbeing of the distant, unfamiliar other captures the coercive nature of moral solidarity and this is, in a nutshell, the promise of cosmopolitan ethics, as we saw in the previous chapter.

The mediation of suffering engages spectators with the scene of suffering by organising their feelings towards the actors on the scene – whether these are the benefactors, the perpetrators or the spectacle of suffering. The range of feelings include pity and compassion for the sufferers, indignation and denunciation towards the perpetrator and appreciation of the spectacles of suffering (Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2006b). These sets of emotions are informed by a moral evaluation of the scene and motivate, in turn, the possible actions that the ethical solicitation demands. This solicitation is a product of the work of representation.

The main argument in relation to witnessing suffering is that this practice means much more than simply seeing or watching. Oliver (2004) makes a distinction between being an eye-witness and bearing witness. These are two sets of moral responses related to witnessing others in their misfortune. Whereas being an eye-witness means watching

what is happening and receiving the accurate facts, bearing witness refers to the understanding of “a truth about humanity and suffering that transcends those facts” (Oliver, 2004, p. 81). Bearing witness, then, requires a profound and historical understanding of the circumstances of suffering and how these fit into a broader sense of the political order. This includes the collective process of historical trauma, acknowledging the historical and contemporary meaning of suffering, comprehending the responsibility of spectators in creating the conditions of suffering and their responsibility for minimising and alleviating suffering (Frosh & Pinchevski, 2009b; Rentschler, 2004; Tait, 2011; Zelizer, 2002).

Haunted by the atrocities of the Holocaust, the moral burden of witnessing atrocities through the media refers to the spectators’ responsibility to act upon suffering, even when it is at a distance (Frosh & Pinchevski, 2009b; Zelizer, 1998). The mediated experience of bearing witness is to engage with a *witnessing text* (Frosh, 2006), i.e. a text that encourages spectators to position themselves vis-à-vis the suffering of others and to reflect upon their responsibility for the sufferers’ conditions. To bear witness means to be attentive to evidence of suffering that emerges through the media and to let this register; to attend to evidence of human despair and to be burdened by this (Tait, 2011). This is the basic moral engagement with distant suffering that compensates for a lack of immediate action. In Tait’s words: “bearing witness ... moralizes the inability to act directly to alleviate the suffering one is proximate to” (2011, p. 1221).

Bearing witness, then, refers to informing spectators of the responsibility they should take for their part in the suffering of others. They need to establish useful knowledge of what they see and to take responsibility for it. Taking responsibility is a twofold process – firstly it means to be aware of and accept their part in creating or enabling the conditions that have led to the on-going conditions of suffering. Secondly, it means taking action – being response-able – to end future suffering and recognising the consequences of inaction.

Firstly, then, taking responsibility means reflecting upon interrelations with distant others and assuming responsibility for contemporary events (Zelizer, 1998): to what extent are we responsible for their suffering? Taking responsibility means reflecting on our role as citizens and spectators in a system of structured inequality or state violence and our participation in the oppression of the other (Rentschler, 2004, p. 300). Once we have realised our responsibility for others’ suffering, we are required to act. By reflecting

on our relations with these others, we are required not only to accept our responsibility for their conditions, but also to recognise our potential to change these conditions (Chouliaraki, 2008b). In this respect, accepting our responsibility for others' suffering should mobilise action, i.e. lead to performing responsibility as a manifestation of our commitment to the wellbeing of the other (Rentschler, 2004; Tait, 2011).

Secondly, taking responsibility means playing an active role in bearing witness and voicing a demand for justice (Oliver, 2004; Rentschler, 2004, p. 300). It is a shift from observing atrocities to responding to them (Tait, 2011, p. 1222). Thus, as Rentschler argues, bearing witness is a form of bodily and political participation: "to watch, see or hear another's victimization from afar can nonetheless constitute affective and political forms of participation in others' suffering" (2004, p. 298). This makes the everyday engagement with the news into a form of political participation in a ritual that serves as a site for the "*transmission of moral obligation*" (Tait, 2011, p. 1227; emphasis in original). Spectators are required to respond to representations of distant suffering by bearing witness and voicing the demand to alleviate the suffering. In so doing, spectators turn from being potentially complicit in perpetrating suffering into potential benefactors.

Moreover, bearing witness necessitates a profound comprehension of the moral consequences of action and inaction – something which does not happen in a historical or political vacuum. Following Zelizer (1998), Rentschler argues that:

"To 'bear witness' should mean that citizens learn that mass acts of violence can continue to happen because so many bystanders have not been taught how to prevent violence, and, more importantly, are prevented from doing so" (Rentschler, 2004, p. 301).

Witnessing, then, activates a moral demand for spectators to act or to bear the consequences of inaction, which, as history teaches us, can be devastating. Inaction, in this regard, can be perceived as complicity.

Thus, ideally, bearing witness to atrocities results in political action to end the suffering and actively manifest solidarity with the distant other. As Chouliaraki argues: "bearing witness should in fact be seen as a politically productive form of moral agency, which contributes to the constitution of community" (Chouliaraki, 2010, p. 68). This articulation of bearing witness establishes a solid link between the mediation of suffering and solidarity, and the social and political bond they form. But what does it mean to bear witness to death?

3.4.2 The moral implications of mediatised death

This thesis focuses on death, which is associated with suffering but also distinct from it. This distinction requires a nuanced formulation of the moral implications of mediated engagement with death, rather than suffering. The key point to be made here is that most of the discussion of the witnessing of suffering applies also to the witnessing of death, but the characteristics of death require a different kind of engagement, which acknowledges its finality and irreversibility while responding to the ethical solicitation it makes.

Violent death and suffering overlap and it is not always easy to tell one from the other. Sometimes continuous conditions of suffering can deteriorate and result in death (as in the case of famine, illness or long lasting conflict). At other times, a sudden incident can cause immediate death and generate long-lasting conditions of suffering (as in the case of terror attacks, accidents and natural disasters). While the discussion of the moral response to distant suffering presupposes that there is still something to be done to alleviate suffering, this is not always the case in relation to death. The discourse on distant suffering premises that these conditions are reversible, that acting upon the suffering can lessen it and improve living conditions. Death, needless to say, is irreversible. The finality of death means that there is nothing we can do to bring the dead back to life and that we cannot act upon their permanent condition. Still, there is something to be done in response to death – which is not done in relation to suffering – and that is to grieve. Whereas suffering can be relieved, death can be grieved for. The finality of death marks the beginning of a liminal phase during which the public is invited to experience and express grief. The expression of grief gives meaning to death and recognises the dead as worthy members of society. Grief, in this respect, is a moral response which takes responsibility and establishes ethical relations. The function of grief is that it positions us vis-à-vis the death of the other and compels us to articulate the nature of our responsibility, as a community, towards his or her death. Grief demands that we ask ourselves: what is the bond that connects us to the dead? What could we have done to prevent this? And what can we do to prevent its reoccurrence? Therefore in this thesis I suggest that, in the light of (distant) death, we need to consider grief as a moral response that informs political consciousness.

3.4.2.1 Grief as a political resource

Earlier, I explored the function of death rituals as a mechanism that marks the significance of death for society, establishes the humanness of the dead, and draws the

boundaries of a community. Death rituals confront the participants with the unfortunate reality of the other, and encourage them to acknowledge the loss and grieve for the dead. By grieving for the dead, participants establish their ties with the other and engage with the moral obligation to account for them. Butler (2004) proposes that we think of grief as a social construct that cultivates solidarity. Death – and Butler refers mostly to violent death – is a public matter that bears social, political and moral meanings, and the manifestation of grief articulates our ties with other inhabitants of the world. This understanding of grief takes into account the obligation of spectators to respond to death by caring for the dead and denouncing the evildoers. This is a broad understanding of grief that extends beyond psychological processes and captures its political and social dimensions, which are the recognition of the value of life and the structure of the social fabric. This proposition takes into account the social and ethical bond that holds individuals together in times of crisis and the obligation to respond to death by reflecting on whose life and death matter to us and what our capacity is in relation to the death of others. In Butler's words,

“[grief] furnishes a sense of political community of a complex order, and it does this first of all by bringing to the fore the relational ties that have implications for theorizing fundamental dependency and ethical responsibility” (Butler, 2004, p. 22).

Violent death means that society has already failed the ultimate test of solidarity, which is to protect and ensure the life of its members. Grief helps to redress that failure by responding to death and re-subscribing to the commitment to secure lives. Grief reclaims a commitment to care for the survivors and honour the dead.

Grief is a useful signifier for reflecting upon questions of vulnerability, solidarity and mutual commitment. This thesis studies grief as a manifestation of ethical response (or responsibility) that informs and facilitates the formation of social and political bonds. In order for death to be meaningful for the community to which the dead belong, death needs to be constructed as grievable; it needs to activate a mechanism that symbolically indicates that something meaningful and valuable was lost, and invites the disposition of grief. The capacity to grieve is contingent upon what we avow as loss, and what we avow as loss is subject to textual representation. “After all”, as Butler reminds us, “if someone is lost, and that person is not someone, then what and where is the loss, and how does mourning take place?” (2004, p. 32).

Drawing on the work of Butler, McRobbie (2006) discusses the significance of familiarity for what we acknowledge as a meaningful loss. McRobbie reminds us that we need to critically examine the rituals performed by various institutions involved in the mobilisations of grief and its reflection on boundaries of care and solidarity. The institution that enables distant death to become an encounter with someone close or familiar is the media that bring us stories of the dead and make them grievable. The construction of death as grievable is a process of meaning-making. It is a process in which discursive means and technological formats are used to give meaning to the death of distant others. Grievability – the ability to grieve – refers to the conditions under which representations of death come together to portray lost lives as significant and meaningful, as something that matters, as life worth living and death worth lamenting on. In the next chapter I introduce an analytical framework that accounts for the construction of grievable death.

3.4.2.2 Witnessing death

The work of the media in facilitating engagement with death and eliciting grief is based on the extent to which death appears in public and the extent to which death is witnessable. By bringing us images and stories of remote deaths, the media make spectators witnesses of fatal events. Following the discussion of the witnessing of suffering, we can draw similar principles in relation to the witnessing of death. The witnessing of death requires spectators to consider whether and how the death of a distant other is something that matters to them. Do the spectators care about the death of the distant other? Do the spectators acknowledge the value of the lost lives? How do the spectators see their part in enabling and preventing the death? Can, and should, the spectators do something to minimise death? What is the spectators' obligation to bring the perpetrators to justice? In other words, the spectators need to situate the death in a broader social and historical context and to articulate the assumed relational ties they have with the distant others. The act of witnessing, then, is a central component in the mediatisation of death, since it generates the reflexive mode which is associated with the liminal phase of death rituals.

In line with the moral work of witnessing suffering, the moral work of witnessing death fulfils yet another function, which is the working of society through time by overcoming collective trauma. As mentioned earlier, since death is irreversible, spectators of death cannot do anything to change this condition. Yet, the occurrence of mass death events can harm society and leave it shattered. By collectively bearing witness to death, society

comes together in an effort to move on and overcome the trauma, and to reinstate its collective identity in the direction of recovery. In Zelizer's words: "bearing witness moves individuals from the personal act of 'seeing' to the adoption of a public stance by which they become part of a collective working through trauma together" (Zelizer, 2002, p. 698). Engagement with the evidence of atrocities is a collective experience that invites individuals to take responsibility for what they see, and in so doing to recommit to their community or to re-constitute it. Even if bearing witness to death cannot generate any action that will bring back the dead or change fatal conditions, it still has a role in generating political awareness and shaping society's moral image of itself.

Hence, given the function of death rituals and media rituals in constituting communities, we need to consider the power of the media in producing *death-related media rituals* and the meaning of this symbolic manifestation of power. The ways in which the media engage with a death event, the ways in which they mediatise it for a community of spectators, bear the potential to unite the spectators in a community of shared values and joint action. Discourse and technological affordances relay stories on death and invite us – perhaps force us – to imagine "the possibility of community on the basis of vulnerability and loss" (Butler, 2004, p. 20). The enactment of death-related media rituals can serve as a means of delineating the boundaries of care and protection for a community of "humans", a community of people whose lives are grievable. Does this mean that every death is grievable? Not at all. And this is exactly the point: because death rituals are so powerful, various actors use the media to utilise death and cultivate grief as a means of shaping global social order and establishing hierarchies of life and death. And so some deaths generate extensive media response while other deaths are played down or even ignored and become invisible. This is the counter-function of death rituals, which reject the egalitarian promise of the *communitas* (Turner, 1969) and utilise death to exclude rather than include. Whatever shape or form the mediatization of death takes, it is the engagement with death through the media that articulates moral principles and informs political consciousness.

3.5 Conclusions

In conclusion, this chapter explores the mediated public sphere as a terrain of power dynamics where the negotiation over the social order takes place. Through questions related to death-related media rituals, this chapter explains that the mediated engagement with death establishes hierarchies of place and of human life, and reflects

political and moral claims for solidarity. The ways in which we learn about death through the media facilitate our understanding of “order” and “disorder”. They shape the ways in which we perceive the other’s vulnerability as a matter of concern, and they play a role in mobilising action toward distant others. Through performativity and representation, death-related media rituals engage us with remote death, and claim its relevance or irrelevance to the social structure we are part of.

Negotiation over the global social order is a matter of connectivity and reception of the products of global news organisations. The various pieces of information they disseminate, the different claims they voice and the multiple narratives they put together play in harmony or cacophony in a mediated public sphere. I wish to argue that it is through engagement with death stories that these differences crystallise; it is through the performance of death rituals and the representation of death that questions of solidarity, responsibility and power are evoked and galvanised. These questions are political in nature, but they also carry a moral baggage that motivates and triggers political consciousness and actions.

Chapter 4: Research design and methodology

4.1 Research design

Based on the discussion thus far, we can draw some important conclusions that have had implications for designing the current research: global crises are moments that invite reflexivity and consideration of the interdependency among citizens of the world; social science needs to study global society outside the national box, especially in relation to crises; the media are the institution which performs and produces death-related media rituals; and finally, the global social order is debatable and subject to negotiation and contestation. These conclusions informed the following methodological decisions: to conduct textual analysis to study the texts that the media produce and circulate together with the formats and contexts through which these texts are produced and disseminated; to select cases of mass death events as moments of (global) crisis; to employ the *methodological cosmopolitanism* approach (explained below); to study transnational media; and to employ a comparative framework to account for the multivocality of the claims regarding the constitution of a cosmopolitan community.

This chapter explains the research design employed to address the thesis's research question, which is: *how do death-related media rituals function as a cultural mechanism of inclusion or exclusion and to what extent do they selectively foster solidarity and a sense of cosmopolitan community?* The chapter begins with a short explanation regarding the focus on the media as a social institution and the rituals they produce. It then moves on to discuss the emergence of the cosmopolitan moment and introduces Beck and Sznaider's (2006) call for the employment of a *cosmopolitan outlook* in social science. This perspective also justifies the study of global news as part of the *methodological cosmopolitanism* framework. The chapter then moves on to explain why a comparative framework can be helpful in accounting for the different claims expressed in relation to the construction of cosmopolitan community and the reasons for comparing and contrasting two transnational news channels. Accordingly, this chapter then presents these two channels – Al-Jazeera English and BBC World News – and the reasons for comparing them. I then turn to exploring the sampling strategy and the rationale for conducting case study research. Next, I introduce the case studies analysed in the analytical chapters (Chapters Five, Six and Seven) and explain the reasons for the sampling, and in the following section the methodology is discussed, including data collection and methods of analysis.

Lastly, the chapter introduces the *analytics of mediatised grievability* as an analytical framework that is applied to studying *death-related media rituals*, while taking into account the moral implications of the mediatisation of death, and the ritualistic properties of reporting on mass death events. This analytical framework is applied to analyse the sampled materials in the chapters that follow.

4.1.1 Mediatisation: an empirical analysis

Taking the theory of mediatisation as a point of departure, the object of this study, then, is the function of the media (namely, television, in this case) as a social institution which is authorised to activate rituals and summon solidarities – how do they perform, what formats do they use, and what meaning do they make? As this thesis is interested in the moral demands which emanate from mediatised death rituals, the analysis focuses on television as a medium which produces these rituals. What concerns me here is what the media do in response to mass violent death events and in an attempt to invoke grief and mobilise solidarity. More specifically, I am interested in the moral demand that images and representations of death make for their spectators.

Later in this chapter, I elaborate on the methods of analysis, but the point to be made here, in introducing the research design, is that the empirical analysis of the mediatisation of death requires that we focus on the role that the media themselves play as social institutions that operate in a complex social terrain, and on the propositions they put forwards for audiences to engage with. Questions regarding how audiences respond to these propositions and what they make of them are indeed valid ones, as spectators can always reject the media's proposition and ignore it or interpret it differently (Kyriakidou, 2015; Ong, 2012; see also Madianou, 2005). Yet, in this thesis I am more interested in media performance and the invitation issued or proposition made by the text or the mediatised rituals.

Having said this, some of the analytical categories which I mention throughout the analytical framework are informed by insights and findings which emerged from audience research. For example, the meaning of the appeal made by the depiction of the faces of people at the scene of death; or the meaning of live footage in relation to the construction of urgency – these elements are supported by findings from audience research and I employ them in my analysis.

4.1.2 Methodological cosmopolitanism

The understanding of major death events as potentially bearing a global importance that affects wide social circles suggests that a national perspective may no longer be the appropriate one for studying such cases. As Beck (2011) proposes:

“A cosmopolitan turn in sociological theory and research is needed. This means that in a world of global crises and of dangers produced by civilization, the old dualisms of internal and external, national and international, and us and them lose their validity, and the imagined community of cosmopolitanism becomes essential to survival” (Beck, 2011, p. 1349).

In fact, Beck (2007) argues that contemporary global social life is more complex than the simple classification according to nation-states, and thus that contemporary social science needs to take account of this complexity by moving away from the nationalist viewpoint. This does not mean, however, that social science needs to abandon the nationalist perspective, but rather that it needs to be more reflexive as to whether and how this perspective is embedded in the project of nationalism, so it does not fail to capture the cosmopolitan moment. According to Beck:

“Systematically, methodological nationalism takes the following ideal premises for granted: it equates society with nation-state societies, and sees states and their governments as the cornerstones of a social sciences analysis. It assumes that humanity is naturally divided into a limited number of nations, which on the inside, organize themselves as nation-states, and on the outside, set boundaries to distinguish themselves from other nation-states” (Beck, 2007, p. 287).

Beck defies these premises and argues that they can be misleading in capturing broader processes and dynamics within the global social world. Instead, Beck suggests an alternative point of view – *a cosmopolitan outlook* – for the study of contemporary society. In this regard, Rantanen (2010) advocates adapting Beck’s *cosmopolitan outlook* to the study of news flows. According to Rantanen, so far, the study of news flows has been rooted in methodological nationalism, whereas the global media sphere is no longer exclusively nation-based, but rather also international or transnational. Therefore, in the current thesis, I focus on transnational media and study how their performance following mass death events shapes the understanding of contemporary society as cosmopolitan.

4.1.3 Comparative analysis of transnational media

Recognising that the contemporary global media sphere is cacophonous, multi-voiced and multi-directional entails methodological decisions that will capture this complexity. As this thesis is interested in cosmopolitanism and the emergence of global publics, it follows that we should examine media channels that speak to and cater for multiple global audiences. Accordingly, this thesis looks at transnational media that operate globally and provide a “cosmopolitan outlook”, or at least an outlook that is not only national. Although Hafez (2007, 2011) argues that transnational media did not help bring about cosmopolitan values, he still agrees that we can identify various spheres of transnationality (2011, p. 486), which include a Western, an American, a European, a Muslim and an Arab sphere (see also Cottle & Rai, 2008; Figenschou, 2010; Painter, 2008; Rai & Cottle, 2007). Each of these spheres provides a stage for narratives and frames that often compete with the narratives and frames promoted in other spheres, yet these spheres are multinational, and often embody an aspiration to become global or cosmopolitan.

Since these transnational channels sometime compete with one another, we need to compare the different voices and worldviews they promote when they address global audiences. Moreover, since some of these transnational channels are considered to be operating in the service of Western hegemony, while others are perceived as challengers of this hegemony, this thesis compares Western and non-Western media. This methodological decision echoes an alternative trend in media studies that aims to balance the bias in media studies that focus mostly on Western media. By studying two global TV channels that are vehicles for two dominant global voices, this thesis discerns the nature and scope of the imagined communities constructed when covering global death events. By comparing and contrasting non-Western and Western media, the analysis I apply here deepens the understanding of the global media environment at the beginning of the 21st century.

The two news channels this thesis studies are Al-Jazeera English (AJE) and BBC World News (BBC). These are two global networks that cover global events 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Both channels broadcast in English and in a way address the same English-speaking audience, the same imagined community of “citizens of the world” (Chalaby, 2003; Figenschou, 2010; Powers, 2012; Seib, 2012). This perception of the cosmopolitan vision needs to be qualified, since the language of the broadcast, and its transmission

and distribution, shape these channels' viewership so that they encompasses only parts of the world (see Rai & Cottle, 2007). Therefore, the working premise in this thesis is that these two channels cater to global audiences that are not confined or organised according to national affiliation, but that they are Western in their cultural orientation.

It is important to note, however, that the categories of Western and non-Western media refer to a variety of media ecologies and media systems. These categories are not homogenous, they speak in more than one voice and each contains an internal variance between the sub-categories which compose it (the category of Western media, for example, contains North American and European media; the category of non-Western contains Arab media and Latin American media). Yet, In line with the literature on the complexity of the contemporary global media ecology, which often takes the West as a focal point for reflection on questions such as flow and counter-flow or hegemony and counter-hegemony, I choose to use these broad categories since the distinction (or the construction of distinction) between them overrides the internal variance each contains. Especially in relation to questions of vulnerability and of cosmopolitan solidarity, these distinctions are very clear. The West is constructed as ordered, affluent and safe, whereas the non-West is constructed as disordered, poor and unsafe. These constructed differences are even more remarkable when we examine news about violent death: the West is usually constructed as a zone where violent death is abnormal and represents a collapse of order, while the non-West is usually constructed as a zone where violence prevails and security cannot be guaranteed (for example, Fishman & Marvin, 2003; J. Taylor, 1998). These differences are important for the discussion here, since they pertain to questions of the responsibility of the global affluent West for the rest of the world, in a global age. Thus, while keeping the complexity of the broad-brush categories of West and non-West, I use these categories in line with research in the field.

Accordingly, we need to keep in mind that Al-Jazeera English and BBC World News are two media organisations that do not represent "The West" or "The non-West". These categories are broad, complex and diverse in their own right, and we need to be very cautious when associating media organisations with a uniform or comprehensive worldview. The BBC offers a different perspective from that of CNN or Fox News, which are also classified as "Western". Likewise, AJE is different from its Arabic-speaking (older) sister, Al Jazeera Arabic (AJA), which is different from Al-Arabiya or Telesur (Painter, 2008). The juxtaposition of BBC World News and Al-Jazeera English does not mean, then,

that these two news outlets offer two completely opposite worldviews. In fact, some studies even suggest that Al-Jazeera English offers a worldview that is not always very different from that offered by other “Western” news organisations (Graaf, 2008; Jurkowitz, Mitchell, & Matsa, 2013).¹¹ Still, these two organisations have come to represent rival storytelling positions on the geopolitical spectrum, each falling on a different side of the Western/non-Western division. In the following sections I introduce AJE and BBC World News in more detail.

4.1.3.1 Al-Jazeera English

Among the non-Western media organisations that challenge Western hegemony, Al-Jazeera is a prominent example (Thussu, 2007). Al Jazeera English (AJE) is part of the Al Jazeera Network, which operates over twenty channels including its initial Arabic channel – Al Jazeera Arabic (AJA). AJE was launched in November 2006 in an attempt to meet what its managers identified as a growing demand for an English-speaking news channel that would challenge the Western-dominated global news scene (Powers, 2009). Interestingly, the decision to launch the English-speaking channel was related to news about death – the decision was taken in response to the controversy that emerged following AJA’s decision to broadcast a video of dead American soldiers in Iraq, and decisions like that have contributed to the perception of the network as anti-American and counter-hegemonic (Samuel-Azran, 2010). In other words, although this information is anecdotal, it reflects the relevance of news about death to the power dynamics of dominance and hegemony in the global public sphere.

Financially, the Al Jazeera Network is funded and supported by Qatar. The Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, invested approximately \$1 billion in establishing AJE. The Qatari government still funds it with approximately \$100 million annually. In addition, AJE has revenues from commercials, which makes it a hybrid, public-commercial entity, very much like BBC World News (Powers, 2009, 2012; Youmans, 2012). The Network headquarters is in Doha, and it has additional broadcasting centres in Kuala Lumpur, London and Washington DC. According to Al Jazeera Network (“Al Jazeera English,” 2014), it has more than 65 bureaus worldwide, with 3,000 staff members, 400 of whom are journalists. Its English channel, AJE, has over 60 bureaus and more than 1,000 employees of more than 50 nationalities.

¹¹ Some of the findings refer to Al-Jazeera America, which was recently launched, yet this still indicates that the division between “Western” and “non-Western” news organisations is not always clear or acute.

The initiative to launch an English-speaking news channel that would operate alongside AJA emerged in the years following the September 11, 2001 terror attacks, when the network received more and more requests from an English-speaking audience interested in what the channel had to say about current affairs (Powers, 2009). Al-Jazeera aims to be a “truly global” news channel committed to plurality and to voicing “opinions and counter opinions”, as its motto indicates. And indeed, the channel has been accused more than once of promoting anti-Western views, as well as, on the other hand, of giving voice to pro-American and pro-Israeli views (Sakr, 2007).

However, the motivation for launching AJE was not simply to provide news in English, but also to balance the Western hegemony of global news and challenge prevailing hierarchies of power in the global public sphere. The aim was “to speak truth to power” and so change the discourse of news in the non-Western world (Powers, 2012). More precisely, AJE aims to give a “voice for the voiceless” (Figenschou, 2010, p. 86) or to be “the voice of the South” (El-Nawawy & Powers, 2010; Painter, 2008) and to reverse the flow of information, so that the global South can speak back to the global North. As Nigel Parsons, AJE’s first managing director, put it:

“The philosophy is very much about decentralizing the news gathering process. We kind of reinvented the news gathering process. It’s to allow people to see events from the eyes of the people of that region, rather than through foreign eyes... We want Africans to tell us about Africa. We want Arabs to tell us about the Middle East and Asians to tell us about Asia” (in Powers, 2009, p. 161).

In addition, AJE’s goal is to offer an alternative agenda and make room for groups and regions that are often not covered (Figenschou, 2010; Painter, 2008). In so doing, the network has said that it hopes to facilitate understanding between cultures and to be a bridge between communities. Nigel Parsons:

“We will be the first global news channel based in the Middle East looking outwards, we will reverse the flow of information ... and therefore be a conduit to greater understanding between different peoples and different cultures” (Pintak, 2005).

And indeed, studies show that AJE functions as a conciliatory media source which can enhance audiences’ understanding of the “Other”, and that it offers an alternative to Western global news channels by providing more stories from the global South and

focusing less on stories that originate in North America and Europe (Painter, 2008; Youmans, 2012).

Furthermore, and directly relevant to the current study, AJE's ideological mission, according to Marwan Bashara, AJE's Senior Political Analyst, is to mobilise its audience and encourage viewers to see human suffering as a universal problem that transcends boundaries and categorical affiliations (in Powers, 2009, p. 163). This stance reflects the cosmopolitan ambition of AJE and the role it sees for itself in cultivating cosmopolitan solidarity.

AJE also has a national agenda. Much like the BBC which maintains British values and interests, so does AJE protect the reputation of Qatar. And although it can be critical and fearless towards powerful regimes, when it comes to news about Qatar and its leadership, the channel is restricted and reserved.

Unlike BBC, AJE does not have a "glocal" model, splitting its transmission according to regions. Instead, AJE has one signal which is transmitted simultaneously to the entire world. This format reflects AJE's mission to promote a cosmopolitan view which offers all its viewers exactly the same news diet. The broadcasting day moves between the different broadcasting centres while the rationale is always to speak to the part of the world that is awake. Like the BBC, AJE broadcasts a news bulletin every hour, on the hour, and half an hour of in-depth analysis (Chalaby, 2009).

Shortly after its inauguration, AJE was reaching more than 80 million households worldwide (Youmans, 2012). Currently, according to the network, AJE broadcasts to over 250 million households across 130 countries. According to Nigel Parsons, "our target audience is everyone who speaks English" (in Powers, 2012, p. 19), and Joanne Tucker, the first managing editor of Al Jazeera's English website, has proclaimed that "we want it to be a global citizen's home page" (in Powers, 2012). This notion of cosmopolitanism is not always clearly defined and AJE takes into consideration the "Westernness" of its English-speaking audiences. Thus, for example, when reporting news on death, AJE is more sensitive than its Arabic sister, AJA, in showing graphic images, although these are more explicit in comparison to other Western news channels (Fahmy, 2010).

4.1.3.2 BBC World News

As for the Western side of the comparison, Chalaby (2003) and Rai and Cottle (2007) mention two global networks that have global coverage and dominate the field of global

news reporting – CNN International and BBC World News. For this thesis I chose BBC World News, which is a British public channel established in 1995. It is the televised version of the BBC World Service, which was established in imperial times and so has come to represent a Western perspective, and therefore it is an adequate candidate for comparison with Al-Jazeera English. However, despite its British origin, the channel has “designed a range of programmes tailored to a multinational audience” (Chalaby, 2003, p. 467).

The BBC World Services launched a television channel in 1991, and in 1995 the channel was split into two distinct channels – *BBC Prime*, which focuses on lifestyle and entertainment, and *BBC World* (now *BBC World News*), which broadcasts news and current affairs shows from around the world, 24 hours a day (Bicket & Wall, 2009). On the organisational level, BBC World News is a hybrid public-commercial entity. It is state-funded by the UK government, but also has revenues from commercials. Its annual budget is between £45 million (Chalaby, 2009) and £76 million (Painter, 2008). Its main operational base is in London, but it is said to have between 41 (Bicket & Wall, 2009; Dencik, 2013) and 72 (Painter, 2008) bureaus worldwide. It employs between 600 (Dencik, 2013; Painter, 2008) and 2,000 (Chalaby, 2009) reporters around the world, and its overall personnel reaches 3,700 employees (Bicket & Wall, 2009).

The motivation for launching BBC World News was, according to Bicket and Wall, to challenge the dominance of CNN as a global TV news channel, but its mission goes beyond competition with other global news providers. Richard Sambrook, former director of BBC’s global news division, defined its mission as follows: “BBC journalists strive to establish a connection between people’s live and global issues in order to make them feel that they are part of a global conversation that is going on all over the world” (in Chalaby, 2009, p. 176). This view of the mission of BBC World News captures the cosmopolitan vision that the organisation holds and the goal it has set for itself of reaching global audiences. According to Chalaby, its personnel make an effort not to project a British point of view: “Overall, the channel’s output reveals a news organisation that is remarkably aware of the globalised nature of the world and the cosmopolitan character of the human condition in the twenty-first century” (Chalaby, 2009, p. 178). Accordingly, Dencik asserts that BBC World News “strives to have a truly global news agenda”, having in mind its cosmopolitan audience (Dencik, 2013, p. 124).

And yet, despite the aspiration to provide a cosmopolitan outlook, BBC World News cannot renounce its British origins. This is reflected in the agenda it sets for its audiences around the world, which favours and promotes a British point of view on current affairs. Thus, stories that originate in the UK or which have pertinence to British audiences are more likely to be reported in spite of the channel's global aspirations (Dencik, 2013; Painter, 2008). Moreover, Bicket and Wall (2009) argue that in the American news arena, BBC World News brands itself as "British", which makes it more appealing to audiences who are interested in alternatives to the American point of view: "the BBC had built up for itself the role of a prime interpreter of British values to the world" (Bicket & Wall, 2009, p. 375).

BBC World News transmission is split into five feeds covering Europe, the Americas, Africa, South Asia and the Middle East, and Asia-Pacific and Australia. It broadcasts a news bulletin every hour on the hour, followed by current affairs shows. The news bulletin is broadcast worldwide, but the second half of the hour is regionalised (Chalaby, 2009). In an attempt to meet its audience's interests, BBC World News offers a substantial portion of business news and financial news. Bicket and Wall (2009) say that the channel promotes an understanding whereby this type of news better fits the definition of "global news" than news on health or education, yet the implication of such an association is that poorer geographical areas like Africa and Latin America receive comparatively less media exposure than wealthier areas such as Europe and North America. Empirical data collected by Dencik (2013) and Painter (2008) support this claim.

BBC World News reaches 161 million households (Painter, 2008). As for BBC World News audiences, according to Chalaby, the channel's viewers by and large speak English, have a good level of education and hold a cosmopolitan outlook. Whilst its audiences have different cultural backgrounds, they still "share commonalities which enable the channel to offer them a satisfying 'international diet'" (Chalaby, 2009, p. 176). And yet, this needs to be considerate of different sensitivities of viewers in various places. When it comes to images of death and devastation, BBC World News needs to take into account local perceptions and values, which can vary significantly (ibid).

4.1.4 Sampling

The current study is based on a selection of case studies. A case study approach is useful when we want to better understand a phenomenon by thoroughly investigating a small number of cases (Gerring, 2006). It is suitable for the study of phenomena that

researchers cannot control, and it is beneficial when accounting for questions such as “how” and “why” in an exploratory fashion (Shakir, 2002, p. 192). As the focus of this thesis is the mediatisation of mass death events by transnational media, a selection of case studies is an appropriate strategy, since it allows us to undertake an in-depth analysis and to elicit as much information as possible on each case. Although this approach does not count on a representative sample and therefore cannot result in statistical generalisation, it does allow analytical generalisation based on a broader theory (Yin, 1994).

The strategy for case selection is *criterion sampling*, which advises us to select the cases according to a predetermined criterion, based on the theory that informs and motivates the research (Patton, 1990). The criteria for case selection will be discussed shortly, but the selected cases are also *typical cases*, as each case “exemplifies what is considered to be a typical set of values, given some general understanding of a phenomenon” (Gerring, 2006, p. 91).

Based on the above, the thesis draws on the literature on the mediatisation of mass death (for example, Katz & Liebes, 2007), which points to three main types of mass death event – terror attacks, natural disasters and wars. These types of event invite death-related media rituals, since they are understood both by society and by its institutions as bearing significant meaning. These are events which are constructed as a collapse of order that can potentially jeopardise large publics and therefore require mobilisation and solidarity. For each type of death event, a typical case was selected, based on the following criteria: mass death; global interest and historic importance; picked up by transnational media (AJE¹² and BBC) and generated extensive coverage. Accordingly, the following three events were selected (see Table 4.1):

¹² Al-Jazeera English was launched in November 2006, and this also affected the selection of case studies.

Table 4.1: Case studies sampling

Case study	2011 Norway attacks	2010 Haiti earthquake	2008 Gaza War
Type of event	Terror attack	Natural disaster	War
Date started	22/07/2011	12/01/2010	27/12/2008
Duration	Day(s)	Day(s)	Three weeks
Political geography	West	South	West-South
Rivals/ Perpetrators- victims	Nationalist Norwegian – Norwegian citizens	Haitians	Israel – Hamas in Gaza
Number of dead	Nearly 80	Hundreds of thousands	More than one thousand

The three cases are prominent death events that vary in a number of aspects. Each is a different kind of a mass violent death event, with different characteristics; they took place in different locations around the globe; and they have different geo-political backgrounds. The events vary in their causes and effects, in their magnitude and in the kind of challenge they posed to the local communities and to the world. Yet, death was an integral component of each of these events and a central reason for their coverage by the media.

As the thesis is designed to analyse the coverage of three case studies by two news outlets, its design uses a cross-case method. As the following matrix suggests (Table 4.2), this design yields six cases, which enables a comparison between cases and between channels. This design allows a number of combinations of news channel and type of event, and so offers an understanding of death-related media rituals from various perspectives. Each of the following analytical chapters concludes with a comparison between the two channels (vertical comparison), and the subsequent discussion (Chapter Eight) draws a comparison between the types of event (horizontal comparison).

Table 4.2: Axes of comparison

	Terror attack	Natural disaster	War
AJE	Case study 1	Case study 2	Case study 3
BBC	Case study 4	Case study 5	Case study 6

4.1.5 Data collection and recording

The BBC and AJE provided extensive coverage of each of these three events, over a few days, including on-location reports from the scene. For each event, I sampled several reports from each channel. The reports were sampled from different points throughout the duration of the event. A report from the first day (sometimes from the first moments) of the event was sampled in order to account for its initial construction as an order-breaking event. Reports from later points throughout the duration of the event were selected according to the extent to which they captured the evolution of the event, whether in terms of happenings on the ground or on screen. Overall, the sample reflects the variance in the mode and style of reporting *on death*, as this appeared on screen.

The selected reports were sampled from the on-line archives of the BBC and of AJE. Each channel has an on-line archive with a search engine. AJE also archives reports via YouTube and so that platform was also searched. The YouTube searches also retrieved some BBC reports.

Since I did not gain access to the official archives of the two channels, I cannot account for the actual broadcast as it appeared on screen in real time. Basing the sample on on-line archives has its limitations. It gives a partial understanding of how the events were registered on screen in real time, and therefore I cannot tell when each channel launched its first reports on each event, or whether these initial reports were transmitted live or not. These are, of course, important dimensions, yet the on-line archives contain multiple materials from throughout the events, including recordings of live broadcasts, which represent rich and diverse forms of coverage. Therefore, I believe that the reports retrieved offer a varied, telling and reliable account of the coverage of the three events by the two channels, which is sufficient for the purpose of this study.

I searched the above archives and sampled at least three reports from each channel for each event. Each report was transcribed and an abridged “storyboard” produced in order to account for the correspondence of the audio and visual narratives. I present the “storyboards” at the beginning of each case-study analysis. The full transcripts appear in the appendixes. The full reports are available on-line, and were also downloaded and stored on my hard drive and in “the cloud”.

These are the reports included in the analysis:

Table 4.3: The reports analysed

Appendix	Channel	Title	Date	Link
The Gaza War				
A1	AJE	Israel launches missile attacks on Gaza	December 27, 2008	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZaG96pnnEQ
A2	AJE	Israel's attack on UN-run school in Gaza	January 7, 2009	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itHo5oHhipl
A3	AJE	More children among Gaza dead	January 6, 2009	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K5wrwZlwAq8&bpctr=1400070981
B1	BBC	Massive Israeli air raids on Gaza	December 27, 2008	http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/7801128.stm
B2	BBC	Israel strike 'kills 30' at Gaza school	January 6, 2009	http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/7813735.stm
B3	BBC	Israel to vote on Gaza truce	January 17, 2009	http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7835376.stm
The Norway Attacks				
A4	AJE	Breaking News – Bomb blast in Oslo	July, 22, 2011	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WIGaweRISA
A5	AJE	Norway witnesses recount Utoya attack	July, 22, 2011	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Kys0BU4DDc
A6	AJE	Interview Norway shooting witness	July 23, 2011	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_X15M9sAReM
A7	AJE	Norway mourns victims at memorial service	July 24, 2011	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DH-pNKzRyCI
B4	BBC	Norwegian capital hit by large explosion	July 22, 2011	http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14254254
B5	BBC	Death toll of at least 80 in the shooting on the island of Utoya in Norway	July 22, 2011	http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&v=cuVD3qN6aul&NR=1
B6	BBC	Norway mourns those killed in Friday's attacks	July 24, 2011	http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14270019
The Haiti Earthquake				

Appendix	Channel	Title	Date	Link
A8	AJE	Haitians struggle to cope amid aftermath of earthquake	January 12, 2010	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EW1VUgH9g2s
A9	AJE	UN confronts 'worst ever disaster'	January 16, 2010	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMythR6gk0Y
A10	AJE	Quake victims buried in mass graves	January 21, 2010	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlYAj3Jx1Vl
A11	AJE	Haiti quake survivor's story of despair and loss	January 20, 2010	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUrGImD7uHU
A12	AJE	Haiti quake UN's most fatal incident	January 15, 2009	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mmq7gn9tns
B7	BBC	BBC News Reports 12.01.2010	January 12-13, 2010	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5dG6vyFWFo
B8	BBC	Haiti - the place where hell is the new normal	January 19, 2010	http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/8467648.stm
B9	BBC	Earthquake misery in Haiti hospital	January 18, 2010	http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8465871.stm http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W26i0QVDiyM
B10	BBC	Looking for survivors online	January 15, 2010	http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/world_news_america/8460551.stm

4.1.6 Data analysis

The analysis of the empirical materials was based on methodologies associated with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The aim of the thesis is to closely examine death-related media rituals as a meaning-making mechanism that manifests power by giving meaning to the social world and constructing categories of belonging. CDA is an overarching framework that offers useful tools for addressing such issues of meaning-making and power, since it is interested in the semiotic dimension of power and seeks to reveal these (Fairclough, Wodak, & Mulderring, 2011; Wood & Kroger, 2000).

CDA sees discourse as a form of social practice:

“Discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially shaped: it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people... it helps sustain and reproduce the social status quo... and contributes to transforming it” (Fairclough et al., 2011, p. 358).

This understanding of CDA is closely related to the understanding of rituals, as discussed earlier, since it is oriented to unravelling the symbolic use of power as a means of making claims regarding the so-called social order. Moreover, CDA offers an encompassing understanding of the term “discourse”, which includes words, pictures, symbols and so forth. As such, it is suitable for analysing rituals as performative acts which aspire to use various forms of representation in order to produce or fix meaning and put the social world “in order”. In fact, there is no ritual without discourse.

CDA does not have a fixed methodological stance. Rather, it needs to tailor methodology according to the research topic, and this can vary from one topic to another. Additionally, the methodology also needs to take into consideration the medium and the genre of communication (conversation, interview, news, advertisement and so on). The present thesis is interested in televisual news about death. Therefore, the applied methodology draws upon Chouliaraki’s *analytics of mediation* (2006), which is a methodology tailored to the study of news of suffering and the specificities of such a genre, as further elaborated below. This methodology uses semiotic analysis, together with the analysis of discursive elements that are outside the semiotic. In addition, I have complemented this approach with general analytical tools, conventionally used for analysing documentary television (Pollak, 2008).

Thus, in order to account for the multimodality of television text, the analysis refers to visual semiotics and the meaning produced by visual representation: what do images represent and how? What ideas and values do people, places, and things represented in images stand for? Since television provides moving images, the visual analysis also considers the meaning of technical elements of filming like camera movements, spaces and the angles of camera shots. The analysis also addresses the narrative structure offered by the news reports – what is the storyline they weave? Multimodal analysis of television texts also needs to consider other filmic representations such as music, sound, voiceovers and the behaviour of social actors. The analysis factors in these dimensions, as I explain in the following section.

CDA is usually a macro-analytical approach (Wood & Kroger, 2000), although some approaches to CDA, like Fairclough's, combine an analysis of texts at both the micro and the macro level (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2006). My analysis of the news reports examined them on a macro level. While keeping in mind Fairclough's three dimensions of analysis (text, discursive practices, and social practice), the analysis did not carry out a close reading of the reports at the level of words or single frames. Rather, the focus of the analysis was on the overall meaning that emerges from the reports while considering social structures and power relations. More specifically, the analysis focused on the potential of the texts to function as vehicles for invoking and processing grief.

In what follows, I introduce the analytical framework applied to analysing the sampled materials.

4.2 The analytics of mediatised grievability

The proposed analytical framework builds on the notion of *grievability*, which I borrow from Butler (2004, 2009), and develops this into an analytical tool based on Chouliaraki's *analytics of mediation* (Chouliaraki, 2006b). The analytics of mediation is an analytical framework that studies television news as a "regime of meaning" (ibid, p. 70) that constitutes knowledge about the world and classifies the world in terms of us and them (see also Hall, 1997). The analytics of mediation takes into account both semiotic elements and technological elements, and studies them as an articulation of power relations between sufferers and spectators. These are useful tools with which to unpack the televised report and construe it in terms of the sense of urgency it encompasses, and the viewing and acting dispositions that the report proposes.

The *analytics of mediation* enables us to identify different modes of reporting on disasters and each mode invites different ways of engaging with the distant other. In so doing, the different modes of reporting create a variety of propositions for engaging and responding to remote suffering and death:

"By means of multimodal and critical discourse analysis, the analytics of mediation enables us to ask questions about the ways in which the news text is put together in language and image and about how the visual and linguistic articulations of news construe the space-time and forms of agency that connect spectators and sufferers in relation to specific pieces of news on suffering" (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 93).

These elements embody an ethical invitation to spectators to respond to television genres of news about suffering and death.

Drawing on the analytics of mediation, I offer the *analytics of mediatised grievability* as an analytical framework for the study of news about death. The multimodal analysis, construal of time-space, and agency (CDA), which are the three dimensions of *the analytics of mediation*, still feature in the proposed analytical framework, but in a modified way that, I would argue, better fits the focus on death and the elicitation of grief.

4.2.1 Conditions of mediatised grievability

Butler encourages us “to ask about the conditions under which a grievable life is established and maintained” (2004, p. 38). Drawing on the literature of media and morality (Butler, 2004, 2009, 2011; Frosh & Pinchevski, 2009b; Silverstone, 2006) and on the mediation of suffering (Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2006b), I consider the following three conditions for the construction of grievable death: (1) the construction of the dead person as human; (2) the constitution of spatiotemporal commonality for spectators and distant others; and (3) the production of a witnessable account. These conditions serve as components constructing vulnerability as a motivation for solidarity. When they join together, they articulate an *ethical solicitation* that implicates the interrelations between spectators and distant others and suggests how spectators should position themselves in light of the deadly reality they encounter, and how they should respond to it. I address each condition in turn.

4.2.1.1 The construction of the dead as human

The first condition for the construction of grievable death is to see the dead as human. In Butler’s words:

“... I propose to start, and to end, with the question of the human... We start here not because there is a human condition that is universally shared – this is surely not the case. The question that preoccupies me in the light of recent global violence is, who counts as human? Whose lives count as lives? And, finally, What makes for a grievable life?” (Butler, 2004, p. 20).

Butler’s questions suggest that not everybody counts – symbolically or politically – as human. “The human” is a symbolic category that fits some and excludes others. Calhoun concurs: the category of the human seems self-evident, but it is not: “In most usage it involves thinking about humanity as a set of individuals, and of individuals as equivalent

to each other, all deserving of moral recognition” (Calhoun, 2010), but this is a relatively modern way of thinking that is surely not universal. Accordingly, “the human” is not understood as a biological matter. Rather, it is socially constructed through political dimensions which have discursive bearings, such as the capacity to speak and participate in social and political life.

This resonates with Agamben’s (1998) notion of *bare life*, which is the life of the *Homo Sacer*, the sacred man who is *not* a free man, and whose killing is considered neither a crime nor a sacrifice. The sacred man, whose life is bare, is excluded from the category of “the human” and from the realm of the political. The notion of *bare life* refers to this indignity, together with other forms of dehumanisation, to the extent that those who live bare lives are unworthy of even the basic form of solidarity on the basis of common humanity. Furthermore, ending the life of the *Homo Sacer* is not considered homicide, and so it is not a crime and therefore does not entail any sanction or condemnation. It is a death that does not register as death, a death that does not count as such. I unpack the construction of the dead as human according to the following criteria – how is death registered and represented? And how is the agency of the people at the scene of death construed?

4.2.1.1.1 Registering death

Butler is concerned with the deprivation of “humanness” in relation to some groups of people who “have fallen outside the ‘human’” (Butler, 2004, p. 32). She engages with this problem by reflecting on “how do our cultural frames for thinking the human set limits on the kinds of losses we can avow as loss?” (ibid). Deaths that are not avowed as losses make no claim to grieve the dead and so construe these deaths as non-grievable, which means negating the “humanness” of the dead. In other words, if death is not registered as death, it makes no claim for the humanness of the person who has died. In addition, employing disavowal as a representational strategy (Hall, 1997) enables a fascinated and voyeuristic gaze upon taboo images of death, as we shall see in the analytical chapters. Hence, by considering deaths that are not avowed as losses, we can infer what a grievable life *is* – a life whose ending is being registered as death; the life of someone who fits the category of “the human”. The notion of grievability, thus, refers to the opposite of *bare life*, since it refers to those lives which are not bare, and to those people whose death is indeed registered as death, and the failure to protect their lives is, therefore, immoral. Grievability, then, is based on the construction of the “humanness” of the dead.

In order for life (or death) to be grievable, it first needs to be identified or to qualify as “life”. This condition is critical to the understanding of violent death as morally flawed, as something that entails denunciation, since violence is legitimate only against those who are not considered as humans and whose lives are not considered as lives (Zehfuss, 2009). “If violence is done against those who are unreal”, Butler tells us, “then, from the perspective of violence, it fails to injure or negate those lives since those lives are already negated” (Butler, 2004, p. 33). Thus, grievable life needs to qualify as “real” life, as the life of someone who qualifies as a “real human”. Death rituals, as discussed in previous chapters, give meaning to death and construct the dead as “human”. Thus, in order to assess the construction of the dead as human we need, first, to ask the following questions:

- How, if at all, is distant death registered?
 - To what extent is the report framed as a death-related story? Is death essential and integral to the understanding of the story?
 - How can we tell that the news story is about death?
 - What do we know about the death?
 - Do we know the scale of the death?
 - Do we know the circumstances of the death?
- Or, is the death, perhaps, ignored by the media, and therefore not registered at all?¹³

The purpose of these questions is to capture the extent to which death is manifested as a central and important happening, and therefore as making claims for the humanness of those who died, setting the ground for grieving over their deaths. If a death-related event takes place and the reports on it do not account for the loss of lives, these reports signal that this very fact is insignificant and, accordingly, undermine the humanness of the dead. For example, if thirty people died while hiking near to an erupting volcano and the news-story about this focuses on the spectacle of the eruption without accounting for the lost lives, then their death is marked as unimportant, and, symbolically, the humanness of the dead is undermined or even negated.¹⁴

¹³ Butler bases the concept of grievability on the claim that some deaths are not registered at all. Some deaths are not reported by the media and so have no representation at all, which means that they are symbolically annihilated and therefore non-grievable.

¹⁴ For example, see this report from an Israeli Channel 2 evening news edition (in Hebrew) on the death of hikers on Mount Ontake (Japan), which focuses on the spectacle of the volcano’s

Accordingly, in the following chapters we see how, in the case of the Norway attacks, estimates of the number of casualties were delivered early on by official state agencies, whereas, in the BBC coverage of the Gaza War, estimates of the death toll were not provided and the prevailing imagery was of the war machinery, rather than of human devastation. These are two approaches to conveying the centrality of human losses within the news story.

4.2.1.1.2 Agency

It is not only the recognition of death as such that constructs the humanness of the dead. Chouliaraki (2006b) associates the construction of the distant sufferer as human with the notion of *agency* that she includes in the *analytics of mediation*. The notion of agency is concerned with the sufferers' voice and humanness: are they capable of acting upon their misfortune and engage with other actors on the scene? The construal of sufferers as agents establishes the humanness of the sufferers, "placing them within a hierarchy of active/human or inactive/inhumane values" (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 89). However, since dead people no longer have agency, I suggest that in the case of dead people, the way to account for their lost lives, and therefore for their lost agency, is by portraying the life they had before their deaths. We need to consider their agency as living people who are now dead. We can call this "*pre-death agency*". We need to ask to what extent the lives of the dead are portrayed as meaningful: Can we imagine them as lively and potent people? Can we grasp their stories as individuals? Or are their lost lives, perhaps, reduced to a number and their personal identity lost in the masses (Boltanski, 1999)? Moreover, to what extent is the life that has ended portrayed as a life worth living? As a lost life whose premature ending is immoral and outrageous? (see also Figenschou, 2011). In other words, we need to consider whether the mediatisation of death invites us to grieve for the dead. Obituaries achieve this end.

4.2.1.1.2.1 Obituarial news

I propose to think about the construction of the other as a human whose life is grievable, by thinking about the construal of his or her pre-death agency in terms of obituaries or, more precisely, as *obituarial news*. Obituaries are a form of communication designed to express grief, and include the necessary components for informing the public of the death of a person and constructing his or her death as grievable (Hume, 2003; Zehfuss,

eruption rather than on the death of the hikers (Hoffman, 2014): <http://reshet.tv/%D7%97%D7%93%D7%A9%D7%95%D7%AA/News/programs/MainNewscast/allmainNews/Article,162279.aspx>.

2009). Obituaries offer a succinct description of a person's life that creates the infrastructure to grieve for his or her death. They give names and faces to the dead. They associate information about a death with a person whose life has been terminated. They make it possible for spectators to imagine the person and his or her life prior to its ending (see also Al-Ali, 2005; Butler, 2004; Gavriely-Nuri & Lachover, 2012; Zehfuss, 2009). McRobbie (2006) explicates Butler's "Levinasian" philosophy, and explains that the "face" enables the dead to address us, and so to articulate the ethical demand that we account for them (see also Brand & Pinchevski, 2013; Kyriakidou, 2015; Pinchevski, 2005). My proposition here regarding obituarial news does not refer solely to the actual newspaper notices. Rather, I propose to identify the different properties of obituaries as these appear in the mediatisation of death by the news media. This includes the person's name, face, personal history, family, dreams, and the values by which the person lived. Hence, in order for the mediatisation of death to establish the pre-death agency of the dead, it needs to convey the lost life as associated with a person, with the life of someone the spectators can imagine.

How, then, can we operationalize obituarial news? The following questions can guide us:

- How does the encounter with the dead take place?
 - Do we see the dead?
 - Do we see the dead as corpses?
 - Do we see images of the dead prior to their death?
 - Do we see their faces?
 - Do the dead have names?
 - Do the dead have personal stories?
- Can we imagine the dead as living people?
 - What do we know about their lives prior to their death?
 - Do we see the documentation of their lives from photo-albums and video clips?
 - How does the representation of the bereaved family and friends help to imagine the dead?
 - Do they recount and recall certain episodes from the lives of the dead?

The dead, needless to explain, can no longer engage with us, yet there are some tropes that can acquaint or confront us posthumously with the dead. For example, we can see

album pictures of them from happier moments in their lives, as in the case of the Rejouis family who were killed in the Haitian Earthquake. We can also learn about the dead from their next of kin who recount their stories or express the pain of their loss, as we shall see on various occasions throughout the analytical materials.

4.2.1.1.2.2 *The living people at the scene of death*

Additionally, sometimes the encounter with the people at the scene of death is obtained through an encounter with living people. These serve as *transient strangers* whose individual story is the story of a larger group of individuals (Boltanski, 1999; Frosh, 2011). Frosh defines this as the *emblematic indexicality* of anonymous individuals:

“In their voices, faces and bodies individuals are depicted in all their astonishing deictic particularity, their singular indexicality in relation to a unique place and time; it is them, and no other, there, then. And yet these same individuals frequently stand for a broader reality, even encapsulating and embodying entire populations and events of immense scale – catastrophes, conflicts and celebrations – that are not themselves depicted” (Frosh, 2011, p. 390).

Accordingly, Boltanski (1999) argues that the mediatisation of suffering needs to portray the suffering in detail while maintaining the balance between singularity and commonality. It is the suffering of somebody who could be anybody:

“It is he, but it could be someone else; it is that child there who makes us cry, but any other child could have done the same. Around each unfortunate brought forward crowds a host of replacements. The sufferings made manifest and touching through the accumulation of details must also be able to merge into a unified representation. Although singular, they are none the less *exemplary*” (Boltanski, 1999, p. 12 emphasis in original).

Seeing the other as someone who could be anyone (rather than as “someone like us”) establishes the other as human and can lead to the understanding of his or her belonging to common humanity and therefore worthy of solidarity due to the commitment to cosmopolitan ethics.

What I suggest here, then, is that in the case of death events, the encounter with the depiction of people *about-to-die* or with those who luckily survived, can substitute for an encounter with the dead. The about-to-die are the people facing impending death. These people were alive at the time of filming, but the report implies that by the time this is aired, they have already died, or, are soon to die (Zelizer, 2010). The survivors are those

who have undergone a near-death experience, yet survived (see also Orgad, 2009). When encountering such transient strangers, we receive an idea of those who did *not* survive. Such reports can also bypass some quandaries regarding the visual depiction of death (see also Hanusch, 2008; Morse, 2014). Thus, people about-to-die and survivors can inform our imagination about the dead, without confronting us with the actual dead body. We can imagine the dead as people similar to the survivors who underwent a similar experience, but did not survive. Moreover, the agency of the living survivors at the scene can evoke the agency of the dead. The agency of the living survivors is analysed in terms of their portrayal as potent and active actors who voice the cry of their beloved dead and fight to save and rescue the casualties.

Operationally, then, we need to address the following questions:

- Do we see any survivors or people about-to-die?
 - Do we get to know them, in terms of names and personal story?
 - Do they face the camera?
 - Do they testify about their near-death experience?
- Do the survivors give voice to the dead and tell their stories?
- To what extent are the survivors portrayed as benefactors striving to save life?
- How do the bereaved family and friends express their grief?
 - How are emotions such as sadness, pain or indignation communicated?

An example of a transient stranger in this about-to-die category whom we shall meet later is the Haitian girl, Stephanie, who survived the earthquake, but the medical conditions in Haiti were insufficient to reverse her medical deterioration. She faces the camera while her father tells her story, and we know that she is soon to die. We are also told that her story is only one of many. In the coverage of the Norway attacks, we find examples of people who survived a near-death experience, like Adrian Pracon, and who face the camera and recount their experience in their own words, in their own voice.

To sum up, the construction of the people at the scene of death as human refers to two components – the registration of death and the agency of the people there, whether in the form of *obituarial news* or the agency of the survivors and the about-to-die. The focus on death signifies its importance. The obituarial news facilitates acquaintanceship with human losses, since it includes names, faces and stories. The agency of the survivors

refers to the extent to which they are portrayed as resourceful and capable of communicating with spectators.

4.2.1.2 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality

A principal function of rituals is that they create conditions which summon a community by gathering all members of the potential community together and creating a shared experience (Couldry, 2002; Durkheim, 1995; Lukes, 1975; Sumiala, 2012). The mediatisation of death and suffering can function similarly if it manages to convey the experience of distant sufferers and establish a connection with spectators, if it manages to register the reality “out there” in the “here and now” of the spectators. Yet, in order to establish this connection, the media need to facilitate the experience of, “being there”, so that spectators can – in imagination – “touch the sufferers’ wounds and hear their cries” (Boltanski, 1999, p. 12). Creating a shared experience for spectators and sufferers means employing different technological and discursive means that construe a sense of shared space and time. In so doing, the media urge spectators to participate in the experience and become involved in its development. Or, the media can mark the events as taking place in a different space and time, and lessen spectators’ involvement in it (Chouliaraki, 2006b).

4.2.1.2.1 Time

When addressing the construal of time, we need to consider (1) how the time of the media stands in relation to “real time”, and (2) how the time within the report is organised. The former consideration refers to whether or not spectators experience the event in real time. The latter refers to the chronology and temporality of events in the report and the way time is defined within the report. The reference to the real time derives from the discussion of *media events* (Dayan & Katz, 1992) and specifically, of the *disaster marathon* (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002; Liebes, 1998). In order to capture the construal of time we need to address the following questions:

- Does the occurrence of death “activate” a media ritual that proclaims the “sacredness” or the “extraordinariness” associated with death?
 - Can the event suspend the everyday media routine and invite an exceptional media ritual (like a “disaster marathon”) that symbolises the significance of the event?
 - Are the events reported in a live transmission?

- Do the events unfold on the screen as they unfold in the zone of death?
- Or, is the event marked as an ordinary moment, which constructs death as part of the “order”?
 - Do we get an abridged account of the events after they have happened and is time condensed in order to allow a succinct report?

The aim of these questions is to capture the extent to which death becomes meaningful for spectators in the way it breaks with their everyday media routine and therefore invites or compels them to “participate” in the event by watching it. These modes of reporting on death reflect different perceptions regarding the sacredness of the lost life by stressing (or minimising) the acuteness of death as an order-breaker and as something that can potentially proclaim the switch into a liminal phase.

For example, as we shall see in the following chapters, a large explosion in the centre of a European capital like Oslo immediately becomes breaking news and sets in play a *disaster marathon* mode of coverage that includes on-going, continuous live-reporting from the scene of death. The spectators at home learn about events together with the people on the ground, as they happen (see also Kyriakidou, 2015). This stands in contrast to the BBC coverage of multiple explosions at the heart of the city of Gaza that were not reported in live transmission. The time on the screen was a condensed time, compressed into a few minutes of stories, whereas the real happenings were much longer. Thus, the spectators of the coverage of the Norway attacks shared the same time with the people on the ground, while the articulation of time in the coverage of the Gaza War maintained a division between “real time” and the time of the events. These two modes of coverage establish a hierarchy of death and construe some violent deaths as more ordinary – and arguably more acceptable – than others.

In relation to the chronology and temporality of the events in the report, what concerns us here is how time is organised in the report. This dimension is relevant for the understanding of the story as open or closed, and the possibility of action (Chouliaraki, 2006b, pp. 86–7). In order to account for that dimension, we need to address the following questions:

- Is the report narrated chronologically?
 - Do the spectators learn about the developments in the order they happen?
 - Or, is the chronology of the events re-ordered to suggest a different temporality for spectators and for the people on the scene?
- How does time within the report stand in relation to the present?
 - Are past events described in the past or present tense?
 - Is there a reference to prospective developments?

For example, the articulation of time in the report can be formulated in the past tense, signifying that the event now belongs to the past. Or it can be formulated in the present tense, implying that the event belongs to the present, even if the specific reported developments have already ended. In addition, reporters can employ non-closure narration strategies (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2008) and construe the event as on-going, as something which is yet to be concluded. Such strategies call on spectators' attention and urge them to keep following the unfolding events. These strategies also have a phatic function (Frosh, 2011) that can potentially maintain a communication channel between spectators and distant others. I demonstrate the use of these strategies in the analytical chapters.

4.2.1.2.2 Space

When addressing the construal of space we need to account for the experiences that different technological means create and allow. Meaning-making affordances such as the format of transmission, camera work, and other visual tropes, maintain the distance (or proximity) of spectators from the scene and inform an imagined presence at the scene. The questions that guide the analysis of the construal of space are the following:

- How do the camera shots and movements create an imagined presence in the zone of death?
 - Is there a camera on location?
 - What is the point of view the spectators get to see?
 - Do they see the events from the perspective of the people on the street?
 - Do they get a remote view from afar?

- How close do the camera shots bring them to the site (and sight) of death?
 - What shots are used: Close-ups? Long-shots?
 - Is there a shift between different locations? And if so, does the shift between different locations create a sense of omnipresence in the central scenes?
 - What sounds do the spectators get to hear?
 - Does the articulation of space establish a division between zones of safety and danger, i.e., does the vulnerability of the sufferer invade the safety of the spectators?

These properties of technological documentation define the experience the spectators at home receive and share with the distant people at the site of death. For example, they can receive a highly disturbing account of the zone of death, comprised of shoulder-camera footage that brings them the point of view of the people on the ground, including close-up shots of bleeding corpses and wailing ambulances sirens, as we find in the coverage of the Gaza War by AJE. Such documentation offers an unfiltered experience that transmits the horror from the chaotic Gaza hospital morgue to living rooms in the West. The spectators are exposed to the horror of war casualties and the shock associated with this. Or, the spectators can get a pastoral helicopter view, comprised of long shots depicting forests and lakes, dubbed with commentary from the calm studio, as in the case of the Norway attack coverage by the BBC. This way the traumatic experience of the young people on the island is kept away from the spectators and the dreadful experience does not invade the spectators' living rooms.

These very different modes of coverage also construe different gazes and establish relations between those who watch and those who are watched. The notion of gaze refers to the exercise of power through an act of viewing. It reflects power dynamics and relations of control or subordination that establish social hierarchies. In relation to death, in Western cultures, explicit images of identifiable dead bodies are considered a violation of the human dignity of the dead. A public presentation of the dead human body in a way which exposes the dead to the gaze of strangers is considered a voyeuristic – even pornographic – gaze on a taboo spectacle of death (Hall, 1997; Hanusch, 2008; Morse, 2014). This is very different from the sterile and remote look at

the scene that protects the viewer from what is considered disturbing images of corpses and protects the dignity of the dead by not allowing them to turn into a subject of public gaze. On the other hand, an implicit representation of death can be considered, for example by an Arab audiences, as a concealment or mitigation of the horror or an inaccurate account of the story (Johnson & Fahmy, 2010; see also Sakr, 2007). These features will be further explored in the following chapters.

4.2.1.3 Producing a witnessable account

The articulation of space and time within the report inform the imagined presence of the spectators at the scene of death. However, this mediated experience is not only a sensual experience of “being there” in “real time”, but also a solicitation to bear witness to the happening and respond to it. Drawing on the moral significance of witnessing, I suggest that we think about the mediation of death in terms of *witnessing text* (Frosh, 2006). “Witnessing text creates presence at the event, which produces experience out of discourse” (Frosh, 2006, p. 274). It is a text that invites us to see the world through the other’s eyes; it invites us to engage with the others and their conditions and to understand the commitment to them. Witnessing text bridges time and space between distant others, who establish their connection to one another through the text.

However, witnessing, as discussed in the previous chapter, is a moral position that places a moral burden on the different participants in the process of mediation (Ellis, 2009; Frosh & Pinchevski, 2009a; Silverstone, 2003). The mediation of death is a reminder of the pre-existing bond that connects the sufferer and the person who is aware of the misfortune of the other (Boltanski, 1999). Witnessing others in their misfortune turns us, the spectators, into moral agents, compelled to bear the testimony and to voice the cry of the sufferers (see also Margalit, 2004; Oliver, 2004).

Our interest here is the moral work of the text in construing the moral burden of the mediation of death. Hence, we should ask to what extent the spectators become witnesses of the atrocities, to what extent they are witnessed. As Ashuri and Pinchevski aptly argue, “an event can be witnessed through the media only insofar as it is constructed as ‘witnessable’ by the media” (Ashuri & Pinchevski, 2009, p. 140). To address this dimension of the analysis, I employ Chouliaraki’s multimodal analysis, which is part of the *analytics of mediation* (2006b). According to this framework, we need to examine the level of engagement with reality that the text permits. Such analysis focuses

on establishing events as real and meaningful and worthy of emotion and reflection. It explores how discursive strategies face spectators with the reality “out there” and the ways in which these strategies enable or disable the bearing of witness.

In order to account for the way in which the text enables spectators to become witnesses, we need to assess the quality of the mediated encounter with reality. To provide a near-real experience, the text needs to create a rich and telling experience that replaces the face-to-face encounter (Boltanski, 1999). The multimodal analysis addresses the ways in which discursive devices are deployed to transmit the happening on the ground to living rooms. In this regard, the analysis refers to the realness of sights and sounds and the appeal they make in relation to commitment to the other; what they tell and how they encourage spectators to feel and think about the reality of the other. These dimensions are important for establishing a sense of urgency in responding to remote death. The following questions help us grasp these dimensions:

- How is the reality of the distant others conveyed in terms of facts and feelings?
- What is the sense of realism (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 75) delivered to us by language and images? Is it -
 - *Perceptual realism* (reality of facts):
 - What are the facts we are told and how are these told?
 - *Categorical realism* (reality of feelings):
 - What are the feelings and emotions that the language, images and sound elicit?
 - Or, *ideological realism* (a text that makes claims to justice in relation to the reality it represents)?
 - What is the normative position proposed by the report?
- How do language, images and sounds position us in relation to the reality of the sufferers?

Answering these questions helps us to account for the different levels of engagement with the reality of distant others that, in turn, may offer a different moral position in relation to the reality of the sufferers and the dead.

For example, an uncensored street-level shot from a shoulder camera offers the perspective of the people on the ground “as if” we are present at the scene, and

construes a near-real experience which is very different from long-shot images of war machinery or collapsed national monuments that offer a sublime and implied experience of death. Accordingly, a soundtrack of wailing ambulance sirens conveys a sense of urgency and disturbing insecurity, which is different from the voiceover of an anchor in a studio. Close-ups on people about-to-die or on survivors offer an emotional, “face-to-face” encounter with the “human cost” of events. Personal testimonies offered by such people invite spectators to share the state of mind of people undergoing a personal near-death experience, and speak to the spectators’ emotions.

The narration added by the reporter can be descriptive and adhere to uncontroversial facts, or it can engage with a broader historical context and provide spectators with tools with which to analyse the events and unpack their historical and political significance. The editing and structuring of the report can bring an “objective” account of the happening, or it can formulate an unbalanced account that clearly casts victims and perpetrators. For example, the juxtaposition of military action and a civic setting or a focus on women and children as victims of a military operation makes the case for classifying events in terms of war crimes. References to international intervention offer an understanding as to who is responsible for a disaster and who is responsible for the recovery. All these points are demonstrated in the analytical chapters.

4.2.1.4 Ethical solicitation

The culmination of grievability is the ethical solicitation that emerges from the mediatization of death. When the conditions for the construction of grievable death come together they facilitate an imagination of the lives and experiences of the people “there” and how this happening is pertinent to the lives of the spectators; they make a proposition regarding the ways spectators should feel and respond in relation to distant death and the ways they should judge it. These dimensions inform the spectators’ understanding as committed, or not, to the distant other. These conditions, then, construct grief as a moral disposition that invites political action.

To what extent does the mediatization of death construct the people at the scene of death as human? If they are constructed as human, they are worthy of solidarity; to what extent is their reality at the scene of death constructed as related to the spectators’ reality? If the reality “there” registers in the “here” and “now” of the spectators, it makes a claim to relevance; how does the mediatization of death articulate the burden of witnessing and invite the spectators to see themselves as committed to the Gazans? If death is

witnessable, it invites spectators to bear witness, and if death is portrayed as immoral, it demands justice. Finally, then, what is the possibility of response? If spectators are constructed as agents and there is a reason for them to respond and to effect change, then they should act.

When examining the ethical solicitation that the text makes, we need to address the moral dimension of a text as a witnessing text –to consider the moral burden of witnessing. What does it mean for us to witness such suffering and death? To what extent does the mediatisation of death articulate the basic expression of cosmopolitanism, which is to protect vulnerable others (Linklater, 2007)? What kind of engagement or interaction between spectators and sufferers does the text permit? What does it mean for the spectator to “be there” and witness the death of “others”? Is it only a lament over their death, or is there a stronger demand for justice? The analysis here, then, concludes with the proposition that the text appeals to spectators and demands that they morally engage with the distant sufferer and act upon this. This resonates with Silverstone’s (2003, 2006) notion of *proper distance*:

“Proper distance refers to the importance of understanding the more or less precise degree of proximity required in our mediated interrelationships if we are to create and sustain a sense of the other sufficient not just for reciprocity but for a duty of care, obligation and responsibility, as well as understanding” (Silverstone, 2006, p. 47).

With the ethical solicitation that emerges from the report of a death event, we can return to our starting point: what kind of solidarity was advocated by this act of mediatisation? What are the possibilities of response proposed by the text and by the ritual? What does this tell us about our role and our commitment to the other? What does it tell us about ourselves if we fail to acknowledge lost lives? What does the encounter with the death of distant others teach us in relation to who we are and who we care for? As Butler put it: “When we lose certain people ... something about who we are is revealed, something that delineates the ties we have with others, that shows us that these ties constitute what we are, ties or bonds that compose us” (Butler, 2004, p. 22). Grievability, then, refers not only to moral questions, but also to political and social questions, as it tell us something about the mechanisms that define who “we” are, and who we are not.

Construing the death of others as grievable means reflecting on the interrelational ties and commitments between spectators and sufferers. It means positioning and portraying

the other as someone who shares with us a set of traits and values that defines us as belonging together, as committed to cosmopolitan ethics, regardless of questions of time and space, language or nationality (Boltanski, 1999; Linklater, 2007; Zehfuss, 2009). It does not, however, mean eliminating differences or specificities. Rather, it means outlining differences while identifying universalities, because the promise of cosmopolitanism is inclusive while maintaining differences.

A possible outcome that derives from the ethical solicitation proclaimed by the construction of grievable death is the possibility of cultivating solidarity and constituting a cosmopolitan community that transcends boundaries:

“Ethical obligations emerge not only in the contexts of established communities that are gathered within borders, speak the same language, and constitute a nation. Obligations to those who are far away as well as to those who are proximate cross linguistic and national boundaries, are only possible by virtue of visual or linguistic translations. These confound any communitarian basis for delimiting the global obligations that we have” (Butler 2011).

The constitution of cosmopolitan community is a product both of the arrangements of collective television viewing and of the meaning ascribed to the depiction of faraway death (Chouliaraki, 2008b). These two dimensions shape the mutual experience of the community of spectators and their position in relation to faraway death:

“The constant flow of images on screen ... inevitably opens up the local world of the spectator to non-local realities and enables the reflexive process by which the spectator comes to recognize such realities as a potential domain of his or her own action. It is the interplay between the visibility of the sufferer and the reflexive response of the spectator to his or her suffering that contains here the promise of cosmopolitanism” (Chouliaraki, 2008b, p. 373).

Thus, what concerns us here is the possibility that the text opens a way for spectators to reflect on their relationships with distant others and to articulate their commitment to these others. The promise of cosmopolitanism is one of overcoming the indifferent, inactive viewing of the suffering of others, and realising the possibility of action. Summoning a cosmopolitan, rather than a communitarian, community implies the expansion of the boundaries of care. It is an act of inclusion that articulates a denunciative response to neglecting to protect human life. Grief, then, is a symbolic act

that returns human dignity to those who have lost it in violent death. Does this mean that every mediatisation of death bears the potential to cultivate cosmopolitan community? Not at all. The use of the analytics of mediatised grievability helps us grasp when this promise is realised and when not.

In the following chapters I put this analytical framework to use and analyse the coverage of the Gaza War, the Norway Attacks and the Haitian Earthquake by BBC World News and Al-Jazeera English.

Chapter 5: Judgemental grief and condemnatory grief – the case of the 2008-09 Gaza War

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters explored the possible function of death rituals in cultivating solidarity and facilitating community formation. This chapter focuses on the mediatisation of war and the media rituals this entails. It studies the media coverage of war as a newsworthy mass-death event that has the potential to become a "media event" (Dayan & Katz, 1992; Katz & Liebes, 2007), even though this potential does not always materialise. Based on the framework of *the analytics of mediatised grievability* introduced in the previous chapter, this chapter analyses the media performance and representations of war and the message they convey to spectators about how they should understand their interrelations with the people at the scene of death.

The case study selected for this purpose is the 2008-2009 Gaza War.¹⁵ The debates about this war, as a military conflict between an Arab entity and a non-Arab state, reflected opposing worldviews that go beyond the specific event and allude to questions of hegemony and dominance, (post)colonialism, terrorism and state violence. Thus, this case study is suitable for examining how the mediatisation of death reflects power dynamics and perceptions of cosmopolitan solidarity. The coverage of the war exposed the vulnerability of civilians on both sides of the West-non-West divide, and invited reflections on solidarity at a distance. This chapter compares the coverage by BBC World News (BBC) and Al-Jazeera English (AJE), and the different propositions the two channels make for their audience's engagement with faraway death. Based on the proposed analytical framework, this chapter looks at the mediatisation of the Gaza War and the extent to which its dead were constructed as grievable. The analysis examines the significance of death in the reports on the war and how the lost lives were acknowledged and presented.

While the war lasted for 23 days, the analysis below refers to it as one continuous event. Reports from different days of the fighting were used as samples, and I analysed these as a sequence of reports that comprised one news story. After a short comment on the context of the War, I begin with the BBC's coverage and offer a detailed analysis of the

¹⁵ Also known as *Operation Cast Lead* or the *Gaza Massacre* (henceforth the Gaza War). Since 2008-2009, Gaza, Israel and Hamas have had two more rounds of intense assaults, known by their Israeli names *Operation Pillar of Defence* (2012) and *Operation Protective Edge* (2014).

different components of the report according to the conditions set for the construction of grievable death – the humanisation of the dead, spatiotemporal commonality and witnessability – as outlined in the previous chapter. Then, I turn to AJE's coverage and focus mainly on the aspects of its coverage that differ from the BBC's coverage. The comparative analysis indicates that there are two approaches to producing an ethical solicitation and that these articulate two levels of commitment to the wellbeing of the people of Gaza. The chapter concludes by defining these two propositions as *judgemental grief* and *condemnatory grief*, and explains the claims they make regarding the responsibility that spectators should feel regarding the killing in Gaza.

5.1.1 The Gaza War

The Gaza War was a three-week armed conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. The Israeli military operation commenced on December 27, 2008, and ended on January 18, 2009. The operation started with an Israeli aerial offensive. A ground operation followed, beginning on January 3, 2009. Israel was also under attack, as Hamas launched rockets on Israel's southern towns and villages. The UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimated that during the operation the Palestinians suffered more than 1,300 deaths and the Israelis had 13 dead soldiers (United Nations, 2009).¹⁶ This was one of the prominent military operations in recent years which received extensive media coverage worldwide. The war generated lively debates and reactions around the world, including the appointment of a UN Fact Finding Mission chaired by South African jurist Richard Goldstone to investigate violations of human rights and international law.

5.2 BBC coverage of the Gaza War

The three reports to be analysed here are taken from three points in time in the course of the war. The three reports tell a story of an Israeli military operation and its deadly consequences. The reports focus mostly on the Palestinian side and the heavy losses it suffered. Only little attention was given to the damage and losses on the Israeli side (2% of the analysed footage presented Israeli suffering; 12 seconds out of 8 minutes and 21 seconds).

¹⁶ There is a dispute as to the Palestinian death toll, with Israeli claims that the numbers are lower whereas the Palestinian organisations report higher figures.

I address these three reports as three “chapters” of one story that compose the BBC’s coverage of the war. The overarching narrative that emerges from this coverage is of an excessive use of military power against a devastated civilian population. The reporters function as *detached witnesses* or uninvolved observers of the scene who recount the happenings in a neutral and balanced way (Chouliaraki, 2012, p. 144). These features will later serve to define this type of coverage as eliciting *judgemental grief*, which invites the spectators to serve as jurors or as external onlookers who are called to morally judge the reality presented to them.

5.2.1 The sampled reports

5.2.1.1 B1: “Massive Israeli air raids on Gaza”

Report B1 is from the first day of the war, after the Israeli airstrike that was – literally – the opening shot of *Operation Cast Lead*. The report shows the chaos in Gaza and the declarations of war by leaders from both sides. The following storyboard brings the main narrative of the report in language and images (the captions underneath the images are the voiceovers or verbal comments of the protagonists depicted). The full report is available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7801128.stm .



Figure 5-1: The attack began like this. Gaza has not suffered as badly in a single day since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. There were two intensive waves of airstrikes.



Figure 5-2: More than a hundred tons of bombs were dropped, Israel said, on dozens of targets.



Figure 5-3: This was one: a Gaza city police station.



Figure 5-4: There were many civilian casualties too, including children.



Figure 5-5: The emergency services were overwhelmed.



Figure 5-6: Bodies were dumped in piles outside the main hospital. Frantic crowds gathered to look for loved ones among the dead.



Figure 5-7: “Even if you kill thousands of us we won’t give in”, says the Hamas leader in Gaza, “we bow only before God”.



Figure 5-10: A ground attack could be next.

Figure 5-8: A short time later, rockets began falling on Israeli towns bordering Gaza, although with far less effect than Israeli airstrikes.



Figure 5-11: And, despite widespread calls for restraint, the international community seems powerless to prevent further bloodshed.

Figure 5-9: “There is a time for restraint, but now is a time to fight,” says Israel defence minister. “It won’t be easy, but we are determined”.

5.2.1.2 B2: “Israel strike 'kills 30' at Gaza school”

Report B2 is from the 11th day of the fighting. It focuses on the aftermath of an Israeli shelling on an UNRWA school the day before, which resulted in the killing of a large number of civilians. This day was one of the deadliest of the war. The full report is available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7813735.stm> .



Figure 5-12: When people live this close together, the front line is everywhere.



Figure 5-13: Gaza’s population has nowhere to run or hide.



Figure 5-14: Many children are said to be among the dead.



Figure 5-15: “We have provided the GPS coordinates of every single one of our locations. They are clearly marked with UN insignia, flags flying lights shining on the flags at night and so on. It is very clear that these are United Nations’ installations”



Figure 5-16: This was the town of Khan Yunis this morning.



Figure 5-17: “These are baseless accusations. There was no fire from the school by the resistance. The Zionist occupier wanted to kill as many civilians as possible”.

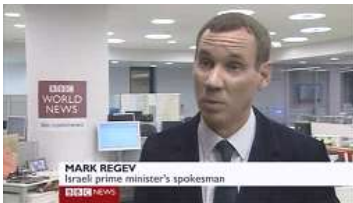


Figure 5-18: “Had we known there were civilians in this institution we wouldn’t have returned fire the way we did”.



Figure 5-19: Whatever the truth, this is the biggest single loss of human life in Israel’s campaign... Gaza’s hospitals are again overwhelmed.



Figure 5-20: “Israel calls itself a great nation”, says this grief stricken man, “this is the measure of its greatness”.



Figure 5-21: "Last night a group of my family members came out to the bathroom. Israeli airstrikes targeted the place, killing my cousin and two other members of my extended family".



Figure 5-22: Israel moved into Gaza with relative ease. Now there is street fighting. The aim of this is not to remove Hamas from power, says Israel, but to destroy it as a military force.



Figure 5-23: There is precious little sign of a cease fire emerging just yet, although international demands for one are growing.

5.2.1.3 B3: "Israel to vote on Gaza truce"

Report B3 is from the last days of the war, as truce initiatives were taking effect. The report describes life in Gaza after another school shelling and then focuses on the diplomatic attempts to end the fighting. The full report is available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7835376.stm.



Figure 5-24: Ordinary men, women and especially children in Gaza feel they are living in hell. Bombs keep falling. There is nowhere to hide.



Figure 5-25: 1,600 people were sheltering in this school, according to the United Nations, when, it says, Israel's shells struck, killing two little boys.



Figure 5-26: But even as Israel and Hamas keep fighting, there is a talk of an end to all this.



Figure 5-27: "Israel has achieved understanding and support from a great number of nations who really understand what has been going on".



Figure 5-28: Militarily, Israel also says it's achieved its goals.



Figure 5-29: Neither side want to talk to the other, but both Israel and Hamas will have to find a way to make a cease fire work.

5.2.2 The construction of the dead as human

The starting point for applying the *analytics of mediatised grievability* is the construction of the dead as human. If there is no human, there is no invitation to grieve over death. Accordingly, we first need to examine whether and to what extent the people at the scene of death are portrayed and constructed as humans whose death requires the spectators' response, and how the information about their death is registered.

Over the last decade, the coverage of wars by Western news organisations has tended to hide the human cost of war (Aday, 2005; Fahmy, 2010; Griffin, 2004, 2010). Such coverage has focused on war machinery and non-human destruction rather than on death and human suffering, and so dissociated war and death and suspended the judgement of war as an event that requires moral consideration and reflection on the interrelations between sufferers and spectators (Chouliaraki, 2009). In other words, since such coverage has dissociated war and death, it does not articulate an explicit moral demand to account for lost lives. Was the BBC's coverage of the Gaza War different? Did the coverage of the war capture the human cost of war? In order to answer this question, I examine how the loss of human lives was registered in terms of representation and agency.

5.2.2.1 Registering death

The BBC's coverage of the Gaza War tells the story of a large-scale military operation from its beginning to its near-end. From the very beginning we see and hear war machines (Figures 5-12, 5-13) and learn about the consequences of their exercise in terms of destruction (Figures 5-1, 5-2, 5-25, 5-26) and diplomacy (Figure 5-27), but the event is not registered as one which is primarily about death. Instead, death is presented as a side effect of military moves. The encounter with death is mostly indirect and suggestive. The reports are in line with the Western norm of taste and decency in the way they represent – or do not present, or misrepresent – death (see also BBC, 2012; Boudana, 2013; D. Campbell, 2004; Hanusch, 2010; J. Taylor, 1998). This self-regulation practice hides what the West perceives as gory images of corpses and human destruction and replaces them with less sensational representations that signify “death” without actually presenting it.¹⁷ In the three reports analysed here, images of dead bodies are scarce, and the spectators are not confronted with explicit images of bleeding or desecrated bodies. When such images are shown these are images of shrouded bodies that come out of clear context and fade away fleetingly (B3: Figure 5-30). As we shall see later, AJE did not hide these images.

¹⁷ For non-Western views on the prevalence and legitimacy of the display of graphic death images, see Johnson & Fahmy (2010) and Hanusch (2012).



Figure 5-30: an infrequent image of dead (covered) bodies from BBC report B3

The BBC's coverage, then, accounts for the human cost of the war in an indirect manner, but what does it tell its viewers about the magnitude of the killing? The number of (civilian) dead in a military campaign can turn a just raid into a misuse of military power and a breach of the proportionality principle (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2005). The information regarding the death toll is an essential piece of information, as it can construe the exercise of violence as justified or not (Butler, 2004). None of the three BBC reports estimates the number of dead.¹⁸ In these reports, no figures or estimation of the number of dead are reported, yet it is implied that the number is high – the population of Gaza is dense; the military targets are close to homes and families (B1: "Gaza is one of the most crowded places on earth. Every military target has homes and families close by": Figure 5-12); "the emergency services were overwhelmed" (Figure 5-5); "bodies were dumped in piles" (Figure 5-6); and "many children are said to be among the dead" (Figure 5-14). These references indeed offer an indirect evaluation of the death toll through language and images of crowdedness, but the information about the death toll remains only suggestive. Not grounding the reports with official data or an estimate regarding the death toll runs the risk of issuing a weaker and less urgent invitation to morally evaluate the happening. And so, by hiding or misrepresenting the deadliness of the military operation, the BBC suspended the moral implications of accountability and responsibility regarding the loss of lives in Gaza. Such representation only partially

¹⁸ Later, in Chapter 6, we see how during the BBC's coverage of the Norway Attack there was a genuine attempt to confirm the number of dead.

captures the scale of death and does not spell out the moral imperative to protect victims.

5.2.2.2 Agency

As explained in Chapter Four, where I introduced the analytical framework applied here, the humanness of the sufferers derives from their portrayal as agents. Drawing on the *analytics of mediation* (Chouliaraki, 2006b), the notion of agency refers to the capacity of individuals to act upon their suffering and to voice their cry:

“In the analytics of mediation, *humanisation* is a process of identity construction that endows sufferers with the power to say or do something about their condition, even if this power is simply the power to evoke and receive the beneficiary action of others” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 88, emphasis in original)

Since the condition of the dead is irreversible and they can no longer act to change that condition, I suggest that we explore the construction of their *pre-death agency* as this emerges from the *obituarial news* that followed their deaths. This exploration also includes the construal of agency of the living actors on the scene.

5.2.2.2.1 Obituarial news

Obituarial news refers to the potential to “see” the person who died and imagine his or her life. This format of news encompasses the tension between the particularity of the individual and the broader context that caused his or her death, together with the death of others. To what extent do the reports provide us with sufficient information to learn about the lost lives of Gazans? In the BBC’s coverage of the Gaza War we hardly find any of these tropes. We almost never learn the names and stories of those who died and never do we see their faces – dead or alive. Even if we do learn the circumstances of their death, we cannot see the individuality of those who serve as the protagonists. The dead are nameless, usually invisible masses – we are told that many people have died (Figure 5-6: “bodies were dumped in piles...”), but we do not see them. The information necessary to facilitate an encounter with the lives of the dead is missing, and therefore their deaths – as individuals – are not registered. In that sense, the preconditions for establishing the agency of the dead are absent and therefore they are deprived of their pre-death agency. Instead, the reports contain representations of mourning. They show people crying over their dead (Figures 5-24, 5-31), and supporting one another. This portrayal of the mourners makes the loss evident. It shows the void created by death and construes the dead as belonging to a community, as individuals who were loved and

will be missed. These representations, however, are displayed hastily, and they do not enable a personal or intimate encounter with the bereaved.

5.2.2.2.2 The living actors on the scene – the about-to-die and the survivors

In the *analytics of mediation* (Chouliaraki, 2006b), the notion of agency also refers to the capacity of the sufferers to make their voices heard and to communicate with the spectators. Using the tropes of the about-to-die, together with the testimony of an eyewitness who survived the shelling, enables the voice of the dead to be heard. The BBC reports contain such tropes. Here are two examples.

Report B1 makes use of the “*about-to-die*” mode of representing death (Zelizer, 2010). This trope presents people facing impending death, but does not show any corpses. The spectators are provided with dramatic images, but not sensational ones: “visualising people about-to-die hides the more problematic visualisation of death itself” (Zelizer, 2010, p. 24). About-to-die images suspend the finality of death and make it easier for spectators to engage with news of death. This visual trope, according to Zelizer, invites us to complete what is beyond depiction and enhances our involvement in what we see. The image of the badly injured policeman (Figure 5-37) demonstrates this trope, as the policeman is depicted lying on the ground while the voiceover describes him as reciting “the Muslim prayer for those about-to-die”. For a brief moment we see the about-to-die policeman as he looks – through the camera – into our eyes, and we look into his (Figure 5-37). This dramatic footage, in the intensity of the fighting, in the midst of chaotic rescue efforts, provides us with the opportunity to share the last moments of this policeman and to engage with him. The face of the policeman fills the screen and this frame establishes an intimacy between the policeman and us. He has a face, he has a voice, and we can hear his cry as he recites the prayer. This mode also presents the dead person as having agency and capable of communicating his dismay before he dies. His vulnerability as a human is apparent and transmittable even if we do not share his language or religion. When employing the “*about-to-die*” mode of representation, we can see the dead as a human subject and not as an object.

The following images are of two policemen consoling each other. We do not see the moment of death, nor do we see the dead body. By using this trope, the report informs us about an occurrence of death and provides us with indirect, circumstantial evidence instead of confronting us with the actual evidence of death. This mode of presentation offers a balance between the journalistic need to report death, and the Western

sensitivity to showing and looking at dead bodies in a way that might turn the gaze into a voyeuristic one and turn the dead into objects and death into a mere spectacle (Hanusch, 2008; Morse, 2014).



Figure 5-37: “A badly injured man recites the Muslim prayer for those about-to-die” (B1)

In report B2 we find another strategy which gives voice to the dead, posthumously. I refer here to the testimony of Tammer, a resident of Beit Lahia, whose three extended family members were killed in the attack (Figure 5-21). Tammer gives voice to his dead relatives by telling the story of their last minutes. Although the dead relatives are invisible and nameless, we hear the testimony of an eyewitness that speaks on their behalf, and communicates with us – through the reporter – in his own voice.

In addition, BBC coverage of the war shows mostly the living actors on the scene. The residents of Gaza are portrayed as occupying two main roles – mourners (Figures 5-24, 5-31) and rescuers (Figures 5-3, 5-4, 5-1, 5-33). They are portrayed as active agents whose energetic and determined actions convey the feeling of emergency and urgency and construct them as survivors, rather than victims. Whereas victimhood is associated with passivity, immobility, silence, and acceptance of misfortune, survivorship is associated with self-responsibility, agency, communicability, and a struggle to invert misfortune and denigrate death (Orgad, 2009). Accordingly, the Gazans are portrayed as survivors who act to overcome their misfortune: civilians carry casualties into cars, injured adults go to the hospital, other civilians carry injured children in their arms (Figures 5-4, 5-14), and emergency teams load casualties onto stretchers. All these images offer a feeling of

action and movement, urgency and determination. The casualties are being taken care of. The Gazans are not presented as passive or helpless.

Most of the rescue efforts in the reports are portrayed as undertaken by civilians (for example, Figures 5-4, 5-14). According to Azoulay (2008), images of rescue efforts undertaken by civilians signify some kind of disorder which shapes the understanding of the value of human life in a certain region. Rescue efforts, Azoulay contends, should be undertaken by official teams from the state. When this task is undertaken by civilians, it signifies that the lives of this population are not fully respected and that their citizenship is defective. Such depiction of the rescue efforts renders a sense of statelessness. Employing Azoulay's analysis in the context of the BBC's coverage of the Gaza War leads to the interpretation of the Gazans' conditions as citizens abandoned by their own regime, as they literally have to take care of their own lives and take these in their own hands. On the other hand, these images demonstrate the commitment of the Gazans to their fellow citizens and their determination to save lives, despite the absence of official rescue teams. This portrayal presents the Gazans as their own benefactors. They suffer the damage and destruction, but they also fight to rescue people and save their lives and they retaliate. In this sense, the Gazans are constructed as fighting to save lives that are worth living.

To sum up this part of the analysis, we can see that the construction of the people in Gaza as humans is ambivalent, as there is tension between their invisible vulnerability and the construal of their agency, which at times facilitates a demand for solidarity while at other times it fails to articulate this demand. The Gazans' humanness, then, cannot be taken for granted.

5.2.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality

In order to construct death as grievable, death needs to be acknowledged as something that matters, and death matters when it activates rituals that reflect the collapse of "order" and proclaim "sacredness". Death rituals create a liminal phase that suspends the ordinary in favour of the extraordinary and summons a community together in a shared space. This spatiotemporal commonality can be physical, but it can also be mediated, as this study shows. Thus, the analysis regarding the ability of the media to constitute a spatiotemporal commonality refers to the ways in which the reality "out there" is delivered to the "here and now" of the spectators. The guiding questions here are: how relevant is distant death to the spectators? To what extent does the deadly

reality “out there” become relevant to the spectators? And to what extent can they be part of it?

The current analysis examines the extent to which the mediatisation of the Gaza War allows the spectators to feel as if they are at the scene of death, to engage with the events and to attend to the death and suffering. This proposition is a product of technological means which create the possibility of connecting to the happening and imagining the feeling of “being there” in “real time”. The construal of space and time also plays a central role in drawing the boundaries between spectators and remote others and in articulating an invitation to act upon the others’ conditions.

5.2.3.1 Time¹⁹

The BBC’s coverage of the Gaza War, as it appears in the sampled reports, holds a tension between the ordinariness of the coverage and the extraordinariness of the event. This duality has some bearing on the construction of war as a state of emergency and the responses this invites. On the one hand, it reduces the importance of the fact that mass death takes place, yet, on the other hand, it makes claims regarding the exceptionality of the scale and circumstances of death.

The BBC’s coverage of the Gaza War was not an immediate, on-going live coverage. This means that the reports presented a condensed time, featuring the main developments in an abridged and concise manner. While it was clear that the evolving military operation had deadly implications (B1: “The Gaza police chief himself was also killed”; Figure 5-4: “There were many civilian casualties too, including children...”; Figure 5-6: “Bodies were dumped in piles outside the main hospital”; B2: “Many children are said to be among the dead”; Figure 5-30: images of shrouded bodies at a funeral), the reports were governed within the regularity of the news feed. As such, the BBC Gaza War reports do not fit the rigid definition of “media event”, which declares the transition into a liminal phase and claims the extraordinariness of the event. Unlike other wars from recent years (namely the so-called “War on Terror”), the coverage of the Gaza War by the BBC did not elevate it into a remarkable, extraordinary event that broke the daily routine. Hence, symbolically, the war in Gaza, despite its deadly consequences, was constructed as part of the ordinary.

¹⁹ My analysis here refers to the three sampled reports retrieved from the BBC’s online archive. Since I did not gain access to the official archive, I cannot account for the way the events were reported in real time.

However, I would argue that the BBC's coverage of the Gaza War contains some of the features that establish a war as an extraordinary event. Despite the fact that the proper "media event mode" was not in play, the war still was generated as the performance of a *mediatised ritual* (Cottle, 2006a, 2006a): it was an event outside the media that was described as a milestone event bearing historic significance and requiring moral reflection on questions of solidarity and justice. The report from the first day of the fighting (B1) makes a claim regarding the significance of the events to the course of history, and in so doing works to establish the importance of viewing. This happens at the beginning of the report, when the reporter says: "Gaza has not suffered as badly in a single day since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war" (Figure 5-1). This statement tells us, the spectators, that this is not just another report about the on-going Arab-Israeli conflict, but a milestone in its history – its most violent moment in 41 years. This statement implies that we are watching history in the making. This is not an ordinary moment in the conflict, but a historic one. The framing of the events in this broad historical context gives it an additional significance. Stressing the importance and exceptionality of the event signals that viewing is mandatory, and calls to the attention of the spectators, inviting them to "participate" in the event by watching it.

The construction of time within the reports is mostly the time of the immediate past. The reports use the past simple tense to describe the main events which took place on the previous day. In that sense, there is a distinction between the time on the screen and real time. For example, report B1 begins with an opening statement about the beginning of the war in the past tense (Figure 5-1: "The attack *began* like this"). Other descriptions are also in past tense (Figure 5-2 "bombs *were* dropped"; Figure 5-8: "rockets *began* falling"). And yet, in the closing segment of each report, the reporters switch to present and future tenses (B1: "neither side *is willing* to pull back. The peace process *is looking* more irrelevant than ever"; B2: "no ceasefire signs *are emerging* just yet, although international demands for one *are growing*. That, though, *could intensify* the violence"; B3: "both Israel and Hamas *will have* to find a way to make this cease fire work"). When the reporters speak about what could happen next, the time of the report merges with real time. We learn that the story is not yet done, and more developments are yet to come. This construction of the story as an on-going, continuous story calls the attention of the spectators to follow the events as they unfold. As the story has not ended, and its construal is as an on-going event, it offers the spectators a chance to engage with it

(Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2008). It asks the spectators to maintain their involvement and be more invested in what is yet to come.

Moreover, reports B1 and B2 maintain a strategy of *open-ending* or *non-closure*. Non-closure, Tenenboim-Weinblatt (2008) argues, is a journalistic device that produces a sustained coverage of the story and enhances the audience's involvement with the journalistic texts. Tenenboim-Weinblatt mentions a number of non-closure strategies, two of which are found in the BBC's coverage of the war. Non-closure serves as a device to establish the event as an *asynchronous continuous story*. One non-closure strategy is *maintaining suspense*, which is best captured by the question "what will happen?". Using this strategy means constructing expectations for the future so that audiences will keep following the story. We find use of this strategy in the report from the first day of the war (B1), when the reporters remark that "a ground attack could be next"; and note fear of "further bloodshed". Similarly, the concluding remarks of report B2 suggest that further developments are expected – "ceasefire signs are emerging just yet", but this "could intensify the violence". These tropes suggest that this event, as a news story, is not yet over. This kind of conclusion advises us to stay tuned and follow subsequent developments. Report B3, on the other hand, leads to a closure of the story, as it suggest that a cease fire is near and the fighting is about to end. Report B3 still holds out prospects for the future, but the "chapter" of the fighting is soon to reach its conclusion.

The use of a non-closure device also serves as a *phatic function* that draws our attention to the symbolic exchange and encourages us to maintain a communication channel with the sufferers (Frosh, 2011). Phatic function creates ties of union by an exchange of words and in so doing expresses "fundamental human sociability among multiple others" (Frosh, 2011, p. 385). In this regard, what matters is not only the means of representation but also the technological possibility of communicating - the relations with the medium, rather than with the text. The use of phatic means asks us, the spectators, to hold an attentive mode. It encourages us not to switch off the communication channel. This, according to Frosh, has a moral significance, as it manifests attentiveness to the suffering of others as a precondition for reaffirming our commitment to them. Phatic communion presupposes that "one is recognized as a potential member of the reference group whose members can be communed with: a community" (Frosh, 2011, p. 387). The potential to engage with distant others – keeping an open channel for them to communicate with us – turns the act of communication into

an act of community formation. Thus, the non-closure of the BBC reports operates as a moral device that stresses the moral implication of staying tuned and being attentive to the happenings in Gaza.

Another non-closure strategy is *thickening the plot*: “The continuous existence of a story depends upon a steady ‘supply’ of new events, causally connected to one another” (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2008, p. 41). And so, even if the coverage of The Gaza War is not an on-going *disaster marathon* (Liebes, 1998), it still maintains some continuity as it resumes every time there are new developments. Report B2, for example, covers the aftermath of a school shelling by Israeli forces, in what is described by the reporter as “the biggest single loss of human life of Israel’s campaign”. Report B3 informs us about another important development and tells us that the military operation is near its end and that “Israel’s security cabinet is expected to vote on a ceasefire tonight”. These examples link different pieces of information from different days into one plot.

Thus, even though the coverage of the Gaza War was not a media event in its strictest sense, it still has some of the functions of media events, which summon large audiences and encourages them to pay attention to a major events of historic significance that take place outside the media. Therefore, I suggest that we consider the coverage of the war as an *asynchronous continuous media event*, since it was an event outside the media which was constructed by the media as bearing historic significance; it was extensively and continuously covered by multiple media organisations; and such media performance invited the spectators to engage with the media in order to engage with the unfolding events “out there”.

5.2.3.2 Space

When examining the construction of space, we need to look into the symbolic production of shared space where the spectators meet the sufferers. To what extent do the sufferers and spectators share the same space in these reports? The capacity to deliver the happenings in Gaza to living rooms in the West is, mostly, a product of camera work. The camera in these reports works to connect the spectators to happenings on the ground and brings them the reality from the perspective of the people at the heart of the scene. The camera uses establishing shots to situate the happenings in Gaza (Figures 5-1, 5-13, 5-26), but it also uses medium and close-up shots taken by a shaky and unsettled shoulder camera (most of the footage). It moves rapidly from one location to another and almost never stands still. The camera captures the

debris and the damage to buildings and infrastructure (Figures 5-2, 5-16, 5-25). It closes in on the faces of the injured on the ground or in the arms of rescuers as they are being taken into ambulances and hospitals (Figures 5-4, 5-14, 5-19, 5-24). Sounds of sirens, shouts and explosions are also inserted into the reports and so provide the “soundtrack” of the events. As such, these modalities offer a near-real, multi-sensual experience. This camera work constructs closeness with the people of Gaza, inviting the spectators to “directly experience the situation” (Figenschou, 2011, p. 244). It provides the spectators with the opportunity to get a sense of what it was like to be a Palestinian in Gaza during the shelling. This sense is, of course, subject to representation and the truth value this manages to render - a point which I will expand on later.

In addition, the camera moves between the different locations where the main events take place. The camera takes us from the streets of Gaza to the buildings targeted on the Israeli side of the border (Figure 5-8), and it cuts from the chaotic scenes of fighting to the calm television studios and the press conferences of the leaders (Figures 5-7, 5-9). As such, the reports put the spectator in a space of omnipresence (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 169). This camera work and video editing offer the spectators “a standpoint of *a-perspective objectivity*” (ibid; emphasis in original). By moving between these multiple scenes the camera takes the spectators through all the key events of the day, and yet it offers a generic perspective that conveys the reality in an accurate and authentic, and therefore neutral and objective, manner. Such camera work, Chouliaraki argues, positions the spectators as a jury and leaves it to them to morally evaluate the happening. I shall further develop this point later.

However, the closing segment of the BBC reports operates in another way. The last segment in each of the three reports is a “stand-up” posture of the reporter from somewhere outside Gaza – from Jerusalem or from the hills (on the Israeli side) overlooking Gaza (Figures 5-11, 5-23, 5-29). These frames take us further away from the events of the war, and establish a barrier – a safety zone – for the reporters as well as for us, the spectators in the West. The peaceful background of Jerusalem and the pastoral fields surrounding Gaza are in stark opposition to the shaky ground inside the Gaza Strip, and this trope reinforces the division of space between the Gazans, the reporters and the spectators at home.

5.2.4 Producing a witnessable account

Thus far, the analysis has addressed the extent to which the televised text creates the possibility for the spectators to imagine their own presence in the event. But to what extent does the text function as a witnessing text, i.e. a text that turns the spectators into witnesses? In this regard, my interest here is in what the spectators see, and also what they know or what they can learn about what they see, and how this informs their commitment to the people at the scene of death. What is the role the text assigns the spectators in relation to the scene of death? How are the spectators made to comprehend death in a broader historical context? Does the text encourage them to be uninvolved, indifferent observers or involved witnesses? In order to address these questions we need to investigate how the reality on the ground is conveyed by different means of representation – images, sounds, and language, and how these multimodal means work together to make a proposition regarding the obligation the spectators have to the distant others.

5.2.4.1 *Perceptual realism*

Overall, the BBC's coverage of the Gaza War construes *perceptual realism* (reality of facts; Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 75). The reports make use of the different television modalities to deliver factual information about the reality on the ground in a reliable way. Vision, sound and verbal narration are used in order to provide the spectators at home with an "objective", indisputable report that is loyal to the reality on the ground. This is constructed in a way that establishes the text as representing the events "as they are", making the spectators eyewitnesses of the events. I shall take a closer look at how this witnessing happens in terms of images, sounds, and language.

All three BBC reports include longshot images of Gaza under fire, with war machinery targeting the city. We see helicopters or cannons shooting (Figures 5-12, 5-13) and the hits on Gaza's residential areas (Figure 5-1, 5-26). Drawing on the capacity of the camera to document reality "as is", and on the common notion that "seeing (and hearing) is believing", the use of video footage establishes the "realness" of the images. It allows the spectators to rely on their own senses to capture the reality of Gaza.

Images of fire and smoke present the spectators with unusual sights, with an exciting reality they are not used to seeing in their (ordinary) lives. These images are sublime images of war, which introduce the spectators to a reality of insecurity and danger as an aesthetic experience. These images beautify the horror of war by foregrounding flames

and smoke as a fascinating spectacle. Such iconic images of war (Griffin, 2010) maintain the war as a spectacle and suspend reflection on its moral consequences (Chouliaraki, 2009). They show the war as an orchestrated operation that yields sparkling images and impressive sounds which do not facilitate an encounter with the suffering of the people on the ground. But these images are quickly replaced by street-level shots that confront the spectators with the devastation of war (Figures 5-3, 5-4, 5-5, 5-6, 5-14). The street-level images remind us that the spectacular images of war have upsetting consequences of damage, destruction and human suffering. This combination of spectacular war images with indexical representation of destruction balances the excitement of witnessing war from a safe distance by associating it with concerns for the people affected by the war.

The prevailing representation of death in the BBC reports is based on metonymy images of death (Zelizer, 2010) that replace the graphic images. These metonymies include images of bereaved families, flames and smoke, wrecked cars, torn-down buildings and blood spatters or images of people facing impending death. Such representation makes use of signs which signify death instead of presenting an indexical representation of dead bodies. For example, report B1 presents images of airstrikes and bombardments (Figure 5-1) and rescue efforts (Figures 5-3, 5-4, 5-6); report B2 shows war machinery (Figures 5-12, 5-13) and torn-down buildings (Figure 5-16); and report B3 presents images of destruction (Figure 5-25) and bombardments (Figure 5-26). The images leave it to the spectators to imagine what happened to the people who drove the wrecked cars or occupied the shattered buildings. Other references to death are verbal rather than visual (as the quotes above illustrate). The verbal and visual representations complete and redress one another and work together to deliver information about the deadly consequences of war, following the “breakfast cereal test” (Zelizer, 2010): when the images are too horrific, they are discarded, and language moves in to “complete the picture” and convey the horror. This way, the screen remains sterile and sanitised, with any trace of disturbing images removed.

For example, in report B2 we can actually see how the visual and the verbal narratives work together to draw the boundaries of taste and decency (Figures 5-31, 5-32, 5-33). In these segments, the reporter diverts from the narrative of the report up until that point, and addresses us, the spectators, informing us of the editorial decision to remove and censor some of the images that were taken in this scene. By saying “much of what was

filmed here was too graphic, too horrific to show” (B2) the reporter draws the boundaries of what is decent and what is too horrific. The images that accompany that statement are of mourning Gazans crying over the loss of their beloved ones (Figure 5-31); a man raises his hands in front of an ambulance in a gesture of devastation or indignation (Figure 5-32); and civilians carry casualties to an ambulance (Figure 5-33). In this short footage, the cry of the mourners substitutes for the graphic images of the dead bodies. By making the above statement, the BBC reporter refers us to an editorial decision to protect us, the spectators, from these horrible sights (see also BBC, 2012). And indeed, as AJE’s report of the same incident shows (A2), the subsequent imagery removed from the BBC’s report included graphic images of bleeding bodies on the ground (Figures 5-34, 5-35, 5-36).

Screen captures from BBC report B2



Figure 5-31



Figure 5-32



Figure 5-33

Screen captures from AJE report A2



Figure 5-34



Figure 5-35



Figure 5-36

The voiceover narration helps the spectators to make sense of what they see and hear. It uses descriptive language and sticks to factual information. Very short sentences tell the facts according to their chronological order. The verbal reports provide information that is not debateable. It is based on hard facts and avoids the use of contested terms like “terror” or “crime”. There is hardly any judgemental tone, only explanations of the sights and sounds. For example, the information on the airstrikes sticks to numbers (Figure 5-2: “More than a hundred tons of bombs were dropped, Israel said, on dozens of targets”), and even this piece of information is mentioned as coming from Israeli sources.

The narration of the events tells the story of unjust death, but it avoids explicit accusations. The story of the first attack (B1), for example, is told in a passive mode, in a way that tells us that something has happened, yet no active agent is mentioned (Figure 5-1: “The attack began like this”; but who attacked?). The aggressor – Israel – is not named. When the report turns to describing the damage on the Israeli side of the border (Figure 5-8) it is again in a passive mode. The articulation of the sentence is such that “rockets began falling”, but there is no explicit naming of who launched the rockets (Hamas, in this case).

When there are references to more controversial statements or unestablished facts, these are bracketed as quotations in order to indicate that this is not the reporter’s claim (B1: “*Israel said* Hamas was to blame in launching *what it called* ‘terror attacks’ from within civilian population centres”; B2: “*Israel insists* it is not fighting the people of Gaza. *It accuses* Hamas of using human shields”; Figure 5-25: “according to the United Nations”; B3: “*The UN is talking* of a possible war crime”).

The debateable information regarding the presence of a rocket team inside the UN school (B2), for example, is bracketed as an Israeli claim (B2: Mark Regev, Israeli Prime Minister’s spokesman: “Hamas brutalised the institution. There were shot at us mortar shots from the institution”). Mutual accusations, together with other controversial statements, are bracketed in quotations or delivered directly by the spokespersons of the two rival parties in their own voices (Figures 5-17, 5-18). The reporter sums up the dispute over the targeting of the UN school by admitting he is in no position to decide who is right (B2: “whatever the truth...”), and leaves it to the spectators to make their own judgement based on the evidence and arguments provided for them, but they are not advised to side with any of the rival parties.

5.2.4.2 Ideological realism

And yet, despite this descriptive, factual language and these indexical images, there are some tropes that construe *ideological realism* and make “claims to justice concerning the cause of suffering” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 79). These tropes are factual as well, but they offer information that speaks to the moral judgement of the spectators and encourages them to adopt a more specific moral position regarding these happenings. Here are some examples.

In reports B1 and B2 the reporter provides information about the density of the population in Gaza (B1: “Gaza is one of the most crowded places on earth”; Figure 5-12).

This factual description of the reality of the Gaza Strip, in the context of military strikes, makes an implicit claim regarding the morality of launching a military campaign against alleged military targets in a place where “every military target has homes and families close by” (B1) and “the front line is everywhere” (Figure 5-12). The inability to tell fighters from civilian population questions the morality of operating military forces in a civilian setting. This implicit accusation is backed by information on the large number of civilian casualties, including children (Figures 5-4, 5-5). Civilians and children are considered innocent victims and by focusing on them the report implies a misuse of military power.

The information regarding the shelling of the UN school (B2) is another example of ideological realism. The UN schools served as shelters for the civilian population. These installations should be a “safe-zone”. The fact that these installations were under fire and that the victims of these attacks were children undermined the morality of the military operation (B2: “And the Israeli army *did know* this was a UN building”). The mention of “a possible war crime” (B3) intensify the notion of immorality.

Moreover, the reports include *iconic* and *symbolic* images (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 79). These images bear *indexical* meaning (they bear sheer resemblance to the reality they depict), but they are loaded with additional meaning that resonates with the pre-knowledge that the spectators have. Iconic images reference some reality through similarity or resemblance. For examples, images of war machinery (Figures 5-12, 5-13) are iconic images that signify war and military power. Another example of iconic images is those of crying men, women and children (Figure 5-20, 5-24, 5-31). These images represent acute feelings of bereavement and mourning and they stand for the Gazans’ outcry. Symbolic meaning is constructed through discursive association with already existing knowledge and values. An example of symbolic images is Figure 5-38. The clenched fist of the person in that image, together with his shout, is an image of indignation and resistance. This image resonates with other images of indignation and resistance already familiar to the spectators. This is a symbolic image of protest and outrage that refers to insurgency against injustice. This act of indignation signifies that at least one of the rival parties contends that immoral acts were taking place, and there is a need for counter-action to repair the wrongdoings. In that sense, this image gives rise to a symbolic meaning of fighting against injustice.

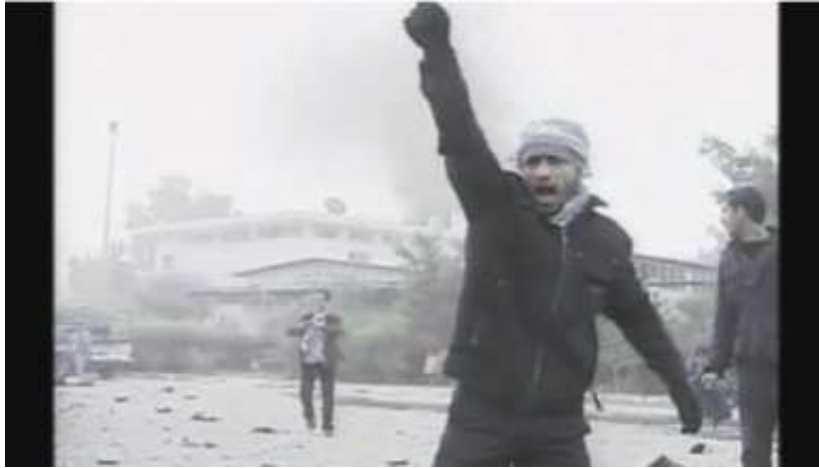


Figure 5-38: symbolic representation of indignation and insurgency against injustice

Chouliaraki (2010b), drawing on Oliver (2004), distinguishes between two modes of witnessing – being an eye-witness and bearing witness. These two modes of witnessing invite the spectator to engage with distant others either by watching them in their misfortune or by elevating the witnessing to an act of “testifying” and expressing some demand for justice (see also Azoulay, 2008). The overall factual nature of these reports, together with the final segments that move us away from the reality of Gaza (B3) and the pessimistic proposition about the chances of ending the violence – all this suggests that, based on these reports, the spectators are merely eye-witnesses. The reality of Gaza does not invade the reality of the spectators in a demanding way, and they are not encouraged to believe that they can change it or respond to it in any meaningful way. It is presented as a happening they should be aware of, and even morally judge, but not as something they are responsible for. Hence, the solidarity with the people of Gaza remains fairly limited. According to Chouliaraki, “bearing witness should in fact be seen as a politically productive form of moral agency, which contributes to the constitution of community” (Chouliaraki, 2010b, p. 68). The function of bearing witness is not fully in play in the BBC’s coverage of the war, and therefore the constitution of a cosmopolitan community is not fully realised. Instead, the report constitutes two distinct communities – the sufferers and the spectators.

In conclusion, the BBC reports offer the spectators factual information about the complex reality in Gaza. They provide both verbal and visual information about the war and its consequences so that the spectators can judge for themselves how devastating this reality is. The factual information also implies that the fighting has a high price in terms of human suffering and death. The identity of the casualties – civilians, women

and children – questions the use of military power in a civilian setting. All this conveys a sense of injustice, but the reports leave it to the spectators to make a judgement about whether this is right or wrong and whether they are required to respond to this encounter with injustice.

5.2.5 Ethical solicitation

After looking into the expression of the different conditions for the construction of grievable death, we can now elicit the ethical solicitation that emerges from the BBC's coverage of the Gaza War. This component of the analysis brings together the three conditions and examines how these inform the agency of the spectators and the proposition that the mediatization of death offers them in responding to faraway death.

As the analysis shows, the BBC's coverage of the Gaza War paid limited attention to the human aspects of the war. While it acknowledged its deadliness, the coverage offered a partial encounter with the reality of the people at the scene. The dead were devoid of agency. They were almost invisible, and the information about them was impersonalised and not detailed. The survivors were depicted as active, but their voices were mute most of the time. The coverage was extensive and operated an *asynchronous continuous media event*, which suggested that the event was taking place between the ordinary and the extraordinary. The camera work allowed an engagement with the reality from the perspective of the people on the ground, and the time dimension was construed as continuous. This issued an invitation for the spectators to be attentive to the war and its developments. While the coverage of the events enabled the spectators to entertain themselves as eyewitnesses, it only implied how they need to morally assess what they see. In revealing unjustified death, the moral stance vis-à-vis the actions taking place was implicit and not put forward explicitly.

And yet, despite the sense of external, perhaps aloof, observation, it was suggested that the spectators still had some responsibility for ending the violence. The references to the international community (B2: "although international demands for [ceasefire] are growing"; B3: "the will of the international community") take the question of responsibility outside the report, to how those external to the conflict need to address the events. This reminds us that the "international community" is also a relevant side in this story. This reference shifts the focus from the fighting parties to a community of spectators witnessing the fighting and called upon to respond to it. This is the moral responsibility that the spectators have. They are asked to position themselves in relation

to the people of Gaza and comprehend their own capacity to save their lives. However, in these reports, the call for action is rather weak, as the reporters conclude that any attempts to prevent further bloodshed are doomed to fail (Figure 5-29). This is a relatively determined conclusion that renders redundant any attempt to act upon ending the violence. It stresses the impotency of the spectators to make a meaningful change, and therefore pushes the event outside the realm of action.

The employment of *perceptual realism* (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 75) and factual description of the course of war works to position the spectators as jurors who are encouraged to take a moral stance based on indisputable facts. They are introduced to the complexity of the conflict and to the consequences of the military campaign, but they are hardly confronted with the feelings of the people on the ground. There is no emotional appeal or pre-determined judgement of the war and the reasons for it, and the spectators need to judge the happenings mostly on the basis of mere facts. The question of “who’s guilty” is left for the spectators to judge. This proposition which introduces factual information about circumstances of death is what I call *judgemental grief*, which encourages the spectators to exercise their moral judgement and critically evaluate the actions at the scene of death, but does not make a moving emotional appeal or an invitation to intervention.

The BBC’s coverage of the Gaza War presented the death in Gaza as something that matters, but without transgressing boundaries of belonging. The notion of an obligation to care for the distant other was subtle. It was a suggestion rather than a demand. We now move to the account of AJE and the strategy it employed to emphasise the responsibility of the spectators, despite their distance, and the immorality of inaction.

5.3 Al-Jazeera English coverage of the Gaza War

We now turn to AJE’s coverage of The Gaza War. AJE reports were similar to the BBC reports in some respects, and in some cases both reports used the same raw material. I point to the similarities, but focus mainly on the elements that are different from the BBC reports.

5.3.1 The sampled reports

5.3.1.1 A1: "Israel launches missile attacks on Gaza"

Report A1 is from the first day of the war. Like report B1, report A1 shows the situation in Gaza following the Israeli strike that started the war. The full report is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZaG96pnnEQ>.



Figure 5-39: Under attack. Israel's air force unleashes devastation on the Gaza strip.



Figure 5-40: On the ground, in one of the world's most densely populated areas, it's a gruesome scene.



Figure 5-41: This Palestinian policeman prepares for his end.



Figure 5-42: And as the victims are discovered, and carried off to hospitals, the attacks just keep coming.



Figure 5-43: Emergency medical officials in Gaza estimate that as many as a hundred and fifty five had been killed, but it's just too early to tell. Many Palestinians staggered the streets in search of medical attention.



Figure 5-44: But it was already sorely lacking from years of siege and embargo which Israel and the international community imposed on the people of Gaza.



Figure 5-45: "I address the Arab rulers saying, he who is not supporting Gaza now is a traitor. The Arab people must now take to streets. We can no longer stand in silence".



Figure 5-46: The so-called Middle East Quartet is yet to weigh in.



Figure 5-47: but then again, they have so far failed to protect the Palestinian population in any meaningful way.

5.3.1.2 A2: "Israel's attack on UN-run school in Gaza"

Report A2 is from the day after the UN school shelling, like report B2. The full report is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itHo5oHhipl>.



Figure 5-48: Carnage outside the



Figure 5-49: But clearly, they were



Figure 5-50: "Nowhere is safe. We

United Nations school near the Jabalia refugee camp. Many of these victims thought they'd be safe inside a UN building.

not. The UN says three artillery shells landed near the school where three hundred and fifty people were taking refuge from the fighting.

have the tragedy of the deaths last night in one of our schools where people have come fleeing the conflict hoping for safety and now they're dead”



Figure 5-51: “I think it’s a new massacre in the holocaust in Gaza. The schools are well known for the Israelis. They know that they are places for the United Nations and they are hitting them”.



Figure 5-52: But Israel insists it was responding to mortar fire from inside the school, and claims Hamas fighters were using civilians as cover.



Figure 5-53: “What we have seen tonight is yet another example of how Hamas deliberately brutalises its own population, and how it has turned a UN education institution into a war zone”.



Figure 5-54: “Any terror organisation that chooses to booby-trap his own people, I think it’s indespicable, I think that it’s not moral, and I think that Hamas does not really care for its own people”.



Figure 5-55: What few can deny is that the attack left this community north of the Gaza Strip grieving and in shock.



Figure 5-56: The UN says its schools were the last place of refuge for civilians trying to flee the fighting. Now even they are not safe anymore.

5.3.1.3 A3: “More children among Gaza dead”

Report A3 is from Gaza’s hospital’s morgue, after a battle in A-Zaytoun neighbourhood.

The report brings some personal accounts from the surviving residents. The full report is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K5wrwZlwAq8&bpctr=1418287153> .



Figure 5-57: Gaza sky in flames. The usual scene for the 11th day. No letting up on the targets the Israeli army has been shelling since Monday.



Figure 5-58: And while actual scenes are hard to see this is the aftermath.



Figure 5-59: A pregnant lady in another home, killed with her four children.



Figure 5-60: “All my family died – my father, my mother, my wife, my son died, my sisters and their children, my cousin died”.



Figure 5-63: “My only resort is to god in my calamity. Only this afternoon my daughter was alive. Now she is no more”.

Figure 5-61: The air and the mood of death spread around the place. In this house there was once a family. In one blow it was turned into dust.



Figure 5-64: They are under siege and under fire from every direction.

Figure 5-62: An entire extended household of children, parents, grandparents obliterated instantly.



Figure 5-65: Their fate is in the hands of their enemy.

5.3.2 The construction of the dead as human

The differences between the AJE and BBC reports are most evident in the focus each channel gave to the human aspect of the war – in terms both of loss of life and of the encounter with the people affected by the war. While providing factual information and images of death, AJE reports permit also an emotional, personal encounter with the people at the scene of death. This approach illustrates Hugh Miles’s claim that “the news is people focused—not government focused” (quoted in Powers, 2009, p. 160). This approach frames the war as a human interest story (Fahmy, 2010) and it emphasises the moral questions that emerge from this.

5.3.2.1 Registering death

AJE’s reports tell the story of the Gaza War while focusing on its deadly consequences. The notion of mass killing is evident throughout its reports and we are constantly confronted with explicit representations of death. Unlike the BBC, AJE spares no detail. Close-up images of bleeding bodies – on the ground and in the morgue – fill the screen (Figures 5-40, 5-41, 5-48, 5-58, 5-59, 5-62). In so doing, AJE claims the centrality of death to this news story. Unlike the BBC’s coverage of the war, which maintained *the economy of taste and decency* (D. Campbell, 2004), while keeping the screen clean of any graphic representations of death, AJE’s approach is different. AJE registers war as a mass violent death event. AJE’s reports constantly remind us that wars are a deadly business; we cannot dissociate war and death.

Other references to death are similar to those we have seen in the BBC’s coverage and they include images of war that serve as metonymic images of death – depicting signifiers of death like images of bombardments, wrecked buildings, blood, flames and smoke (Figures 5-36, 5-42, 5-52, 5-57, 5-64). This is in addition to the “about-to-die” images we already encountered in the BBC report (B1; Figure 5-37), although in AJE’s

report (A1) we see that the policeman lies next to a group of already dead policemen (Figure 5-41) - these images were left out of the BBC report.

In addition, AJE's reports provide an estimate or an indication as to the number of dead. The captions of some of the footage state an estimate of the dead or the magnitude of the killing (Figure 5-40: "Medical sources say at least 145 killed & 150 wounded in Israeli strikes in Gaza") and the reporter mentions that "Emergency medical officials in Gaza estimate that as many as a hundred and fifty five had been killed" (Figure 5-43). As mentioned earlier, the question of the number of dead is critical in the evaluation of the use (or misuse) of military power and the morality of the military operation. This piece of information enhances the human interest frame as it initiates a body count which reminds us that these are countable humans and not simply an obscure notion of mass death. These large numbers become more concrete when they are supported by obituarial news.

5.3.2.2 Agency

Like in the coverage of the BBC, the construal of agency is sometimes ambivalent, as some of the tropes facilitate the humanisation of the people at the scene while other tropes do the opposite. In the coverage of AJE this ambivalence is different, since death is visible, and the presentation and representation of the dead has a different function than that of invisible death.

5.3.2.2.1 Obituarial news

The Gaza War was a mass death event. Understandably the media cannot recount the story of each and every individual who died in this war.²⁰ However, the media can tell the stories of some individuals as an illustration of multiple other cases. These stories need to be the story of "someone," while being told as the story of "everyone".

AJE's report from the morgue (A3) exemplifies some of these properties. This report brings the stories of bereaved families at the hospital's morgue and, more intensely, it confronts us with the dead. The camera takes close-up shots of the faces of the dead,

²⁰ Fignschou (2011) analysed an episode of AJE's NewsHour programme that featured an interactive video showing the names of 210 identified Gaza children killed in the war. In this context, it should be noted that Israeli media do tell the story of every Israeli war casualties – military or civilian – as part of their culture of bereavement and mourning. In the course of the 2014 Gaza War (*Operation Protective Edge*), AJE posted on its websites the names of all (identified) war casualties – Palestinians and Israelis: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/07/gaza-under-seige-naming-dead-2014710105846549528.html>. At the same time, Israeli media refused to broadcast the names of Palestinian children killed during the war.

with no mitigation or concealment, so we can see them as if we are standing very close (Figures 5-58, 5-59, 5-62). Their blood-covered faces fill the screen. Their shrouded bodies lie immobile on stretchers on the morgue's floor and in its refrigerators. The other people who occupy the morgue are bereaved family members who survived the attacks ("This man was left with no single member of his family alive"; "A pregnant woman in another home, killed with her four children"; "This man is the only survivor..."). They shed tears and cry out or weep quietly. Some of them look into the camera and testify to the tragedy of their family: "All my family died – my father, my mother, my wife, my son died, my sisters and their children, my cousin died", says one of them (Figure 5-60); "Only this afternoon my daughter was alive", says another, "now she is no more" (Figure 5-63). The reporter also mentions their family names and the name of the neighbourhood where they used to live (A3: "This man is the only survivor, when the Samouni family in A-Zaytoun neighbourhood perished under a barrage of Israeli rockets"). This presentation personalises the dead and makes their death more tangible and concrete. Indeed, it does not specify the personal stories of the dead, but it does offer an indirect encounter with their previous lives. It presents the dead as someone whose name and family we know, whose face we see, whose family members' outcry we hear.

5.3.2.2.2 Lack of agency

But not all of AJE's reports facilitate such an intimate encounter with the dead and the bereaved. The reports from the first day of the war (A1) and from the day after the school shelling (A2) provide different encounters. These reports do not state the names or stories of the dead and only show images of dead bodies on the ground (Figures 5-34, 5-35, 5-36, 5-40, 5-41, 5-48). In that sense, the dead remain unknown and unfamiliar, and the images only illustrate their numbers. This depiction of the dead deprives them of their agency. They are presented as bleeding bodies, laid on the ground, lacking any signs of human dignity as understood in the West (Gross et al., 1991; Wischmann, 1987). It is hard to see the humans behind the graphic images, or learn their stories. The frequency of death images in these two reports erodes the uniqueness of each and every one of the dead as an individual. This depiction objectifies them and takes away their humanness. This representation makes death visible, but it does not humanise the dead.

Despite the urgency it shows, this representation might be proven counterproductive, as it holds the risk of turning the contemplation of death into a voyeuristic gaze. Or, it might erode the power of the image by creating *compassion fatigue* and so turn sympathy into

apathy (see also Moeller, 1998). In this regard, it is important to note that the encounter of the Western spectators with explicit images of dead bodies is usually an encounter with images of dead “others” (Fishman, 2001; Fishman & Marvin, 2003; Hanusch, 2010; Morse, 2014; J. Taylor, 1998; Zelizer, 2010). This pattern maintains the power relations between Western spectators and non-Western dead (D. Campbell, 2004). In other words, confronting the Western spectator with images of non-Western dead bodies maintains a well-established journalistic practice that permits a Western gaze upon dead bodies only as long as they are “foreigners”. The presentation of explicit images of dead Gazans, then, constructs them as “Others”; it enhances and reinforces their “otherness”. This practice makes it harder for the Western spectators to identify with the dead Gazans and to see them as belonging together.

5.3.2.2.3 The living actors on the scene

The report from the first day of the war (A1: Figure 5-41) utilises the same footage of the “about-to-die” that we encountered in the BBC report (B1; Figure 5-37), and so I shall not repeat this here. Other elements which construe the agency of the living people at the scene can be found in the report from the morgue (A3). This report gives voice to the survivors. Their anguish is heard and their tears are visible (Figures 5-60, 5-63). They look into the camera and tell the story of their loss in their own voices, in their own language. The face-to-face encounter with the personal grief of the bereaved families associates the loss with a particular person and so can elicit compassion toward that other (Boltanski, 1999, p. 6). Through the camera, they communicate with the spectators, making it easier for them to engage with the people on the ground. This communicability construes the bereaved Gazans as agents.

Like in the BBC’s coverage, here too the spectators get to see the residents of Gaza as the living actors at the scene who serve as their own benefactors (Figures 5-44, 5-47). These are the rescuers who rush to the scene and evacuate the dead and the injured. In some images they carry children and adults; in other images they embrace one another in consolation. These perhaps unordered, perhaps organised actions convey the feeling of emergency and urgency, but they also tell a story of self-determination, as the residents of Gaza take their fate in their own hands, trying to restore order. These images present the Gazans as resourceful, being able to cope with the attack and its consequences in an inspiring way. As in the BBC’s coverage, they are survivors, not helpless victims (Orgad, 2009).

5.3.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality

5.3.3.1 Time

Time is here, as with the BBC, suspended between ordinary and extraordinary. AJE coverage was not a live coverage of the events as they unfolded, but summarised the main happenings of each day of the war. As summaries, the reports did not break the media routine, but we can still consider the compilation of these reports as one news story which functions as an *asynchronous continuous media event*, like in the coverage by the BBC. This performativity establishes the war as exceptional and worthy of watchful attention, yet not extraordinary enough to actually generate a media event.

The report on the first day of the war (A1) opens with a “Breaking News” banner at the bottom of the screen that claims the importance of the report (Figure 5-39). This banner signals “urgency”. It tells us that this story is a leading story that emerges and develops in front of our eyes. This banner signifies that the reports on the happenings in Gaza push aside the media planned agenda in favour of a latest development. In this sense, the report “breaks” the media routine and makes a claim about the exceptionality of the military campaign. It is not a live media event, and still, within the constraints of the media routine, this is a story that can break that day’s agenda. This banner calls our attention to the latest developments in Gaza and, in a way, suggests that viewing this piece of news at this very moment is obligatory.

In terms of the way time is constructed within the reports, these reports use the present tense in a way that indicates that the events happen right now, in the present (for example, Figure 5-39: “Israel’s air force unleashes devastations ...”; Figure 5-42: “the attacks just keep on coming”; Figure 5-57: “No letting up on the targets the Israeli army has been shelling since Monday”). This formulation posits the events as on-going, as continuous. This formulation suggests that the events are still evolving. And still, the spectators do not witness the events in live transmission, as they unfold. Therefore, this articulation of time maintains the division between spectators and sufferers, between “us” and “them”.

As in the BBC’s coverage, we can see how AJE coverage also employs the *non-closure* strategy by maintaining suspense (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2008). The report from the first day of the war (A1) indicates that the information being given is only the exposition of this “story”. There are constant developments and this event is far from being concluded: “it is just too early to tell” the number of casualties, “ Hamas leadership

vowed revenge” and the “Middle East Quartet is yet to weigh in”. As with the coda of the BBC report that offered a forecast of what is yet to happen, this way of reporting does not close the story. Rather, it keeps an open ending that encourages us to keep following later developments.

The two other AJE reports (A2, A3) also use non-closure, but they do it in a slightly different way. These two reports end with no denouement or resolution (Figure 5-56: “Now even they are not safe anymore”; Figure 5-65: “Their fate is in the hands of their enemy”). The final remarks in both reports stress the lack of any clear future – good or bad. This peradventure keeps the plot open. The lack of resolution indicates that there is yet to come. The plot is not resolved yet and there must be further developments until these matters are settled; until order is restored; until the story reaches its “happy ending”.

5.3.3.2 Space

The articulation of space in AJE’s coverage of the war creates an imaginative presence in the event by positioning the spectators in the middle of the chaotic reality of Gaza’s streets and hospitals. The audio-visual account conveys the feeling of “being there”. Street-level shots offer the point of view of the people on the streets of Gaza and confront us with explicit death images (for example, Figures 5-40, 5-41, 5-42, 5-48). The camera runs with the rescue teams; it tilts down to see the injured and dead people on the ground and captures the flames and smoke coming out of the bombarded buildings (Figure 5-64). The sounds also offer a very vivid experience of the chaos on Gaza’s streets. The continuous sound of sirens enriches the feeling of what is it like to be caught in the midst of an airstrike. The spectators are provided with the opportunity to feel *as if* they are there, in Gaza, seeking shelter from the attacks that keep on coming.

Unlike the BBC reports (Figures 5-11, 5-23, 5-29), AJE reports begin and end in Gaza.²¹ There is no symbolic barrier that takes the spectators away from the reality of Gaza. And yet, the spectators have the benefit of experiencing a space of omnipresence (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 169), since they are not only imaginatively positioned on the streets of Gaza, but they also see the television studios where the official spokespersons are positioned (Figures 5-51, 5-53, 5-54). This cutting from Gaza to the studios constructs two spaces in complete contrast – the unsafe space of Gaza and the secure space of the

²¹ It is important to note, though, that AJE was the only non-Arabic-speaking news organisation whose team was located inside Gaza (Seib, 2012).

television studios. When the Palestinian and the Israeli representatives speak, they do it from the quiet, ordered, sterile space of the studio. Their speech is calm and serene. The studio camera stands still, and the shot is open and stable. This distinction of space creates a distance between the scene of what is happening and the undisturbed space for contemplation where commentary takes place. All this is a complete opposite to the shooting from the scene. In this sense, the transition between multiple spaces stresses the division between the fortunate, safe spectators and the unfortunate, unsafe sufferers who still need to cope with their devastating reality.

5.3.4 Producing a witnessable account

AJE coverage of the war produces a witnessable account. The reports provide a detailed account of the mass deaths and the spectators receive an explicit depiction of the war and its aftermath, in terms of how it looks, how it sounds, and how the people on the ground feel. AJE's coverage of the war primarily construes *perceptual realism*, but it also offers instances of *ideological realism* and *categorical realism*.

5.3.4.1 Perceptual realism

The reports make compelling claims to truth by using different televisual modalities to convey the reality on the ground in the most accurate way. The images and sounds provide a sensory account of the happenings. It shows what appears in front of the camera with no mitigation. The reports contain a number of images of dead, bleeding bodies lying on the ground (for example, Figures 5-40, 5-41, 5-48, 5-58). The camera is positioned among the crowd. The spectators encounter the aftermath of the Israeli shelling from the point of view of the people on the streets, in the midst of the evacuation efforts. These modalities are highly effective and telling in conveying the reality on the ground. AJE's reports take full advantage of these modalities and bring the gruesome sights and the onerous sounds as they are, with no censorship. We, the spectators, see the happenings as if we were there, on Gaza's streets, accompanying the civilians and rescue teams in the removal of the dead bodies. The footage shows the overwhelmed hospital and the bereaved families (A3). The camera moves fast, pointed at the ground, where the bodies lie. Within a few seconds a sequence of dead bodies on the ground flashes across screen. The extent of the killing is further revealed.

This explicit representation of death is not common in Western media (Hanusch, 2010). In fact, it breaches the conventions and challenges the norms regulating violent news in the West (see D. Campbell, 2004; Zelizer, 2010). It dismantles the protective mechanism

of war reporting that keeps the spectators untouched. AJE lets horrifying images invade the safety zone of the living room. The distant death makes the spectators vulnerable as well. AJE coverage of the war turns the spectators into witnesses, but, unlike the protective witnessing text that the BBC proposes, for AJE witnessing the war means seeing it *as is*. What happens on the ground also takes place on the TV screen, and if the reality of the Gaza War is a reality of dead children and bleeding corpses, then this reality makes its way into the living rooms in the West.²²

Overall, the reporters' voiceover sticks to indisputable facts. When there are more controversial claims and statements, they are delivered by official spokespersons of the fighting parties (Figures 5-45, 5-51, 5-53, 5-54). In so doing, the reporters provide an objective account of the events and the reasons for their occurrence. The verbal voiceovers contextualise the happenings and compensate for missing information. This adds information that is not depicted and helps to make sense of the indexical representation of the reality in Gaza. In some cases, the verbal voiceover provides some background (A1: "The people of Gaza have been bracing themselves for this ever since the six months cease-fire with Israel expired last week"; "[medical attention] was already sorely lacking from years of siege and embargo which Israel and the international community imposed on the people of Gaza"). In other cases the verbal voiceovers provide a context for what appears on the screen (A2: "It was one of three schools to come under fire on Tuesday"; A3: "The air bombardment continues through the night").

5.3.4.2 Categorical realism

AJE coverage of the war also offers some examples of *categorical realism* that construe a sense of realism that speaks to our feelings and emotions. These parts of the reports speak to a common sense of human compassion and make it possible for the spectators to engage with the bereaved and the survivors on the basis of humane feelings. For example, the closing part of the report on the school shelling (A2) focuses on the residents of Jabaliya Refugee Camp and the lack of any refuge that they were destined to experience. Images of women and their small children as they flee and seek shelter surface on the screen (Figure 5-55). Women and children signify innocence. They embody the guiltlessness of the residents of Gaza, the victims of the fighting. These

²² This representation of death feeds into the on-going debate on the visual nature of war coverage and the need – if there is any – to protect the viewers from the horror (Aubert, 2008; Hanusch, 2010; Morse, 2014; Zelizer, 2010). By employing this practice, AJE posits itself as challenging and questioning the common Western practice.

images tell the story of the hopeless flight and the misery of the people of Gaza that “are not safe anymore” (Figure 5-56) and so they evoke a sense of compassion.

Another example of *categorical realism* is the closing images of two of the reports (A2, A3). These are images of an infant sitting barefoot on the ground (Figure 5-56) and images of terrified children, one of them – a blond infant – weeping (Figure 5-65). These telling images of human pain make an emotional appeal, encouraging feelings of compassion for these infants (see also Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 131). Especially when they portray a *blond* infant, these images invite the (Western) spectators to identify with the bereaved Gazans and share their pain. These are near-iconic images that capture the helplessness inherent in this story, as they show an innocent, small, vulnerable child who has nowhere to go. These images resonate with the innocence and helplessness ascribed to infants and thus speak to the spectators’ sense of pity and compassion as it urges the protection and salvation of these children, who are “are not safe anymore” (Figure 5-56) and whose “fate is in the hands of their enemy” (Figure 5-65). This closing statement tells the spectators that unless they do something the fate of these children will be terrible.

The face-to-face encounter with the bereaved families (A3) also construes *categorical realism*, as it connects us to the reality in Gaza on the basis of feelings and emotions. We meet the bereaved families and hear their outcry as they mourn the death of their loved ones. The close-ups on their weeping faces create intimacy and their tears evoke sympathy on the basis of universalism.

5.3.4.3 Ideological realism

And yet, such a vivid representation of a violent reality – mass killing of civilians – makes it unavoidable to position oneself critically in relation to the happening and the depiction of innocent victims. This construes *ideological realism* that speaks to our moral judgments. I now turn to discussing in more detail the audio-visual tropes, in order to see this mechanism in operation.

At different points throughout the reports, the reporters not only tell the facts, but they also work to shape the perception and judgement in relation to these. In report A1, we see a cluster of dead policemen while the voiceover confirms that “it’s a gruesome scene” (Figure 5-40). The use of the adjective “gruesome” is a judgemental and subjective description of what the spectators can see for themselves. A similar trope can be found in report A3, in which the reporter warns that “the actual scenes are hard to

see” before confronting us with images of dead children (Figure 5-58). This representation of death – by images and verbal description – confronts the spectators with the deadly reality, with no attempt to protect them from the horror. Such depiction compels the spectators to acknowledge that the Gaza War is, first and foremost, a story about mass violent death. It not only positions the spectators as eyewitnesses who learn the facts, it also advises them how they should feel and think about these facts.

Report A2 is framed in terms of carnage. From the very beginning of the report, its “title” tells a tragic story of unjust death: “Carnage outside the United Nations school...” (Figure 5-48). The word “carnage” refers to indiscriminate mass killing, and so construes the event as a story of immoral acts that caused dreadful human tragedy. The latter clause of the title, “outside the United Nation’s school,” enhances the notion of immorality, as it situates the carnage in what was supposed to be a “safe zone” – the United Nations school. The United Nations installation should be a space beyond the fighting, outside the battlefield. The nature of the installation – a school – refers to the vulnerable population – children – it aims to protect. The framing of the occurrence of mass killing in what was supposed to be a safe space for children establishes the story as a violation of combat conventions. Thus, the overarching theme of this report, from the beginning to the end, is that the people of Gaza have nowhere to hide and nowhere to run, since the violation of combat conventions leaves no zones outside the battlefield. Moreover, all the “human targets” are described as non-military. According to AJE’s report, this attack was not against Hamas and its militias, but against “the people of Gaza” (A1; Figure 5-44). This juxtaposes army and civilians and thus further underlines the immorality of the attack.

Another way of encouraging a critical stance is the use of responses from political leaders (Figures 5-45, 5-51, 5-53, 5-54). These inserts bring the denunciation and condemnation of the leaders in their own language and voice. As such, the reports include some very bold accusations in very strong language. The report on the first day of the war (A1) contains two statements by Palestinians in the West Bank and Jordan that strongly condemn the attack (“He, who is not supporting Gaza, now is a *traitor*... Whoever establish [sic] a relationship with the *enemy* is nothing but a *criminal*”). These statements make a clear distinction between “good” and “bad”, while suggesting that neutrality is not a valid option, and that indifference equals complicity.

The report on the school shelling (A2) brings the response of Hamas representative, Osama Hamdan (Figure 5-51). Hamdan not only describes the shelling as immoral, given that the schools' locations were known to the Israelis and they knowingly chose to target these installations; Hamdan condemns the attack and calls it "a new massacre in this holocaust in Gaza". This reference to a Holocaust, accompanied by a sequence of images of inanimate bodies on the streets of Gaza, makes an explicit link to what is considered the ultimate crime against humanity – the Holocaust – and thus deliberately employs a discourse of crimes against humanity which come with a heavy historical baggage. The shelling, then, becomes not only utterly criminal, but the Israelis are cast as playing the role of the Nazis. This statement, which names the killing "a massacre" and "a holocaust," associates witnessing and collective memory as it positions the happenings in Gaza alongside historical crimes against humanity. In so doing, such a statement frames the events in a broader historical context that imposes its moral lessons (inaction and indifference as complicity) on the spectators (see Zelizer, 2000). It tells us that denunciation is inevitable.

The Israeli speakers in this report (Figures 5-53, 5-54), in turn, use strong language and make sharp accusations in an attempt to divert the blame back to Hamas. The shelling is described as a response to mortar fire from inside the school and as an abuse of the UN installations in a way that jeopardises people seeking shelter. Hamas is described as "deliberately brutalising" and "booby-trapping" its own people. These arguments strive to invert the narrative, and portray Hamas as an immoral organisation, responsible for the death of its innocent people. All these portrayals of the war and the mutual accusations suggest that innocent victims pay the price of leaders' decisions.

Moreover, report A1 concludes with an accusing statement that the international community has "so far failed to protect the Palestinian population in any meaningful way" (Figure 5-47). This statement makes a claim regarding the need to manifest solidarity and realise the responsibility for the wellbeing of the Palestinians in Gaza. The demand to protect Palestinian lives is expressed as a matter of concern for the international community, suggesting that even those who are external to the conflict bear a responsibility to protect vulnerable lives. This is an important stance that AJE expresses, as it accepts its role not only as an uninvolved news organisation, but also as a player which can advocate for external intervention, a mode of operation Chouliaraki describes as *committed witnessing* (Chouliaraki, 2012, p. 145).

To conclude this multimodal analysis, we see how this text uses multimodal tropes to position the spectators as witnesses of “carnage”. Not only do the Gazans have nowhere to hide, but the spectators are also not immune from the horrific images and sounds. They are confronted by the devastating reality at its most gruesome. The images show the reality “as is”, with no concealment, and the verbal description contextualises the images and organises them into a narrative of carnage and misuse of military power as part on an on-going immoral occupation. The references to the Holocaust suggest that by witnessing the events, the spectators also bear responsibility to the people out there. Facing this reality bestows a moral burden that turns the spectators into moral agents who cannot renounce their responsibility by simply claiming “we did not know”.

5.3.5 Ethical solicitation

After examining the different dimensions of AJE reports, we can now see that the ethical solicitation that emerges from this coverage is more explicit and compelling than that of the BBC. AJE focuses its reports on the human aspects of war and the experiences and feelings of the people at the scene of death. The visibility of death and the grief of the local community facilitate the humanisation of the dead and make their death count. These reports offer a personal encounter with the people at the scene of death and so make it easier to identify with them and to feel sympathetic with their suffering and death.

Similarly to the BBC, AJE also performs *an asynchronous continuous media event* that calls for the spectators’ attention. But, unlike the BBC, AJE’s coverage offers no escape from the horrible sights and disturbing sounds. The reports strive to provide an account that is loyal to the reality in Gaza by using a range of modalities to convey the horror on the ground “as is”, and confront the spectators with the death scene without mitigation. The reports contain explicit images of dead bodies, they inform us of the estimates on the death toll and provide some personal accounts of the people affected by the war. The use of graphic death images transgresses the well-established norms of war reporting and therefore makes death alarming. AJE coverage brings the story of the Gazans in all its gruesomeness and does not try to soften its representation even when it does not follow the Western codes of taste and decency. This articulation construes war as a story of brutal military power used against powerless people, which makes the use of military aggression immoral. Moreover, the spectators are reminded of the price of inaction on Palestinian suffering. AJE makes the claim that the mass violent death in

Gaza is a result of indifference to Palestinian suffering, and so articulates the role of the spectators in acting upon this reality by denouncing the evildoers.

The failure to protect human lives means negligence and perhaps guilt. Who is to blame for the death in Gaza? Who is responsible? AJE reports clearly blame Israel, but they also claim that the responsibility for the misfortune of the Palestinians in Gaza is not Israel's alone. The international community also shares some responsibility for failing to protect the Gazans' lives. The international community also bears responsibility for the injustice the Gazans suffer. AJE reports tell us in various ways that we are not uninvolved spectators who only watch the news. We are, or we should be, involved actors who take responsibility for ending human suffering. We should do this as an act of solidarity between humans who are tied together and depend on one another.

By allowing the spectators to engage with the reality of Gaza in terms of moral evaluation and personal sympathy, AJE encourages its spectators to become involved in the reality "out there" and to condemn those responsible for immoral death. These two dimensions – sympathy and judgement – work together to elicit *condemnatory grief*, which has the advantage over sentimental engagement of informing political consciousness and invoking action – condemnation that will stop the killing. The spectators are encouraged to "bear witness," to speak up in the name of the Gazans and to voice their pain and indignation. This proposition works to establish ties between the people of Gaza and the spectators, and to bring to the fore the dependency of the people of Gaza on the action (or inaction) of the spectators as fellow members of the same cosmopolitan community.

5.4 Conclusions

This chapter explored the coverage of the Gaza War by two transnational TV channels and examined the different propositions made by each regarding the possibility of the spectators in the West grieving for the death of the remote Palestinians in Gaza and acting upon this. The two accounts are similar in many respects, but they also hold significant differences. While drawing on similar material, each channel articulated a different understanding of the interrelations between spectators and sufferers and the demand for accountability. A comparison of the ways in which each channel addressed the conditions for the construction of grievable death manifests the similarities and differences and so enables us to identify two types of grief – *judgemental grief* and *condemnatory grief*.

The coverage of the Gaza War – at least in the way it was covered by AJE and by the BBC, followed some of the logics of media events that call for careful attention to specific happenings by providing extensive coverage of an on-going story. I described this form of death-related media ritual as *an asynchronous continuous media event*: it was a media event in the sense that it was an event of historic significance that took place outside the media. It was covered simultaneously by a large number of media organisations and was positioned high on the news agenda. Its extensive and continuous coverage invited the spectators to “participate” in the event by watching the news. And yet, the reports on the events were not transmitted live, and its coverage did not break the pre-planned media schedule.²³ In other words, it was a major news event that received extensive coverage, but within the regularity of the news schedule.

When performing a “media event”, the media mark the extraordinariness of the moment. They tell us that something of great importance and grand implications just happened, something so important that it suspends everything else. In relation to death events, the performance of a “media event” is a statement of the exceptionality of such death and its significance as “news”. In this sense, in the case of the Gaza War, death was trivialised. The symbolic marker of the switch from ordinary to extraordinary was missing. Thus, by maintaining the reports on mass death events within the regularity of the news feed, both channels told us that such mass death event – exceptional as it may be – is still very “ordinary”. By delivering war in the realm of “the ordinary” both channels limited the urgency of the happening.

The notion that viewing is mandatory is also important for creating a sense of shared experience. The participation in the act of viewing the news not only establishes the connection with the distant others who appear to us in the news, it is also an act of coming together with many other spectators who consume the news and engage with it as we do it. Thus, if an event is marked as unimportant in the sense that it does not generate special conditions of viewing, it also creates a weaker sense of shared experience and produces an insufficiently compelling invitation to participate in the act of viewing. In other words, such a mode of coverage makes disengagement a legitimate and valid option. Accordingly, the participation in the communal exchange of news is not

²³ At least as was found in the materials analysed. Since I did not gain access to the official archives of the channels, I am cautious in relation to whether or not they reported live on the events.

compulsory. The meaning of not generating a media event is, then, that the life of those reported dead matter less.

And yet, although the coverage of the Gaza War was not a media event as we know it, it was an *asynchronous continuous media event*: it was a major news event that demanded the attention, if not the response, of the spectators. The recurring reports from Gaza (and Jerusalem) and the references to prospective developments manifested the non-closure strategy (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2008) and the maintenance of suspense that have a potential to keep the spectators attentive. These propositions embody an implicit notion of connectedness that construes an understanding of commitment and belonging.

Both channels also employed similar technological affordances to convey the feeling of “being there”. Street-level shots and camera cuts between the different scenes where the events took place offered the spectators a detailed and authentic account of what it was like to be in Gaza during the war. AJE’s account was more explicit as it did not hide away the disturbing sights of war, but, nonetheless, both channels facilitated an imagined presence at the scene.

Despite the similarities, the accounts provided by the two channels were different. The BBC reports told a story of war without really confronting us with the horror of war. Inasmuch as war is a deadly business, its very nature of was not entirely evident. By and large, the screen remained “clean” of any graphic evidence of death. The reports delivered representations of war machineries, but when the images became too horrific the camera turned away. By making these editorial decisions, and stating them out loud, the BBC reports adhered to what has already been established as the common representation of war reporting. The BBC reports deliberately chose to protect us from the horror and, in so doing, maintain the safe zone of our living rooms. The graphic images did not invade our peaceful and ordered reality in the West. The happenings in Gaza were not delivered “as is” on a full scale. The vulnerability of the Gazans did not invade the screen, and so was not shared by the spectators. Thus, the representation of death delivered by the BBC created two distinct symbolic spheres of vulnerability – the physical vulnerability in Gaza and the secure zone of viewing in the West.

The same goes for the encounter with the survivors and the bereaved. The BBC reports analysed did not present the human consequences of the use of war machinery and did

not acquaint us with the personal stories of the people at the scene of death. In these reports there were no elements of *obituarial news* and they did not enable any acquaintance with the life of people who had died. The human cost of war, then, was not properly accounted for. This account of the war gives an incomplete picture of war and fails to facilitate an encounter between spectators and sufferers. It makes it harder to identify with the misfortune of others on the basis of common human feeling. This dissociation of war and death – and more specifically, of war and the dead – limits the possibility of grieving for the dead.

The AJE reports, on the other hand, choose to defy the common practice of death representation. The graphic reality is rendered to us in the most tangible way. Images of dead and bleeding bodies fill the screen. Sirens, shouts and cries invade our living rooms. This practice challenges the perception that we need to be protected from this depiction. It confronts us with this bleeding reality, forcing us to have a share in the Gazans' lives, making their vulnerability ours. It forces us to witness them in their misfortune. The AJE report from the morgue, unlike the other reports, brings us closer to the Gazans, making it possible for us to see the people who mourn. This account offers a face-to-face encounter with the people who paid the highest price of war – the dead and the bereaved families. This powerful report demonstrates the loss. Death translates into the bereavement and pain of families and devastated communities. This portrayal of death invited a disposition of grief, as it shows the painful cost of war on a personal level.

If we think of the mediatisation of death in wartime as a reflexive moment in which we reassess questions of interdependency, commitment, moral agency and collective identity, then the analysis showed that the AJE reports make stronger and fiercer claims of standing by the people of Gaza. The inevitable denunciation that emerges from AJE's reports derives from references to the impotency to account for the Gazans on-going suffering and the sheer – sometimes bold – references to historic human suffering. In so doing, the AJE reports articulate the moral demand to end this suffering and lay the burden of witnessing the death in Gaza on us, the spectators. This is an inclusive move that compels us to respond – to take responsibility – for the Palestinian misfortune. The BBC reports did not demand such a level of engagement. Instead, the BBC positioned its spectators as uninvolved onlookers.

Accordingly, the two channels presented two different understandings of solidarity and accountability in a global age. Whereas the BBC maintained a division between the

spectators and the victims of war, AJE tried to blur this division and establish the connection and the commitment between the two spheres of viewing and being viewed. Each channel used a different strategy to articulate its worldview: the BBC delivered the basic facts and informed its audience of the misfortune of the Gazans, using factual and non-controversial language and censored images and sounds. AJE, on the other hand, confronted its audiences with explicit accounts of atrocities, while using affective language to describe the happenings. That put a very heavy moral burden on the spectators, as they could not simply ignore the call to respond to the Gazans' misfortune. AJE's proposition made it clear that the spectators bore responsibility for the Gazans' fate.

These differences in covering the war, I would argue, produced a different understanding of the interrelations between spectators and people at the scene of death, which I describe as two types of grief. I call the type of grief elicited by the coverage of the BBC *judgemental grief*, and the type of grief elicited by the coverage of AJE *condemnatory grief*.

5.4.1 Judgemental grief

Judgemental *grief* is elicited by news coverage that focuses on factual information rather than emotional appeal. It points to incidents of injustice, but, as its name suggests, it leaves it to the spectators to judge the morality or immorality of the reality they see. This proposition calls the spectators' attention to wrongdoing and provides incriminating evidence, but it does not make explicit accusations. Actions at the scene of death are described as deprived of human action. Despite the reference to death, the encounter with the deadly reality is indirect, and the dead are almost invisible.

This type of grief construes death as something remote. Despite its importance, it is constructed as something which is not permitted to transgress existing boundaries of belonging. Accordingly, the invitation put forward for the spectators to respond is not pressing. The obligation to care for the distant other is subtle. It is a suggestion rather than a demand. The distant others remain in a different sphere. The spectators are positioned as witnesses of a deadly reality, but they are not compelled to act upon it. Thus, judgemental grief reinforces boundaries of care and belonging and leaves the distant others on the verge of these boundaries, but not inside them.

5.4.2 Condemnatory grief

Unlike judgemental grief, *condemnatory grief* refers to a type of news coverage that is much blunter in its insistence on transforming grief into political consciousness, turning sympathy with the victim into denunciation of the evildoers. It is the type of grief that encourages the recruitment of strong emotional engagement to spell out a firm political demand. This type of grief does not settle for evidence of wrongdoing, but points an accusing finger at the perpetrators and voices a demand to pursue justice.

Much like Chouliaraki's category of *emergency news* (Chouliaraki, 2006b), condemnatory grief expands the boundaries of precommitment to accommodate the loss of those who are not necessarily within the communitarian bond. Indeed, this construal of victims and benefactors maintains the power dynamic between Western spectators and non-Western dead, yet it also articulates the demand for cosmopolitan solidarity:

“It is precisely this articulation of suffering with a discourse of ‘universal’ morality – morality beyond the narrow concerns of the communitarian bond – that renders the spectators of emergency news – and no other class of news – potential citizens of the world, regarding all humanity as their fellow citizens” (Chouliaraki, 2006, 191)

Accordingly, condemnatory grief is the type of grief that insists on transforming the encounter with distant death into a manifestation of cosmopolitan solidarity beyond national or cultural affiliation. It is a proposition that makes an articulate moral appeal for the spectators, as moral beings, not to escape their obligation to ensure the wellbeing of remote others, and it emphasizes their agency as political actors who have a moral part to play.

Chapter 6: Empathising grief – the case of the 2011 Norway attacks

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the mediatisation of major terror attacks that result in mass killing and explores the possibilities for summoning cosmopolitan solidarity. The 2011 Norway attacks serve as the case study that represents such cases. The chapter analyses the coverage by the BBC and by AJE and explores the ways in which these channels cut off their broadcasting schedule to deliver the events that took place in Norway to their Western audiences as they unfolded, until the memorial service at Oslo's Central Cathedral two days later.

The chapter begins with the analysis of the BBC coverage of the Norway Attacks and then proceeds to analyse AJE's coverage. Using the *analytics of mediatised grievability*, the current chapter shows how the coverage of the Norway Attacks by the two channels invites empathy and identification with the Norwegians and so transforms a local, national tragedy into a global one, yet the coverage on both channels fails to cultivate solidarity that extends beyond the West. Therefore, this chapter argues, the coverage of the Norway Attacks fosters a sense of communitarian solidarity that indeed goes beyond Norway, but still maintains a hierarchy of deaths – and thus of the living. The chapter concludes by introducing *empathising grief* as a proposition, produced by such media performance, which construes the victims as familiar others, and invites the spectators to empathise with them on the basis of commonality.

6.1.1 The Norway attacks

On July 22, 2011, Norway experienced twin attacks: the first was a car explosion in central Oslo, near the Prime Minister's headquarters. The second attack took place an hour later, when a gunman opened fire indiscriminately on young people in a youth camp run by the ruling Labour Party at Utoya Island, some 38 kilometres north-west of Oslo. Both attacks were planned and executed by Anders Behring Breivik, a Norwegian man. The death toll from both attacks was a total of 77. The twin attacks, as I shall discuss later, were the most violent act on Norwegian soil since World War II.

6.2 BBC coverage of the Norway attacks

As the news about an explosion in central Oslo broke, BBC World News immediately began reporting from Norway, and kept doing so throughout the following days. The

overarching narrative that emerged from that coverage was of an unexpected violation of the tranquillity, peace and security of a nation that is unfamiliar with violence or insecurity. The three reports analysed here are from three points in time in the course of the coverage of the Norway attacks. These three reports tell a story of an emerging national tragedy from its very first moments till its provisional closure, after order has been restored. I address these three reports as three important phases of the *disaster marathon* genre.

6.2.1 The sampled reports

6.2.1.1 B4: “Norwegian capital hit by large explosion”

Report B4 is the very first report of the explosion in central Oslo. The report gives some very sketchy and initial details of a developing story. The exact location was still unclear and there was uncertainty with regard to the magnitude and the causes of the explosion. The full report is available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14254254> .



Figure 6-1: We just got these pictures in the past few minutes. We put them on air for you, but the details are still quite sketchy. Some reports are saying that the explosion took place inside the headquarters of Norway’s biggest tabloid newspaper. Other people are saying that a car has been damaged and an entire building housing government offices has been damaged as well.



Figure 6-2: This is a map that we’re getting for you of the middle of downtown Oslo. What we can tell you for sure is that there has been a massive explosion in the middle of Norway’s capital, Oslo. From what we understand, a few people have been injured.



Figure 6-3: Here you can see. This is the picture I was talking to you about that we saw on Twitter. You can see smoke rising in the air there, and what we are being told that this building is a government building, and that the offices of the Prime Minister, Jens Stoltenberg, are in this building as well.



Figure 6-4: This is after the blast, in central Oslo, although we do understand that there has been some casualties, but the Prime Minister is in fact safe. We’ll keep you right up-to-date with events in Oslo.



Figure 6-5: We’re working to get someone on the telephone who can tell us a little bit more about what happened there, and I’ll continue to update you on that blast.

6.2.1.2 B5: "Death toll of at least 80 in the shooting on the island of Utoya in Norway"

Report B5 is a news bulletin from a couple of hours after the shooting on the island. The report begins with a short update on the unfolding events, followed by a live interview with Oslo's police spokesperson. The full report is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&v=cuVD3qN6aul&NR=1>.



Figure 6-6: A gunman opens fire at a youth camp on an island outside the Norwegian capital, Oslo. Police now say at least eighty people were killed there. Earlier, a car bomb exploded in Oslo, killing at least seven. A Norwegian man has been arrested. Local media says he has links to right-wing extremism.



Figure 6-7: Hello and welcome. Let's start the hour with some breaking news on the situation in Norway. Police there say that at least eighty people were killed on the island of Utoya, when a gunman opened fire. Now, to repeat that, the death toll at the island of Utoya is now put at around eighty. Police says that the killings were of catastrophic dimensions.



Figure 6-8: Let's see if we can just get the very latest from a Norwegian police spokesman now. I wonder if we can open communications now.



Figure 6-9: Policeman: Yes. I can confirm that. That is the latest figures from this island. Eighty young people were shot on this island.

Anchor: - This is a shocking development, because we'd heard that around ten had been killed. We were aware of the fact that many people were escaping into the water. It's very difficult to comprehend what happened on that island.



Figure 6-10: Anchor: And it is just difficult to comprehend the numbers. Is it... How is it possible that one gunman killed so many people? What kind of device was he using? Do you know that yet?

Policeman: We are having an investigation and hopefully the investigation will show how this is possible.



Figure 6-11: And just to bring that to you, eighty people now confirmed to have been killed on the island of Utoya, where a gunman open fire, and that was, of course, where, around seven hundred young people were taking part in a summer camp.

6.2.1.3 B6: "Norway mourns those killed in Friday's attacks"

Report B6 is from the second day after the attack, summarising the memorial service at Oslo's Central Cathedral. This report includes a personal testimony of two of the survivors of the massacre on Utoya Island. These personal accounts are told from the point of view of people who were there, at the scene. The full report is available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14270019>.



Figure 6-12: This was Norway's day of mourning, of remembering all those who lost their lives at the hands of a man who described the killings as gruesome but necessary.



Figure 6-13: In Oslo's cathedral they held a service for sorrow and hope. The people were told that the full scale of the evil had yet to emerge.



Figure 6-14: The king and queen were present, aware that this is the worst violence to strike their country since the Second World War. The Prime Minister said many are still missing.



Figure 6-15: "Each and every one of those who died is a tragedy. Combined, the losses have become a national tragedy".



Figure 6-16: In a small country, almost everyone knows the people who have lost friends or family, and some of those who had been on the island when the shooting started were among the crowds.



Figure 6-17: "It was like hell, actually. I have no words. The feeling was that soon I'm going to die, and the fear, that I heard so many shots of this gun. He never stopped shooting".



Figure 6-18: Also there, young people who had friends at the summer camp but were still missing: "A friend of us is missing, and we haven't heard a thing about her and neither does her family".



Figure 6-19: This is a country in profound shock, numb. A society so far untouched by the kinds of violence that have scarred so many other places. And made worse by the fact that the focus of one of these attacks was a holiday island, mainly for young people.



Figure 6-20: Out on the lake, near where the gunman started killing young people, the grim task has continued of recovering bodies. Divers were still looking for the missing. Four or five students remain unaccounted for.



Figure 6-21: "When people ran from him. He just walked after them. He didn't run. He walked slowly, because he thought 'you may run but you can't hide. I will find you. I will kill you'. And so he yelled that this is the day you are going to die".



Figure 6-22: "This is me, hiding here under some clothes, and between also dead bodies and this is the man shooting me at the same time in the shoulder".



Figure 6-23: For many, it is a bewildering time, discovering that a Norwegian man felt so enraged with the country's political leaders that he could turn his gun on teenagers at a summer camp.

6.2.2 The construction of the dead as human

6.2.2.1 *Registering death*

The BBC coverage of the Norway attacks managed to register the attacks as a death-related event without showing even a single indexical representation of death. It did so by activating a media ritual designated for mass violent death events – the *disaster marathon* – which brackets the events and stresses the extraordinariness of death. The switch to the *disaster marathon* mode is a statement in itself. The message that emerges from this performance is that an explosion in central Oslo is breaking news and deserves immediate and on-going attention (report B5 also opens with a caption of “Breaking News”; Figure 6-7). It marks the transition into liminality and the suspension of the everyday. Based on the ritual approach to communication (Carey, 1992; Silverstone, 2002b), the flow of news is governed by the regularity of the news broadcast, maintaining an ordered routine. The collapse of this rather rigid structure is a meaningful symbolic act, as most news stories are not allowed to break this media routine. This can only come about when something extraordinary happens, such as mass killing.

The Norway attacks were allowed to break this media routine. The extensive coverage of a local, national tragedy by a global news organisation such as the BBC signifies the importance of the events and the acuteness of the lost lives to a global community that spreads beyond Norway (Figure 6-4 is an incorporation of Norwegian television relay into the BBC broadcast: the local Norwegian perspective turns global). This sweeping media attention manifests alert, emergency, and vulnerability and asks the spectators to pay attention to the attacks in Norway, suggesting that ignoring them is not a valid option. This very performance is what constructs the humanness of the dead. As discussed in previous chapters, the death of “the human” is something that matters. And, as the analysis here shows, the death of the Norwegians indeed was a serious matter. The humanness of the dead was constructed by performing a media ritual that accentuated the significance of the deaths in Norway, and included, primarily, the switch to the *disaster marathon* mode (B4).

In addition, the BBC coverage of the event registers death by making a genuine attempt to clarify the number of casualties and the circumstances of death (something that was missing in the coverage of the Gaza War). In report B4, the anchor in the studio works to weave the sketchy information into a coherent and confirmed story (Figure 6-5: “We’re working to get someone on the telephone who can tell us a little bit more about what

happened there”). In report B5, the anchor in the studio asks the Norwegian police spokesperson a series of questions in order to comprehend the reality on the ground (“We’re hearing that eighty people were killed on the island of Utoya. Can you confirm that for us?”; Figure 6-10: “How is it possible that one gunman killed so many people? What kind of device was he using? Do you know that yet?”). This facts-gathering mission, which focuses on the scale and circumstances of death, further stresses that this story is exceptional, precisely because it is a story about a surprising mass violent death.

Visually, the Norway attacks, as they were reported by the BBC, are death-free death events. Throughout the coverage, there was not even a single shot showing images of dead bodies or a coffin, and the screen was kept “clean” of any images of blood and gore. The visual narrative, instead, uses metonymies of death that include verbal testimonies and images of mourning, rather than death – people laying flowers and lighting candles outside Oslo Central Cathedral (Figures 6-12, 6-16), shedding tears (Figure 6-14) and embracing one another (Figure 6-19). Thus, along with technological affordances, verbal discursive devices were employed to convey the horror and to construe death as integral and central part of the event, even in the absence of explicit visual representation of death.

The BBC coverage of the Norway attacks exemplifies what Campbell (2004) calls the economy of “taste and decency” (or the economy of “good taste”), according to which Western media do not display death images of dead Westerners (see also Fishman & Marvin, 2003; Morse, 2013; Sontag, 2003; J. Taylor, 1998; Zelizer, 2010). This self-regulating practice offers a mitigated account of atrocities and horrific events, while abstaining from exposing the public to what Western audiences often perceive as gruesome images.²⁴ Yet, as the literature indicates, this practice applies mostly to Western victims whose visual death is usually hidden. Thus, by delivering news on a death event without showing death, the BBC coverage construed the Norwegians as “Westerners,” who were not different from the Western spectators and belonged together with them to an imagined “us”.

6.2.2.2 Obituarial news

The encounter with the dead in the BBC coverage takes place through the representation of the living actors on the scene, who are presented as *sovereign agents* (Chouliaraki,

²⁴ In so doing, the BBC complied with its own ethical and professional guidelines (see BBC, 2012). Yet, as the analysis of the Haiti Earthquake (Chapter Seven) shows, this practice is not firm.

2006b). The dead are absent throughout these reports. The anchors in the studio mention the number of confirmed dead during that day, but even two days after the attacks, the components of *obituarial news*, as I introduced them in the analytical framework in Chapter Four, are missing. The reports give no information about those who died – no names, no faces and no personal stories. In this regard, the materials that construe the pre-death agency and cultivate disposition of grief are missing.

6.2.2.3 Agency

The living actors on the scene are not missing, and they are present throughout the reports. These actors are portrayed as having *sovereign agency* which “construes each actor in the scene of suffering as a thoroughly humanised and historical being – somebody who feels, reflects and acts on his or her fate” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, pp. 158–9). The Norwegians are depicted as acting on their misfortune (B5: the police spokesperson updates us that the police are already operating on the island; Figures 6-8 and 6-9 show policemen in operation; in Figures 6-21 and 6-22, a survivor describes how his resourcefulness helped him to survive) and voice their pain and outcry (Figures 6-14, 6-18). This depiction manifests their agency in a way that construes their humanness. Moreover, it also projects the humanness of the dead, since the association of the survivors with the dead victims helps the viewers to imagine the life and individuality of the dead. I shall return to this point shortly.

The Norwegians are both the victims of the tragedy and the benefactors who rescue and save the victims (in this case a Norwegian is also the perpetrator, but that is a different issue). The Norwegians are also in a position to report their suffering (as bystanders or survivors) and to analyse it (as journalists or experts). Thus, as Norwegians rescue Norwegian victims, the sufferers and the benefactors coincide. We see this happen mostly in the reports from the day of the attacks (B4, B5). The Norwegians are the rescuers. They rush to the scene and provide an official account of the damage and casualties. Their presence at the scene and telephonic updates convey the message that order is on the way, and that the order that was ruptured as the bomb blast is about to be restored (see also Azoulay, 2008; Chapter 6).

Agency comes about not only in action at the scene, but also in the capability to communicate and speak. Report B6 offers detailed accounts from the survivors. Young people who survived the Utoya shooting recount the frightening moments they underwent during the attack (Figures 6-17, 6-21, 6-22). These accounts construe the

near-death experience of those who faced impending death, but luckily managed to save themselves. Their testimonies substitute for that which cannot be testified – the actual massacre experience (Figure 6-17: “The feeling was that soon I’m going to die”; B6: “He yelled ‘I’m going to kill you. This is your last day. I will kill you’”). Their stories offer the closest and most genuine account of facing imminent death and this account substitutes for the stories that cannot be told, of those who died. Moreover, the survivors’ faces, their names, their stories and their voices “animate” those who died. By looking at the survivors and hearing their testimonies, we can imagine what the dead looked like and what they experienced before they died, since it is only by chance that these survivors survived and their friends did not. The survivors face the camera and tell their story in their own words, in their own voices, in English. They are living *transient strangers* (Frosh, 2011) whose appearance in the context of the massacre facilitates the impossible mediated encounter with the nameless, faceless dead. Thus, in a way, the survivors represent and embody the dead, testifying on their behalf in the last moments of their lives, making it possible to imagine the dead victims.

Another way of making the dead present is via the families and friends who care about them and mourn their loss. We meet such a friend in report B6, where she expresses her concern with regard to her missing friend (Figure 6-18). This testimony, alongside images of weeping teenagers (Figure 6-19), conveys the pain of losing a dear friend or a family member.

Hence, the absent-presence of the dead and the empowering presence of the survivors motivate the construction of the dead as grievable humans, whose death matters and invites empathy and identification.

6.2.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality

Another way of positioning the death of the Norwegians as something that matters is the permission the reality in Norway receives to invade the reality of the spectators at home. This “invasion” exposes their vulnerability and sets the ground for the spectators to explore their own feelings of insecurity and loss in light of what they see on television. This potential sense of shared vulnerability is a product of the constitution of spatiotemporal commonality. It is obtained by the spectators’ ability to engage with the events as they happen, and the articulation of space, as realised by the employment of different technological means and visual and discursive tropes. These dimensions translate the faraway vulnerability into something that matters “here” and “now”.

6.2.3.1 Time

Throughout the coverage of the events, we see how the broadcast evolves from *fully live* coverage, to *edited reporting* (Bourdon, 2000). As we see in report B4, the pre-planned broadcasting schedule is suspended in favour of news on the explosion in Oslo. This excerpt begins with the anchor's statements regarding the urgency of the developing event and the decision to break it without further delay: "We just got these pictures in the past few minutes. We put them on air for you, but the details are still quite sketchy" (Figure 6-1). In so doing, the anchor takes charge and, basically, pronounces the transition to the disaster marathon mode. This move establishes the importance of the events evolving in Oslo and the necessity or the demand to focus attention on what is happening "now" in Oslo, even though it is still unclear what exactly is going on there. The switch to a disaster marathon mode creates shared time on the screen and on the ground. Thus, by logging into the media, spectators connect to the reality "there" as it unfolds.

The narration of the events further stresses the notion of "real time". For example, the news bulletin (B5) broadcast a couple of hours after the event erupted, maintains the language of the present continuous. Events that took place a short time prior to the news bulletin are described in the present simple tense (Figure 6-6: "a gunman *opens* fire..."), and the police statement is brought in the present progressive ("police *now* say..."). The anchor in the studio strives to provide updated information – "the death toll at the island of Utoya is *now* put at around eighty" (Figure 6-7); "Let's see if we can just *get the very latest* from a Norwegian police spokesman *now*" (Figure 6-8). The interview with the Norwegian police spokesperson happens in real time and maintains a direct communication channel between the studio and Norway (Figure 6-8: "I wonder if we can open communications *now*"), and the spokesperson is asked to "get us *up to date* on the police operation *now*" (see also Bourdon, 2000; Marriott, 1996). Thus, the spectators are kept informed on the latest developments and are as knowledgeable as the anchor in the studio or the police spokesperson on the ground. This shared time creates one communal space in which location does not matter, since it makes no difference if we are on the ground, in the TV studio or at home. The details are revealed everywhere simultaneously. This will be discussed further in the next section.

As we saw in the coverage of the Gaza War, the coverage of the Norway Attacks also uses narration strategies like *thickening the plot*, *non-closure* and *open-endedness*, which encourage the spectators to focus their attention on the happening and keep following

the reports (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2008). We can find an example of this strategy in report B5. Inasmuch as the interview with the police spokesperson provides answers, it creates uncertainty and confusion. His answers raise further questions as to what happened and why. The interview creates a sense that what we know is true only for this very moment and that there is still much that we do not know and further investigation is needed (Figure 6-10: “We are having an investigation and hopefully the investigation will show how this is possible”). This momentary certainty only enhances the fragility and instability of the event and makes a compelling invitation to stay attentive and follow the developments. The uncertainty is shared by the anchor and the spectators, and in fact by everybody, and thus the curiosity to learn what has happened and what the potential consequences are is further enhanced.

Excerpt B4 ends with the anchor’s statements, which manifest the open-endedness of the coverage and the invitation to stay tuned and follow the news relay: “We’ll keep you right up-to-date with events in Oslo. We’re working to get someone on the telephone who can tell us a little bit more about what happened there, and I’ll continue to update you on that blast” (Figure 6-5).²⁵ From that moment on, the events unfold on the screen in “real time” as they unfold in Norway. The time on the screen and the time beyond the screen are the same, until they gradually move to “the redressive ceremonial closure” (Liebes, 1998, p. 74), as we see this in report B6.

The report of the memorial service in Oslo’s Central Cathedral (B6) construes the closure of the story. This is already an edited report, and the language used in this report is that of the near past tense, describing what has already happened (Figure 6-12: “This *was* Norway’s day of mourning ...”). This makes a gradual move back to routine, to the common, “ordinary” language of news reporting. The liminal phase that started as the event erupted (Figure 6-1) ends and routine is reinstated. Indeed, there are some loose ends (some people are still missing; Figures 6-18, 6-20) and, as the reporter comments, Norway will have to recover from its worst trauma in more than sixty years (Figure 6-13: “the full scale of the evil had yet to emerge”), but as a news story, this report brings the Norway Attacks to its closure.

6.2.3.2 Space

Switching to the disaster marathon mode (in the initial report on the blast, B4) makes the “here” and “there” coincide. The properties of the live coverage blur the notion of

²⁵ For a later excerpt of this broadcast, see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14254634>.

space, since the events develop simultaneously in multiple spaces, in multiple realities. What happens “there, in Oslo” also happens “here, on our TV screens”. The report that begins the marathon of reporting from Oslo embeds footage from a Norwegian television news relay into the BBC broadcast (Figure 6-4). As a result, space converges – BBC spectators around the world see the same perspective as the spectators in Norway, who in turn receive the perspective of the people on the ground. And so it does not matter if we are “here” or “there”, as long as we are watching.

As this report breaks immediately after the explosion, there is no official news team on the ground, and so the first, “sketchy” information is imprecise. The anchor in the studio integrates information from various sources – the Norwegian news relay (Figure 6-4), images from social networks such as *Twitter* (Figure 6-3) and information from news agencies such as *Reuters* and the *Associated Press* (“Norway’s agency, NTB, just told Reuters...”; “Associated Press are saying...”). Although the images at this stage are only still images (whereas television is a medium of moving images), these images give an initial idea of the explosion and how it looks from Oslo’s streets, facilitating the spectators’ imagined presence at the scene. The verbal voiceover of the anchor in the studio contextualises what we see and even tries to redress the television’s inability to transmit smell, by describing the smell of sulphur in the air (Figure 6-3). This description enhances the feeling of “being there”, as it gives an idea not only of how the scene looks like, but also of how it smells. In addition, one of the images is an aerial photograph of central Oslo (Figure 6-2). This imagery gives a general orientation to where the explosion took place. And yet, although the event takes place at a very specific location, confined to a red circle on an aerial photograph, it is also registered “everywhere”, on every television screen.

The news bulletin (B5) uses moving images from the scenes of the happenings. The use of visual materials confirms that the journalists are at the location and gives a sense of eye witnessing (Zelizer, 2005), however these images do not really take us closer to the scenes of the attacks and do not assist us in grasping what happened in Oslo or Utoya. While the anchor talks to the police spokesperson, we see a sequence of recycled footage taken at different points in time, from different points of view. We see nocturnal images of the quiet streets of Oslo, a highway checkpoint filmed earlier that evening and aerial images of Utoya Island shot from a helicopter (Figures 6-6, 6-8, 6-9, 6-10). This

footage construes a space of omnipresence (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 169), as it brings sights from multiple sites.

Similarly, the report from the memorial service also construes a space of omnipresence. The camera takes us from the flowers and candles outside the cathedral (Figure 6-12) into the memorial service inside the cathedral (Figure 6-13). It then acquaints us with the survivors and their friends outside in Oslo's main square (Figures 6-17, 6-18, 6-19). Later the report cuts to the hospital, where we meet another survivor and hear his testimony (Figures 6-21, 6-22), before returning to the city square (Figure 6-23). These jumps in space (and in time) position us at the centre of the happenings on that day. By logging on to the television, we participate in the ceremonies in Oslo and so can experience what it feels like to be there. This makes it easier for us to imagine ourselves in this setting.

6.2.4 Eliciting a witnessable account

To what extent do the spectators of the BBC coverage become witnesses of the Norway attacks, if they only get a remote and removed perspective on the scene? To what extent can the reports morally burden the spectators? Although the spectators do not become witnesses in the sense of seeing the scene of death, they can turn into witnesses of the attacks in the sense that they are provided with the possibility of becoming involved and emotionally invested in it. The account provided by the BBC connects them to the scene and encourages them to feel obliged and committed. This engagement is obtained mostly due to the live and on-going coverage of the events:

“Live footage is the genre of the witness, par excellence. Witnessing relies on the instantaneous presence of the camera at the scene of the action – a presence that is instrumental in live news's claim to factuality, to showing things as they really are. The camera claims to be there when the event actually happens and brings back home the rawness and contingency of the event as it unfolds” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 159).

The BBC coverage is compelling since it tells a catastrophic story as it unfolds in live transmission. The spectators become witnesses since they learn about the happening as it happens and they are “forced” to account for and engage with the reality of Norway. The uncertainty and thrill of the story have the potential to “glue” the spectators to the screen. They learn of the latest developments together with the TV anchors, and they are as knowledgeable as the people in Norway, if not more so. In that sense, the media witnesses (the spectators) and the eye witnesses on the ground converge – they share the same information and have the same knowledge of the events.

Thus, the live coverage establishes the initial connection with the events. In addition, there are some other multimodal means that set the level of engagement with the events registered on the screen. The multimodal means employed by the BBC to cover the Norway attacks construe different forms of realism at different points throughout the coverage – *perceptual realism* at the early stages and *psychological realism* later.

6.2.4.1 Perceptual realism

The two reports from the day of the attacks (B4, B5) construe mainly *perceptual realism* (Chouliaraki, 2006b), as they stick to factual description of the unfolding events. These two reports focus on delivering accurate information to the spectators. Their main function is to give the spectators a general orientation on what is going on in Norway. The anchors in the studio are concerned with clarifying and establishing the facts – what exactly happened, where, when and how (for example, Figure 6-2: “what we can tell you for sure...”; Figure 6-5: “We’re working to get someone on the telephone who can tell us a little bit more about what happened there”). The nature of the reports, the story they unveil, are in themselves alarming – the number of casualties (around eighty), their collective affiliation (Norwegians) and their age (young) – all these enhance the unfolding tragedy. That is enough to convey the shock and horror, and indeed we find the anchor in report B5 repeatedly reminding us of this information (Figure 6-7: “Now, to repeat that, the death toll at the island of Utoya is now put at around eighty”; Figure 6-11: “And just to bring that to you, eighty people now confirmed to have been killed on the island of Utoya”).

When examining the verbal-visual correspondence in these two reports, we see that the verbal account is more valuable, since the images that accompany the reports add only a little information to what is verbally stated. In report B4, the verbal report of the anchor in the studio is accompanied by a combination of still images retrieved from Twitter and from a televisual relay from Norwegian television. The images on the screen confirm the verbal report – they give an idea of what the reality that was verbally described looks like – but they do not do much more than that. Report B5 is a phone interview with a Norwegian police spokesperson. Again, the valuable information comes from the verbal conversation, as the visual illustration is recycled footage that in fact gives very little relevant information, if any. These are serene images of pastoral landscape that create a feeling of orientation and control, but obviously they are less detailed. In this regard, these images come out of a clear context, and although it makes sense, they give us a limited understanding of the massacre described and discussed by the anchor and the

police spokesperson. The coupling of this recorded and recycled footage with the live interview makes an asynchronous audio-visual relay. The more horrific and devastating the verbal information (Figure 6-7: “killings were of catastrophic dimensions”; Figure 6-9: “This is a shocking development”), the less disturbing are the images. The calm and serene images of the island are in complete opposition to the upsetting report of the spokesperson. The anchor brings the police statement on the scale of death, and the spokesperson confirms that it is “a very difficult situation”, but the spectators lack any visual evidence to support this. In fact, the truthfulness of the report is confirmed by the position of the speaker – the official spokesperson – who is the functionary authorised to deliver and confirm the information.

The horror, then, is not witnessable, and the spectators need to use their imagination to visualise the scene. However, they can do so by drawing on the verbal testimonies of the survivors, like Lars Martin Haugland (Figure 6-17) and Adrian Pracon (Figure 6-21).²⁶ The survivors describe their experience of the massacre – the constant shooting (Figure 6-17: “He never stopped shooting”), the people running for their lives, people falling over one another and the water turning red (Figure 6-21: “I saw people... being shot in the head, being shot in the back. People falling over me, dead. The water turns red around me”). These telling accounts reveal the terror and horror of the victims while being limited to words only. Although television is a visual medium, the encounter with the deadly reality of the Norway Attacks sticks, nonetheless, to verbal descriptions.

6.2.4.2 Psychological realism

The report of the memorial service (B6) is from two days after the events, after the uncertainty was cleared and the full scale of the story was revealed and confirmed. The report brings the highlights of the main memorial service (Figures 6-13, 6-14, 6-15), together with some personal testimonies of survivors (Figures 6-17, 6-21, 6-22). The beginning of the report contains some elements which construe the events as a tragedy – an unjustified attack, of historic dimensions, on vulnerable victims (Figure 6-23: “teenagers at a summer camp”). The reporter accentuates that “this was the worst violence to strike their country [Norway – T.M.] since the Second World War” (Figure 6-14), which affected almost every household in the country since Norway is “... a small country, [and] almost everyone knows people who have lost friends or family” (Figure 6-16). The Prime Minister’s statement further emphasises the personal and national loss,

²⁶ For another telephonic testimony from Adrian Pracon see this report: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14259356>.

counting each death: “Each and every one of those who died is a tragedy. Combined, the losses have become a national tragedy” (Figure 6-15).

The second half of the report brings the testimonies of two survivors, and in so doing, construes *psychological realism*. This form of realism aims to give the spectators a look at the survivors’ personal experience: “His experience, his feelings and his thoughts shape our contact with the event. His reality becomes our reality and his emotions touch on and provoke our own sensibilities” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, pp. 162–3). These verbal accounts convey the fear and terror felt by the survivors, enabling the spectators to share the experience of near-death (Figure 6-17: “The feeling was that I’m soon going to die, and the fear that I heard so many shots of this gun”). The survivors describe the endless shooting and the feelings of impending death. They recount how people were shot dead and how the water turned red, and the sense that their end is near (see more examples above).

Inasmuch as these personal accounts provide the spectators with the survivors’ point of view, they restrict the encounter with the horror to aural testimonies. The spectators *see* the survivors as they recount the happenings, but they do not see what actually happened. The testimonies are detailed and telling, but they only inform and feed the spectators’ imagination as to how the scene looked. In this regard, testimonies from near-death experience function similarly to *about-to-die* images (Zelizer, 2010), making it easier for the spectators to engage with problematic representations of death by engaging with substitutive representations: in the case of about-to-die images these are visual substitutes; in the case of *near-death* testimonies these are aural substitutes. However, in both cases these are tropes that engage the spectators with death, without actually showing it. The spectators cannot witness what happened, but yet they are informed. The verbal testimonies of the survivors establish grievability on the basis of the encounter with the survivors, rather than with the dead.

Thus, even though the verbal and the visual accounts give different perspectives on the events, together they complete the *two faces of witnessing* (Peters, 2001): “The spectator is both called to consume images of raw reality, recorded by technology, and invited to engage with the deep feelings and thoughts of the person who witnesses” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 164). The double-layered proposition allows the spectators to imagine themselves as if this has happened to them, and through this engagement they associate themselves with the people in Norway.

6.2.5 Ethical solicitation

What is the ethical solicitation that emerges from the BBC coverage of the Norway attacks? What is the moral demand that this coverage makes? What are the ties this mediatization establishes between the Western spectators and the Norwegians?

As the analysis shows, the early reports of the evolving story fit the genre of *disaster marathon* (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002; Liebes, 1998). These surprising attacks “hijacked” the BBC telecast and “held it captive” for a while. During the long hours after the first news broke, all attention was focused solely on this story. This switch into liminality establishes the humanness of the dead, since it claims that their violent mass death is not an ordinary matter.

The viewers of BBC World News had no escape from this story, and, in a way, they were forced to watch it. The coercive nature of this television genre articulates an assertive demand for the spectators to pay attention to the suffering of the distant others. This attentive mode is in itself a moral position, since it caringly connects the spectator to the reality of the sufferer (Frosh, 2011). This resonates with the coercive nature of solidarity that compels response without any preliminary consent.

But it is not only the live transmission of the events that calls upon an attentive mode. It is also the uncertainty and the historic nature of the reports that compel the spectators to follow the news. Report B4 tries to clarify what exactly is going on, “but the details are still quite sketchy”. Early information from the scene is contradictory, and the anchor promises that she will “continue to update on that blast”. Report B5 still strives to clarify the details, but it gives a sense that the situation in Norway is unbelievable – the confirmation of the high figure of casualties is “a shocking development” and the anchor wonders “how is it possible that one gunman killed so many people?”. One thing is clear, though, and that is the historic significance of the attack in a usually peaceful country like Norway, as the reporter reminds us in the third report (B6; “this was the worst violence to strike their country since the Second World War”). Thus, the surprise and uncertainty, together with the extraordinary scope of the killing, demand the spectators’ attention.

Another important feature of the coverage that facilitates the engagements with the events and with the Norwegians is their geographic location and the broader implications of that location. The fact that these attacks took place on European soil connects the Western spectators to the happenings and makes it easier for them to

engage with the people at the scene. The occurrence of the attack in peaceful Norway creates a sense of interchangeability – “if this has happened there, it could have happened anywhere; if this has happened to them, this could also happen to us”. That is the power of terror attacks that create the feeling that nobody is immune, and everybody is vulnerable. When the Western spectators watch the BBC coverage of the attacks they see a reflection of themselves. They meet white, blond, English-speaking people with Western names. The people at the two ends of the communication channel are similar and this similarity facilitates an imagination of belonging to the same community (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 160). This representation of the “distant others” makes them, in fact, very near. Such representations:

“... valorise nearness as a condition for encountering and knowing the other, and so tend to figure ethical relations as binding upon those whose face we can see, whose name we can know and pronounce, those we can already recognize, whose form and face is familiar” (Butler, 2011) .

This nearness, I would argue, captures Silverstone’s (2006) *proper distance*, as it allows the spectators to meet the other, understand his or her condition, identify with him or her and define their interrelationship. It juxtaposes the chaotic scenes of death with a prevailing sense of security in a way that encourages the spectators to question their own sense of security and establish their connections with others whom they do not personally know, and to share their vulnerability.

The BBC coverage of the Norway Attacks constitutes relations of nearness and similarity between the spectators and the Norwegians. But what exactly is the ethical demand that emerges from this mediated encounter? After all, at a very early stage we learn that the perpetrator is already in police custody. The update given by the police spokesperson (B5), together with the scenic views of Utoya Island makes the encounter with the suffering into a sublime spectacle (Boltanski, 1999), that despite the horror, leaves no active option for the spectators but to “sit back and contemplate the horrific in a manner that they could never have done had they been at the scene of action themselves” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 173). In other words, order has been restored, but the tragedy is still on and thus the main act of participation left for the spectators is to grieve for the dead, as the report from the memorial service invites them to do. This report manifests the loss suffered by the Norwegians, sharing it with us, the spectators. The invitation to participate in the mourning ritual, which culminates in the report on the memorial service (B6), enables the spectators to establish a sense of connectedness with the

sufferers and feel like fellow members of the community who share the loss. This invitation is what I shall later define as *empathising grief*, which stresses similarity and sameness as a basis for solidarity.

The next section analyses the AJE coverage of the Norway attacks. There is a great deal of similarity between AJE and BBC reports, thus I point to the similarities but focus mainly on the elements that are different from the BBC report.

6.3 AJE coverage of the Norway attacks

6.3.1 The sampled reports

AJE reports to be analysed here are as follows:

6.3.1.1 A4: “Breaking News – Bomb blast in Oslo”

Report A4 is a news bulletin that announced the blast in Oslo as the story broke (A4).²⁷

Much like the BBC report on the emerging event, the anchor in the studio interviews a journalist who happened to be close by when the explosion happened, in an attempt to collect information. The following figures summarise the main information. The full report is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WIGaweRISA>.



Figure 6-24: We take you back to the events taking place in Norway. A bomb in the capital Oslo. At least it would appear to be a bomb. Some serious damage being done. We can talk to Christina Orven who is an eyewitness to the events there. Christina, what can you tell us?



Figure 6-25: Christina Orven: I am now at the site, about 150 meters from the government quarter and well, I wasn't there, as an eyewitness, but I am a journalist, so I just came here a few minutes after it happened. And, people are quite upset. A lot of people are walking around here and are quite scared I think.



Figure 6-26: Anchor: Can you please describe what do you see around you? What is the extent of the damage? And what is the response of the security forces?
Christina Orven: From what we can see there are some windows in the governments quarter that are blown out, and the pressure has also blown out a lot of windows nearby also in the parade street, and there are now security or police securing in the area so we can't really see much of the site itself.

²⁷ A4: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WIGaweRISA>

6.3.1.2 A5: “Norway witnesses recount Utoya attack”

Report A5 brings the testimonies of two survivors of the Utoya Attack, as they appeared on Norwegian television. This report is from a later point in time, after the survivors were rescued and brought to safety. These testimonies are available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Kys0BU4DDc> .



Figure 6-27: Witnesses who are on the island of Utoya have been speaking to Norwegian television about what they saw.



Figure 6-28: [speaks Norwegian] “we just started talking about what happened in Oslo and went to the refectory and everyone was running in panic.... They thought a balloon had burst. But then people started to realise that others had been shot. They jumped out of the windows and we all ran in different directions. We were all petrified. Most people ran down the water and hid behind the cliffs. He looked like a policeman and tried to show that he was going to help us, and tried to lure us over. Then he had a gun and started shooting at us. Some people threw themselves into the waters. Others hid behind stones. I saw people get shot”.



Figure 6-29: Another witness described his account of what he saw at Utoya Island.



Figure 6-30: [speaks Norwegian] “Two others and myself from the youth group had gone across. We didn’t realise until we heard shots and then we ran uphill across the main road and we hid behind rocks and trees and we saw lots of people running towards the water. We tried to call someone, it was absolutely terrible. We saw somebody heading towards land, and we ran down and started shouting. I was a little bit scared when we were pushed into the car. I felt quite sure, but was very scared inside. I had to stay in control because I was one of the people who haven’t been hurt.... otherwise, I wouldn’t have been standing here today”.

6.3.1.3 A6: “Interview with Norway shooting witness”

Report A6 is similar to report A5 and it brings a testimony of one of the survivors from Utoya Island. Unlike report A5, which was a televised interview taken from Norwegian television, report A6 is a telephone interview with some recycled visual illustrations from earlier points in time. The full interview is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X15M9sAReM> .



Figure 6-31: A little earlier I spoke to Ali Esbati who was attending the youth camp on Utoya Island, now safely back in Oslo. He described what happened:



Figure 6-32: Like many other people I thought in the beginning it might be some kind of joke going on and people were over-sensitive because of the bombs that had been reported earlier in Oslo. But when we finally ran out of the building, we were heading down the slope to go down towards the water.



Figure 6-33: I turned back and I saw two bodies lying there, umm, just on a field, next to the building, where we slept, and that's when I realised that it was actually some real bullets being shot at people.



Figure 6-34: I thought it would be around 15 or 20. I did see, I think I saw three dead people and one that was badly injured, but I think that there were around six hundred people there on the island.



Figure 6-35: But of course, some people jumped into the water and tried to swim a little bit out just to not be very close to land. Some actually managed to swim all the way to the land, on the other side.



Figure 6-36: And, as far as I understand, in that process they have found a lot, a lot of dead bodies. And they then raise the count from ten to eighty dead people.



Figure 6-37: Ali, as a Norwegian yourself, just give us an impression now of... you've had time to digest what happened ... what are you actually feeling now about the whole incident?



Figure 6-38: Obviously, this is a country in shock. The numbers would be shocking in any country, but in a small country with four million people, of course this is an even larger shock.



Figure 6-39: What it seems like, the man who did it was some kind of Islamophobic internet activist and who has gone one step further, and this of course might be reflected in the coming debates...

6.3.1.4 A7: "Norway mourns victims at memorial service"

Report A7 is a report from the memorial service two days after the attack. Similarly to the BBC report B6, this report brings the story of a nation in mourning. The full report is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DH-pNKzRyCI> .



Figure 6-40: As morning broke an



Figure 6-41: For many, the pain was



Figure 6-42: "Everybody, it's been

entire country struggled to express its grief. But still trying to come to terms with Friday's violence, Norwegians didn't quite know how.

too much for words, but others shared their thoughts.

hurting. It hurts. All over Norway and all over the world".



Figure 6-43: "Since we have quite a big group of immigrants in this country, I think that that will possibly unite us all more, the fact that they are not to blame in any way".



Figure 6-44: The nation has stopped asking questions for a moment to grieve together. Norway is a small country, and the death toll here is proportionally bigger than that suffered by the Americans in 9/11.



Figure 6-45: It was a service of calm dignity. The Prime Minister fought with his feeling as he remembered those who died.



Figure 6-46: "Every single one of those we have lost is a tragedy in itself. Together, it is a national tragedy".



Figure 6-47: Inside the cathedral, the words were of comfort. Norway is strong. The people are together.



Figure 6-48: The nation will go on. But it's hard to see how Norway can ever be the same again.

6.3.2 The construction of the dead as human

6.3.2.1 Registering death

Similarly to the BBC reports, here too the "humanness" of the dead is established mostly by technical and ritualistic means and less by discursive and visual tropes. Switching to the disaster marathon mode; highlighting the story on the news agenda; bringing testimonies of the survivors; and sharing the memorial service – all this manifests the surprise and shock of the first moments when the story broke and the justification for breaking off the pre-planned media schedule. Allowing such a story to "take over" the news agenda signals its importance and the value of the lives being threatened. This performance is what establishes the humanness of the dead.

Other tropes which convey the deadliness of the events are mostly implicit, as there is hardly any visual evidence of the high number of dead. Most of the time, the AJE coverage does not confront the spectators with any indexical representation of death. The reports show damaged buildings (Figure 6-26) and people mourning (Figure 6-41), and bring survivor' testimonies (A5), but they hardly show dead bodies, blood or coffins, which are more concrete representations of death. The most explicit representation of death is found in report A6 as an illustration for the telephone interview conducted with

one of the survivors (Figure 6-39). The footage shows recycled images from the day before, including images of plastic bags covering and holding dead bodies. These images are shown for a very short time, and they are not as explicit as the death images encountered in AJE coverage of the Gaza War.²⁸ As such, death is represented in a subtle way. Report A7 summarises the memorial service and presents signifiers of death such as flowers (Figure 6-40), candles (Figure 6-48) and tears (Figures 6-47). In addition, it presents mourners gathered in the main square, wearing black clothes (Figures 6-41), embracing one another, and queuing to lay flowers in the improvised memorial zone. Their tears and black clothes are signifiers of mourning which manifest the loss they suffer. Other references to death are the verbal testimonies of the survivors, describing what they underwent during the moments of horror as the perpetrator was shooting indiscriminately (A5: “Then he had a gun and started shooting at us”, A6: “and that’s when I realised that it was actually some real bullets being shot at people”). Thus, excluding a few rapid shots, death is mostly invisible, but present through metonymies and verbal testimonies.

6.3.2.2 Obituarial news

Like in the BBC coverage, the dead are reflected through the representation of the survivors. The main indication of the identity of the dead derives from the identity of the survivors. We see the people who survived and we know that the dead were their peers. And so, even if we do not know the precise details of the dead, we can “cast” them as young Norwegians attending a summer camp organised by the ruling Labour Party. The appearance of the identifiable survivors, facing the camera, telling their stories (A5) substitutes for the unrepresented dead. This trope does not provide specific information about the individuals who died, but it provides sufficient material to allow us to imagine them as people similar to the survivors, but who did not survive.

Note, however, that two of the survivors in the AJE sampled excerpts have *oriental* characteristics: one of the survivors in report A5 has an oriental appearance (Figure 6-28), and the interviewee in report A6 has an oriental name (Ali Esbati). These two witnesses show the diversity of the Norwegian people (something that the person in Figure 6-43 also mentions: “we have quite a big group of immigrants in this country”), and in a way, also enable non-Western spectators to see the survivors as “someone like us”.

²⁸ For another example see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivL6HcbhQh8&feature=relmfu>.

6.3.2.3 Agency

Like in the BBC reports, the depiction of the survivors and of the rescue teams establishes the *sovereign agency* of the sufferers. The presence of rescue teams on the island (Figures 6-36, 6-38) manifests the capacity of the Norwegians to regain control of the chaotic scene and restore order. The testimonies of the survivors position them as agent actors capable of acting upon their own suffering. This portrayal construes the Norwegians as humans (A5: “I had to stay in control because I was one of the people who haven’t been hurt.... otherwise, I wouldn’t have been standing here today”, A6: “people tried to get to the shore, tried to perhaps be picked up by some boats or just get away from the shooting”).

However, in the case of AJE’s coverage, the sovereign agency is construed also in the sense that the sufferers are in a position both to mourn death and to analyse it. Ordinary people (passers-by: Figures 6-42, 6-43), survivors (A6) and journalists (A4) are asked to describe what they see, but also to express their views and offer their commentary on the events and their consequences (A5: “Can you tell us what the feeling is there? Is that unexpected to you? Is there a sense that Oslo was ever under threat? What are the conditions that you live in security wise, on a daily basis?; figure 6-37: “Ali, as a Norwegian yourself, just give us an impression now of... you’ve had time to digest what happened ... what are you actually feeling now about the whole incident?”). This aspect of sovereign agency is associated with *psychological realism* (Chouliaraki, 2006b), and I shall return to this later.

6.3.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality

Constituting spatiotemporal commonality refers to the articulation of time and space. AJE’s proposition in this regard is very similar to that of the BBC, so I recap briefly.

As the news from Oslo broke, AJE switched to the disaster marathon mode (A4), providing their audience with a live telecast from the streets of Oslo and the shore of Utoya Island. The anchor in the studio takes us “back to the events taking place in Norway” (Figure 6-24), doing a live telephone interview with a local journalist. On the screen there was a series of “latest pictures” from Oslo, making the “now” of Oslo also accessible for the spectators (Figure 6-26). The conclusion of that interview is an invitation to follow the developing story, since it is “an on-going story, and clearly, much

more to come on that". From the moment the story broke, it was the leading story on the agenda, and the channel kept exploring it and its consequences.²⁹

As other sampled reports indicate, and as time passed, the reports from Oslo were not transmitted live, and were based on recorded material from the day of the attack. The witnesses recounted what had happened the day before, reviving and reliving the events, but not in real time. The disaster marathon gradually faded out and was woven into the regularity of the news feed. The report on the memorial service closed the story as a news item, signalling the return to routine, despite the painful events (Figure 6-48: "The nation will go on. But it's hard to see how Norway can ever be the same again").

The articulation of space in AJE coverage was also very similar to that of the BBC. A map was used to give a general orientation of the location of the events, i.e. Oslo, Norway (Figure 6-25), and street-level images showed the reality on the ground (Figure 6-26). As the events evolved, there was some birds-eye view footage of Utoya (Figure 6-33). Images from both locations were reiterated the next day during the telephone interview with one of the survivors. These images offered a visual redress to the verbal testimony, facilitating the imagined presence of the spectators at the scene.

6.3.4 Producing a witnessable account

To what extent did AJE articulate the burden of witnessing for its spectators of the Norway attacks? AJE's proposition encourages the spectators to become involved by emotionally investing them in what has happened in Norway, even if their point of *view* as *witnesses* is limited. This is realised thanks to the live telecast of the events in real time and from the locations where they happened, and thanks to the survivors' testimonies, which construe *psychological realism* by sharing their thoughts and feelings (Chouliaraki, 2006b). In addition, AJE coverage of the Norway attacks construes what we can call *analytical realism* (or commentarial realism), which strives to analyse and explain the events.

6.3.4.1 Analytical realism and psychological realism

The first report on the attack in Oslo (A4) first construes *perceptual realism*, as the anchor in the studio interviews a local journalist to clarify the facts, while the visual relay confirms the verbal report (Figure 6-26: "From what we can see there are some windows

²⁹ See for example the following news bulletin: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywAjqbluLl0> ; and the live conversation with a reporter on location the next day: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAdmvbOjYu4> .

in the government quarter that are blown out, and the pressure has also blown out”). Since the journalist admits that she was not an eyewitness (Figure 6-25: “I wasn’t there, as an eyewitness”; Figure 6-26: “we can’t really see much of the site itself”) and that, since the scene is closed, she cannot provide any valuable contributions, the interview turns to the feelings of the people at the scene and the possible reasons for the attack. The journalist is asked to express the feelings of the people “there” (“Can you tell us what the feeling is there?”) and to comment on the possibilities of terror attacks happening in Norway (“Have you seen perhaps any indication that perhaps Norway would become a target?”). Thus, within only a few seconds the journalist turns from an eyewitness into a commentator, offering her analysis of the emerging event.

A similar move happens during the interview with Ali Esbati (A6), a survivor of the Utoya attack. The interview begins with Esbati’s personal account, as he tells what happened to him during the attack (for example, Figure 6-32). Then, the interview takes a different course (Figure 6-37: “: Ali, as a Norwegian yourself, just give us an impression now of... what are you actually feeling now about the whole incident?”), and Esbati is asked to offer his commentary and, moreover, his impression and feelings as to what is going to happen in the near future in light of the attacks (“and this of course might be reflected in the coming debates...”).

Excerpt A5 construes *psychological realism*, which make an emotional appeal by bringing the personal testimonies of two other survivors. These testimonies of the two teenagers, covered with blankets, are given in Norwegian and are dubbed in English. They tell the experience of these two young men in their own voices, in their own language. The spectators get a succinct taste of what happened on the island, and how it felt to be there (Figure 6-28: “We were all petrified. Most people ran down to the water and hid behind the cliffs”; Figure 6-30: “We tried to call someone, it was absolutely terrible”). The survivors tell their story and share what they felt as the event unfolded (Figure 6-30: “I was a little bit scared... I felt quite sure...”), and in a way, offer the most authentic account, which substitutes for the untold story of those who did not survive.

6.3.5 Ethical solicitation

The ethical solicitation that emerges from AJE’s coverage of the Norway attacks is to grieve the death of innocent Norwegians and acknowledge their tragedy as a universal one. Similarly to the performance of the BBC, AJE too switched to the *disaster marathon* mode as the news broke, and, in so doing, signalled the importance of the event. The

statement embedded in this move is that twin attacks in Western capitals are breaking news events that are permitted to take over the global news agenda. The message conveyed is that a threat to European lives is alarming. The Western spectator was invited, or expected, to “participate” in the event by watching the news.

The identification with the suffering was possible on the basis of the mediated face-to-face encounter with the bereaved families and friends. The survivors, representing themselves but also standing in for their dead peers, added the “human aspect” to the coverage. The survivors had faces, voices and fears that the spectators could all share and contain. They were presented as very human, in the sense that they were vulnerable and fragile when threatened, longing for security and comfort. And, in that moment of crisis, they needed support and condolences. And yet, from a Western perspective, they are also a bit different. The survivors whom AJE presented to their audiences did not have an occidental look or names, and by positioning such a portrayal of Norwegians up front, AJE manifested the diverse and omnifarious new faces and voices and the changing identity of Europe.

Thus, AJE coverage invited identification. It invited an engagement with the scene of death on a personal level. But it also invited reflection on the deeper meaning of the events. In two cases (A4, A6), the anchors in the studio try to elicit a political analysis of the attacks and their consequences from their interviewees. In their answers the interviewees allude to religious tensions in Norway (A5 “There have been [warnings] due to the Muhammad [cartoon]...”; A6: “when we have a situation in Norway... where there was a fear and anxiety about Muslims and about Islamic extremism...”). Yet despite AJE’s attempt to raise questions, the reporter in report A7 expresses a subtle critique that the Norwegians did not rise to the occasion of this erupted liminal phase, and did not reflexively engage with fundamental questions of their collective identity. Instead of confronting thorny issues, the Norwegians chose not to cope with the liminal challenge, and preferred to seek comfort and reconciliation. “The nation has stopped asking questions for a moment”, as the reporter mentions (Figure 6-44), and one of the bystanders is relieved that Muslim immigrants are not to blame (Figure 6-43). The reporter concludes that, inasmuch as this is a time for comfort and coming together, there will be some demanding future challenges for Norway (Figure 6-48: “The nation will go on. But it’s hard to see how Norway can ever be the same again”). In other words, AJE’s proposal leaves an open invitation to reflect on what happened and the reasons for

that happening. This invitation urges to overcome the current crisis and to be united, but also to translate grief into a political analysis.

6.4 Conclusions

The analysis of the coverage of the Norway attacks by both the BBC and AJE was based on the concepts of *disaster marathon* (Liebes, 1998) and *ecstatic news* (Chouliaraki, 2006b). These concepts overlap, but they are not identical, and they are both useful for explaining how televisual media rituals, following major terror attacks, maintain an intrinsic tension between the disruption of the events and the reconciliatory function of the ritual performed in and by the media.

Much like in the original account of a disaster marathon (Liebes, 1998), the Norway Attacks were covered live, in an open-ended mode of coverage by a reporter on location and as the events broke. The switch to the disaster marathon calls for the immediate attention of the spectators to the happenings in Norway. The meaning of this switch is a break from the ordinary to the extraordinary. What was extraordinary about the Norway Attacks? It was a mass death event in a European capital, and as such it was “qualified” to suspend the “everyday” (media) routine. This switch also signalled the humanness of the dead, whose unexpected violent death is alarming and deserves immediate attention. The coercive nature of the attacks forced the spectators to be attentive to the suffering in Norway and to position themselves vis-à-vis this reality.

A disaster marathon opens a liminal phase that redefines the boundaries of “here” and “there”. By letting what happens “there” register “here,” in real time, the division between these two zones blurs and so does the distinction between “chaos” and “order”, between “us” and “them”. The live, unedited, monopolistic broadcast from Norway coerced viewing and exposed the spectator to the happening. Momentarily, the vulnerability of the Norwegians invaded the safety zone of the spectators, creating some kind of *communitas* (Turner, 1969) informed by a sense of uncertainty and insecurity.

However, putting the disaster marathon into play is not only a statement that viewing is mandatory; it is also an arrangement that brings people together in a “shared space of mourning” (Liebes, 1998, p. 76). The media is the technology that people gather around and the space that they symbolically occupy as they seek comfort and consolation. By participating in the collective act of viewing, the spectators are invited to reflect on their commitment and responsibility to the other. The media ritual of the disaster marathon

offers a sense of belonging to a community whose coming together creates a solid ground and security in the light of instability and fear. This is the dualism of the disaster marathon – as the media introduce terror and chaos, they simultaneously serve as a *shaman*, holding the community together and offering a sense of stability, protection and support (Chouliaraki, 2006b; Dayan & Katz, 1992).

And yet, the experience of “being there” was only temporary and not fully realised. The accounts provided by both channels were sterile and did not render the terror in its entirety. Both channels broke with their pre-planned schedules to report on mass death events taking place at these very moments, but actual images of death were absent. Death was invisible throughout the broadcast, and indexical representations of death were replaced by signifiers and representations of grief and mourning. The invisibility of death did not mean that the spectators could not engage with the experience of death. Instead of imagery of death, the reports delivered verbal testimonies. The telling testimonies of the survivors offered the spectators the experience of near death, exposing them to the thoughts and feelings of people facing impending death that fortunately did not happen. And so, the spectators were encouraged to serve as witnesses to the attacks, but they did not see the dead. Moreover, such representations of deadly attacks and their aftermath maintained the economy of taste and decency associated with the depiction of Western dead, and so further established the “Westernness” of the dead (see also D. Campbell, 2004; Hanusch, 2010; J. Taylor, 1998). The combination of disaster marathon and sterile representation of death construe the dead as Westerners whose death is treated with both urgency and respect.

The testimonies of the survivors were delivered by the survivors themselves, in their own words, sometimes in their own language, in their own voices. This capacity to communicate their experiences construed the Norwegians as agents. The spectators were able to see the survivors and mourners at their own eye level, and thus they could share their fear and panic or pain and loss. The survivors and the mourners were presented to the Western spectators as “people like us”, which enhances the notion of “this could happen to me”. Such representation invites empathy and identification, as the it is realised that the tragedy of the people at the scene of death is a potential tragedy of the spectators.

This leads the discussion to an analysis of the events as *ecstatic news* (Chouliaraki, 2006b). Ecstatic news, Chouliaraki argues, cultivates the formation of community within

the microsphere of the West. The presentation of ecstatic news is rare, while mass death events – including terror attacks – are frequent and even ordinary. The scarcity of ecstatic news signifies the sacredness of life under threat, and so positions this life at the top of the hierarchy. This is in contrast to the myriad lives constantly exposed to threats and risks, while these discomfiting conditions are portrayed as ordinary and routine. This creates a rather clear distinction as to whose death matters to “us” and delineates the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion: “Ecstatic news... reserves the spectators’ capacity to connect for those who are like ‘us’ while blocking this same capacity for the largest majority of world sufferings – those experienced by distant ‘others’” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 181).

Ecstatic news, even when this refers to news of global importance and even when it is delivered by transnational news organisations, fails to fulfil the cosmopolitan promise. Instead, Chouliaraki argues, it cultivates a communitarian outlook, as it portrays suffering of “people like us” rather than “universal suffering”, and so limit empathy to Western microspheres:

“... ecstatic news clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of television in creating a global audience, but, simultaneously, it also shows that this aggregate function is reserved for those rare pieces of news that have historical significance for the West... The community of ecstatic news, global as it may be in its scope, in fact addresses the fears of Europeans who may now imagine that similar attacks are imminent in Madrid or London... It is the space of common vulnerability, where the spectators’ commitment to the suffering ‘others’ is natural because the sufferers are people like them” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 188).

Hence, we see that despite the cosmopolitan promise of the live coverage of the Norway Attacks, and although such coverage caters for audiences beyond one locale and one nation, it still construes a limited understanding of care and belonging beyond one’s immediate or familiar surroundings. It was delivered to Western spectators and addressed Western fears. The transition from the liminal phase back to “the ordinary” indeed maintained the prevailing division between “the West” and “the rest”.

One of the characteristics of the Norway Attacks that made them worthy of immediate and extensive media coverage was their unexpectedness. These events were portrayed as taking place in the least expected location – Norway. And yet, despite the element of surprise and disbelief, the events were also portrayed as *managed chaos* (see also Azoulay, 2008, Chapter 6). The notion of restoring order was reflected throughout the

coverage by both channels. The reports conveyed the symbolic presence of “the state” in taking charge of managing the scene and handling the situation. Official rescue teams were on site: ambulances and police were present early on in the different locations of the happenings. They also spoke to the media, and through the media they demonstrated their successful attempts to gain control and restore order. In this regard, the Norwegians were not depicted as helpless or powerless. On the contrary, the active performance of state officials on the ground signalled resourcefulness. And so, although these attacks caught the Norwegians by surprise, they still managed to cope with them in a trustworthy manner.

If the Norwegians were portrayed as self-saviours, what then did the mediatization of the Norway Attacks demand from the spectators? Empathy and grief. The moral demand that emerged from this case was to grieve over the death of innocent Norwegians and to identify with their pain as if they were familiar others, but there was no need to come to their rescue. Rather than share their fears and losses, the spectators had no active role to play. The moral demand was to be empathetic with the Norwegians in their painful hours and to care about them. The demand for the spectators was to be attentive to the death and mourning in Norway. The call that emerged from these reports was a call for empathy without denunciation – a suspension of judgement for the sake of unity and mourning. There was no clear demand to reflect on the conditions that enabled these happenings, and there was no-one to blame. Instead, there was an invitation to engage with a manifestation of pain and sorrow for the loss of innocent lives.

Inasmuch as the coverage of the Norway Attacks by AJE and by the BBC was inclusive, it still offers a communitarian rather than a cosmopolitan perspective, since it played out the commonality of the Western spectators and the Western victims. In both cases we see how the media ritual was performed and how it construes the death of the Norwegians as grievable, since they are similar to “us” and their vulnerability is ours as well.

The coverage of the Norway Attacks elicits what I define as *empathising grief*. Such media ritual presents the dead as familiar to the Western spectators and invites them to identify with the vulnerability of the distant others and to empathise with their pain and loss on the basis of commonality. This type of grief is motivated by emotional engagement with the dead and the bereaved, without being critical of the conditions that enabled the killing.

Chapter 7: Moving grief – the case of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the mediatization of major natural disasters that result in mass deaths. It analyses the coverage of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake by the BBC and by AJE and shows how the two channels delivered the devastating reality of Haiti to their Western spectators. In this manner the spectators were informed of the tragic aftermath of a large-scale catastrophe, while enabling them to grieve for the death of Haitians on the basis of common humanity. The chapter explores the ways in which these two global news networks offered an extensive coverage of the unfolding events and followed the Haitians' attempts to cope with the chaotic reality, and their long wait for the restoration of order.

The analysis of the coverage of the Haiti Earthquake by the two channels shows how death facilitates the construction of the situation in Haiti as a state of emergency (Calhoun, 2004, 2010). The disaster is portrayed as a massive, on-going process of dying, and death serves as a trigger to focus the attention on poor living conditions. The analysis shows how the media performance simultaneously construes the Haitians as inferior "Others" living in unbearable conditions *and* as humans whose rescue is an altruistic cause, precisely due to their inability to save themselves. Such portrayal positions the spectators as potential benefactors who are called upon to save the Haitians in an act of solidarity based on differences rather than similarities. This duality is manifested throughout the coverage and discussion of this will be further developed later.

The chapter begins with a short discussion of the concept of *disaster news* and the paradox of humanitarian discourse. This discussion considers the role of the media in constructing *a state of emergency* while nourishing the imagination of common humanity (Calhoun, 2010; Chouliaraki, 2012; Orgad, 2012). It explores *disaster news* as a means of informing global publics about major catastrophes and considers their moral agency to act upon distant death or to show sympathy to the survivors despite substantial differences between spectators and sufferers. The chapter concludes by identifying the elicitation of such media performance as *moving grief*, which emotively makes an ethical claim to mobilising global aid for those whose death is beyond their control.

7.1.1 The Haiti Earthquake 2010

On January 12, 2010, an earthquake measuring 7 on the Richter scale hit Haiti. It was estimated that around 230,000 people were killed and about 300,000 were injured (BBC, 2010).³⁰ Massive damage was caused to essential infrastructure and services and many of the state institutions ceased to function. Worldwide organisations arranged for rescue and relief efforts shortly after the quake, but it took some critical time until these efforts materialised (see also Orgad, 2012, p. 68). The disaster gained global media attention that included television teams on the ground, extensive coverage and follow-up reports for more than a week afterwards, alongside new-media relays on social networks such as *Facebook* and *Twitter* (see also Chouliaraki, 2012, p. 157).

The coverage of the quake and its aftermath yielded large amounts of material. For the purpose of this study I sampled 4-6 excerpts from the BBC and from AJE.³¹ These excerpts focus on death-related issues and reflect the various approaches the channels used to tell the story of this mass death event.

7.2 Disaster news and the paradox of humanitarian discourse

Natural disasters reveal the vulnerability and inferiority of humans, of every human, when coping with *force majeure*, regardless of gender, race, age, religion, nationality, wealth or geographic location. Natural disasters do not distinguish between people, and coping with their consequences manifests the mutual dependency of various groups. Especially when it comes to major natural disasters that hit widespread areas and stretch beyond specific national territory, it takes global efforts to cope with the aftermath (Beck, 1992, 2009b).

Natural disasters are constructed as sudden, unexpected and demanding urgent response, and therefore call for humanitarian relief which embodies two principles: “the idea of neutrality, the notion of humanity as a mass of individuals equally entitled to care, and a sense of ethical obligation based on common humanity, rather than on citizenship or any other specific loyalty” (Calhoun, 2010, p. 31). Thus, the coverage of natural disasters plays a role in enabling the imagination of “humankind” as it joins hands in an act of solidarity towards vulnerable others, “precisely because they are

³⁰ The exact death toll is in dispute; the estimates vary and indicate up to 316,000 dead (O’Connor, 2012).

³¹ The sampled materials were retrieved from the channels’ online archives and from YouTube. Since I did not gain access to the official archives of the channels I cannot give an account of how the event was covered in real time.

human, not because [they] share some more specific civic solidarity” (ibid). In this process, the media’s performance in covering disasters feeds the humanitarian imaginary that articulates the bond among fellow citizens of the world and potentially cultivates the construction of cosmopolitan community. It portrays “the world” as it comes together to act upon the suffering of the victims of the disaster, whoever they are (Chouliaraki, 2012; Orgad, 2012).

The humanitarian discourse is usually composed of two contradictory narratives: one that includes everybody under the umbrella of common humanity and another that establishes the hierarchies of those who watch or help, and those who are watched or helped (Orgad, 2012). These two contradictory narratives are often constructed and enacted simultaneously:

“The image of a world predicated on relations among distant strangers, global connectedness and solidarity, which transcend ties, affiliations and spatial boundaries, interacts with, and often is articulated simultaneously with, an imaginary of the other as distant, undeserving of recognition and care” (Orgad, 2012, p. 56).

The humanitarian discourse is usually composed of images of the sufferers as worthy of humanitarian aid – they are humans, after all – but it also constructs the sufferers as “the Other”, as very different from “us” (Calhoun, 2010, p. 33). Chouliaraki calls this dual portrayal of the sufferers the *paradox of humanitarian communication*, which simultaneously reconfigures hierarchies of power and delineates boundaries of solidarity and care:

“The paradox of humanitarian communication is grounded on the claim that, whilst it speaks the language of common humanity, the spectacle of vulnerability simultaneously evokes the language of power and thus tends to reproduce existing global divides rather than proposed bond of solidarity beyond the West” (Chouliaraki, 2012, p. 29)

Thus, the humanitarian discourse can do both – it strives to mobilise citizens of the world to act and alleviate the suffering of those in need, while, at the same time, it maintains the division between the wealthy and the poor, the powerful and the powerless, first world and third world, the actors and those acted upon (Calhoun, 2010, p. 41). The analysis of the coverage of the Haiti Earthquake shows how these two functions are played out.

7.3 The BBC coverage of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake

BBC World News responded immediately to the earthquake in Haiti. The early reports were based on telephone calls and internet-based materials (including Skype interviews). Later reports included televisual footage of BBC reporters on the ground. At one stage Matt Frei, the channel's anchor, was in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital and delivered the news from an open-air studio. The coverage was sequential (but not continuous) and diverse, giving accounts of the various aspects of the story, including geological explanations, reports on the collapse of the Haitian state institutions, rescue efforts, the waiting for humanitarian relief and various initiatives around the world to support Haiti. I sampled a number of excerpts from the extensive coverage, from different points in time throughout the week following the outset of the event (January 13, 2010 to January 18, 2010).

The two narratives of humanitarian discourse discussed above are evident throughout the entire BBC coverage of the disaster – the Haitians are constructed as humans in desperate need, but their “otherness” is maintained; they are a noble object of cosmopolitan solidarity, but their dependency on external help reinforces the hierarchies of power between “us”, the Western spectators, and “them” (Chouliaraki, 2012, p. 142). This duality is reflected in the three conditions for the construction of grievable death.

7.3.1 The sampled reports

The sample reports focus on the engagement with death and demonstrate the tropes used to convey the death-related aspects of the events. The sampled excerpts are the following:

7.3.1.1 B7: BBC News Reports 12.01.2010

Report B7 is an early report from about 24 hours after the earthquake hit. The report brings the devastating reality that was revealed in the first hours following the quake and the initial global response to it. The report was retrieved from the following compilation (8' 24" to 12' 00"): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5dG6vyFWFo> .



Figure 7-1: Haiti was already one of the world's poorest countries. It was already a disaster zone. And now this.



Figure 7-4: As the sun rose, the nightmare was only just beginning. In the streets – some screamed.



Figure 7-7: At the presidential palace, proof of the strength of this quake. It wasn't just flimsy buildings which collapsed. The central cathedral caught fire, it now lies in ruins.



Figure 7-10: "I now invite you to rise up, and observe one minute silence". In New York, the UN Security Council paused to mark the scale of this tragedy...

Figure 7-2: "there's... an earthquake just happened, and many people are walking in front of me, and they have blood all over them"



Figure 7-5: Others lay lifeless. How do you explain all this to a child? They already had little here. Now many have nothing.



Figure 7-8: But it is the human losses which are most shocking. Throughout the night, desperate survivors tried to rescue their family, their friends, in whatever way they could.



Figure 7-11: "There are just a few hundred miles of ocean between us and a long history that binds us together. Haitians are our neighbors in the Americas and here at home, so we have to be there for them in their hour of need"

Figure 7-3: "The hospital is collapsed. The national palace is collapsed. I see at least five big buildings that collapsed. I think this is really a disaster".



Figure 7-6: There is a city in ruins. A country which can do little, but wait for help to arrive.



Figure 7-9: "The situation is very serious and we are very anxious and concerned. It's a tragedy for the UN and also for the Haitian people. So far we have no information regarding the casualties"



Figure 7-12: This was the worst earthquake to hit this impoverished nation in two hundred years, and it is a country which has suffered plenty in its history.

7.3.1.2 B8: "Haiti - the place where hell is the new normal"

Report B8 is from January 18, 2010. The report focuses on the devastation and uncertainty in coping with the earthquake's aftermath, including an item on the disposal of the bodies. The full report is available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/8467648.stm>.³²



Figure 7-13: At night, Port-au-Prince is a place inhabited by shadows, and haunted by a growing list of fears: the security for food, for the simple business of survival.



Figure 7-14: Here is the camp outside the crushed "White House", the president's former home. The citizens left very much to their own resources.



Figure 7-15: But Josephine, a journalist with one of the local papers, the sky is now the roof over her head. "What about your house?" "My house is gone"



Figure 7-16: From the indignity of living, to the indignity of dying...The open air makeshift morgue at the general hospital. The bodies are simply dumped, waiting for the bulldozers.



Figure 7-17: The grave diggers at Port-au-Prince are kept very busy these days.... one of the chief grave diggers here... has just explained to me is that there are three-hundred bodies in this mass grave here



Figure 7-18: and the way they did it, is that they burnt them first of all, you can still see how the ground is blackened here.



Figure 7-19: When hell is the new normal, it is not surprising that this has become a city on the edge of a nervous breakdown.



Figure 7-20: We came across Joseph and Michel, digging in the rubble, with a determination of expert rescuers.



Figure 7-21: Looting now is the only industry here, and this is the new rush hour of Port-au-Prince. Anything will do as a weapon.



Figure 7-22: The airport is beginning to resemble a film set, courtesy of the pentagon's productions. Aid is being flown in by the minute.



Figure 7-23: This man was looking for food. "We are thirsty and we are hungry".



Figure 7-24: But if the anarchy spreads, they may soon find themselves patrolling the streets, in what will look like a full scale military operation.

³² The report can also be retrieved from the following compilation: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUVf1k8k> (7' 18" onwards).

7.3.1.3 B9: “Earthquake misery in Haiti hospital”

Report B9 is from January 18, 2010. The report brings the scenes in one of Port-au-Prince’s hospitals and tells the story of one victim in particular. After the report ends, the anchor addresses the audience at home, asking them to try to imagine what the Haitians are enduring. The full report is available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W26i0QVDiyM> (12’ 28” to 14’ 59”).³³



Figure 7-25: Haiti’s agony is clear to see, but some help has arrived.



Figure 7-26: “We don’t really have much drugs that I can give them for pain. I’m just doing the best that I can. We have piles of people outside that require to get in here, still, so we are trying to get people out the door as quickly as possible”.



Figure 7-27: Still, it is a world away from the desperate scenes we saw here a day after the earthquake. When there were no doctors, no medicines, just the dying and the dead. Today, at least, there is hope.



Figure 7-28: But not for everyone. Not for nine-year-old Stephaney. Her father Carlos tells me she will die.



Figure 7-29: That the hospital the hospital doesn’t have the right equipment to carry out an operation to save her life. So they wait, as she slowly slips away from them.



Figure 7-30: The tragic story of Stephaney (see full text in the following excerpt).

Figure 7-30: The tragic story of Stephaney. Now, of course, we talk about aftershocks, when one of these seismic events happens, and we felt a few while we have been here, but the real aftershocks that grip a place like this are the emotional ones. Just put yourself into the shoes of the people of Haiti. First, there is the extraordinary shock of the earthquake. One minute when the earth shakes, and everything around them either collapses into a pile of dust, or looks so bad and cracked, that they know they can’t go back there and live there in the future. Then, there is a search for the bodies. Then, they wake up the following morning, and kind of wonder what has happened to their world. Everything has changed – they have no jobs, they have no food, they have no money, they have no water, they have no medical supplies. And the next phase is watching those who are not

³³ A slightly longer version of the recorded report can be found here: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8465871.stm>.

already dead dying slowly. A mother watching her child, life ate out of her child in the hospital, knowing full well that the most menial medical attention would make all the difference. I have seen quite a few of the scenes, and I have to say, having covered a few of these crises, as well, this has been one of the most heart-rending. Mainly because the people of Haiti have been left so much for their own very meagre resources, indeed. And yes, there has been an enormous amount of international aid and goodwill, and millions of dollars are poured in, and that will make a huge difference to this country, but what happens in a month? Or in a year? Or in five years? Will this be the opportunity to remake Haiti, or will it be another lost opportunity?

7.3.1.4 B10: “Looking for survivors online”

Report B10 is from 15 January, 2010. The report explores the use of social networks in circulating information and raising money for Haiti. The report is available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/world_news_america/8460551.stm .



Figure 7-31: This is the information nerve centre – the Haitian embassy in Washington. Volunteers are setting up a website they hope will harness the power of Facebook and Twitter to trace missing loved ones.



Figure 7-32: “People have use Facebook tremendously just to post information, to know, to find out what’s going on”.



Figure 7-33: “It’s like people spend hours and hours on Facebook, posting messages, making comments, seeing pictures. It’s a great tool for us in this time of need”.



Figure 7-34: The earthquake is the biggest natural disaster so far in the age of social networking. And people are turning to their computers for information.



Figure 7-35: In previous crises, the embassy itself has been the point of contact, but today, nobody is here. Mainly because they and the authorities are getting more information online, using Twitter and Facebook.



Figure 7-36: After the terrorist attacks of September 11th, people flocked to lower Manhattan to post photos of their missing relatives. Today, Facebook is the electronic post board for disasters.



Figure 7-37: “Facebook and Skype are one of the only ways we can get communications, because the cell-

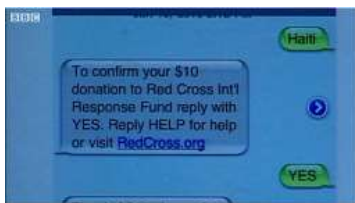


Figure 7-38: Technology is also key to raising cash. A record breaking five million dollars was quickly netted by



Figure 7-39: “If any of your viewers want to participate they can text Haiti, H-A-I-T-I and the number is 909999,

phone lines are down”.

the Red Cross through text messages
alone.

and ten dollars will be automatically
billed to your cell-phone”.

7.3.2 The construction of the dead as human

The construction of the dead as human refers to the means through which the death of the other is registered as death in terms of representation, and the extent to which the people at the scene of death are constructed as agent.

The analysis of the construction of the dead as humans in the BBC reports of the Haiti Earthquake reveals a duality, as though at times the Haitians are dehumanised – they are portrayed as devoid of agency and unworthy of recognition and care – at other times they are humanised and therefore worthy of solidarity. It is precisely this tension between dehumanisation and humanisation which creates conditional agency and turns the Haitians’ impotency into a call for action. The construction of the Haitians as incompetent stresses their dependency on external help and this construction invites the actualisation of cosmopolitan solidarity. I explore this duality by pointing to mechanisms of humanisation and dehumanisation alternately.

7.3.2.1 *Invisible suffering*

The point of entry into the analysis of the construction of the Haitians as human is invisible suffering. My argument here is that the Haitians’ suffering before the earthquake was invisible and this “transparent suffering” dehumanised them, to begin with. Since this argument refers to the lack of representation, it is hard to pinpoint exactly how this dehumanisation happens in terms of representation; still, this invisibility is an important reference point for analysing this case, since it precedes the actual engagement with the deteriorating living conditions in Haiti. Moreover, it also facilitates the construction of the earthquake as an emergency, i.e. as “a sudden, unpredictable event emerging against a background of ostensible normalcy, causing suffering or danger, and demanding urgent response” (Calhoun, 2010, p. 30).

The living conditions in Haiti before the earthquake were poor and unworthy for humans to live in.³⁴ This was a well-established fact, as the reporter in report B7 admits: “it was already a disaster zone” (Figure 7-1). But the constant near-disastrous living conditions in Haiti were ignored or accepted by the international community and the media. The Haitian suffering was outside the public sphere of appearance. It was invisible or

³⁴ For more information on the humanitarian aid Haiti received before and after the earthquake, see UEH Tulane DRLA Haiti Humanitarian Aid Evaluation (Luu, 2012).

unrepresented. It was not registered anywhere, and therefore did not generate any response. The lack of response to the Haitian suffering in a way accepted their unworthy living conditions as “normal”, as suitable for them, and this acceptance negated their humanness. It reduced the Haitian lives to the status of *bare life* – poor and inadequate life that is almost unworthy to be called life (Agamben, 1998). And although such living conditions are below the minimum for sustaining “truly human” life (Calhoun, 2010), these poor living conditions were not enough to generate a humanitarian response. As undeserving of humanitarian response, the Haitians fell outside the category of “the human”, outside social and political life (see also Colebrook, 2008; Norris, 2000). This resonates with Azoulay’s (2008) assertion regarding life *on the verge of catastrophe*. Some people live in harsh conditions that deprive them of basic human needs or dignity, but these living conditions have been normalised and routinised and thus constitute *life on the verge of catastrophe*, rather than catastrophic life. Such life is disastrous, yet it is insufficient to gain global (media) attention and to become a subject of human solidarity, because the people who live it do not qualify as “human”. Although these living conditions are sufficient to demand an alleviation of suffering based on solidarity between humans, the construction of the people who live in such conditions as under-qualified to be regarded as human, weakens – perhaps even eliminates – this demand. This perception is also expressed in the media’s performance. Poor living conditions in some places are sometimes insufficient to meet the media’s criteria of newsworthiness, and so this suffering does not register in the media (this is what Campbell, 2004, calls *the economy of indifference*). When can the disaster register in the media and invade the normalcy of the West? At the occurrence of catastrophic death. The obligation to help humans in need is realised only when their unbearable living conditions become, literally, fatal.

This, I argue, is the case of Haiti, where living conditions before the earthquake were below the Western understanding of minimum human conditions, yet these very conditions were not constructed as “emergency” and therefore were insufficient to activate a demand for humanitarian relief (Calhoun, 2010). Only when the Haitian misery turned into a “full blown” disaster – then (and only then) did their lives become worthy of rescue. Paradoxically, then, what reintegrated the Haitians into the category of “human” was that their disaster worsened and they died in exceptionally vast numbers. Only when they were dying did their disaster fit a state of emergency and entail a

humanitarian response.³⁵ The constant “ordinary” suffering of the Haitians was not registered, yet their extraordinary death was. This change in attitude towards the devastating living conditions in Haiti is central to their construction as humans, for as long as their suffering was invisible they were dehumanised, but the very fact that the mass death in Haiti became a subject of global attention is a symbolic act of humanisation.

The early reports inform the spectators of various manifestations of solidarity like a moment of silence in the UN Assembly (Figure 7-10) and the US mobilisation to act upon the Haitian suffering (Figures 7-11, 7-22). This global humanitarian response to mass death bears a performative function which symbolically restores the human dignity of those who lost their lives in tragic circumstances. These manifestations suggest that Haitian (usually poor and miserable) lives deserve to be saved. They retrospectively establish the Haitians as human, as worthy of global solidarity in the form of humanitarian relief. Thus, if we understand the concept of grievability as the integration or re-integration of the dead into the category of human, then in their death (and only then), the Haitians became grievable. The Haitian lived a bare life until they died in masses, but in their death they were recognised as human.

7.3.2.2 Registering death

How, then, was the Haitian death registered? The BBC told the story of the Haiti Earthquake as a story of mass death from the very beginning. “It is the measure of the scale of this tragedy that any estimate of the number of people killed, injured, trapped or left homeless is nothing more than a wild guess. The country’s Prime Minister today guessed that the death toll could reach 100,000, the next few days will reveal just how accurate he was”, says the anchor in the studio before introducing report B7. And it was told as a story of a colossal death (Figure 7-8: “it is the human losses which are most shocking”), which requires global rescue efforts since Haiti is “a country which can do little but wait for help to arrive” (Figure 7-6).

The notion of death is expressed using various tropes that include metonymies of death (for example, Figures 7-6, 7-10) alongside explicit images of corpses (Figure 7-16); mass deaths (Figure 7-16), together with stories of a few individuals *about-to-die* (Figure 7-28). These tropes work simultaneously to convey the complexity of the disaster –

³⁵ And indeed, a search of the BBC online archive for stories on Haiti in the decade before the earthquake retrieves video reports that deal mostly with disasters and death-related news: <http://tinyurl.com/ptx59zu> .

incomprehensible, depersonalised death on the one hand, and personal stories of impending death and survival which give faces to the disaster on the other hand. For example in reports B7 and B8 we find images of ruined infrastructure and collapsed buildings (Figures 7-6, 7-12, 7-24). Each torn-down building resembles a gravestone for those buried underneath. We saw this trope in the case of the Gaza War, so I need not repeat it here. Other representations of death are explicit images of dead bodies (Figure 7-16), though these come in relatively small doses. Given the high numbers of dead – around 230,000 – the number of images depicting dead bodies is fairly low.³⁶ When such images are shown, they depict clusters of corpses. This is the case, for example, in report B8, where the reporter takes the spectators to “the open-air, makeshift morgue at the general hospital” (Figure 7-16). The reporter then takes the spectators to one of the city cemeteries and the fresh burial spot of some three hundred people (Figures 7-17, 7-18). There, the spectators meet the grave-diggers at their work, and the reporter describes the disposal procedure – the burning and the burial in a mass grave. This part of the report demonstrates the magnitude of death and the incapability to cope with such high numbers or to account for the precise figures. This careful attention to processes of death and dying frames the story as a story about death. It tells us that what matters here is the striking scale of death.

7.3.2.3 *Conditional agency*

As discussed in earlier chapters, agency is an important component in the portrayal of the sufferers as human. To what extent can they master their own destiny? To what extent can they communicate with us, the spectators at home, and mobilise us to act? The analysis of agency in the BBC coverage of the Haiti Earthquake shows the dual representation discussed earlier – between utter devastation and resourcefulness. It construes the Haitians as weak “others”, lacking agency, who are heavily dependent on external help, but at the same time as fellow citizens, worthy of saving in a way that enhances the commitment to come to their rescue. This combination construes the Haitians’ *conditional agency*, which “implies that the sufferer is only able to be active in a limited and ineffective way – hence the need for external intervention” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 119).

³⁶ The reports contain more images of dead bodies that are not displayed in the above storyboards.

7.3.2.3.1 Lack of agency

The focus on the scale of death reveals its extremely large numbers, but the collective images of mass death have another effect, which is the depersonalisation of the dead. They draw the attention to the collective catastrophe rather than the personal tragedy of each individual. In report B8, for example, the camera shows the spraying of corpses with disinfectant, while “waiting for the bulldozers” (Figure 7-16). These are the most explicit death images the spectators encounter. The camera uses long shots to capture the full scale of the pile of corpses, and so conveys the “indignity of dying”, as the reporter describes it. The scene at the cemetery (Figures 7-17, 7-18) ends when the reporter turns to the spectators and says, in the second person: “You can still smell it, and you can see the flies”.

This representation of death dehumanises the dead and blocks the ability to imagine the person who died and grieve for his or her death. This presentation “effaces” the dead as persons. “The human” is reduced to “a body”, dumped in a pile of faceless, nameless bodies that were stripped of their dignity and did not even have a chance to be buried with a proper funeral. Funerals are significant death rituals which bear symbolic meaning: funerals show respect for the dead, evoke grief as an expression of pain over the loss, and reintegrate the community. The images of dumped bodies depict people who were deprived of this symbolic gesture. They show people who did not have the chance to receive a proper recognition as worthy members of their community.

Moreover, the depicted person who died is not only described as the outcome of hazardous conditions, but also as itself a hazard. He or she is depicted as decomposing flesh that needs to be immediately discarded to prevent the risk of spreading disease and further death. This depiction of the dead at the scene of death as a spectacle of mass graves and piles of rotting corpses does not allow the spectators to be empathetic with the dead. Instead, it bears the potential to be perceived as repellent or even traumatising for the spectators to watch. These tropes construe the Haitians as lacking agency and their qualification as “humans” in unrecognised. Such depiction makes the dead non-grievable.

However, there is another side to the facelessness of the dead. These images show corpses, but they do not show the dead, i.e. the person who has died. The camera is far enough from the bodies so we can see the corpse, but we cannot identify the dead. In a way, the unidentifiability of the dead protects their dignity as individuals. This camera

work confronts us with the scale of death and conveys a feeling of discomfort and helplessness while maintaining some of the dignity of those who suffered dishonouring death (see also Hanusch, 2008; Morse, 2014).

In addition, there are other tropes which deny the agency of the Haitians. These tropes refer to the collective portrayal of Haiti as a dysfunctional country. Haiti is depicted as “a country which can do little but wait for help to arrive” (Figure 7-6) and the Haitians are depicted as lifeless, broken people (Figures 7-4, 7-5) undergoing gradual but accelerated death. The symbolic images of the collapsed state institutions – the presidential palace (Figure 7-7) and the central cathedral (B7) – tellingly illustrate the dysfunctionality of the state. “The citizens left very much to their own resources”, the reporter says (Figure 7-14), pointing to the disappearance of any state agency. Any symbolic presence of “the state” is missing; any symbolic sign of the restoration of order is absent. The scenes are portrayed as lacking any signs of state sovereignty – no police, no ambulances and no official rescue teams. This depiction degrades the Haitians’ lives (see also Azoulay, 2008). The Haitians are deprived of their basic “citizenship” – in a time of need, their state is not there for them and they have been abandoned to their own fate. But, as the “contract” between Haitians and their state ceased to exist – to use Azoulay’s vocabulary – a new “contract” between Haitians and many other states is signed, as “the world” is asked to step in and respond to their suffering. Haitian national “citizenship” loses its meaning, but the Haitians regain their status as citizens of the world, as worthy of global solidarity.

The dysfunctionality of the state forces Haitians to take initiative and be active in pursuing rescue. The reports bring the stories of some Haitians who do try to act upon their own suffering. Given the devastating conditions, these efforts are described as even more remarkable: “Desperate survivors” are described as “digging down with bare hands” (B7), “with a determination of expert rescuers” (Figure 7-20). Others are described as “organising themselves; putting up signs at the new homeless camps” (B9). This presentation of the Haitians construes them as potent agents who are overcoming impossible conditions to restore their human dignity and to regain proper living conditions. Moreover, if we understand agency as the potency to communicate one’s suffering to the world, the Haitians do well in this regard. They face the camera and tell their personal but national stories, in English or in French. They voice their misfortune, testifying to the lack of food or water, admitting they have no shelter (Figures 7-15, 7-23; B9).

Comparing the Haitian state of emergency with that of the Norway Attacks reveals a very different picture from that we encountered in the previous chapter. In the Norwegian case, official state organisations rushed to the scene to rescue the victims, and in so doing they not only functioned as life-saving organisations, but also manifested state sovereignty and its efforts to restore order. In the Haitian case, the lack of functioning state organisations makes a compelling invitation for global state organisations to step in. Paradoxically, then, the inability of the Haitians to rely on their own country construes them as agents, in the sense that they possess the power “to evoke and receive the beneficiary action of others” (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 88). Here emerges the other side of humanitarian discourse, which refers to the construction of “powerless others” as humans who are dependent on the “powerful” and deserve to be rescued by them.

7.3.2.3.2 Impending death

Alongside the reports of mass graves and piles of bodies, we find other tropes that inform us about the disaster and introduce us to the personal tragedies of selected victims. This intimate encounter functions as an invitation to grief. One of these tropes is the “about-to-die”, which focuses on an individual story of a person facing impending death (Zelizer, 2010). The encounter with the about-to-die person replaces the gruesome representation of death, and enhances the engagement with the story. This trope, Zelizer argues, is moving and invites the spectators to pay careful attention to the story they see. In addition, since the number of dead is incomprehensible, and it is impossible to tell the story of each and every one of them, focusing on one story faces us with one story of one person, but it could be the story of “anyone” or “everyone” (Boltanski, 1999). The spectators are being familiarised with *transient strangers* whose story is *The Story* (Frosh, 2011). An example of such an about-to-die story is that of nine-year-old Stephaney, whom we meet in report B9 (Figures 7-28, 7-29).³⁷ As we meet this girl we learn right away that she has no hope. “Her father tells me she will die. That the hospital doesn’t have the right equipment to carry out an operation to save her life”, the reporter says determinedly. The camera closes up on her face so it fills the screen. Her heavy breathing is clearly shown and visible. “So they wait, as she slowly slips away from them”, the reporter concludes, and like her family, so do we, the spectators, watch her die while she is watching us, through the camera. When the recorded report ends, the anchor on the ground faces the camera and tells us that this tragic story is the story of

³⁷ A less detailed example can be found in the following report, where the camera moves between a number of helpless patients outside the hospital, and the reporter informs us that soon they will all die: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luBqINh_2nk (from 8’ 25” to 9’ 20”).

many more Haitians who can do nothing but watch “those who are not already dead dying slowly” (Figure 7-30). The structure of that sentence positions all Haitians in a state of impending death. They are either “already dead” or dying.

This way of introducing the disaster turns the incomprehensible number of casualties into something more tangible. It turns it into an encounter with one figure we can recognise and identify with, and so grieve his or her impending death and be moved by it. Such representation humanises the dead, allowing the spectators to see the face and know the names of selected individuals who are part of the masses of dead. It permits an intimate encounter with the dead and the bereaved.

To recap, the analysis shows two very different approaches to confronting us with the death in Haiti – one that effaces the dead and the other that provides a face for the dead. The approach that effaces the dead prevents the spectators from seeing the dead as a person and confronts them, instead, with other means of representation that illustrate the scale of death. Images of mass non-individualised dead dehumanise the dead by presenting them as decomposing corpses dumped into piles and removed by bulldozers. The approach which gives a face to the dead enables the viewers to see the person behind the figures. Images and stories of individual death humanise the dead by using representational tropes that animate them and allowing an intimate encounter with the personal stories of few of them. The combination of these two approaches reflects the full scale of the disaster – the individuals’ stories are “multiplied” by the high numbers and so help us to grasp what the Haitians are suffering. These two forms of representation interweave and create what I shall define as *moving grief*.

7.3.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality

What kind of media ritual did the Haiti Earthquake activate? To what extent did the coverage allow the reality of Haiti to invade the spectators’ reality? Did the extraordinary scale of death entail a suspension of the ordinary for the spectators at home?

The televisual coverage began shortly after the eruption of the event, and continued extensively throughout the following week. From the very beginning it was clear that this was an event of historic scale, “the worst earthquake to hit this impoverished nation in two hundred years” (Figure 7-12). The coverage included studio interviews with experts and witnesses (Figures 7-9, 7-15), live reports by reporters from the scene, recorded reports that summarised the latest developments (or lack thereof) and materials

retrieved from social networks (Figure 7-2). At some stage the anchor himself was sent to Haiti and delivered the news from there, from an open-air broadcasting point (Figure 7-30).³⁸ Overall, like in the coverage of the Gaza War, the coverage of the Haiti quake materialised as an *asynchronous continuous media event*.

7.3.3.1 Time³⁹

The construal of time within the BBC coverage is that of a continuous time, which implies that the event is on-going and therefore can still be acted upon. While the reports tell a story about mass death which has already taken place, they concurrently warn that there are others who are still dying, and unless something urgent is done to save them they are doomed to die as well (B9: “Haiti humanitarian crisis is worsening by the day, with more than a million people living out in the open, the of risk disease and of death is growing”; “How many more could be alive after all this time?”; Figure 7-30: “And the next phase is watching those who are not already dead dying slowly”). The coupling of stories on death with stories about survival, while stressing that survival is temporal, presents death – or more precisely dying – as a gradual and reversible process, that requires immediate response. By warning that the fate of the survivors might be similar to that of those who are already dead, the reports encourage the spectators to acknowledge the reversibility of dying before reaching the point of irreversibility of death. This construal of time suggests that, despite the focus on mass death (which is, of course, final), on the axis of urgency/finality (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 85), the Haiti Earthquake leans towards the urgency pole.

The construal of time within the reports was that of present continuous, with explicit reference to the near future, to what could happen next. The reports used the present tense and the past tense interchangeably to describe how what happened in the near past affects the present (B7: “And now this: [recorded message] ‘an earthquake just happened’”; Figure 7-22: “The airport is beginning to resemble a film set ... Aid is being flown by the minute”; B8: “Looting now is the only industry here ...”). Throughout the reports, the reporters repeatedly referred to the disaster as an on-going, open-ended story. The early report emphasised that “the nightmare” revealed as the sun rose shortly after the quake “was only just the beginning” (Figure 7-4), and the full scale of the

³⁸ See the following link for a compilation of the BBC reports on the Haiti Earthquake and its aftermath: <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL652021EA1F853D7A>

³⁹ My analysis here refers *only* to the sampled materials as introduced above. Since I did not gain access to the official BBC archive, I do not discuss whether the BBC operated a “disaster marathon” at any stage of the extensive coverage.

catastrophe is yet to be known (Figure 7-9). Later reports captured the near past, while raising questions regarding the future development in a place “where hell is the new normal” (B8). The reporter focused on the challenges the Haitians face now and the future risks they bring. Report B8 ends with the reporter’s concern that anarchy will prevail, and that the foreign forces “will soon find themselves patrolling the streets, in what will look like a full scale military operation” (Figure 7-24). These remarks construe the “story” as *open-ended*, as a story expected to further develop (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2008).

The ending of report B9 and the switch to the anchor in the open-air studio (Figure 7-30) enhances the sense of continuous time and open-ended story. This part of the news relay is transmitted live (see also Bourdon, 2000). The anchor speaks directly to the camera and addresses the spectators at home (rather than the main studio), in the second person, in real time. During this address, the time on the screen and the time at the scene converge. Indeed, not much is happening on the screen during this segment, but the sense of shared time and the direct address to the spectators establish a connection between multiple spaces. The coda to the anchor’s remarks enhances the open-endedness of the story, as the spectators are encouraged to consider the prospects for Haiti beyond the near future. The anchor concludes with question marks regarding the future of Haiti: “but what happens in a month? Or in a year? Or in five years? Will this be the opportunity to remake Haiti? Or will it be another lost opportunity?” (Figure 7-30). These concluding remarks stress that the ending of the story of Haiti remains open and unclear. This articulation of time, as discussed in earlier chapters, invites the spectators to “stay tuned” and maintain communication with Haiti, and possibly even do something to shape future developments.

7.3.3.2 Space

The articulation of space positions the spectators in a space of omnipresence (Chouliaraki, 2006b). Report B7 begins with a map of the Atlantic Ocean and the moving illustration imitates a zoom-in camera movement, as the frame closes in on Haiti and Port-au-Prince (Figure 7-1). This exposition gives a general orientation as to where on the globe these happenings are taking place. The illustrated map is then replaced by footage from the ruined streets of Port-au-Prince (Figure 7-2). This footage offers the perspective of the people who are literally on the ground (Figures 7-4, 7-5) – we see the devastation from their point of view, and we hear the screams of the survivors at the scene of suffering (B7: “The world is going to an end!”). Throughout the reports from Haiti we

mostly see these street-level camera shots, but the camera moves along the various sites of destruction, enabling a close, sometimes intimate encounter with the survivors. The reporter informs the spectators about where “we” (i.e., the camera and the spectators) are, taking into account that even the landmarks of the city are now unrecognizable (Figure 7-7: “At the presidential palace... the central cathedral... lies in ruins”; Figure 7-14: “Here is the camp outside the crushed ‘White House’”). Through the camera, the spectators pass by the presidential palace, the central cathedral, the UN building (B7), a caravan zone near the airport, Petion-Ville square, the general hospital and the city cemetery, where the reporter tries to account for the smell, not only for the disturbing sights (B8: “You can still smell it, and you can see the flies”). In addition, the reports bring the happening from outside Haiti, where the global aid is concentrated before their delivery to Haiti (B10). Hence, through the camera, the spectators have the experience of being “there”, in all the relevant locations.

The final segment of report B9 (Figure 7-30) bears a symbolic meaning in relation to the construal of space. The positioning of the anchor in an open studio at the heart of the scene signals the importance of the space where the happenings are taking place, as the positioning of the anchor outside the studio is a gesture reserved only for special occasions. The meaning of this move is that Haiti and Port-au-Prince are at the centre of these happenings, on a global level. The fact that the news anchor is positioned on the ground and delivers the news from “there”, signals the centrality of the location from which the news is delivered. It reflects the exceptionality of the events and the extraordinariness of the moment. This further advises the spectators to pay attention to the happenings at this specific location.

7.3.4 Producing a witnessable account

This part of the analysis explores the extent to which representational and discursive means construct the veracity of the reality “out there” and how they position the spectators vis-à-vis the distant others. The coverage of the Haiti Earthquake by the BBC construes *perceptual realism* and *psychological realism*, which consists of both *categorical realism* and *ideological realism*, and encourages the spectators to position themselves vis-à-vis the reality in Haiti and even to act upon it. The proposition that emerges from the various reports is that, although they reveal an Unimaginable scale of death, they represent very real deaths and raise concern for the survival of real people who deserve to be saved.

7.3.4.1 Perceptual realism

The BBC coverage of the Haiti Earthquake draws mostly on indexical images in order to establish the reality of the events taking place. The plethora of images from multiple locations conveys the sense of “seeing is believing”; that a disaster on such a large scale cannot be fully comprehended unless one sees the actual sights. Images of rubbed out neighbourhoods (Figure 7-6), collapsed buildings (Figure 7-24) and debris (Figure 7-20), together with images of helpless victims (Figures 7-4, 7-5), help the spectators to capture the scale of devastation. In other cases, the reporter’s verbal narration explains what appears on the screen, bolstering the visual narrative with explanatory descriptions (Figure 7-18: “and the way they did it is... you can see how the ground is blackened here”). Some of these images, like that of the collapsed presidential palace (Figure 7-7) also bear iconic meaning, as they literally demonstrate the collapse of state institutions, as discussed earlier.

7.3.4.2 Psychological realism

The story of dying Stephaney (Figures 7-28, 7-29) is an example of *psychological realism*, which appeals to the spectators’ sense of humanity and justice (Chouliaraki, 2006b, p. 120). Together with other close-up images of suffering children (Figures 7-2, 7-5, 7-25) and the rhetorical question of “how do you explain all this to a child?” (Figure 7-5), they make a dual emotional and moral appeal that rests upon the contradiction between the children’s innocence and vulnerability on the one hand, and the misery and insecurity they were destined to, on the other hand. The use of the rhetorical question suggest that the “nightmare” that was revealed “as the sun rose” (Figure 7-4) is unjust, as it is hard to explain to an innocent child why he or she deserves this. Such a rhetorical device asks the spectators to think of a satisfactory explanation which will be simple enough to convey to a child, suggesting that such an explanation is impossible.

The anchor’s comments, following the report from the hospital which tells the story of dying Stephaney (Figure 7-30), invite the spectators to imagine the thoughts and feelings of the Haitians in coping with their misfortune. In this excerpt, the reporter faces the camera and turns to the spectators at home, speaking in the second person: “just put yourselves into the shoes of the people of Haiti”. He then lists a number of experiences the Haitians underwent during these past few days, and guides the spectators’ imagination through these moments: “First, there is the extraordinary shock of the earthquake... Then, there is a search for the bodies. Then, they wake up the following morning and wonder what has happened to their world... And the next phase is watching

those who are not already dead dying slowly”. Very much like Voltaire’s poem (1756) following the Lisbon 1755 earthquake,⁴⁰ the anchor urges the spectators to contemplate the pain and suffering of faraway others, and invokes compassion for them despite their very different situation (Orgad, 2012, p. 78). This rather exceptional move aims to unsettle the safety and comfort of the spectators at home and encourages them to explore the range of feelings these experiences arouse. It tries to create an emotive appeal based on a common humanity that overcomes space, nationality or any other affiliation. This piece of text also functions as a *witnessing text* (Frosh, 2006) that invites the spectators to imagine themselves *as if* they need to cope with the tragic experience of a catastrophic earthquake and reflect upon the demand that emerges to respond to the spectators’ reality (Chouliaraki, 2012, p. 140).

The verbal narrative of the reports, while delivering factual information about the scenes, uses expressive language which encourages the spectators to reflect on their normative stance in relation to the described events. The reporter makes general claims about Haitian historical and contemporary suffering and its worsening (Figure 7-5: “They already had little here, now many have nothing”; Figure 7-12: “a country which has suffered plenty in its history”; Figure 7-16: “From the indignity of living to the indignity of dying”). These observational statements, which deflect from the objective description of facts, encourage the spectators to ponder on questions of justice, as those who are portrayed as already living in miserable, humiliating conditions now need to cope with even worse conditions which make the “simple business of survival” (Figure 7-13) no longer simple; with conditions which do not even permit them to die in dignity. This formulation embodies a sense of injustice in relation to the dire destiny of those who have already suffered, of those whose dignity was long ago taken away. In addition, Haiti, as a country, is described as “a country which can do little but wait for help to arrive” (Figure 7-6), and this construal of helplessness points to the expectation for those who can help to actually do it.

The reports brought some inspiring rescue efforts by resourceful survivors, yet these efforts seem tenuous in light of the utter devastation. The picture that emerges from the reports is that without substantial international help the Haitians are doomed: “without a sustained commitment from the international community, this country, already one of the world’s poorest, will set back a generation” (B9). Thus, the Haiti crisis is portrayed as

⁴⁰ For more on Voltaire’s *Poeme sur le desastre de Lisbonne* and its invoking of compassion for the sufferers of the 1755 Lisbon Earthquake, see Orgad (2012, pp. 60–63).

a humanitarian crisis that stretches far beyond Haiti. It is portrayed as a crisis that calls for immediate global relief as an act of solidarity between humans, regardless of any prior – national or other – affiliation.

7.3.5 Ethical solicitation

This concluding part of the analysis considers the solicitation the text makes in relation to the spectators' possible involvement in the scene. In this regard, the analysis takes into consideration the construction of the dead as human, the possibility of the spectators sharing the reality of the scene of death, and the extent to which they are able to witness it, in the broad sense of this term. The ethical solicitation that emerges from this comprehensive account considers whether and how *the spectators* are constructed as agents, and their possibilities for responding to the mediatisation of death.

Putting together the three conditions for the construction of grievable death, as these appear in the BBC coverage of the Haiti Earthquake, results in an ethical solicitation to rescue the Haitians. The construction of the Haitians as human swings between the construction of the dead as non-human and the construction of the survivors as human beings whose survival is not yet assured. This duality construes the Haitians' conditional agency – they are human beings who deserve to be saved, but they are dependent on external intervention in order to achieve that. The construction of spatiotemporal commonality allows the spectators to engage with the reality of Haiti, and stresses the fear of an overflow of death from past to future. This formulation suggests that dying, rather than death, is reversible, and that therefore there is still room and justification for intervention. The Haitian disaster was witnessable and the coverage offers multiple ways of engaging with the reality of the Haitians. The reports captured both the large scale of death and the personal fears of dying for those who survived, while constantly reminding us that survival is temporary. This puts the spectators in a position of witnesses of a tragedy that can be minimised, and compels them to act. The twofold argument that emerges from the various reports is that, although time is running out, there is still a chance to rescue lives, and since the Haitians were left to their own resources, subject to a dysfunctional regime, external intervention is the only moral solution, and therefore the spectators can choose whether to act or to sit back and be culpable.

The emotive concluding remarks of the anchor at the end of report B9 (Figure 7-30) push the spectators a little further, inviting them to imagine what the Haitians are undergoing

("Just put yourselves into the shoes of the people of Haiti"). This invitation, I would argue, positions the spectators at a *proper distance* to realise their commitment to the Haitians. It encourages them to see the commonality that binds them together rather than the differences that distinguish between them, and this bond includes acting upon the conditions in Haiti. The fate of the Haitians is now in the hands of the international community. The Haitians have nothing to depend on but cosmopolitan solidarity. Thus, witnessing here means reflecting upon this bond and the demand for action embedded in it.

The actions that the coverage of the Haiti Earthquake demands are within the spectators' reach. Thanks to new technologies of communication, as report B10 tells us, the Haitians are no longer "far away" and the possibility of helping them is actually very near and simple: "If any of your viewers want to participate they can text Haiti, H-A-I-T-I and the number is 909999, and ten dollars will be automatically billed to your cell-phone": American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton approaches the spectators and encourages them to take action (Figure 7-39). The demand to act is not groundless, since action is simple. Spectators are no longer passive viewers of the news edition. They are, or they can be, if they choose, involved players who contribute to the salvation of Haiti. The excuse that there is nothing to be done at a distance, from the comfort of the living room, is no longer valid, since as long as a mobile device is in reach, action is possible. In other words, since action is possible and simple, indifference is not a valid option. The moral thing to do is to engage with the Haitians and help them reverse their fate. Moreover, since the only resource to draw upon is the international community, lack of any substantial actions places a moral stain on the citizens of the world.

7.4 The AJE coverage of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake

Similarly to the BBC, AJE also had a comprehensive and continuous coverage of the Haiti Earthquake. AJE had reporters on location, and they also used new media to illustrate their reports and retrieve information about the happenings. I sampled several excerpts from different points in time to capture the different ways in which the event was covered, focusing on the mediatisation of death. These reports demonstrate – like the BBC reports – the duality of disaster news in their portrayal of the Haitians in very different conditions from those of the Western spectators, but also as worthy of their care and sympathy.

7.4.1 The sampled reports

The sampled excerpts are the following:

7.4.1.1 A8: "Haitians struggle to cope amid aftermath of earthquake"

Report A8 is from two days after the earthquake. The report shows displaced survivors alongside the dead and waiting for relief. The full report is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EW1VUgH9g2s> .



Figure 7-40: As we drove through the streets evidence of the damage the quake caused were everywhere. Building after building, body after body.



Figure 7-41: Men, women and especially children. This is the second dark night the people of Port-au-Prince have had to suffer.



Figure 7-42: Everybody here is sleeping outdoors. After what's happened, they are understandably terrified of sleeping inside.



Figure 7-43: On one side of the road, people huddle to get some rest, on the opposite side of the streets – just a few feet away – the bodies of their loved ones.



Figure 7-44: "The little one, take the little one".



Figure 7-45: No-one here has much food or water. We saw little evidence of international help for these people on our journey through the very centre of the city, the area that has been worst hit.



Figure 7-46: This is where people have come to sleep. They say they are afraid to go back into their houses, they fear something else might happen.



Figure 7-47: In one corner of the square there's even a woman having a baby.



Figure 7-48: It is uncertain just how bad the first days of the new child's life could get.

7.4.1.2 A9: "UN confronts 'worst ever disaster'"

Report A9 focuses on the actions in the city cemetery and the continuation of the rescue efforts. The full report is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMythR6gk0Y> .



Figure 7-49: Nothing is now easy in this devastated country, even burying the dead. The last few bodies are received at Port-au-Prince main cemetery before it is closed, filled to capacity.



Figure 7-50: The names of the dead scrolled on loose pieces of paper. And in one of the city's rubbish dumps, officials have started burning bodies.



Figure 7-51: More than two thousand incinerated together in huge piles.



Figure 7-52: On the outskirts of the city, hundreds more bodies are dumped by the trunkful into [unclear]. These mass graves, a desperate attempt to avert a public-health disaster.



Figure 7-53: "The urgent intervention here is to manage the bodies. We have to get them out and sanitise the area, disinfect it. And we have to prevent epidemics".



Figure 7-54: Haitian man: "I'm hungry. Everybody hungry".



Figure 7-55: "Nobody has been abandoned, but if they have that feeling, and if they see they are not getting the assistance they need, they could start take matters into their own hands, and that is always the danger that in situation like this it could become more volatile, so we are very conscious of that".



Figure 7-56: The rescue efforts continue, but with time against them, bodies are now increasingly being found.



Figure 7-57: For those who remain, singing and praying is the only way to deal with their loss.

7.4.1.3 A10: "Quake victims buried in mass graves"

Report A10 is from the rubbish dump outside Port-au-Prince. The report focuses on the mass burial procedure and the violation of the respect towards the dead associated with it. The full report is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlyAj3Jx1VI> .



Figure 7-58: In Titanyen, outside Port-au-Prince, a truck dumps a load of



Figure 7-59: Now it's the final resting place for many earthquake victims.



Figure 7-60: "The trucks with the dead come and dump them right in the

rubble and corpses into a mass grave. This stretch of arid scrub has long been used as garbage dump.



Figure 7-61: Haitian officials say their work crews have dumped about fifty-thousand bodies into mass graves like these since the earthquake.

Deep trenches lie open, ready for more bodies.



Figure 7-62: There are perhaps thousands of people buried here. Their names have gone unrecorded, and their final resting places are marked only by piles of dirt and rubbish.

hole”.



Figure 7-63: Such hasty treatment of the dead is against Haitian culture and religion.



Figure 7-64: In this Port-au-Prince cemetery, a voodoo shrine sits among the tombs. Voodoo priests have complained the government that these mass burials are sacrilege.



Figure 7-65: The people say they have received no help from anyone. The mass grave has added to their misery. “The bodies are coming from far away, and they pass through here with them”.



Figure 7-66: They drop them nearby, and the smell hit us. It’s not good for the kids. The Haitian government says it has no but to continue the mass burial to protect public health.

7.4.1.4 A11: “Haiti quake survivor's story of despair and loss”

Report A11 brings the story of one survivor and her new life in the aftermath of the quake. The full report is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QURGlMD7uHU>.



Figure 7-67: It once was where Haiti’s affluent and well to do send their children for private education.



Figure 7-68: For the last seven days, the St Louis de Gonzague School in Port-au-Prince has been home to fifteen thousand of Haiti’s earthquake survivors.



Figure 7-69: The stories of despair and loss are too numerous to recount, each one sad and heart-breaking.



Figure 7-70: Josiane’s story is just one paragraph in this terrible story, but so typical... her home crumbled... the twenty eight year old mother and her



Figure 7-71: “My life changed. I had a home and a husband. We used to see these sights on television. I never imagined that I would suffer the



Figure 7-72: Now she has only a few bags to her name, and is relied on outside help, help that is slow in coming.

baby girl... survived, her husband same".
Jounieh... was crushed and died.



Figure 7-73: The UN has delivered water once here, foreign doctors have visited,



Figure 7-74: but food has been sparse and has come not from the massive international aid efforts, but from a small charity from the neighbouring Dominican Republic.



Figure 7-75: Locals started a fire to cancel out the smell of decaying corpses. It has estimated that around twenty thousand people have perished in this area alone



Figure 7-76: "It was so frightening, I was cooking and everything started to shake violently and the walls went crushing down. I was terrified. Now I always feel as if the ground is moving. It feels like a cemetery now. I don't want to come here again until everything is rebuilt".



Figure 7-77: Until then, this could remain her home. She has left with sheets for cover, handouts for food, rough ground for a floor and hopes.



Figure 7-78: The international community say better is coming. The Haitian people are asking when.

7.4.1.5 A12: "Haiti quake UN's most fatal incident"

Report A12 tells the story of one UN family, some of whose members are presumed dead. The report ties together the personal story of one UN employee and the harsh reality the organisation needs to cope with. The full report is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mmq7gn9tns>.



Figure 7-79: A new year wish from one UN family, sent just days before the quake. French-Haitian, Emanuel Rejouis and New-Zealander wife Emily with their three girls.



Figure 7-80: For most of the last decade, the couple worked for the UN in a variety of trouble spots. A post into Port-au-Prince, finally a chance for Emanuel to help those in his home country.



Figure 7-81: "Working for the UN was something that he was very passionate about... He really wanted to be able to be with his family while working, so for him to take the family to Haiti was a dream".



Figure 7-82: But like hundreds of other UN staffers that dream is now shattered. Escaping from the devastated UN office, Emily found the family apartment in ruins, and was able to pull her youngest out of the rubble, injured, but alive. Emanuel and the other two girls, trapped in the rubble, and are now presumed dead.

Figure 7-83: “Of course it’s a very emotional moment for me, because we had a six-storey high building standing behind me, and now as you can see it’s only one storey. And we know that between fifty or up to a hundred people are buried there...”

Figure 7-84: But the task of getting the UN up and running again is enormous. Dozens of key figures, including the mission’s chief and deputy are dead or missing.



Figure 7-85: The UN’s core relief activities – security, food, and medical assistance – will rely heavily on whatever staff it can bring in.



Figure 7-86: Coordinating these activities and that of the dozens of other agencies and governments will be difficult.

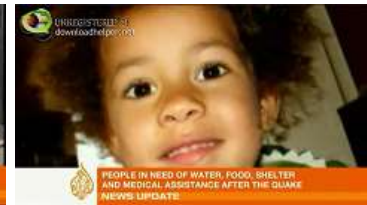


Figure 7-87: Working amid such a mess of losses, the UN now has its own loss to deal with – that of its families and its workers who were in Haiti, hoping to make a difference.

7.4.2 The construction of the dead as human

Similarly to the analysis of the BBC reports, analysis of the construction of the dead as humans by AJE reveals two very different approaches. On the one hand, the dead are dehumanised as they are portrayed as a pile of decomposing corpses; on the other hand, some reports provide a very detailed account of individuals’ stories that acquaints the spectators with a human perspective on the disaster and enables them to see the sufferers as human. These tropes are similar to those found in the BBC coverage, but they offer a more intimate encounter with death, in terms of both its visual depiction and the personal stories of the victims, as I show next.

7.4.2.1 Registering death

AJE’s reports draw a thin and blurred line between life and death and so establish the contingency of death. A number of juxtapositions in report A8 illustrate this point. For example, the reporter juxtaposes the dead with the living survivors whose future is unclear and insecure: “On one side of the road, people huddle to get some rest, on the opposite side of the street – just a few feet away – the bodies of their loved ones” (Figure 7-43). The camera shows explicit images of dead children as they are removed into a pickup truck (Figures 7-41, 7-45), lined up on the ground together with dead bodies, and covered with sheets (Figure 7-43). Other family members and survivors wander around them, one of these asks the cameraperson to shoot footage of a young child, ensuring that his death is registered and circulated around the world (Figure 7-44: “The little one, take the little one”). This interaction with the reporting crew on the

ground is an act of communication, designed to ensure the witnessing of the catastrophe and make this death count.

Report A8 ends with a woman about to give birth (Figure 7-47). This juxtaposition illustrates the thin line that distinguishes the dead from the living, together with the continuous life cycle. On one side of the road, people are lying dead, and on the other side new life begins. But this coda suggests that, even though the cycle of life continues, the chances that the new-born baby will live a proper life are slim (Figure 7-48: “It is uncertain just how *bad* the first days of the new child’s life could get”). The information on the lack of supplies and the absence of rescue teams only stresses that survival might be temporary (Figure 7-45: “No-one here has much food or water. We saw little evidence of international help for these people...”).

Reports A9 and A10 capture the scale of death and the inability to cope with such high numbers. Report A9 focuses on the scene in one of the cemeteries and shows images of coffins (Figure 7-49) and dead bodies surrounded by flies, while the reporter adds that “more than two thousands [dead were] concentrated together in huge piles”, and later were dumped by trucks and burned (Figures 7-51, 7-52). Similarly, report A10 brings the sight of a mass-burial of dumped bodies from a rubbish dump outside Port-au-Prince (Figures 7-58, 7-59, 7-63). These reports establish the centrality of death in this news story and the exceptionality of the burial process, but they also have a counter-function, to which I turn next.

7.4.2.2 Agency

Like in the BBC coverage of the earthquake, AJE also uses contradictory tropes to construct the Haitians as human. Reports A9 and A10 dehumanise the dead by depicting them in a way that takes away their agency. Reports A11 and A12, on the other hand offer a very different portrayal of the loss, which construes *conditional agency*. These two reports show the Haitians as human and as living viable, meaningful lives. They have names, faces, families, occupations and personal stories. These reports offer the opportunity to connect and engage with the people of Haiti. They draw a rich and vivid picture of the lives that Haitians lead, and in so doing set the ground for us, as spectators, to become more emotionally involved and to lament the lost lives. The two reports focus on the stories of two families which, while being very singular, are also illustrative of the broader tragedy. This maintains the balance between singularity and commonality (Boltanski, 1999, p. 12) and produces *emblematic indexicality* (Frosh, 2011, p. 390).

7.4.2.2.1 Lack of agency

Reports A9 and A10 portray the dead as devoid of any characteristics of humanness: their presentation denies any sign of human dignity or any other property that can portray them as human. They are depicted as lifeless decomposing flesh, and it is impossible to identify the individuality of the persons they were before the disaster. Reports A9 and A10 illustrate this approach most tellingly. These reports show piles of dead bodies removed by trucks and burned. “Their names have gone unrecorded, and their final resting places are marked only by piles of dirt and rubbish” (Figures 7-59, 7-61, 7-62). The inability to grant the dead the final gestures of proper burial and gravestones undermines their human dignity and negates their humanness. Indeed, the reporter explains that “such hasty treatment of the dead is against Haitian culture and religion” (Figure 7-61), and in so doing expresses discomfort that the dead were subject to these dehumanising procedures which they do not deserve.

Moreover, the bodies are not associated with the person they used to be, and they are described as a health hazard (Figure 7-66). Their presence in the public domain jeopardises the survivors, and therefore they need to be removed: “We have to get them out and sanitise the area, disinfect it”, says Alex Larson, Haitian minister of public health, suggesting that the dead are now contaminated (Figure 7-53). Such representation of the dead dissociates the human bodies from the notion of “the human”. It erases the human being and reduces him or her to bacterial substrate. It portrays the human body as rubbish disposed of in dumps, and this representation peels off the dignity of the dead. Of course, it is not the coverage of the event that desecrates the dead, it is the actual conditions in Haiti that do so, but inasmuch as the coverage reflects the conditions there, it also establishes the dead as non-humans and suspends the possibility of grieving for their death.

7.4.2.2.2 Obituarial news

Report A12 tells the story of the UN mission to Haiti in general, but focuses on the story of “French-Haitian, Emanuel Rejouis and New-Zealander wife Emily with their three girls” (Figures 7-79, 7-80, 7-87, 7-88). Their story is a story of one family that was eradicated, which is the story of many other families. The reporter tells us their story, while we see the Christmas card they sent to their families and friends, decorated with their pictures from happier times. Jules Hobbs, a family friend, describes Emanuel, who is now presumed dead (Figure 7-81). This form of report establishes the *pre-death agency* of the dead. We see them as vital people, leading meaningful lives, having dreams for the

future. We know their names, we recognise their faces and we know the values they lived by (“Working for the UN was something that he was very passionate about... for him to take the family to Haiti was a dream”). We can imagine their lives prior to their deaths, and we can share the grief of their loss.



Figure 7-88: pre-death agency – an encounter with the dead prior to their death (A12)

7.4.2.2.3 Agents survivors

Report A11 focuses on the story of one survivor, Josiane Jeanpierre, and her new life in the aftermath of the disaster. The reporter’s opening remarks stress that “the stories of despair and loss are too numerous to recount, each one sad and heart-breaking. Josiane’s story is just one paragraph in this terrible story, but so typical” (Figures 7-69, 7-70). This introduction makes us aware of the impossibility of telling all the stories and calls our attention to the story of one individual who represents so many other untold stories. Through this report, we meet Josiane and the life she had before the earthquake – she had a family and she lost her husband, Jounieh – and she also shares her hopes and dreams for the futures. She takes us (together with the reporting crew) to the place where she used to live (Figure 7-76) and to the place where she spends time in her new life. She speaks to the camera in her own voice, in her own language. And she addresses the international community with a plea to save her country: “I want the international community to rebuild my country, because it’s destroyed” (A11). She is a survivor with a “typical” story, and her testimony enables us to see the person behind the figures. This address construes her conditional agency, as it shows her as worthy of being saved,

while suggesting that she cannot save herself and therefore external intervention is needed.

7.4.3 Constituting spatiotemporal commonality

The earthquake became a leading story on AJE's agenda as it broke and received extensive coverage during the following week.⁴¹ In this regard, the coverage of the earthquake was a major news event that manifested the extraordinary dimensions of death in Haiti. The continuous coverage established the sense of shared time, as the spectators were constantly informed of the happenings in Haiti and could engage with its reality in real time and over the course of time.

As in other cases of reporting on an on-going event, the AJE reports are also constructed as open-ended stories. The details are told in the present tense (for example, Figure 7-49: "Nothing is now easy in this devastated country ..."), and include reference to the future. The prospect they offer for the future is unclear and subject to further developments (for example, Figure 7-48: "it is uncertain just how bad the first days of the new child's life could get"; Figure 7-56: "the rescue efforts continue ..."). Thus, the reports leave an open invitation for the spectators to continue following the story and maintain their engagement with the Haitians. Recall report A11, for example, which introduces the hopes and the dreams of Josiane, who has suffered loss and grief. The uncertainty regarding her chances of rebuilding her life and her country suspend the closure of that story (Figures 7-76, 7-77). The descriptions of her current life represent "displacement" ("she is left with sheets for cover... rough ground for a floor ...") and "temporariness" ("until then"). The concluding sentence of the report (Figure 7-78) makes a clear reference to the future ("The international community says better is coming"), while maintaining the notion of uncertainty ("The Haitian people are asking when"). This concluding remark suggests that a "happy ending", as a wishful closure, is still yet to come, if it ever does.

The presence of cameras on location offers the perspective of the people "there". The shoulder cameras bring the point of view of the people on the street, enabling the spectators back home to see how things look as if they were there themselves. However, unlike the BBC coverage, which provided a restrained perspective, AJE confronted its

⁴¹ See, for example, the following news bulletins: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAn6Q9F4DDo>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uPK3Akjo90>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2Z5YAboA7w>.

audience with more graphic images (Figures 7-41, 7-51, 7-63). These include images of decomposing bodies covered with flies and dumped bodies in rubbish trenches. The BBC also used footage depicting similar scenes, but AJE footage is much more detailed. The camerapersons used close-ups rather than long shots and the camera remained focused for a longer time on each object. Thus, while the BBC provided a censored, “sanitised” version of the reality in Haiti, AJE did not filter out disturbing sights. This mode of coverage confronted the spectators with the same gruesome sights the Haitians saw. The spectators were confronted by the horror almost in the same way as the people on location. It seems as if, except for the smell, AJE conveyed every possible representation of death.

7.4.4 Producing a witnessable account

AJE, like the BBC, provides a rich account of the scene, enabling the spectators to see for themselves the reality on the ground and engage with the experiences and feelings of the people at the scene of death. This, in addition to the construal of a sense of injustice to innocent humans who do not deserve such an unfortunate destiny.

7.4.4.1 Perceptual realism

As the discussion above illustrates, AJE’s depiction of the Haiti Earthquake spares no detail in its representation of the scene of death. By taking full advantage of the ability of the camera to capture the scene in front of it, AJE delivers a telling account of destruction of infrastructure and human lives. Most of the images are self-evident, and so the visual narrative conveys the story through the sights themselves, while the verbal narrative provides a general orientation to the location where the images were taken (Figure 7-46: “This is where people have come to sleep”; Figure 7-52: “On the outskirts of the city, hundreds more bodies are dumped...”; Figure 7-58: “In Titanyen, outside Port-au-Prince, a truck dumps a load of rubble and corpses...”).

7.4.4.2 Ideological realism

Together with the superfluous details and factual language, some of the reports construe *ideological realism* by expressing a tone of discomfort about how things are. Reports A9 and A10 include explicit images of decomposing corpses (Figures 7-41, 7-51, 7-63) and the reporters express dissatisfaction with the conditions in Haiti. The burial procedure, they explain, dishonours the dead, and denies them an opportunity for a proper burial according to Haitian religious belief and custom. “Nothing is now easy in this devastated country, even burying the dead” (Figure 7-49), says the reporter in his opening sentence of report A9. Report A10 include close-ups on dumped corpses in rubbish trenches which

did not undergo proper burial, “against Haitian culture and religion” (Figure 7-63). The reporter stresses that “Voodoo priests have complained to the government that these mass burials are sacrilege” (A10). In other words, these reports show explicit images of dead bodies, arguably in a dishonouring manner, but the purpose of this representation is to give voice to the outcry of the local community at being unable to respect their dead in line with their tradition. The spectators are encouraged, therefore, to feel for the Haitian dead and their utter misfortune. The pitifulness of the impossibility even of dying properly is a universal feeling, shared by common humanity, and the spectators witness exactly this. Thus, despite their graphic nature, these two reports appeal to a shared wish for respectful death and the discomfort when such a wish is not realised.

7.4.4.3 Psychological realism

But AJE reports do not focus only on the dead. As we saw, report A11 focuses on one survivor and her personal story. She recounts the horrifying moments of the earthquake (Figure 7-76) and presents her current life to the camera (Figure 7-77). She also shares her feelings of fright and hopes for a better future for her and her daughter. Her testimony offers a piece of *psychological realism* (Chouliaraki, 2006b) that introduces the spectators to the experience of suffering the earthquake and coping with its aftermath (figure 7-76: “It was so frightening... I was terrified. Now I always feel as if the ground is moving. It feels like a cemetery now. I don’t want to come here again until everything is rebuilt”). Similarly, but in a less detailed manner, in report A12, Edmond Mulet from the UN Peacekeeping Operation, shares his feelings in light of the losses his organisation suffered (Figure 7-83: “Of course it’s a very emotional moment for me... we know that between fifty or up to a hundred people are buried there ...”). Such a portrayal of the survivors enables a personal encounter with the people at the scene of disaster, with their experience and with their dreams.

7.4.5 Ethical solicitation

AJE coverage of the Haiti Earthquake positions the spectators as witnesses of a horrific disaster. The explicit footage confronts the spectators with disturbing sights of dumped corpses in bad conditions. Such depiction provides an unusual opportunity to peep at a depiction of the human body under radical conditions. It appeals to the emotions of the spectators as it allows them to explore feelings of repulsion and fascination. The body-in-pain is a subject of fascination despite its gruesomeness (or maybe because of it) (Sontag, 2003), its association with a human subject makes it unsuitable for public contemplation. However, when the human subject is not constructed as “truly human”,

then peeping at the desecrated body becomes less problematic. The disavowal of humanness makes gazing at the dead a legitimate practice (Hall, 1997). And this, in part, was the case of Haiti – the detailed and explicit presentation of death estranged the people at the scene of death, and their construction as non-human allowed the spectators to explore the body-in-pain under extreme conditions.

But AJE's coverage not only dehumanised the Haitians. Along with graphic depiction of death, its reports rendered a sense of pity for the unfortunate conditions the Haitians were destined to. The spectators could learn about the fragility of life and the contingency of death as they met people who had lost everything they had, including their dignity, without the possibility of paying their last respects. In addition, AJE also brought the personal angle of the disaster and encourages the spectators to feel sorry for the Haitians in their calamity and identify with their pain on the basis of common humanity. Such representation of death puts the spectators in intimate contact with "real" people who are suffering extreme conditions of death and suffering. By focusing on the stories of a few families, the spectators are invited to see the people behind the numbers. And the Haitians, on their side, get the chance to speak up and voice their anguish and their plea for help. These tropes enable a bond to be established between sufferers and spectators and facilitate identification with the sufferers' pain and loss. This positions the survivors at a *proper distance* from the spectators and enables the spectators to see the sufferers as human and the sufferers to speak up and voice their wish to be rescued.

7.5 Conclusions

The analysis of the coverage of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake draws on the indications that suffering and indecent *living* conditions were insufficient for the Haitians to become a legitimate cause for humanitarian aid, but once these conditions became deadly, they were constructed as an "emergency". Accordingly, only when people in Haiti died (*en masse*) did they qualify as "human". The analysis shows that when the earth quaked and Haitian living conditions became deadly, then the broadcasters registered the Haitian disaster, while subtly admitting that the well-known harsh living conditions in Haiti were insufficient to receive any media attention or generate a moral response. Yet, this chapter argues that the media performance in response to the earthquake enabled us to reconsider those who lived a "*bare life*" as worthy of solidarity. Using the language of common humanity regarding the death of those whose life was not considered "life"

prior to their death, retrospectively articulates their worthiness of protection and care. The employment of the humanitarian discourse with regard to those who are normally excluded from the category of “the human” re-introduces them into this category and establishes their humanness. In addition, the analysis shows that AJE and the BBC offered a similar account in covering the Haiti Earthquake, both employing the two contradictory narratives of humanitarian discourse which maintain a tension between the “otherness” of distant others and their worthiness of solidarity (Orgad, 2012).

On the one hand, Haitians were presented as very different from the Western spectator. The magnitude of death and the dishonouring conditions of the dead make this encounter with dead overwhelming. The numbers are inconceivable and the conditions are so extreme that they make it hard to develop any compassionate attitude towards the dead; they give no reason to be empathetic with the dead. Such scope of death is beyond our capacity to imagine and comprehend, and so to care for the dead and grieve for their death – as individuals who had the misfortune to die in a violent manner – is almost impossible. Those already dead were presented as lacking any human characteristics – they were faceless, nameless dead, stripped down from their “personality”. Their humanness was reduced to numbers and they became a health hazard. The public domain needs to be sanitised of their presence. Moreover, such elements of coverage portray the human body as infectious and lethal, and so not only does the “humanness” of the dead evaporate, their material remains – the corpse – become a cause of prospective death. The dead are not only the outcome of hazardous conditions, but also themselves a hazard. Such positioning of the dead at the scene of death does not allow the spectators to be empathetic with the dead but makes them repelled by (or fascinated with) the spectacle of mass graves and decomposing corpses. Such depiction deprives the dead of the respect they deserve as humans and takes away their agency. They are not depicted as people with stories to tell. Rather, they are depicted as faceless and nameless decomposing corpses that do not even get to be properly buried. This makes the dead un-grievable. Those still alive were described as facing an uncertain future with the risk of dying due to lack of decent conditions. The Haitians survivors were portrayed as unable to rise from the rubble without external aid.

But, on the other hand, inasmuch as such depiction reduces the dead to faceless corpses, it also made an urgent demand upon spectators to respond to the happening and act upon the deadly conditions in order to minimise these and hopefully reverse them. By

stressing the point that the death of some might turn into the future cause of death of others, the reports told the spectators that death is not the end, and so made a demand that they urgently come to the rescue of the Haitians. This demand was also reflected in the construction of the event as having global importance and as generating global humanitarian relief. The aftermath of the quake were constructed as a state of emergency that required the international community to step in and come to the rescue of Haiti, after the state institutions there collapsed. This was done by introducing the survivors and their deteriorating conditions while stressing that their impending death was still reversible.

The demand to stand by the Haitians was bolstered by another important form of representation, and that was their portrayal as agents. By introducing stories of some Haitians who had died or who had managed to survive, the coverage of the event allowed a personal and intimate encounter with the people who live there, their pain and their dreams. Despite the major differences between the people at the scene of death and the Western spectators at home, this presentation of human death and suffering allows us to identify similarities and diminish dissimilarities. The human tragedy of the Haitian was presented as universal enough for the spectators to identify with the Haitians, since it manifested “similarity in respect to pain and humiliation” (Rorty, 1989, p. 192). Thus, in spite of the overwhelming nature of some of the reports, their coupling with humanising tropes facilitates engagement with the sufferers and the about-to-die. The Haitians were construed as worthy of global solidarity on the basis of common humanity. The survivors were presented with their names. They spoke to the camera and voiced their feelings, pain and frustration. Coming to their help was presented as the right and the moral thing to do in their time of need.

These elements of the coverage humanise the dead. Their humanness – not any other shared affiliation – should be sufficient to generate a moral, humanitarian response (Calhoun, 2010). In the coverage of the Haitian Earthquake we see how this happens by employing three modes of introducing the dead and presenting them as agents. These are *obituarial news*, which establishes the *pre-death agency* of those already dead; the about-to-die trope, which delivers the pleas of dying people and allows them to communicate with the spectators through the camera; and the survivors, who voice their hopes for a better future and show their resourcefulness in overcoming their devastating conditions.

This complex combination of humanisation and dehumanisation elicits what I define as *moving grief*, which appeals to the emotions of the spectators in order to articulate a moral demand that they act upon the remote tragedy. These two contradictory narratives illustrate the Haitians' dependency on global aid. Moving grief positions the Haitians as others, but as other human beings. As such, they are worthy to be rescued but they cannot do this alone. Hence, the world must come to their rescue, and any other option is immoral. By producing an emotional encounter with the insecure lives of the people "out there", and by exploring the possibilities of action, this proposition moves the spectators to act. It facilitates the imagination of the world, while acknowledging hierarchies of power and dependency. It reminds "the world" that power and dependency come with responsibility, and therefore encourages citizens of the world to come together in a time of need.

In terms of the narrative that emerged from the reports, unlike the narratives we met in coverage of the Gaza War or of the Norway Attacks, the Haiti Earthquake, as a natural disaster, had no clear (human) perpetrator. It was "Nature" that caused the devastation, and there are scientific explanations its occurrence.⁴² Therefore, there is no blame and no subject for denunciation. Given the magnitude of the damage, even the Haitian government is hard to blame. This returns the discussion to where it began – a natural disaster as a struggle between humankind and nature. In this struggle all human beings are equally vulnerable and are exposed to risks, regardless of any other affiliation. This construal of the narrative invites a cosmopolitan outlook and a willingness to hear an account of everybody, whoever they are, wherever they are.

⁴² See, for example, the following reports: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsJhijLJB1s>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g77Vwlc1Ik>

Chapter 8: Mediatised grief and the fallacy and promise of cosmopolitanism

8.1 Introduction

In his early work on *proper distance*, Silverstone (2002c) asked the following questions:

“But who is the citizen these days? And how has his or her status as a citizen been affected by the media, both old and new, both broadcast and interactive? In what ways do our media enable or disable our capacity to relate to each other as citizens, but also as human beings? In what ways do they enable or disable us as ethical beings in our relationship to the world?” (Silverstone, 2002c, p. 280)

The analysis offered here addresses these questions by using the concept of *grievability* as a prism through which to analyse the media rituals performed following mass death events. This chapter brings the analyses of the three analytical chapters together, and offers an overview of the various propositions in relation to the interrelations amongst citizens of the world in times of crisis, as brought about by the BBC and AJE in their coverage of the three events: the Gaza War, the Norway Attacks, and the Haiti Earthquake.

All three cases discussed in the analytical chapters are major death events that received extensive media coverage. Yet the coverage of the three events by the two news organisations demonstrates the diversity and variance of *death-related media rituals* and the meaning these selectively assign to the deaths of faraway others. The mediatisation of mass death events by AJE and by the BBC was not uniform or varied in accordance with the type of event, its geopolitics, the parties involved or the news channel. The analysis in the three analytical chapters shows the diversity and complexity of the construction of grievable death, and the range of moral and political demands imposed on spectators.

8.2 Typology of mediatised grief

The analysis has identified four types of grief produced by employing various discursive strategies and technological means – *empathising grief*, *moving grief*, *condemnatory grief*, and *judgemental grief* – each of which construes a different understanding of the other as a fellow citizen and as a human being. The following table summarises how the components of the construction of grievable death are played out in each type (in black)

and what their possible consequences are in terms of ethical solicitation and political proposition (in white):

Table 8.1 - Typology of mediatised grief

	Empathising grief	Moving grief	Judgemental grief	Condemnatory grief
Humanisation				
What registers death? And How?	The switch from profane to sacred registers death	References to the scale of death and fear of future deaths	Indirect references to the consequences of power inequality	Direct references to the consequences of power inequality
How is death represented?	Invisible death; metonymies of death; representations of mourning	Explicit representation of death; obituarial news and personal testimonies of survivors	Indirect reference to human deaths; metonymies of death; invisible dead	Explicit representation of death
What kind of agency is construed?	Sovereign agency of the survivors who act upon their misfortune	Lack of agency for the dead together with pre-death agency of selected dead and survivors having conditional agency	Sovereign agency of the survivors	Agent mourners communicate their pain
Spatiotemporal commonality				
To what extent does the reality at the scene of death become the reality of the spectators?	Disaster marathon imposes the reality “out there” on the spectators; location becomes meaningless as events are registered on screen as they unfold	Asynchronous continuous media event maintains an on-going and detailed engagement with the scene of death.	Asynchronous continuous media event maintains an on-going, detailed but remote observation of the scene of death	Asynchronous continuous media event maintains an on-going and detailed engagement with the scene of death
Witnessability				
What do the spectators witness?	On-going disaster as it happens; survivors’ personal testimonies	Spectacle of death and testimonies of on-going process of dying	Factual information on unjust death	Violent immoral death “as is”
Are the spectators encouraged to bear witness?	They are involved eyewitnesses	They are encouraged to bear witness	They are detached eye witnesses	They are encouraged to bear witness
What is the spectators’ responsibility?	No responsibility	To act upon reality and change it	To judge the actors at the scene of death	To condemn the perpetrators
Ethical solicitation				

	Empathising grief	Moving grief	Judgemental grief	Condemnatory grief
What is the ethical solicitation communicated to the spectators?	To reflect on their vulnerability	To show sympathy to vulnerable others	To be attentive to unjust death	To be responsive to unjust death
What is the position proposed to the spectators?	To be empathic to the bereaved and survivors on the basis of commonality	To respond to their appeal by committing to generate relief	To morally judge the actions at the scene of death in pursuit of justice	to express solidarity by rising against injustice and condemning unjust death
Solidarity and citizenship				
Are the dead worthy of solidarity? And on what basis?	Worthy of solidarity on the basis of commonality	Worthy of solidarity on the basis of difference and dependency	Worthy of justice and pity despite their belonging to a different political sphere	Worthy of solidarity on the basis of the pursuit of justice, despite differences

The following discussion introduces each type of grief in more detail. I shall take *empathising grief* as a point of departure, as it produced the most compelling media ritual and places Western spectators at its centre. The discussion will then proceed to explore the other types of grief produced by the performance of death-related media rituals.

For each type of grief, I explain how the three dimensions of grievability are played out. I explain how the *humanisation of the dead* is constructed in terms of representation and agency; how performativity constitutes *spatiotemporal commonality* and delineates (or blurs) boundaries between zones of safety and vulnerability; and how multimodality construes the burden of *witnessing* death and articulates the interrelations between spectators and sufferers. The combination of these three dimensions makes an *ethical solicitation* that captures a certain understanding of death as grievable, and the claims this makes for the cultivating of solidarity and community ties.

The chapter concludes with a comparison of the two channels – BBC and AJE – across the three case studies.

8.2.1 Empathising grief or grief as empathy from within

Empathising grief refers to the ethical solicitation made by a media ritual that encourages spectators to feel empathy in response to mediated death. This is the solicitation that was made in the coverage of the Norway Attacks both by AJE and by the BBC. These attacks took place in Europe, and the type of media ritual performed after

the attacks presented the dead as familiar to Western spectators, as members of a community whose death is a breakdown of “order”. As the secure zone of Norway became a scene of death, so the security of spectators was disrupted. This media ritual invited spectators to reflect on their own vulnerability and to empathise with the pain and loss of (not very) distant others on the basis of commonality. The solicitation of empathising grief draws on emotional engagement with the dead and the bereaved, without being critical in relation to the circumstances that led to the killing.

In terms of performativity, *empathising grief* is associated with the operation of a *disaster marathon* (Liebes, 1998) following the outbreak of a disaster. This is a prerogative reserved for the media as a social institution whose immediate and spontaneous decision to perform a mediatised ritual constructs the disaster as such. This mode of coverage suspends the everyday media routine in favour of live, continuous transmission of the unfolding disastrous events. During this broadcast, the journalists – inside and outside the news studio – are occupied with clarifying the facts and establishing the circumstances and scale of death. Later, as the coverage continues, testimonies of survivors emerge, verbally recounting a near-death experience. The continuous coverage of the event lasts until order is restored – official rescue agencies (re)gain control over the scene and the local community buries its dead.

The performance of the *disaster marathon* constructs the humanisation of the dead. The switch from the ordinary news schedule to the disaster marathon bears significant symbolic meaning, as it signals the importance of the events and gives “permission” to disrupt and suspend the “ordinary”. It proclaims the sacredness of the lost lives, and makes death meaningful everywhere it is registered. It opens a *liminal phase* that defies the “familiar” and challenges boundaries of space and belonging.

In terms of the representation, the location of death is initially presented on a geographical map, and the happenings are described by aural testimonies delivered by eyewitnesses via telephone lines. These testimonies are later replaced by still and moving images, which give an account of the damage by providing indexical representation of destruction which serve also as a metonymic representation of death. The actual depiction of death (i.e. dead bodies) is absent.

According to the Western understanding of the association between human dignity and the visual display of a dead body, the public presentation of lifeless bodies undermines

the human dignity of the dead (see also D. Campbell, 2004; Hanusch, 2010; J. Taylor, 1998). Such presentation takes away their agency and limits the ability of spectators to be empathetic. Accordingly, by hiding the graphicness of death and providing substitute representations of death, *empathising grief* upholds the dignity of the dead and marks them as humans worthy of honour and respect.

The humanisation of the people at the scene of death is further enhanced by their portrayal as similar to the spectators. They face the cameras and testify, in their own words, on what they have undergone. Their vulnerability is presented in close-up and as pertinent, and spectators are invited to put themselves in the victims' shoes and to identify with the dead and the bereaved as "someone like us" (see also Kyriakidou, 2008, 2015). Moreover, the survivors' capacity to communicate their experiences construes their agency. As mentioned above, the dead are invisible, but despite their absence they can be imagined as the peers of the survivors and therefore as similar to spectators. This construction of similarity turns the commitment to the other into a self-oriented commitment. It makes a call for solidarity from within, solidarity on the basis of similarity. Of the four types of grief I discuss here, *empathising grief*, as its name suggests, is the only type of grief which solicits a solidarity informed by *empathy* (identifying with the other's pain by imagining what is it like to be in the other's condition), rather than *sympathy* (caring for the other's pain).

The switch to the *disaster marathon* takes over spectators' attention and coerces their viewing. Such media performance imposes an engagement with the scene of death and invites participation in the mourning rituals taking place outside the media. It summons spectators to gather around the media and creates an immediate shared space of mourning. The media are the space that spectators connect to in order to feel grief, and it is through the media that they are made to feel as if they are connected to the centre of society (Couldry, 2002). This participatory act of viewing construes a sense of unity. The disaster marathon exposes the spectator to sudden and unexpected mass death, and – in a way – allows the vulnerability of "there" to invade the safety zone of the spectators. This invasion blurs the boundaries between "here" and "there", between "us" and "them". The live transmission of the disaster marathon enables spectators to participate in events as they unfold. The spectators are forcibly invited to feel the experience of "being there" in "real time", without leaving their homes. They can share

in the breakdown of a certain and the familiar order, and in the fear and pain following the collapse of this order.

Thus, spectators/participants in the media rituals of *empathising grief* become witnesses of faraway death, yet this happens without them seeing the actual death. Instead, there are other modalities that introduce them to the scene: their knowledge of the events is obtained through the verbal testimonies of survivors who have witnessed or experienced the attacks, but fortunately survived. Such testimonies “proclaim experiences that cannot be share[d] ... [and] immortalize events that are uniquely tied to the mortal bodies of those who went through them” (Peters, 2001, p. 713). Even though the spectators do not see the actual consequences of the attacks, namely the dead bodies, they still receive a very telling account of the experience of being involved in such attacks.

Empathising grief is mostly geared towards an emotional appeal. It renders the sense of alarm and insecurity caused by the eruption of an unexpected event, and it unites spectators with the bereaved community in sadness over the loss and the hope for order restoration. The ethical solicitation that emerges from such a ritual is to grieve the death of innocent victims. Spectators are asked to be empathetic with the survivors in their painful hours and to care for them, but not necessarily to critically engage with the circumstances of the event. This is a call for empathy without denunciation – a suspension of judgement for the sake of unity and mourning.

The coercive appearance of the other’s vulnerability potentially compels feelings of solidarity with the other at the scene of death. It forces spectators to reflect on their interrelations with the people at the scene of death. However, *empathising grief* is found in cases where the survivors are constructed as resourceful. The survivors in such cases manage to cope with the devastating reality on their own. Accordingly, the need to come to their rescue, to serve as their benefactors, does not emerge. Hence, once the reports inform us that order is being restored, spectators are invited to explore their own feelings of fear and grief. As the notion that “this could have happened to me” is rendered, the spectators identify their own vulnerability as reflected in the survivors’ testimonies. The appeal that *empathising grief* makes, then, focusses on empathy rather than on any other form of engagement.

The ritual of *empathising grief* cultivates solidarity from within, i.e. solidarity within well-established boundaries that already contain those watching and those being watched as equal members of (more or less) the same community. In a way, watching such a disaster on the news is like looking in a mirror – “they” are “us” as much as “we” are “they”, and “we” share what “they” undergo. And so the invitation that emerges is to identify with the pain, loss and fear on the basis of similarity and commonality. Accordingly, *empathising grief*, as a product of *ecstatic news*, appeals to “a community of spectators that is already constituted as a public space” (Chouliaraki, 2008b, p. 380). It reinforces imagined ties that already exist between “similar others”. Given that cosmopolitan solidarity refers to bonds of mutual commitment that transcend pre-existing categories of affiliation, *empathising grief* does not capture this sense of cosmopolitanism. Rather, it further demarcates boundaries of inclusion and exclusion based on similarity. By playing out the similarities between victims and spectators, such a ritual indeed blurs the distinction between the people on the ground and their spectators, yet it also further demonstrates *communitarian ties* that divide them from the rest of the world. Such a ritual reconstructs a bond that is beyond the nation, but not beyond the (usually secure) West. For as long as this media performance is in use - mostly when there are Western victims involved - it offers a universal outlook which is exclusionary, since it does not expand beyond the West (see also Chouliaraki, 2006b).

8.2.2 Moving grief or sympathy and responsibility from outside

Moving grief refers to the ethical solicitation made by a media ritual that encourages spectators to feel sympathy (rather than empathy) in response to mediated death and calls on them to perform responsibility in relation to it. This is the solicitation that was made in the coverage of the Haiti Earthquake both by AJE and by the BBC. This coverage manifested the paradox of humanitarian discourse which simultaneously speaks the language of common humanity while re-establishing hierarchies of power and dependency, and therefore reconstitutes the division between an affluent West and a devastated South.

The media ritual of *moving grief* strives to generate an emotive response to death and to stir action in response to looming death. It does so by juxtaposing the already dead and those facing impending death unless something is done to alter their destiny. This juxtaposition is manifested by the combination of two main tropes – one which captures the scale of death and devastation and the other which focuses on the personal stories

of survivors whose survival is not yet secured. Let me begin with the representations which account for the scale of death and then proceed to the representations which shed light on the personal aspects of the disaster.

The scale of death and devastation is rendered through images of collapsed buildings and infrastructure, piles of abandoned, desecrated corpses, and mass graves, and it is the reference to the large numbers which tells this part of the story. These tropes capture the scale of death, but they impersonalise death and alienate the dead by presenting them as faceless and nameless. Furthermore, the depiction of the dead as decomposing flesh dissociates the human being from the body while presenting the latter as poisonous and contagious. It effaces the human being who has died and denies his or her agency, by treating them as the bodily aftermath of violent death.

As the humanness of the dead fades away, and as it is harder for spectators to see the dead as the persons they used to be, so does the call for identification with the people who have died become weaker, if not silenced. Such a depiction does not encourage spectators to find any similarities between themselves and the dead. And so, although the spectators are exposed to extreme living conditions, they are not encouraged to feel as if they share the humiliation of the distant others. In other words, this set of tropes symbolically dehumanises the dead, and so eradicates, or makes redundant, the demand to grieve for their death. It negates their potential “citizenship” and rejects their claim to solidarity.

The personal angle is delivered by an elaborate focus on a selected case and the detailed story of a specific individual or family. This includes personal testimonies of survivors in their own voices and *obituarial news*, which is comprised of images and stories of the dead victims, presenting their lives before they died. *Obituarial news* portrays the dead as “real” people with names, faces and personal histories. Their appearance in photographs and footage from before their deaths animates them and construes their pre-death agency. Spectators get to know them as living people who are now dead. Similarly, the survivors are presented as communicative. They are also portrayed as “real” people, with faces and voices, who address the spectators through verbal and non-verbal communication. The survivors appear in front of the spectators as human beings who have already survived a major disaster, but are still facing the threat of impending death. They appear as human beings with a strong desire to live, yet their survival is beyond their power and so their agency is construed as conditional. Yet they

make a plea to the spectators, overcoming distance and culture, asking for basic manifestation of solidarity that will secure their future. These tropes construct the people at the scene of death as human and facilitate an intimate encounter with their lives before and after the disaster.

Notwithstanding their dissimilarities, the people at the scene of death and the spectators can find common ground and identify the things they share. And what they primarily share is human vulnerability. Unlike the case of *empathising grief*, where the spectators can imagine themselves as the protagonists in the scene and so identify with the victims and survivors on a broad basis of commonality, in the case of *moving grief*, the basis for identification is thinner and weaker. This solicitation lacks the notion of “this could have happened to me”. It is highly unlikely that Western spectators can imagine themselves at the scene of insecurity and devastation. And yet, the intimate encounter with the people “there” registers its appeal, making their voices heard. This encounter with human calamity throws into relief the dependency of the people on the ground on the people watching at home.

The construction of death as a gradual yet reversible process of dying entails the media ritual of the *asynchronous continuous media event* through which the media maintain a continuous coverage which is more extensive than *emergency news* (Chouliaraki, 2006b), but less coercive than the *disaster marathon* (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002; Liebes, 1998). Initial reports are delivered early on by laypersons from the scene, and later reports are delivered by journalists on location. The reports explore the scene and allow spectators to share in the perspective of the people on the ground. The extensive media coverage follows a single massive event over many days, but within the regularity of daily news reporting. Reports of the happenings constantly emerge, but they do not take over the entire news edition, and they are not reported in a live transmission.

The tropes which dehumanise the dead reduce death to a spectacle and so make it visible, but not witnessable. The representation of the radical conditions of the dead estranges them and allows spectators to see them as objects rather than subjects. The objectification of the dead allows the spectators to explore the decaying bodies without guilt or voyeurism, or the obligation to respond to it (Hall, 1997). This encounter with the spectacle of death can be thrilling or shocking. In the case of shock, according to Sontag (2001), it can even create a sense of paralysis. In the case of thrill, it can generate a strong emotional reaction such as repulsion or disgust, yet it is less likely to emotionally

connect the spectators to the people who have died. Accordingly, since such depiction shifts the attention to spectacles of death, it does not encourage any critical reflection on the conditions of living and dying. In other words, the spectators get to see explicit images of death, but such images lack the moral burden of witnessing. They render death as incomprehensible, and therefore it makes no moral demand for responsibility. Furthermore, the focus on unburied, decaying bodies further stresses the irreversibility of death and the impossibility of acting upon it. These are bodies that cannot address us, and so make no appeal to us to be answerable.

Had the representation of death been limited to graphic images of death, it could have been considered an example of the *economy of display* (Campbell, 2004), which does not raise any ethical demand. However, the depiction of the devastating death of faraway others can be utilised to make claims for solidarity, by stressing the utter dependency of the living people at the scene of death on people beyond their immediate surroundings. This framing of death makes an ethical solicitation for spectators to realise their role in relation to the reality of distant others. It encourages spectators to comprehend that the devastated others depend on them. The encounter of mass, dishonouring death retrospectively establishes the unrealised commitment that spectators have to others who are dependent on them, and the spectators have the obligation to attend to the misfortune of those others. Even if the humanness of the dead fades away, the incomprehensibility of this human condition still resonates with past major catastrophes, which serve as a reminder of the consequences of an unfulfilled commitment to human devastation and so conveys the demand for solidarity. This plea joins other tropes that construe the dead as human and therefore as grievable.

Thus, although such representation makes it harder for spectators to imagine themselves at the scene, they can rather easily imagine themselves as benefactors, precisely because of the power inequality between spectators and sufferers. This imaginative task is possible only to the extent that the spectators reflect on what connects them with the distant others, which is human vulnerability and interdependency. The appeal this representation makes allows spectators to identify their own role in the potential recovery of distant others, while introducing the possibilities for actions which can actually change the conditions of the people at the scene of death (donating money through social networks, for example). As such, *moving grief* reminds us of the bond that connects spectators and sufferers and the obligation to give an account of suffering,

despite any national, ethnic, religious, cultural or geographical differences. This is a manifestation of cosmopolitanism that draws on moral principles and realises a commitment to take responsibility for the wellbeing of the other simply because he or she is human.

Moving grief, then, makes a claim on solidarity with distant others, but on the basis of difference and dependency and not of similarity. It does so by employing a dual set of representational tropes which at times contradict each other – *dehumanising the dead* and representing them as the “ultimate other”; and *humanising the dead* by portraying their vulnerability as common to all humans. The juxtaposition of these two sets of tropes produces the ethical demand of *moving grief*, which is that spectators come to the rescue of those who are worthy of being rescued, but cannot rescue themselves. By juxtaposing the utter devastation of the already-dead and the about-to-die, *moving grief* spells out the urgency of responding and the possibility of effecting a change. Thus, by playing out the differences between spectators and sufferers, *moving grief* presents these differences in terms of dependency and thus makes a call for spectators to act upon the devastating reality of the sufferers. Indeed, this combination points out the different living conditions on both sides of the screen – in the secure zone of viewing and the insecure zone of disaster, yet it also stresses the spectator’s responsibility to act upon the insecurity in the zone of disaster.

However, as *moving grief* relies on an emotional appeal, it fails to offer a more profound engagement with the scene of death or, more precisely, with its circumstances. Resting upon the construction of an event as a *state of emergency* (Calhoun, 2004, 2010), *moving grief* proposes an urgent yet ad-hoc connection with distant others. By giving precedence to personal emotional stories and stressing the immediacy of a possible response, this proposition obscures the long-term, underpinning structural factors which enabled the disaster in the first place.

8.2.3 Judgemental grief or grief as an aloof judgement

Judgemental grief is the ethical solicitation made by media rituals that encourage spectators to exercise their judgement like jury members at a trial, and it is only suggestive in terms of a moral “verdict”. This kind of mediatisation conveys information that provides evidence of allegedly criminal acts. Its ethical solicitation derives from the use of factual information rather than from the affective appeal of a report on unjust death, while attempting to balance contradictory narratives. *Judgemental grief* refers to

the construction of death as grievable in the sense that it considers violent deaths as consequences of inequality, injustice or even criminality, and as such, these acts necessitate denunciation and punishment. Yet, inasmuch as it pursues justice, it does so in a subdued manner. This is the solicitation made by the BBC in its coverage of the Gaza War.

Judgemental grief tells a story about death without dwelling on the personal accounts of the human beings affected by violence. Although such coverage attempts to outline the complexity of the scene of death, it does not offer a detailed account of the human aspect of the event from the perspective of the victims, and it refrains from providing explicit evidence of actual deaths. The people at the scene of death are voiceless – their personal stories are untold and the representation of deadly reality is removed and absent. Yet, as stories of death are implicit and suggestive, stories of survival do appear and construe the agency of survivors as they struggle to cope with their devastating conditions.

A media ritual that produces *judgemental grief* construes distant others as human in the sense that their death counts as a serious matter which deserves public attention, and yet the people who have died do not count as citizens in the sense that they remain outside spectators' immediate boundaries of care. This is not a clear case of "bare life", since death is acknowledged and presented as wrongful, yet the "citizenship" of those who have died is invalid or defective, since they remain voiceless. As "external" beings, outside the political, the dead are worthy of solidarity, but this is a thin solidarity that signifies exclusion more than inclusion.

Judgemental grief holds a tension between the extraordinariness of an event and the ordinariness of its coverage. This tension is reflected in the encapsulation of an event of an immense, even historic significance within the regularity of news broadcasting. Like in the case of *moving grief*, the extensive, continuous coverage of the event marks its significance and importance, yet its maintenance within the familiar and known boundaries of news reporting delimit its importance and do not allow the "celebration" of such death. As an *asynchronous continuous media event*, such extensive coverage calls the attention of spectators to unjust faraway violent death, yet it does not permit the event to take over the spectators' agenda. This media performance signals that the reported remote deaths are worthy of attention, but although such deaths are problematic, they still fit within a broader understanding of "order" and "the ordinary".

In other words, in spite of the invitation to engage with the scene of death, such a proposition construes the death of the distant other as a transgression of order that is unjust, but not unexpected. Although such deaths are presented as disturbing and unfortunate, there is no spelling out of an urgency to respond to them that extends beyond the locality of its occurrence. Such deaths are maintained as a remote matter that, in spite of its historic importance, does not impose itself on the secure zone of spectators.

By allowing the reality “there” to register in the “here” of spectators, *judgemental grief* claims the importance of death and encourages an engagement with it, but in an unimposing way. *Judgemental grief* does not seek to threaten spectators or make them as vulnerable as the people on the screen. In this sense, it opens a window for spectators to witness the reality “out there”, but this imaginative window also serves as a barrier that maintains the division between the separate zones of safety and danger. It is the witnessing of the scene of death from the safety of the living room that upholds the division between “here” and “there”, while playing out the intrinsic commitment to being attentive to human suffering. It is a remote yet politically compelling account that falls outside spectators’ immediate boundaries of care while still demanding their attentiveness.

Judgemental grief is not geared towards an affective engagement with the scene, but an informative one. It does this by offering a *detached witnessing* (Chouliaraki, 2012, p. 144) of the scene of death.⁴³ This form of reporting focuses on indisputable facts combined with commentary provided by the rival parties, while leaving aside elements which can elicit an emotional response. It tells a story of death on a geopolitical level in order to allow an informed analysis of the circumstances of death. As such, *Judgemental grief* fails to capture or convey the emotion of grief. The spectators are not provided with materials that can form a strong emotional engagement with the dead or the bereaved. The invisibility of the dead and the limited attention to the lives of the people affected by the events make it harder for spectators to identify with people at the scene or to engage with their reality on a personal level.

However, although it does not encourage emotional response, such coverage still alludes to grief as a political resource by speaking to the political consciousness of spectators. Even though *judgemental grief* provides an aloof account of the scene, it still invites

⁴³ For an audience account of detached witnessing, see Kyriakidou (2015).

spectators to morally reflect on the cause of death. By calling attention to unjust death, *judgemental grief* seeks to invoke spectators' commitment to pursuing justice. It offers solid evidence that injustice occurs, and as it positions the spectators as jurors, it requires them to pursue justice. They are placed under a duty to morally determine whether the violent mass death they are witnessing is problematic or not.

The ethical solicitation associated with *judgemental grief* is the least compelling one – to be attentive to distant death. This media ritual construes distant death as grievable in the sense that it identifies death as a matter of public concern, yet it is wary of making blunt accusations. Instead, such a media ritual positions spectators as jurors who are requested to morally assess the events taking place on the screen, while the media presents the arguments in favour of and against the actions that caused mass death.

This burden of the pursuit of justice brings to the fore the interrelations between spectators and sufferers, but although it makes a claims on spectators to play a role in the lives (and deaths) of the people on the ground, it also limits their responsibility for changing these conditions. It encourages spectators to morally assess the reality “out there”, but does not spell out a call for their involvement. They are informed, but not mobilised. *Judgemental grief* does not unsettle spectators, although it supplies sufficient evidence for them to acknowledge their role in relation to the unsettling reality of distant others. And their role, in this case, is to be aware of injustice against other human beings, while acknowledging their limited ability to act upon it. The spectators are encouraged to be in solidarity with others on the basis of common humanity, while recognizing that the distant others are beyond the spectators' immediate boundaries of care and commitment.

8.2.4 Condemnatory grief or grief as an inclusive commitment

Condemnatory grief refers to the ethical solicitation made by media rituals that encourage the spectator to express condemnation of wrongdoing as a manifestation of solidarity. This is the solicitation made in the coverage of the Gaza War by AJE. Similarly to the case of *judgemental grief*, the solicitation made by *condemnatory grief* is to pursue justice, but in this case, the media serves as the prosecutor, pointing an accusing finger at the evildoers. *Condemnatory grief* makes death matter by not letting those responsible for unjust death avoid denunciation. It is precisely the ethical solicitation that tells its spectators that they cannot will away the mediated encounter with death, since this death is a product of unjust and unequal power relations, and that if they

choose to dismiss this ethical solicitation they accept their own complicity. The discourse of *condemnatory grief* asserts the interconnectedness between spectators and the dead, and the commitment they have to the wellbeing of one another (even if the dead are already dead). The media ritual of *condemnatory grief* employs various tropes to register death as affective *and* political, as resonating with a terrible past, and thus necessitates contemporary conviction. It is a type of grief that makes death politically and historically grievable.

Unlike *judgemental grief*, *condemnatory grief* brings to the fore the human aspect of a deadly reality. It makes death visible and inescapable – in images and stories – in order to formulate a compelling moral demand. *Condemnatory grief* enables an intimate encounter with the dead and their bereaved community. It shows explicit and detailed images of those who have died and gives voice to the pain and outcry of the bereaved relatives. In addition, *condemnatory grief* offers a historical contextualisation of events and associates them with the past.

Condemnatory grief constructs the humanness of the dead by making their death count. It positions death at the centre of the story it tells and provides a detailed account of what this means to the bereaved community. By presenting an explicit representation of desecrated dead bodies, *condemnatory grief* alludes to the brutality of the actions that caused the death. By enabling an intimate encounter with bereaved relatives, it shows the impact that death has on a local community and makes their pain evident. The intimate encounter with the pain and loss of people at the scene of death makes grief shareable – it allows spectators to feel close to the bereaved and to be awed by the ostensibly criminal circumstances of death.

Much like *moving grief* and *judgemental grief*, *condemnatory grief* does not include a suspension of the ordinary media routine in light of an unusual mass death event, though it does give priority to its coverage. In other words, *condemnatory grief* does not proclaim the sacredness of lost life by making an exceptional move into *liminality*, but it does perform an *asynchronous continuous media event*, which grounds the story it tells as worthy of attention precisely because it is a story about the unjust death of human beings.

By allowing the horror of death to appear in public, *condemnatory grief* registers death as alarming everywhere it appears. Moreover, this representation undermines the

delineation between the zones of safety and of danger. By offering a detailed and uncensored account of the deadly reality “out there”, this media performance facilitates an invasion of vulnerability into the secure zone of viewing. Spectators are exposed to the horror of violent death and confront the fragility of the human body. And, as they cannot escape the disturbing imagery of death, they are encouraged to position themselves vis-à-vis the actions that caused it.

But it is not only visual representations of violent death that play out the moral burden of witnessing. It is also the historical references this evokes that serve as a reminder of the role of spectators as political actors and the culpability of indifference and inaction. Such mediated encounters with death and its political context call on the spectators to fulfil their role as citizens of the world and to exercise their duty to care for fellow citizens even if perceived as distant others. This is an example of *committed witnessing* (Chouliaraki, 2012, p. 145), in which the media take seriously their commitment to justice and put forward an attempt to change reality rather than simply observe and report it.

The ritual of condemnatory grief equates solidarity and denunciation. It encourages spectators to be involved onlookers, and to locate what they see in a broader historical context. The faraway dead are symbolically portrayed as different from Western spectators. Condemnatory grief works to keep the dead within the boundaries of an imagined community, so they are not excluded. And even though the dead are remote, they still deserve the same sense of moral justice. The insistence on registering their death protects the dead and does not let their death become invisible or meaningless.

By making a dual – emotional and political – appeal, *condemnatory grief* articulates an ethical solicitation to bear witness to the death of distant others and be compassionate to them in their devastation, while demanding the denunciation of wrongdoing and the pursuit of justice. The reference it makes to crimes against humanity highlights the moral impossibility of remaining uninvolved or untouched and adds a sense of urgency to the halting of further deaths. Such a proposition emphasises the dependency of distant others on the political involvement of spectators outside the scene of death, while asserting that morally these crimes are not beyond their responsibility. It positions the spectator as a potential benefactor whose action can potentially save the other or at least serve justice. Exercising such an unconditioned commitment to distant others is a manifestation of *cosmopolitan solidarity* that tears down national boundaries and

transcends cultural affiliations as it realises a moral bond that connects citizens of the world in times of crisis.

8.3 Mediatized grievability and the call for cosmopolitan solidarity

After exploring the various propositions for constructing the grievability of distant others, as found in the AJE and BBC coverage of the three case studies, I now return to the question that motivated this thesis. This is the extent to which different death-related media rituals following mass death events advocate unity and selectively cultivate solidarity and a sense of cosmopolitan community. More specifically, I now address the moral demand each proposition makes and the boundaries it delineates in terms of solidarity and commitment.

Using Silverstone's questions concerning citizenship and proper distance as a point of reference, the analysis shows how death-related media rituals construct citizenship at a global level in various – sometimes contradictory – ways. Whereas *moving grief* and *condemnatory grief* construe death as a catalyst of cosmopolitan solidarity between fellow citizens of the world, *empathising grief* and *judgemental grief* – each in its own way – both construe distant death as a local experience that cultivates a communitarian outlook and reinforces boundaries of belonging that limit the obligation to ensure the wellbeing of the distant other beyond one's own locale.

Empathising grief upholds the association of solidarity and similarity. It encourages identification with the other as a reflection of the self. Indeed, it is triggered by vulnerability, which can serve as a basis for cosmopolitanism (Chouliaraki, 2013), but it is the vulnerable other who is similar to "us" who makes the appeal for solidarity. It is the relatively shared identity which facilitates identification, and as long as *empathising grief* applies (solely) to solidarity with someone similar, it brings no message of cosmopolitanism; it maintains a communitarian outlook which privileges some, but not all.

Judgmental grief responds to violent death, but it maintains the dead as "others" and beyond confined boundaries of care and responsibility. While the pursuit of justice is integral to this proposition, *judgemental grief* lacks the transgressive element which defies established boundaries. While it makes apparent the consequences of the use of violence, the vulnerability of others remains hidden and suggestive. Since this

proposition does not position a human subject at its centre, it limits the engagement with the other as a basis for solidarity, and this is one of the main differences between judgmental grief and condemnatory grief.

The two types of grief that foster a *cosmopolitan outlook* are *condemnatory grief* and *moving grief*. Both these types of grief encourage spectators to be in solidarity with distant others despite their differences, but each draws on a different motivation. The articulation of these two types construes distant others as vulnerable human beings and establishes sufficient grounds for generating a moral response from spectators despite their differences. It is precisely the unequal power relations between those who watch and those being watched that necessitate a moral response. In the case of *moving grief* the emphasis is on the vulnerability of the other and his or her dependency on spectators' reachable response. In the case of *condemnatory grief*, it is the reliance on spectators' sense of justice and political consciousness which encourages a moral response to the appearance of the vulnerable other.

Whatever the proposition the media make, the above typology demonstrates how news about death can serve as a moralising force which facilitates spectators' imaginations regarding their relations with and commitments to faraway others. All four types of grief explored here show how the media performance following the occurrence of mass violent death can serve as a defining moment for global publics to consider how (if at all) they fit together and what the bonds between them mean in terms of responsibility and solidarity.

8.3.1 The possibility of non-grief

All three events examined in this thesis are mass violent death events which received extensive coverage both by AJE and by the BBC. Moreover, as the analysis shows, in all three cases, the media ritual performed by the two channels elicited grief and constructed distant death as grievable. However, this does not mean that every mass violent death event becomes a major news event, or that it becomes a major news event on every news channel, or that every death-related news item constructs a grievable death. In fact, only very few death events become major news events, and it is fair to guess that, more often than not, the media coverage of death events does not construct death as grievable. Therefore, we need to consider that, in addition to the typology of grief proposed here, there is another, complementary proposition of non-grief.

In her work on grievability, Butler (2004, 2009) coins this term in relation to cases where death is not registered at all, and even if it is registered it does not raise any moral or political demand. This is Butler's main concern – that some violent deaths are non-grievable and therefore become legitimate. Accordingly, we should also consider the occasions when the conditions for the construction of grievable death are absent, and therefore the mediatisation of death (or lack thereof) fails to construct death as grievable; or, to put it differently, the occasions when death is constructed as non-grievable.

Earlier, I argued that if there is no human subject there is no claim on grief. Throughout the analysis, we came across representational tropes that dehumanise the dead. For example, in the analysis of the coverage of the Haiti Earthquake, I pointed to some tropes that objectify the dead or present them as lacking agency (Figures 7-16, 7-51, 7-52, 7-59, 7-63). Similarly, the AJE report from the morgue in Gaza (A3) presents images of lifeless, bleeding bodies (Figures 5-85, 5-59). When such a representation of death comes without any redressing, humanising tropes, it dehumanises the dead and potentially blocks the possibility of grief. In cases where the dead are represented only by images of corpses, and in ways that dishonour their memory, then the humanness of the dead fails to emerge, and therefore makes no claim on solidarity, identification or grief. On the contrary, such a depiction of the dead turns them into an object, something we can look at and explore without any sense of embarrassment or shame (Hall, 1997).

In addition, there are many other cases of death that make it onto the news. Some of these cases are of violent or public deaths or pertaining to large number of victims, and therefore they are newsworthy. However, these cases are reported briefly without any reference to the human subjects at the scene of death. For example, in her work on *The Spectatorship of Suffering*, Chouliaraki (2006b) describes a news category which she calls *adventure news*. This category refers to brief news items on suffering (or death), like a shooting incident (in Indonesia), a boat accident (in India) or floods (in Bangladesh). These items are comprised of short verbal descriptions, using factual language to describe the happening. The visual representation varies from dots on a map to footage of the scene, yet there is no reporter at the location of the event and the narration is delivered from the studio. More importantly, despite the fact that this is news of mass violent death, death is invisible and there is no reference to any human subject.

Adventure news, then, is a news category which makes no invitation to grieve for the dead. It is a news category of non-grief, which complements the typology proposed here.

In addition, there are cases of news stories about death which construct death as a legitimate or even justified outcome. Reports on executions of (political) criminals or the killing of criminals/perpetrators at a scene of death are often constructed as justice in action (see also Lesser, 1995). In these cases, death is visible and witnessable, but witnessing is here perceived as attending to the service of justice. It is a passive mode of participation in an act of restoration, rather than the acceptance of a commitment to pursuing a prospective justice.

These examples join a myriad other cases of death that simply do not make it onto the news, yet require further consideration of their construction of death as non-grievable and of categories complementary to the typology proposed here.

8.4 Grievable death by AJE and BBC – similarities and differences

In *Media and Morality*, Roger Silverstone writes:

“Viewers watching Al-Jazeera will obviously be seeing a different world from those watching Fox. And those differences are palpable and crippling. Yet they will be seeing the world through the media, and to a significant degree so do we all” (Silverstone, 2006, p. 31).

In this thesis, I have compared the world as it is shown on our screens by AJE and by the BBC when reporting on mass death events. What was the worldview they offered to their audience and what was the understanding they fostered in relation to global solidarity in times of mortal crises?

Contrary to the intuitive conclusion that a comparison of Western and non-Western media would show different worldviews (as also suggested by Silverstone’s quote above), the analysis of the coverage of the three case-studies by the two channels showed a similarity in many respects. Both channels considered faraway death as an important matter which required an immediate and extended attention and responded similarly in terms of the media ritual they performed. Both channels provided an extensive and continuous coverage and in some cases they even used the same raw footage (though they did not always use it in a similar way). The main differences were in the attention they paid to the human aspects of each story and in the explicitness and graphicness of the images they used – AJE focused more on personal stories and used

more graphic images than the BBC. The comparison of the coverage of the Norway Attacks and of the Haitian Earthquake showed that AJE and the BBC offered similar perspectives and raised similar moral concerns. However, the comparison of the coverage of the Gaza War showed different moral solicitations, and this was the case where the differences between the channels were most remarkable. These findings also mean that there is no clear association between the type of event or other geo-political factors and the type of media coverage or the media organisation.

In relation to the Norway Attacks, the analysis showed that both channels produced *empathising grief*. AJE and the BBC offered similar accounts most of the time, with some minor nuances. The humanness of the dead was constructed by switching to the *disaster marathon* mode as the news broke. In so doing, both channels claimed the importance and urgency of the event and the sanctity of lost lives. In addition, both channels provided a representation of “the other” as very similar to the spectators, and it was the verbal testimonies of the survivors, rather than visual representation, which facilitated the encounter with death. Both channels constituted spatiotemporal commonality by maintaining an extensive coverage of events from the scene throughout their unfolding, and registering them on the screen in real time until their gradual conclusion. This performance allowed spectators to be involved eyewitnesses and invited them to reflect on their own vulnerability on the basis of commonality.

The main difference in the coverage of the Norway Attacks was subtle: AJE presented a larger diversity of victims’ ethnicity and in so doing challenged the common representations of “Norway” (or “Norwegian”) and of “Europe” more generally. By allowing a diverse representation of the victims, AJE offered a more inclusive outlook than the communitarian outlook offered by the BBC. This portrayal of European victims also implies that the concepts of West and Westerners are not fixed, as one might think, but are in fact more diverse and can change over time.

The coverage of the Haiti Earthquake was also similar on both channels. They used similar tropes to account for the scale of death and how the disaster affected individual people on the ground, offering detailed testimonies of survivors. Both channels used a graphic representation of death, yet constructed the people at the scene of death as worthy of being saved. They both articulated an urgent demand for action by pointing to the fragility of the situation in Haiti and the thin line between life and death, and by expressing discomfort with the dishonouring burial procedures. The representation that

was used by both channels facilitated the construction of conditional agency for the people at the scene of death and their dependency on people beyond their own locale. Both channels maintained an extensive and continuous coverage of events and had news teams on the ground which collected the news from the multiple event scenes. Additionally, they claimed that despite the utter devastation there was still a chance to save lives, and therefore intervention was urgently needed. In so doing, they made the case for *moving grief*. Here too, the differences between the two channels were minor, with AJE focusing more on personal stories of casualties and survivors than the BBC did.

The main difference I found between the two channels was in the coverage of the Gaza War. Both channels identified the Gaza War as a significant event and therefore provided detailed and continuous coverage, but it was registered differently in terms of framing and representation. The story that emerged from the BBC was a story about war as a military operation, with relatively little attention to human losses. The BBC brought information about the suffering of the civilian population in Gaza, but spectators were not provided with clear or detailed information about how deadly the situation was. Nor could they learn about the feelings and experiences of the bereaved and the survivors. Death was represented in an implicit way, with recurring metonymies of death like war machinery, collapsed buildings and debris. Although the reports pointed to the unjust death of innocent victims, the incidents were described in an objective language and the spectators were invited to make their own judgement. AJE, on the other hand, was much more blunt and explicit in its depiction of the war. The focus of the story was the unjust death of innocent Gazans. It was represented by explicit representations of corpses, figures for the number of dead and intimate encounters with the bereaved and with survivors. While maintaining mostly an objective language in narrating the story, AJE brought statements of spokespersons from both sides of the armed conflict, who made serious accusations of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Despite the attempts to balance the accusations, the overall argument was that Israel was a brutal aggressor whose actions needed to be condemned. These statements situated the events taking place within a broader historical context, and therefore asserted the need not to be passive in relation to these events.

As for the interrelations between spectators of the Gaza War and the people in Gaza, each channel articulated a different understanding of the demand for mutual accountability. The media-rituals performed by the two channels offered different

understandings of issues such as interdependency, mutual commitment, moral agency, and collective identity. These propositions varied in terms of the emotional appeal they made and the moral judgement they encouraged. While the BBC delivered a restrained account of the war that did not elicit a fierce moral demand, AJE coverage of the war undermined the safety zone the screen allows. Furthermore, AJE used the screen to invade the living rooms of their audience in order to confront them with the moral demand to respond to the atrocities of war. So the ethical solicitation made by AJE was much more demanding than that made by the BBC. AJE's spectators had to engage with the obligation to account for the lives of the Gazans and to express condemnation, while the BBC's spectators were positioned as external, uninvolved observers.

Taking an overview of the three cases, the analysis shows that AJE was more devoted to promoting a cosmopolitan outlook than the BBC. The three accounts from AJE offered a more compelling construction of "human beings" at the scene of death, a more intriguing spatiotemporal commonality, and a more demanding witnessing. In so doing, the channel maintained an understanding of the value of life and the immorality of overlooking death, regardless of religion, nationality or location. The BBC, on the other hand, was more communitarian in its approach. Holding a more conservative view of the hierarchies of life and death construed for its audiences, the BBC maintained Europe at the centre and Europeans as a powerful party in global power dynamics (see also Joye, 2009).

Yet it would be fair to acknowledge that these two channels do not stand in sharp opposition to one another, and more often than not they both fulfil the role of giving voice to the voiceless, or - in the vocabulary of this thesis - making the non-grievable grievable. In this regard, the analysis offered here questions prevailing perceptions of flow vs. counter-flow and West vs. non-West, as it shows that in some cases global news organisations do not necessarily adhere to their classification as "hegemonic" or "counter-hegemonic"; "Western" or "non-Western". The analysis offered here shows how a Western and a non-Western news organisation both treat remote death - inside or outside Europe - in a similar way, and that the two organisations do not necessarily value or devalue lost lives in accordance with fixed geo-political characteristics. Both channels cultivated cosmopolitan solidarity with the people of Haiti, who live (and die) in a poor non-Western country; they both conveyed a terror attack in a European capital as alarming and surprising; yet they treated the Gaza War in two different fashions.

What can explain these differences and similarities? This question will require a different research design focussed more on the newsroom culture of these two organisations and the political atmosphere in which they operate. However, what is already known about the background of the two organisations can offer initial explanations.

The similarities can be explained on the following grounds: both channels position themselves as committed to cosmopolitanism, but in fact they both have the same “imagined viewer” in mind – English-speaking viewers interested in world news – which reflects a rather narrow understanding of cosmopolitanism. Nonetheless, the audiences of both channels have similar characteristics. In addition, both channels work to position themselves as an alternative to American networks.

Another explanation of the similarities derives from the organisational cultures of both channels and the human resources they employ. A large portion of AJE’s personnel was trained and indoctrinated at the BBC. AJE was founded shortly after the BBC had to cut its personnel, and so many former employees of the BBC were recruited to the new enterprise, which later became AJE (Powers, 2012). Thus the working culture of the BBC was duplicated in AJE. This does not mean that these two organisations have identical organisational cultures, but they share a similar understanding of the role of journalism in a global age and use similar journalistic practices.

The characteristics of two of the three of the case studies – the Norway Attacks and the Haiti Earthquake – can also explain why their coverage was similar on both channels. The Haiti Earthquake has a very clear frame – it is a story of an impoverished country that suffered a major natural disaster. The main conflict at the centre of the story is between humankind and nature. This is the immediate essence of this story and therefore it was easily adopted by the two channels. Indeed, this news story can be told and framed otherwise (by raising questions about the allocation of resources in a global setting, for example), but, as an on-going news event, its treatment by both channels corresponds with the prevailing understanding in journalistic treatment of stories of this kind. Similarly, the Norway Attacks have a straightforward frame. Like other terror attacks which are utilised to promote a worldview that will challenge prevailing power dynamics, the attacks aimed to defy contemporary Norwegian (and European) politics, but the attacker did not succeed in blurring the division between “good” and “bad” in this case. Accordingly, the news coverage of the events reflected this consensus, shared by both AJE and the BBC.

The Gaza War, on the other hand, can explain the dissimilarities between the channels. In this case, there was a clear and long-lasting conflict that reached yet another climax. However, this regional episode can be understood as representing a broader issue which relates to the use of military superiority by Western countries against weaker, non-Western (mostly Arab) countries in recent years; or even to colonialism in a post-colonial era. AJE's critical approach should then be understood as an observance in this specific case of its general motivation to "speak truth to power". In this regard, AJE's general motivation to give voice to the voiceless and provide a counter-narrative to prevailing Western worldviews was supplemented by a regional Middle-Eastern agenda. The use of military power in this case was against an Arab entity, and it should not come as a great surprise that AJE presented a critical approach towards what the Arab world saw as the aggressive side.⁴⁴ The BBC expressed more subtle criticism, which can be explained by its general approach of fairness and balance. It would be interesting to compare the coverage of the 2008-2009 Gaza War with the two other military escalations of 2012 (Operation Pillar of Defence) and 2014 (Operation Protective Edge) and to examine whether the BBC changed over time its approach regarding the focus it gave to the human aspects of war; and whether AJE was critical also in relation to the use of weapons against a civilian population by Hamas.

8.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of the coverage of the three mass death events by AJE and by the BBC shows that death is a useful prism through which to unpack broader worldviews and propositions regarding the understandings of the global social order. It shows that the occurrence of death – and especially mass violent death – is perceived as a defining moment which invites reflections on social ties and moral commitments. This perception is manifested in the performance of the media following such events, and this performance invites people around the world to contemplate their responsibility in relation to vulnerable others. These ethical and political ties are not constant or uniform, but it is through the media that they are shaped and constituted.

The analysis offered here also encourages us to reflect on our understanding of the power dynamics within a global media sphere. The fact that two different news channels are traditionally cast as representing competing worldviews does not mean that they always offer opposite accounts, and it does not mean that they always subscribe to the

⁴⁴ For other studies of AJE's coverage of the Gaza War, see Gilboa (2012) and Merriman (2012).

prevailing understanding of hierarchies of life and death. In fact, as the analysis shows, news channels from the two sides of the hegemonic/counter-hegemonic divide can offer similar propositions concerning cosmopolitan (and communitarian) solidarity in a global age.

Chapter 9: Conclusions

On December 18, 2012, four days after the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting (Newtown, Connecticut), the American President, Barack Obama, gave a public speech at a memorial service.⁴⁵ The speech marked the conclusion of four days of extensive media coverage, during which the names, pictures and personal stories of the victims were circulated worldwide. At the end of his speech Obama stated the names of each and every one of the 26 victims. In this gesture, Obama made each of them count as an individual, reminding us that each had a family and friends who loved them and now grieved for their death. Obama's gesture resonates with the rituals of "everyone has a name", which I introduced at the beginning of the thesis. These rituals, as I have argued, capture the essence of *grievability*, as they introduce the life of a person who has died to large publics who did not know that person, but who, through the ritual, re-commit to the community to which the deceased and the participants belong. The media coverage that culminated in Obama's speech made the lives of the victims grievable worldwide. Only a few are awarded the honour of being commemorated by the president of the United States and serve as a trigger for the reassertion of his commitment to the wellbeing of his fellow citizens. Only a few become the subject of global grief, yet it is through the performance of *death-related media rituals* that anonymous individuals become familiar and their death evokes (cosmopolitan) solidarity.

In this thesis, I have explored the rituals the media perform following mass death events. The main premise that underlies the thesis is that death creates special conditions for community formation (or maintenance). Death serves as a trigger for society to perform rituals that organise the social world and bring to the fore the relational ties individuals have with one another. When mass violent death events occur, the media play their role as providers of information and moral orientation, and the media sphere becomes a space where some of these death rituals take place. It is through engagement with the media that publics position themselves vis-à-vis the deadly reality of the other. This thesis was interested in these media performances and the extent to which they summon cosmopolitan community. The argument that I have developed throughout the thesis is that death-related media rituals propose to their audiences various levels of engagement with the death of faraway others. Drawing on the understanding of grief as a political resource, I have shown the different propositions made by death-related

⁴⁵ "President Obama's Complete Speech at Vigil in Newtown, Connecticut"; available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-T87j1MY>.

media rituals for audiences to consider their commitment to distant others. These propositions encourage or discourage cosmopolitan solidarity, which is the basis of cosmopolitan community.

In this concluding chapter, I outline the main contributions of the thesis. I return to the main theoretical grounds that motivated the thesis and show how these contributions strengthen or challenge these theoretical grounds. I point to the limitations of the thesis and offer suggestions for future research.

9.1 Main contributions

In an attempt to understand processes of community formation, this thesis dwells on the notion of solidarity as a primary motivation for community formation. Contemporary theories of solidarity and community formation in a global age point to the notion of risk and vulnerability as important factors that inform a sense of mutual dependency. Sociologists like Beck (1992, 2009b) and Giddens (1990, 1991) argue that, in late or second modernity, the notion of impending threat enhances a shared consciousness among people around the world that – whether they like it or not – they need one another. These theories capture contemporary processes of social integration, yet they give rather little attention to the mechanisms that inform such shared consciousness and, in particular, do not adequately consider the role the media play in these processes. However, as this thesis shows, the media create the central public arena where people engage with the world and the risks it bears. It is through the media that crises are constructed as such and become meaningful, and it is the performance of the media and the representations they distribute which inspire global social imaginaries. Thus the social sciences must pay careful attention to the media as the space where social processes take place and as the institution that shapes these processes (Cottle, 1998, 2006b; Silverstone, 2006).

Accordingly, this thesis proposes to re-introduce into the discussion the role of rituals in facilitating community formation and to reconsider the function of the media as a stage for such rituals, which construe the notion of vulnerability and articulate the interrelations between dispersed groups when coping with crisis conditions. The argument proposed here is that the function of the media in reporting on death-related stories is to construe a sense of vulnerability or security, and that the rituals the media perform enable their audiences to make sense of the perceptibility of vulnerability, and to reflect on questions of solidarity and commitment. In line with the literature on

mediatisation (Hjarvard, 2008, 2012) and mediatised rituals (Cottle, 2006b; Sumiala, 2014), the thesis has shown the centrality of the media as a social institution which plays a pivotal role in organising social life and advocating the cultivation of solidarities. More specifically, it points to *death-related media rituals* as a central mechanism that enables the construction of (cosmopolitan) communities in a global age. These rituals expose spectators to one of the consequences of risk, which is death, position them vis-à-vis distant others, and so encourage them to define their commitment to and understand their dependency on these others, regardless of any categorical affiliations.

Moreover, this thesis proposes to bring theories of social integration together with principles of moral philosophy (Butler, 2004; Chouliaraki, 2013; McRobbie, 2006; Rorty, 1989). The argument here is that, alongside the practical dimension of community formation, there are also moral principles that encourage such an alignment. Coming together as a community and uniting with others is not only a rational move that can guarantee a better functioning of individuals as a community or ensure a better future; it is also a moral imperative that manifests solidarity between human beings committed to universal higher values. When the vulnerability of the other is revealed to us, the argument has it, we have a moral imperative to be attentive and responsive and to manifest solidarity with him or her on the basis of our common humanity. Such integration is not based on similarity or on willed affiliation, but on a comprehensive moral justification for uniting all human beings as equal members of a cosmopolitan community. What we, as citizens of the world, have in common is our vulnerability as human beings, and this is sufficient grounds for forming ethical and political ties (see also Calhoun, 2002a; Chouliaraki, 2013; Hollinger, 2006).

The literature on the mediation of suffering has already engaged with the possibility of the media bringing together people from various backgrounds and of introducing them to the justifications for a social and moral commitment to one another (Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2006b; Silverstone, 2006). Yet death creates more specific conditions for such relations to be shaped, since it is understood as a well-defined *event* that requires and activates social responses (something that “plain” suffering without death does not always manage to do). Death generates rituals that invite the switch from the “profane” to the “sacred”. Death initiates the transition to a liminal phase that compels participants in a death ritual to reflect on their social reality (Turner, 1969; Van Gennep, 1960). These ritualistic performances are not always played out in relation to suffering.

This thesis, then, has aimed to address the specificities of death, rather than of suffering, and to examine the mediatisation of death in light of these qualifications. The thesis has shown that that death rituals which facilitated community formation throughout history have taken a media-oriented form, that they have become *mediatised* (Cottle, 2006b; Sumiala, 2012). These Mediatized death rituals are performed regardless of other ceremonies that are (or are not) in play outside the media. Rather, these mediatized death rituals correspond to the eventness of death (in terms of its eruption at a specific time and place) and manifest the interaction with the media as a means of engaging with core values of society and as a means of reflecting on questions of solidarity and belonging. Especially in a global age, the media function as a dominant social agent whose performance and effect are not confined to national borders or categorical affiliation and therefore bear cosmopolitan significance. Thus, through the dual lenses of death rituals and media rituals we can acquire a telling understanding of society in action and of power relations and dynamics within (and beyond) the community.

As for engagement with the distant other, while suffering confronts spectators with living humans whose suffering needs to be alleviated, death invites spectators to grieve the dead. Alleviation and grief are different propositions, yet they are both informed by the notion of solidarity. In this regard, I have proposed, drawing on Butler (2004, 2009), that we consider grief as a moral response to death. Grief is not only a sentimental expression of sorrow, but also a political statement about the value of the lost life and the “humanness” of the person who has died. Thus, through the prism of grief, we can grasp the proposition made by rituals regarding the interrelations between the living and the community to which the dead belonged. The extent to which rituals construe lost lives as grievable reflects broader perceptions of social order (or its breakdown). And the media have a central role in performing death-related rituals and thus constructing death as grievable. In this regard, this thesis contributes to the understanding of grief as a political resource which shapes and reflects collective identities and moral commitments (and not only personal sentiment or psychological condition). Especially in relation to questions of vulnerability in a global age, grief can capture and promote additional justifications for solidarity and commitment.

This thesis, then, has explored the centrality of death and of the media to the cultivation of a sense of cosmopolitan community. It has shown how mass death events can become a matter of global concern and generate exceptional media responses that proclaim the

switch into a liminal phase and create the conditions for people around the world to come together and negotiate their relations with other citizens of the world. Death-related media rituals can lay out the corporeal reasons for interdependency, and ground these in a moral reasoning that stresses the righteousness of such an alignment. However, these conditions are not uniform or homogenous, and hence they produce different propositions for ways in which spectators may understand their relations with the other. As death-related media rituals are also a manifestation of political power, they can also work in an exclusionary fashion and push out various groups or deny them access to such community. Accordingly, the possibility of fostering interdependency and reciprocal relationships between citizens of the world based on egalitarianism is not always realised.

Drawing on Chouliaraki's *analytics of mediation* (2006b), this thesis has developed an analytical framework to account for the construction of death as grievable. Theoretically grounded in the literature on media, morality and distant suffering, the *analytics of mediated grievability* offers a way of studying and analysing news of death, using various methods of textual analysis. This analytical framework unpacks the notion of grievability and accounts both for the ritualistic properties of media rituals and for the moral principles embedded in these – how the humanisation of the dead is constructed, how spatiotemporal commonality is constituted, and whether spectators are encouraged to bear witness to faraway death. This tool offers a systematic method of analysing news of death and of identifying the ethical solicitation it makes to spectators as to how they should feel and act in light of distant death.

Putting the analytics of mediated grievability to work in analysing the coverage of the three case studies (the Gaza War, the Norway Attacks and the Haiti Earthquake) shows the variance in the ethical solicitation that death-related media rituals make. The analysis has identified four types of grief; two of these, *moving grief* and *condemnatory grief*, advocate for the manifestation of cosmopolitan solidarity and two, *empathising grief* and *judgemental grief*, encourage solidarity while maintaining a communitarian outlook. This analysis shows that the cosmopolitan promise embedded in the public appearance of the other in his or her misfortune is not always realised. Under certain conditions, the representation of the other can work to maintain the prevailing boundaries of belonging, while making a weak call for cosmopolitan solidarity.

Moving grief and *condemnatory grief* both encourage spectators to be in solidarity with distant others. They both construe the distant others as human and worthy of solidarity regardless of any categorical affiliation. The difference between the two is that, while *moving grief* makes an emotional appeal and solicits sympathy with distant others, *condemnatory grief* appeals to the moral judgement of spectators and encourages them to express denunciation of the evildoers.

Empathising grief and *judgemental grief* also cultivate solidarity with remote others, but they do so without challenging the prevailing understanding of zones of safety and danger or of boundaries of belonging. Again, the difference between the two derives from the different appeal to emotional identification or moral judgement. *Empathising grief* associates spectators with the people at the scene of death and establishes an emotional bond between them. By making an emotional appeal, this type of grief invites spectators to feel empathy and to mourn the death of distant others. Judgemental grief, on the other hand, positions spectators outside the zone of danger and does not offer any emotional engagement with the scene of death. However, judgemental grief turns to spectators and encourages them to exercise their moral judgement in relation to the deadly reality revealed.

Death-related events are often the outcome of conflicts and competing understandings of justice and injustice, right and wrong, order and disorder. These are disruptive events and so engagement with them can reveal competing undercurrents and conflicting worldviews. The comparison of two different perspectives was designed to account for such contestations and multivocality. For this purpose, the thesis compares two news organisations, on the basis of the premise that these are considered as representing two distinct – perhaps even competing – worldviews. As the thesis was interested in the possibility of constructing cosmopolitan community, I chose to study two transnational news organisations – BBC World News and Al-Jazeera English. As transnational news organisations, both cater to global (Western, English-speaking) audience, and so create the conditions for audiences to come together regardless of national affiliation and to establish their connection with people with whom they have no prior relations. This approach also corresponds to Beck and Sznaider's (2006) call for an enhancement of the tradition of *methodological cosmopolitanism* in the social sciences. Most studies in the social sciences take the nation-state as a unit of analysis. This thesis offers an understanding that goes beyond the nation and the national outlook.

This comparison has also contributed to broadening the perspective of media rituals to non-Western media organisations. Most studies of media rituals thus far have focused on Western media. This thesis has looked also at non-Western news organizations and offered a way of examining the extent to which media rituals following mass death events differ across different media organisations. Such a comparison enriches the understanding of the media as a space where voices and narratives compete with one another, while mapping the differences and similarities between different media organisations.

In this regard, despite the expectation of finding rival worldviews, the comparison between the two channels across the three cases has shown that both channels offer, most of the time, subtle (rather than radical) differences. The expectation of finding different worldviews was not always met, demonstrating that, perhaps, one of the presuppositions regarding the classification of news organisations according to the hegemonic/counter-hegemonic divide needed to be examined with caution. The analysis shows the complexity of categories such as “West” and “non-West” and the problematics of essentialising these. These categories do not always constitute a binary opposition and the media organisations that have come to represent these opposing worldviews do not always represent such differences. At least in relation to two of the cases examined here, a Western and a non-Western news organisation have been shown to operate similarly in their coverage of events taking place in the West and in the global South. The main differences between the two channels were found in their coverage of the Gaza War, which was a controversial event.

9.2 Limitations and suggestions for future research

This thesis has focused on the mediatisation of mass violent death events by transnational news channels. However, the contemporary media environment is much richer than what two television channels can represent. The transnational media landscape includes prominent news channels not included in this thesis, such as CNN, Sky, Fox, France24, RT and others (see also Painter, 2008; Rai & Cottle, 2007). It also does not include news organisations that cater for non-English-speaking audiences or for audiences that are, by definition, non-Western. In addition, media consumers around the world can (sometimes) choose their news source, which can be local channels, transnational channels or both. Each news channel offers a different “news diet” based on various parameters, including national orientation, political agenda and business

model (Cottle & Rai, 2008). And, of course, media consumers around the world can zap between channels (or news formats) and gather information from more than one source. These perspectives could not be contained in the research design employed here.

The contemporary media environment includes media other than television. Newspapers are still here and allow an engagement with the news which is different from that of television, and television is no longer the only audio-visual medium. The internet is becoming more and more dominant in mediating information about events taking place in the world, especially in times of crisis (Chouliaraki, 2010a). Online news websites and social media platforms have technological affordances which are different from that of television, and offer their users diverse experiences of news consumption. Some of the features I have discussed here in relation to engagement with television as a medium lose their meaning when the medium is the internet. The experience of simultaneous or synchronous viewing is no longer valid when online materials can be retrieved and viewed asynchronously. The space of engagement with the medium changes with the move to mobile devices, as individuals engage with a personal device they can carry with them instead of gathering around a stationary television set that allows collective viewing. Most importantly, the internet is an interactive medium that allows its users to actively participate in the space of appearance and deliberation. Internet users not only consume news, they can also generate content and respond to news on multiple platforms (Chouliaraki, 2010a; Madianou, 2012). This opens up a new set of opportunities for publics to engage with news of death that goes beyond the possibilities discussed here in relation to television.

Another limitation of this thesis concerns the selected case studies. The three cases selected represent the main types of mass violent death event, as these are also identified in the literature – wars, terror attacks and natural disasters. However, each type of event invites a different media performance. Terror attacks usually generate *disaster marathons* (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002; Liebes, 1998). War and natural disasters are less confined in time and space and require a different type of coverage (which I define as an *asynchronous continuous media event*). Each type of event also requires a different type of storytelling – wars and terror attacks contain an inherent conflict between “good” and “bad”; natural disasters are usually reported as a struggle of humankind against nature. All these differences make the comparison between the case studies difficult, as it is not always easy to tell whether the difference in their coverage

stems from one or another characteristic of an event. In this regard, it may be useful for future research to conduct a comparison between similar types of event and to narrow down the variance between them (for example, by comparing the coverage of the 2008-2009, the 2012 and the 2014 Gaza Wars).

This thesis has focused on the rituals the media perform and the representations they produce and circulate following the occurrence of mass violent death events. Drawing on theories of ritual and mediatisation, the thesis studies the symbolic meaning embodied within the rituals and texts that the media perform and produce. Accordingly, the thesis has employed methods of textual analysis to capture the meaning these rituals and texts carry and the claims the media make in relation to their institutional role in society. I have identified four types of mediatised grievability, each containing a different proposition for the ways in which publics may engage with faraway death. However, since this study focuses on textual analysis, I believe this typology can serve as an invitation to audience researchers to work with, enrich, validate or challenge this framework. As Simon (2006b) argues, the performativity of mediatised rituals

“is not confined to the performative ‘doing’ of media producers but includes the ‘doing’ of ‘spectators’ as well, who actively enter into (‘commit themselves to’) the proceedings and who can identify themselves and their sentiments within them” (Cottle, 2006b, p. 429).

Accordingly, I join researchers such as Ong (2012) and Kyriakidou (2015), and hope that the analysis proposed here will serve to strengthen the dialogue between the study of the representation of suffering and death and the study of audiences’ engagement with these texts.

As I conclude the writing of this thesis, ISIS is systematically killing people in Iraq – some of them are Western journalists, some of them are not – while using the media to disseminate its claims (Rose, 2014; see also Weimann & Winn, 1994); the Ebola virus is killing hundreds in Africa and threatening to spread to other continents; the US is experiencing unrest due to police violence in Ferguson (Missouri) and other places. All these are death cases with significant media components. They demonstrate the centrality of death in shaping the global news agenda and in establishing hierarchies of lives and deaths. I believe the framework developed and presented here is useful for understanding such processes, although I make no claim that the typology proposed here is exhaustive.

Hence, *the analytics of mediatised grievability*, as proposed here, can serve as a useful analytical framework for future research. This framework has already identified the main features of the mediatisation of death and operationalised them. It offers a systematic analysis of these features and their meanings. Thus, it is applicable to the study of further cases of mediatised death. I suggest that future research use this framework, expand it and appropriate it in order to study news about death also on a national level, in relation to other types of death event (protests, for example), and in relation to media organisations that cater for non-Western audiences. In addition, I hope that future research will take this framework further and apply it to other media, and in particular to the internet and social networks.

References

- Aday, S. (2005). The Real War Will Never Get on Television: An Analysis of Casualty Imagery in American Television Coverage of the Iraq War. In P. M. Seib (Ed.), *Media and conflict in the twenty-first century*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Agamben, G. (1998). *Homo sacer: sovereign power and bare life*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.
- Al-Ali, M. N. (2005). Communicating messages of solidarity, promotion and pride in death announcements genre in Jordanian newspapers. *Discourse & Society*, 16(1), 5–31. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0957926505048228>
- Alexander, J. C., & Jacobs, R. N. (1998). Mass communication, ritual and civil society. In T. Liebes & J. Curran (Eds.), *Media, ritual, and identity*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Al Jazeera English. (2014). Retrieved June 1, 2014, from <http://www.aljazeera.com/aboutus/>
- Alpher, R. (2001, October 2). A known and familiar ritual. *Haaretz*, p. 16. Israel.
- Anderson, B. R. (1983). *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London; New York: Verso.
- Ashuri, T., & Pinchevski, A. (2009). Witnessing as a field. In P. Frosh & A. Pinchevski (Eds.), *Media witnessing: testimony in the age of mass communication* (pp. 133–157). Basingstoke [England]; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Aubert, D. (2008). Picturing the dead: The 2004 flag-draped coffins controversy. In K. Hildenbrand & G. Hugues (Eds.), *Images of war and war of images* (pp. 191–216). Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Pub.
- Averill, J. (1979). The function of grief. In C. E. Izard (Ed.), *Emotions in personality and psychopathology* (pp. 339–369). New York: Plenum Press.
- Azoulay, A. (2008). *The civil contract of photography*. New York Cambridge, Mass.: Zone Books ; Distributed by The MIT Press.
- BBC. (2010, February 11). Haiti quake toll rises to 230,000. *BBC*. Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8507531.stm>
- BBC. (2012). BBC Editorial Guidelines. *BBC*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidelines/>
- Becker, K. (1995). Media and the ritual process. *Media, Culture & Society*, 17(4), 629–646. <http://doi.org/10.1177/016344395017004007>
- Beck, U. (1992). *Risk society: towards a new modernity*. London ; Thousand Oaks Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Beck, U. (2006). *The cosmopolitan vision*. Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA: Polity.
- Beck, U. (2007). The Cosmopolitan Condition: Why Methodological Nationalism Fails. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 24(7-8), 286–290. <http://doi.org/10.1177/02632764070240072505>
- Beck, U. (2009a). Critical Theory of World Risk Society: A Cosmopolitan Vision. *Constellations*, 16(1), 3–22.
- Beck, U. (2009b). *World at risk*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Beck, U. (2011). Cosmopolitanism as Imagined Communities of Global Risk. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 55(10), 1346–1361. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0002764211409739>
- Beck, U., & Sznaider, N. (2006). Unpacking cosmopolitanism for the social sciences: a research agenda. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 57(1), 1–23. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2006.00091.x>
- Bicket, D., & Wall, M. (2009). BBC News in the United States: a “super-alternative” news medium emerges. *Media, Culture & Society*, 31(3), 365–384. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443709102711>
- Blondheim, M., & Liebes, T. (2002). Live Television’s Disaster Marathon of September 11 and its Subversive Potential. *Prometheus*, 20(3), 271–276. <http://doi.org/10.1080/08109020210141434>
- Boltanski, L. (1999). *Distant suffering: morality, media, and politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Boudana, S. (2013). Must war photography condemn war? Lessons from Roger Fenton’s 1855 photographs of the Crimean War. *Unpublished Manuscript*.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power the economy of linguistic exchanges*. Cambridge: Polity in association with Basil Blackwell.
- Bourdon, J. (2000). Live television is still alive: on television as an unfulfilled promise. *Media, Culture & Society*, 22(5), 531–556. <http://doi.org/10.1177/016344300022005001>
- Brand, R., & Pinchevski, A. (2013). Facing the Image. In N. Couldry, M. Madianou, & A. Pinchevski (Eds.), *Ethics of Media* (pp. 106–119). Basingstoke [England]; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bumiller, E. (2009). Pentagon to allow photos of soldiers’ coffins. *The New York Times*.
- Butler, J. (2004). *Precarious life: the powers of mourning and violence*. London: Verso.
- Butler, J. (2009). *Frames of war: when is life grievable?*. London ; Brooklyn, NY: Verso.
- Butler, J. (2011). Precarious Life and the Obligations of Cohabitation. In *Precarious Life and the Obligations of Cohabitation*. Nobel Museum, Stockholm. Retrieved from http://www.nobelmuseum.se/sites/nobelmuseum.se/files/page_file/Judith_Butler_NWW_2011.pdf
- Calhoun, C. (2002a). Imagining Solidarity: Cosmopolitanism, Constitutional Patriotism, and the Public Sphere. *Public Culture*, 14(1), 147–171.
- Calhoun, C. (2002b). The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travelers: Toward a Critique of Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 101(4), 869–897. <http://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-101-4-869>
- Calhoun, C. (2004). A World of Emergencies: Fear, Intervention, and the Limits of Cosmopolitan Order*. *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue Canadienne de Sociologie*, 41(4), 373–395. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1755-618X.2004.tb00783.x>
- Calhoun, C. (2010). The Idea of Emergency: Humanitarian Action and Global (Dis)Order. In D. Fassin & M. Pandolfi (Eds.), *Contemporary States of Emergency* (pp. 29–58). Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Campbell, C. (2000). Social Structure, Space and Sentiment: Searching for Common Ground in Sociological Conceptions of Community. In D. Chekki A. (Ed.), *Research in Community Sociology* (pp. 21–57). JAI Press.

- Campbell, D. (2004). Horrific Blindness: Images of Death in Contemporary Media. *Journal for Cultural Research*, 8(1), 55–74. <http://doi.org/10.1080/1479758042000196971>
- Carey, J. W. (1992). *Communication as culture: essays on media and society*. London: Routledge.
- Carey, J. W. (1998). Political ritual on television: episodes in the history of shame, degradation and excommunication. In T. Liebes & J. Curran (Eds.), *Media, ritual, and identity*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Carruthers, S. L. (2011). *The media at war*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chalaby, J. K. (2003). Television for a New Global Order Transnational Television Networks and the Formation of Global Systems. *Gazette*, 65(6), 457–472. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0016549203065006003>
- Chalaby, J. K. (2009). *Transnational Television in Europe: Reconfiguring Global Communications Networks*. London; New York: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd.
- Chouliaraki, L. (2006a). The Aestheticization of Suffering on Television. *Visual Communication*, 5(3), 261–285. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1470357206068455>
- Chouliaraki, L. (2006b). *The spectatorship of suffering*. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE.
- Chouliaraki, L. (2008a). The media as moral education: mediation and action. *Media, Culture & Society*, 30(6), 831–852. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443708096096>
- Chouliaraki, L. (2008b). The Mediation of Suffering and the Vision of a Cosmopolitan Public. *Television & New Media*, 9(5), 371–391. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1527476408315496>
- Chouliaraki, L. (2009). Witnessing War: Economies of Regulation in Reporting War and Conflict. *The Communication Review*, 12(3), 215–226. <http://doi.org/10.1080/10714420903124077>
- Chouliaraki, L. (2010a). Ordinary witnessing in post-television news: towards a new moral imagination. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 7(4), 305–319. <http://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2010.511839>
- Chouliaraki, L. (2010b). The mediation of death and the imagination of national community. In A. Roosvall & I. Salovaara-Moring (Eds.), *Communicating the nation: national topographies of global media landscapes* (pp. 59–78). Göteborg: Nordicom.
- Chouliaraki, L. (2012). *The Ironic Spectator: Solidarity in the Age of Post-Humanitarianism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Chouliaraki, L. (2013). Mediating vulnerability: cosmopolitanism and the public sphere. *Media, Culture & Society*, 35(1), 105–112. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443712464564>
- Colebrook, C. (2008). Agamben: Aesthetics, Potentiality, and Life. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 107(1), 107–120. <http://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-2007-058>
- Collins, R. (2004). Rituals of Solidarity and Security in the Wake of Terrorist Attack. *Sociological Theory*, 22(1), 53–87. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2004.00204.x>
- Cooke, M. (1995). Selfhood and Solidarity. *Constellations: An International Journal of Critical & Democratic Theory*, 1(3), 337.

- Cottle, S. (1998). Ulrich Beck, 'Risk Society' and the Media A Catastrophic View? *European Journal of Communication*, 13(1), 5–32. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0267323198013001001>
- Cottle, S. (2006a). *Mediatized conflict: developments in media and conflict studies*. Berkshire, England: Open University Press.
- Cottle, S. (2006b). Mediatized Rituals: Beyond Manufacturing Consent. *Media, Culture & Society*, 28(3), 411–432. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443706062910>
- Cottle, S. (2008). 'Mediatized rituals': a reply to Couldry and Rothenbuhler. *Media, Culture & Society*, 30(1), 135–140.
- Cottle, S. (2009). *Global crisis reporting: journalism in the global age*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Cottle, S. (2011). Taking global crises in the news seriously: Notes from the dark side of globalization. *Global Media and Communication*, 7(2), 77–95. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1742766511410217>
- Cottle, S. (2013). Journalists Witnessing Disaster. *Journalism Studies*, 14(2), 232–248. <http://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2012.718556>
- Cottle, S., & Rai, M. (2008). Global 24/7 news providers Emissaries of global dominance or global public sphere? *Global Media and Communication*, 4(2), 157–181. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1742766508091518>
- Couldry, N. (2002). *Media rituals: a critical approach*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Couldry, N. (2008). Mediatization or mediation? Alternative understandings of the emergent space of digital storytelling. *New Media & Society*, 10(3), 373–391.
- Couldry, N., & Hepp, A. (2009). Introduction: media events in globalized media cultures. In F. Krotz, N. Couldry, & A. Hepp (Eds.), *Media Events in a Global Age* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Couldry, N., & Hepp, A. (2013). Conceptualizing Mediatization: Contexts, Traditions, Arguments. *Communication Theory*, 23(3), 191–202. <http://doi.org/10.1111/comt.12019>
- Couldry, N., & Rothenbuhler, E. W. (2007). Review Essay: Simon Cottle on 'mediatized Rituals': A Response. *Media, Culture & Society*, 29(4), 691–695. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443707078430>
- Dayan, D. (2008). Beyond Media Events: Disenchantment, Derailment, Disruption. In M. Price & D. Dayan (Eds.), *Owning the Olympics: Narratives of the New China* (pp. 391–402). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Dayan, D. (2009). Beyond media events: disenchantment, derailment, disruption. In F. Krotz, N. Couldry, & A. Hepp (Eds.), *Media Events in a Global Age*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.
- Dayan, D., & Katz, E. (1992). *Media events: the live broadcasting of history*. Harvard University Press.
- Deacon, D., & Stanyer, J. (2014). Mediatization: key concept or conceptual bandwagon? *Media, Culture & Society*, 36(7), 1032–1044. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443714542218>
- Delanty, G. (2006). The cosmopolitan imagination: critical cosmopolitanism and social theory. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 57(1), 25–47. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2006.00092.x>

- Dencik, L. (2013). What global citizens and whose global moral order? Defining the global at BBC World News. *Global Media and Communication*, 9(2), 119–134. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1742766513479716>
- Doka, K. J. (2003). Memorialization, ritual and public tragedy. In M. E. Lattanzi-Licht & K. J. Doka (Eds.), *Coping with public tragedy* (pp. 182–193). New York: Brunner-Routledge.
- Domke, D., Perlmutter, D., & Spratt, M. (2002). The primes of our times? An examination of the “power” of visual images. *Journalism*, 3(2), 131–159. <http://doi.org/10.1177/146488490200300211>
- Duncan, S. (2012). Sadly missed: The death knock news story as a personal narrative of grief. *Journalism*, 13(5), 589–603. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1464884911431542>
- Durkheim, É. (1960). *The division of labor in society*. New York: Free Press.
- Durkheim, É. (1995). *The elementary forms of the religious life*. Glencoe: Free Press.
- Ellis, J. (2000). *Seeing things: television in the age of uncertainty*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd.
- Ellis, J. (2009). Mundane witnessing. In A. Pinchevski & P. Frosh (Eds.), *Media witnessing: testimony in the age of mass communication* (pp. 73–88). Basingstoke [England]; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- El-Nawawy, M., & Powers, S. (2010). Al-Jazeera English A Conciliatory Medium in a Conflict-Driven Environment? *Global Media and Communication*, 6(1), 61–84. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1742766510362019>
- Fahmy, S. (2010). Contrasting Visual Frames of Our Times: A Framing Analysis of English- and Arabic-Language Press Coverage of War and Terrorism. *International Communication Gazette*, 72(8), 695–717. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1748048510380801>
- Fairclough, N., Wodak, R., & Mulderring, J. (2011). Critical Discourse Analysis. In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction* (Second Edition edition, pp. 357–378). Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Ferguson, J. T. (2004). *Cosmopolitan solidarity: Social-political integration in an era of globalization* (Ph.D.). Purdue University, United States -- Indiana. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/305151925/abstract?accountid=9630>
- Figenschou, T. U. (2010). A Voice for the Voiceless? A Quantitative Content Analysis of Al-Jazeera English’s Flagship News. *Global Media and Communication*, 6(1), 85–107. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1742766510362023>
- Figenschou, T. U. (2011). Suffering Up Close: The Strategic Construction of Mediated Suffering on Al Jazeera English. *International Journal of Communication*, 5, 233–253.
- Fishman, J. M. (2001). *Documenting death: Photojournalism and spectacles of the morbid in the tabloid and elite newspaper* (PhD Thesis). University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Retrieved from <http://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AAI3003629>
- Fishman, J. M., & Marvin, C. (2003). Portrayals of Violence and Group Difference in Newspaper Photographs: Nationalism and Media. *Journal of Communication*, 53(1), 32–44. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2003.tb03003.x>
- Frosh, P. (2006). Telling Presences: Witnessing, Mass Media, and the Imagined Lives of Strangers. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 23(4), 265–284. <http://doi.org/10.1080/07393180600933097>

- Frosh, P. (2011). Phatic morality: Television and proper distance. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 14(4), 383–400. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1367877911403248>
- Frosh, P., & Pinchevski, A. (2009a). Introduction: Why media witnessing? Why now? In A. Pinchevski & P. Frosh (Eds.), *Media witnessing: testimony in the age of mass communication* (pp. 1–19). Basingstoke [England]; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Frosh, P., & Pinchevski, A. (2009b). *Media witnessing: testimony in the age of mass communication*. Basingstoke [England]; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gavriely-Nuri, D., & Lachover, E. (2012). Reframing the Past as a Cosmopolitan Memory: Obituaries in the Israeli Daily Haaretz. *Communication Theory*, 22(1), 48–65. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2011.01397.x>
- Gerring, J. (2006). *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from <http://ebooks.cambridge.org.gate2.library.lse.ac.uk/ebook.jsf?bid=CBO9780511803123>
- Giddens, A. (1990). *The consequences of modernity*. Cambridge: Polity in association with Blackwell.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self identity: self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity Press in association with Basil Blackwell.
- Gilboa, E. (2012). Covering Gaza, 2008-2009: An Israeli view. In P. Seib (Ed.), *Al Jazeera English: Global News in a Changing World* (pp. 143–162). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Graaf, J. J. de. (2008). *Al-Jazeera English: the Opinion and the Other Opinion. A comparison between ideologies in CNN International and Al-Jazeera English* (Master thesis). Universiteit Utrecht, Utrecht. Retrieved from <http://igitur-archive.library.uu.nl/student-theses/2008-0429-201317/UUindex.html>
- Griffin, M. (2004). Picturing America's "War on Terrorism" in Afghanistan and Iraq: Photographic motifs as news frames. *Journalism*, 5(4), 381–402. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1464884904044201>
- Griffin, M. (2010). Media images of war. *Media, War & Conflict*, 3(1), 7–41. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1750635210356813>
- Gross, L., Katz, J. S., & Ruby, J. (1991). *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film, and Television*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hafez, K. (1999). International news coverage and the problems of media globalization. In search of a "new global-local nexus." *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 12(1), 47–62. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13511610.1999.9968587>
- Hafez, K. (2007). *The myth of media globalization*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hafez, K. (2011). Global Journalism for Global Governance? Theoretical Visions, Practical Constraints. *Journalism*, 12(4), 483–496. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1464884911398325>
- Hall, S. (Ed.). (1997). *Representation: cultural representations and signifying practices*. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage in association with the Open University.
- Hanusch, F. (2008). Graphic death in the news media: present or absent? *Mortality*, 13(4), 301–317. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13576270802383840>
- Hanusch, F. (2010). *Representing death in the news: journalism, media and mortality*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Hanusch, F. (2012). The visibility of disaster deaths in news images A comparison of newspapers from 15 countries. *International Communication Gazette*, 74(7), 655–672. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1748048512458560>
- Harcup, T., & O’Neill, D. (2001). What Is News? Galtung and Ruge revisited. *Journalism Studies*, 2(2), 261–280. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14616700120042114>
- Hawdon, J., Oksanen, A., & Räsänen, P. (2012). Media Coverage and Solidarity after Tragedies: The Reporting of School Shootings in Two Nations. *Comparative Sociology*, 11(6), 845–874. <http://doi.org/10.1163/15691330-12341248>
- Hawdon, J., & Ryan, J. (2011). Social Relations that Generate and Sustain Solidarity after a Mass Tragedy. *Social Forces*, 89(4), 1363–1384. <http://doi.org/10.1093/sf/89.4.1363>
- Hawdon, J., Ryan, J., & Agnich, L. (2010). Crime as a Source of Solidarity: A Research Note Testing Durkheim’s Assertion. *Deviant Behavior*, 31(8), 679–703. <http://doi.org/10.1080/01639620903415901>
- Henckaerts, J.-M., & Doswald-Beck, L. (2005). Proportionality in Attack. In *Customary International Humanitarian Law* (Vol. 1, p. 628). Cambridge: ICRC and Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from <https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/customary-international-humanitarian-law-i-icrc-eng.pdf>
- Hepp, A. (2013). The communicative figurations of mediatized worlds: Mediatization research in times of the “mediation of everything.” *European Journal of Communication*, 28(6), 615–629. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0267323113501148>
- Hepp, A., & Couldry, N. (2009). What should comparative media research be comparing? Towards a transcultural approach to “media cultures.” In D. K. Thussu (Ed.), *Internationalizing media studies* (pp. 32–48). Abingdon: Routledge. Retrieved from <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/52470/>
- Hepp, A., Hjarvard, S., & Lundby, K. (2010). Mediatization – Empirical perspectives: An introduction to a special issue. *Communications: The European Journal of Communication Research*, 35(3), 223–228. <http://doi.org/10.1515/COMM.2010.012>
- Hepp, A., Hjarvard, S., & Lundby, K. (2015). Mediatization: theorizing the interplay between media, culture and society. *Media, Culture & Society*, 37(2), 314–324. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443715573835>
- Hertz, R. (1960). *Death and the right hand*. London: Cohen & West.
- Hjarvard, S. (2006). The Mediatization of Religion: A Theory of the Media as an Agent of Religious Change. In *Mediating Religion in the Context of Multicultural Tension* (p. 16). Stockholm/Sigtuna/Uppsala, Sweden: The Sigtuna Foundation. Retrieved from http://www.oikosnet-europe.eu/oldintranet/Archives/Meetings/Annual_Conferences/Sigtuna_2006/Download/The%20mediatization%20of%20religion.pdf
- Hjarvard, S. (2008). The Mediatization of Society: A Theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change. *Nordicom Review*, 29(2), 105–134.
- Hjarvard, S. (2012). Doing the Right Thing: Media and Communication Studies in a Mediatized World. *Nordicom Review (Supplement)*, 33 (Supplement)(1), 27–34.
- Hoffman, T. (2014, September 28). Dozens Killed after Mount Ontake erupted. *Channel 2 evening news edition*. Israel: Channel 2. Retrieved from <http://reshet.tv/%D7%97%D7%93%D7%A9%D7%95%D7%AA/News/programs/MainNews/wscast/allmainNews/Article,162279.aspx>

- Hollinger, D. A. (2006). From identity to solidarity. *Daedalus*, 135(4), 23–31. <http://doi.org/10.1162/daed.2006.135.4.23>
- Hoskins, A. (2005). *Televising war: from Vietnam to Iraq*. New York: Continuum.
- Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B. (2010). *War and media: the emergence of diffused war*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Hume, J. (2003). "Portraits of grief," reflectors of values: The New York Times remembers victims of September 11. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 80(1), 166–182. <http://doi.org/10.1177/107769900308000111>
- Huntington, R., & Metcalf, P. (1991). *Celebrations of death: the anthropology of mortuary ritual* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Johnson, T. J., & Fahmy, S. (2010). "When blood becomes cheaper than a bottle of water": how viewers of Al-Jazeera's English-language website judge graphic images of conflict. *Media, War & Conflict*, 3(1), 43–66. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1750635210356225>
- Jørgensen, M., & Phillips, L. (2006). *Discourse analysis as theory and method*. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications. Retrieved from <http://www.rasaneh.org/Images/News/AttachFile/27-3-1391/FILE634754469767402343.pdf>
- Joye, S. (2009). The hierarchy of global suffering. *Journal of International Communication*, 15(2), 45–61. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13216597.2009.9674750>
- Jurkowitz, M., Mitchell, A., & Matsa, K. E. (2013). *How Al Jazeera America Tackled the Crisis Over Syria*. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from http://www.journalism.org/commentary_backgrounder/how_al_jazeera_america_tackled_crisis_over_syria
- Katz, E., & Liebes, T. (2007). "No More Peace!": How Disaster, Terror and War Have Upstaged Media Events. *International Journal of Communication*, 1(1), 157–166.
- Kazin, O. (1995, July 28). Again. *Ha'ir*, p. 18. Israel.
- Kitch, C. (2000). "A news of feeling as well as fact" Mourning and memorial in American newsmagazines. *Journalism*, 1(2), 171–195. <http://doi.org/10.1177/146488490000100202>
- Kitch, C., & Hume, J. (2008). *Journalism in a culture of grief*. New York: Routledge.
- Kyriakidou, M. (2008). Rethinking media events in the context of a global public sphere: Exploring the audience of global disasters in Greece. *Communications: The European Journal of Communication Research*, 33(3), 273–291. <http://doi.org/10.1515/COMM.2008.018>
- Kyriakidou, M. (2009). Imagining Ourselves Beyond the Nation? Exploring Cosmopolitanism in Relation to Media Coverage of Distant Suffering. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 9(3), 481–496. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-9469.2009.01062.x>
- Kyriakidou, M. (2015). Media witnessing: exploring the audience of distant suffering. *Media, Culture & Society*, 37(2), 215–231. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443714557981>
- Lesser, W. (1995). *Pictures at an Execution: Inquiry into the Subject of Murder* (New edition edition). Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Liebes, T. (1998). Television's disaster marathons: a danger for democratic processes? In T. Liebes & J. Curran (Eds.), *Media, ritual, and identity*. London; New York: Routledge.

- Liebes, T., & Kampf, Z. (2007). Routinizing Terror: Media Coverage and Public Practices in Israel, 2000-2005. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 12(1), 108–116. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1081180X06297120>
- Linklater, A. (2007). Distant Suffering and Cosmopolitan Obligations. *International Politics*, 44(1), 19–36. <http://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ip.8800156>
- Livingstone, S. (2009). On the Mediation of Everything: ICA Presidential Address 2008. *Journal of Communication*, 59(1), 1–18. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2008.01401.x>
- Lukes, S. (1975). Political Ritual and Social Integration. *Sociology*, 9(2), 289–308. <http://doi.org/10.1177/003803857500900205>
- Luu, K. (2012). *UEH Tulane DRLA Haiti Humanitarian Aid Evaluation* (p. 50). New Orleans: Tulane University's Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy. Retrieved from <http://www.drlatulane.org/groups/haiti-humanitarian-aid-evaluation/final-report>
- Madianou, M. (2005). *Mediating the nation: news, audiences and the politics of identity*. London: UCL.
- Madianou, M. (2012). Humanitarian Campaigns in Social Media. *Journalism Studies*, 14(2), 249–266. <http://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2012.718558>
- Malkinson, R. (2001). Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy of Grief: A Review and Application. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 11(6), 671–698. <http://doi.org/10.1177/104973150101100603>
- Margalit, A. (2004). *The ethics of memory*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Marriott, S. (1996). Time and time again: 'live' television commentary and the construction of replay talk. *Media, Culture & Society*, 18(1), 69–86. <http://doi.org/10.1177/016344396018001005>
- McRobbie, A. (2006). Vulnerability, violence and (cosmopolitan) ethics: Butler's Precarious Life. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 57(1), 69–86. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2006.00094.x>
- Merriman, R., Najjar. (2012). Covering Gaza, 2008-2009: A Palestinian view. In P. Seib (Ed.), *Al Jazeera English: Global News in a Changing World* (pp. 121–142). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mishkovsky, Z. S., & Falk, M. (2004). *The Spectacular Difference: Selected Poems of Zelda*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press.
- Moeller, S. D. (1998). *Compassion fatigue: how the media sell misery, war, and death*. New York: Routledge.
- Morse, T. (2013). Shooting the dead: images of death, inclusion and exclusion in the Israeli press. In M. Aaron (Ed.), *Envisaging Death: Visual Culture and Dying*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Morse, T. (2014). Covering the Dead: Death images in Israeli newspapers—ethics and praxis. *Journalism Studies*, 15(1), 98–113. <http://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2013.783295>
- Nordenstreng, K. (1972). Policy for news transmission. In D. McQuail (Ed.), *Sociology of mass communications: selected readings* (pp. 386–405). London: Penguin.
- Norris, A. (2000). Giorgio Agamben and the Politics of the Living Dead. *Diacritics*, 30(4), 38–58. <http://doi.org/10.1353/dia.2000.0032>

- Nussbaum, M. C. (2002). Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism. In M. C. Nussbaum & J. Cohen (Eds.), *For love of country?* (pp. 3–20). Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press.
- O'Connor, M. R. (2012, January 12). Two Years Later, Haitian Earthquake Death Toll in Dispute. Retrieved November 22, 2014, from http://www.cjr.org/behind_the_news/one_year_later_haitian_earthqu.php
- Oliver, K. (2004). Witnessing and Testimony. *Parallax*, 10(1), 78–87. <http://doi.org/10.1080/1353464032000171118>
- Ong, J. C. (2012). "Witnessing" or "Mediating" Distant Suffering? Ethical Questions across Moments of Text, Production, and Reception. *Television & New Media*, 1527476412454687. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1527476412454687>
- Orgad, S. (2009). The Survivor in Contemporary Culture and Public Discourse: A Genealogy. *The Communication Review*, 12(2), 132–161. <http://doi.org/10.1080/10714420902921168>
- Orgad, S. (2012). *Media Representation and the Global Imagination*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Orgad, S. (2013). Visualizers of solidarity: organizational politics in humanitarian and international development NGOs. *Visual Communication*, 12(3), 295–314. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1470357213483057>
- Orgad, S., & Seu, B. I. (2014). "Intimacy at a distance" in humanitarian communication. *Media, Culture & Society*, 36(7), 916–934. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443714536077>
- Painter, J. (2008). *Counter-hegemonic news: a case study of Al-Jazeera English and Telesur*. Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.
- Pantti, M., & Sumiala, J. (2009). Till Death Do Us Join: Media, Mourning Rituals and the Sacred Centre of the Society. *Media, Culture & Society*, 31(1), 119–135. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443708098251>
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd Edition.). Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.
- Peri, Y. (2000). *The assassination of Yitzhak Rabin*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Peters, J. D. (2001). Witnessing. *Media, Culture & Society*, 23(6), 707–723. <http://doi.org/10.1177/016344301023006002>
- Pinchevski, A. (2005). The Ethics of Interruption: Toward a Levinasian Philosophy of Communication. *Social Semiotics*, 15(2), 211–234. <http://doi.org/10.1080/10350330500154790>
- Pintak, L. (2005, October 23). Interview with Nigel Parsons, Managing Director of Al Jazeera International. Retrieved January 6, 2014, from <http://tbsjournal.arabmediasociety.com/Archives/Fall05/Parsons.html>
- Pollak, A. (2008). Analyzing TV Documentaries. In R. Wodak & M. Krzyzanowski (Eds.), *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences* (First Edition edition, pp. 77–95). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire England ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Powers, S. (2009). *The geopolitics of the news: the case of the Al Jazeera network* (PhD Thesis). University of Southern California, Los Angeles. Retrieved from <http://digitalibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll127/id/283824>

- Powers, S. (2012). The origins of Al Jazeera English. In P. Seib (Ed.), *Al Jazeera English: Global News in a Changing World* (pp. 5–28). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- President Obama's Complete Speech at Vigil in Newtown, Connecticut. (n.d.). Retrieved June 16, 2014, from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_q_T87j1MY
- Price, M. (2008). On Seizing the Olympic Platform. In D. Dayan & M. Price (Eds.), *Owning the Olympics: Narratives of the New China* (pp. 86–114). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Rai, M., & Cottle, S. (2007). Global mediations On the changing ecology of satellite television news. *Global Media and Communication*, 3(1), 51–78. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1742766507074359>
- Rantanen, T. (2010). Methodological Inter-Nationalism in Comparative Media Research: Flow studies in international communication. In I. Salovaara-Moring & A. Roosvall (Eds.), *Communicating the nation: national topographies of global media landscapes*. Göteborg: Nordicom.
- Reimers, E. (2003). A reasonable grief--discursive constructions of grief in a public conversation on raising the shipwrecked M/S Estonia. *Mortality*, 8(4), 325–341. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13576270310001604031>
- Rentschler, C. A. (2004). Witnessing: US Citizenship and the Vicarious Experience of Suffering. *Media, Culture & Society*, 26(2), 296–304. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443704041180>
- Ronen, G. (2013, December 3). Haaretz Declares War on Hanukkah? Retrieved January 6, 2014, from <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/174746>
- Rorty, R. (1989). *Contingency, irony, and solidarity*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rose, S. (2014, October 7). The Isis propaganda war: a hi-tech media jihad. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/07/isis-media-machine-propaganda-war?CMP=tw_t_gu
- Rothenbuhler, E. W. (1998). *Ritual communication: from everyday conversation to mediated ceremony*. London ; Thousand Oaks Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Sakr. (2007). Challenger or lackey? The politics of news on Al-Jazeera. In D. K. Thussu (Ed.), *Media on the move : global flow and contra-flow*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Samuel-Azran, T. (2009). Counterflows and counterpublics. *Journal of International Communication*, 15(1), 56–73. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13216597.2009.9674744>
- Samuel-Azran, T. (2010). *Al-Jazeera and US war coverage*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Seale, C. (1998). *Constructing death: the sociology of dying and bereavement*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Seaton, J. (2005). *Carnage and the media : the making and breaking of news about violence*. London: Allen Lane.
- Seib, P. (Ed.). (2012). *Al Jazeera English: Global News in a Changing World*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shakir, M. (2002). The selection of case studies: strategies and their applications to IS implementation case studies. Retrieved from <http://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/4373>

- Sharir, M. (2013). Kasher News Editions. *Haaretz, Online edition*. Retrieved from <http://www.haaretz.co.il/gallery/television/tv-review/.premium-1.2179815>
- Shemesh, L. (2013, December 3). Why does Haaretz care about a menorah? Retrieved January 6, 2014, from http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_opinion.php?id=6543
- Shils, E., & Young, M. (1953). The Meaning of the Coronation. *The Sociological Review*, 1(2), 63–81. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.1953.tb00953.x>
- Silverstone, R. (2002a). Complicity and Collusion in the Mediation of Everyday Life. *New Literary History*, 33(4), 761–780. <http://doi.org/10.1353/nlh.2002.0045>
- Silverstone, R. (2002b). Mediating catastrophe: September 11 and the crisis of the other. *Dossiers de l'Audiovisual*, 105.
- Silverstone, R. (2002c). Regulation and the ethics of distance: distance and the ethics of regulation. In R. Mansell, R. Samarajiva, & A. Mahan (Eds.), *Networking knowledge for information societies: institutions & intervention*. Netherlands: Delft University Press.
- Silverstone, R. (2003). Proper distance: towards an ethics for cyberspace. In G. Liestøl, A. Morrison, & T. Rasmussen (Eds.), *Digital media revisited: theoretical and conceptual innovation in digital domains* (pp. 469–491). Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Silverstone, R. (2006). *Media and Morality: On the Rise of the Mediapolis*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Sontag, S. (2001). *On Photography* (1st edition). New York: Picador.
- Sontag, S. (2003). *Regarding the pain of others*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Sumiala, J. (2012). *Media and Ritual: Death, Community and Everyday Life*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.
- Sumiala, J. (2014). Mediatized Ritual – Expanding the Field in the Study of Media and Ritual. *Sociology Compass*, 8(7), 939–947. <http://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12188>
- Tait, S. (2008). Pornographies of Violence? Internet Spectatorship on Body Horror. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 25(1), 91–111. <http://doi.org/10.1080/15295030701851148>
- Tait, S. (2009). Visualising Technologies and the Ethics and Aesthetics of Screening Death. *Science as Culture*, 18(3), 333–353. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09505430903123016>
- Tait, S. (2011). Bearing witness, journalism and moral responsibility. *Media, Culture & Society*, 33(8), 1220–1235. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443711422460>
- Taylor, C. (2002). Modern Social Imaginaries. *Public Culture*, 14(1), 91–124. <http://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-14-1-91>
- Taylor, J. (1998). *Body horror: photojournalism, catastrophe, and war*. New York: New York University Press.
- Tenenboim-Weinblatt, K. (2008). Fighting for the story's life. *Journalism*, 9(1), 31–51. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1464884907084338>
- Thompson, J. B. (1995). *The media and modernity: a social theory of the media*. Polity Press.
- Thompson, J. B. (2005). The New Visibility. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 22(6), 31–51. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0263276405059413>

- Thussu, D. K. (2007). Mapping global media flow and contra-flow. In D. K. Thussu (Ed.), *Media on the move : global flow and contra-flow*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Touraine, A. (1977). *The Self Production of Society*. Pearson Education.
- Turkel, G. (2002). Sudden Solidarity and the Rush to Normalization: Toward an Alternative Approach. *Sociological Focus*, 35(1), 73–79.
- Turner, V. W. (1969). *The ritual process: structure and anti-structure*. London: Routledge & K. Paul.
- United Nations. (2009). *Field update on Gaza from the Humanitarian Coordinator* (p. 4). East Jerusalem: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Retrieved from http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_humanitarian_situation_report_2009_01_29_english.pdf
- Van Gennep, A. (1960). *The rites of passage*. London: Routledge & K. Paul.
- Volkmer, I. (2003). The Global Network Society and the Global Public Sphere. *Development*, 46(1), 9–16. <http://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.development.1110415>
- Walter, T. (1994). *The revival of death*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.
- Walter, T., Littlewood, J., & Pickering, M. (1995). Death in the News: The Public Invigilation of Private Emotion. *Sociology*, 29(4), 579–596.
- Weimann, G. (1987). Media Events: The Case of International Terrorism. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 31(1), 21–39. <http://doi.org/10.1080/08838158709386643>
- Weimann, G. (2004). The Theater of Terror: The Psychology of Terrorism and the Mass Media. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 9(3/4), 379–390.
- Weimann, G. (2008). The Psychology of Mass-Mediated Terrorism. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 52(1), 69–86. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0002764208321342>
- Weimann, G., & Winn, C. (1994). *The theater of terror: mass media and international terrorism*. New York: Longman.
- Wessler, H., & Adolphsen, M. (2008). Contra-Flow from the Arab World? How Arab Television Coverage of the 2003 Iraq War Was Used and Framed on Western International News Channels. *Media, Culture & Society*, 30(4), 439–461. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443708091176>
- Wischmann, L. (1987). Dying on the front page: Kent state and the Pulitzer prize. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 2(2), 67–74. <http://doi.org/10.1080/08900528709358296>
- Wood, L. A., & Kroger, R. O. (2000). *Doing Discourse Analysis: Methods for Studying Action in Talk and Text* (1 edition). Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research : design and methods*. (2nd ed.). Sage Publications,.
- Youmans, W. L. (2012). *The Media Economics and Cultural Politics of Al Jazeera English in the United States*. The University of Michigan. Retrieved from <http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/96045>
- Zayani, M. (Ed.). (2005). *The Al Jazeera Phenomenon: Critical Perspectives on New Arab Media*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.
- Zehfuss, M. (2009). Hierarchies of Grief and the Possibility of War: Remembering UK Fatalities in Iraq. *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, 38(2), 419–440. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0305829809347540>

Zelizer, B. (1992). *Covering the body: the Kennedy assassination, the media, and the shaping of collective memory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zelizer, B. (1998). *Remembering to forget: Holocaust memory through the camera's eye*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zelizer, B. (2000). *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera's Eye* (2nd ed.). University of Chicago Press.

Zelizer, B. (2002). Finding aids to the past: bearing personal witness to traumatic public events. *Media, Culture & Society*, 24(5), 697–714. <http://doi.org/10.1177/016344370202400509>

Zelizer, B. (2005). Journalism through the camera's eye. In S. Allan (Ed.), *Journalism: Critical Issues* (pp. 167–176). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Zelizer, B. (2010). *About to die: how news images move the public*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Appendix A1: Israel launches missile attacks on Gaza

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZaG96pnnEQ>

Under attack. Israel's air force unleashes devastation on the Gaza strip. On the ground, in one of the world's most densely populated areas, it's a gruesome scene. This Palestinian policeman prepares for his end. These human targets were no match for the high explosion munitions that hit them. This building was among the targets, and as the victims are discovered, and carried off to hospitals the attacks just keep coming. The people of Gaza have been bracing themselves for this ever since the six months cease-fire with Israel expired last week. Emergency medical officials in Gaza estimate that as many as a hundred and fifty five had been killed, but it's just too early to tell. Wounded Palestinians staggered the streets in search of medical attention. But it was already sorely lacking from years of siege and embargo which Israel and the international community imposed on the people of Gaza. Calls for unity have already sounded from The West Bank.

Mustafa Barghouthi (via telephone): "And we have to be unified to be finally free from this oppression and occupation and injustice that has continued longer than any people can tolerate".

In Syria, the Hamas leadership has vowed revenge. From Jordan, a neighbouring country which has peace with Israel, an ominous condemnation.

Hamam Saeed, Muslim Brotherhood Leader, Jordan: "I address the Arab rulers saying, he, who is not supporting Gaza now is a traitor. The Arab peoples must now take to streets. We can no longer stand in silence. After we have seen rivers of blood running in Palestine, we should sacrifice our own for the Palestinian people. We demand the Arab rulers who dealt with the Jewish enemy as dear friend to revoke all their agreements, treaties and promises with the criminal enemy. Whoever establishes a relation with the enemy is nothing but a criminal".

The so-called Mid-East Quartet is yet to weigh in, but then again, they have so far failed to protect the Palestinian population in any meaningful way.

Clayton Swisher, Al-Jazeera.

Appendix A2: Israel's attack on UN-run school in Gaza

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itHo5oHhipI>

Carnage outside the United Nations' school near the Jabalia refugee camp. Many of these victims thought they'd be safe inside a UN building. But clearly, they were not. The UN says three artillery shells landed near the school where three hundred and fifty people were taking refuge from the fighting. Israel has confirmed its military fired the mortar shells. The UN says it had briefed the Israelis on where its installations were positioned.

John Ging, UN Relief and Works Agency: "Nowhere is safe. We have the tragedy of the deaths last night in one of our schools where people have come fleeing the conflict hoping for safety and now they're dead".

It was one of three schools to come under fire on Tuesday. Hamas has condemned the attack.

Osama Hamdan, Hamas representative: "I think it's a new massacre in the holocaust in Gaza. The schools are well known for the Israelis. They know that they are places for the United Nations and they are hitting them".

But Israel insists it was responding to mortar fire from inside the school, and claims Hamas fighters were using civilians as cover.

Mark Regev, Israeli Government spokesman: "What we have seen tonight is yet another example of how Hamas deliberately brutalises its own population, and has turned a UN education institution into a war zone. This, unfortunately, is a part of a pattern we have seen with Hamas".

An Israeli military spokesperson says Hamas was using Palestinians as human shields.

Avital Leibovich, Israeli Army Spokeswoman: "Any terror organisation that chooses to booby-trap his own people, I think it's indispicable, I think that it's not moral, and I think that Hamas does not really care for its own people".

The Associated Press news agency quoted two residents who said they saw a small group of Palestinian fighters firing mortar rounds from the streets near the school, but other locals say it's impossible to conduct what Israel claims is a targeted operation in such a

densely populated area. What few can deny is that the attack has left this community north of the Gaza Strip grieving and in shock. The UN says its schools were the last place of refuge for civilians trying to flee the fighting. Now even they are not safe anymore.

Hanna Belcher, Al Jazeera.

Appendix A3: More children among Gaza dead

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K5wrwZlwAq8&bpctr=1389463659>

Gaza sky in flames. The usual scene for the 11th day. No letting up on the targets the Israeli army has been shelling since Monday. The air bombardment continues through the night. With the ground offensive going deeper into the strip, fighting is taking place right at the outskirts of Gaza city itself. And while actual scenes are hard to see this is the aftermath. This man was left with no single member of his family alive. His baby daughter in diapers, her head was smashed. A pregnant lady in another home, killed with her four children. This man is the only survivor, when the Samouni family in A-Zaytoon neighbourhood perished under a barrage of Israeli rockets.

Bereaved father: "All my family died – my father, my mother, my wife, my son died, my sisters and their children, my cousins died".

Scores of Gaza families continued to pour into hospitals – dead, injured or bereft. The air and the mood of death spread around the place. In this house there was once a family. In one blow it was turned into dust. An entire extended household of children, parents, grandparents obliterated instantly.

Bereaved mother: "My only resort is to god in my calamity. Only this afternoon my daughter was alive. Now she is no more".

Gazans don't know what to do. They are under siege and under fire from every direction. Their hospitals are running out of medical supplies, and even of space. Their fate is in the hands of their enemy.

Mohammed Vall, Al-Jazeera.

Appendix A4: Breaking News – Bomb blast in Oslo

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WIGaweRISA>

We take you back to the events taking place in Norway. A bomb in the capital Oslo. At least it would appear to be a bomb. Some serious damage being done. We can talk to Christina Orven who is an eyewitness to the events there. Christina, what can you tell us?

Christina Orven: I am now at the site, about 150 meters from the government quarter and well, I wasn't there, as an eyewitness, but I am a journalist, so I just came here a few minutes after it happened. And, people are quite upset. A lot of people are walking around here and are quite scared I think.

Anchor: Can you please describe what do you see around you? What is the extent of the damage? And what is the response of the security forces?

Christina Orven: From what we can see there are some windows in the governments quarter that are blown out, and the pressure has also blown out a lot of windows nearby also in the parade street, and there are now security or police securing in the area so we can't really see much of the site itself.

Anchor: I think a lot of people would be surprised that an event like this would target a town like Oslo. Can you tell us what the feeling is there? Is that unexpected to you? Is there a sense that perhaps Oslo was ever under threat? Or is this completely out of the blue?

Christina Orven: Yes, people are really surprised. I was surprised myself. We are in a very tall building in Oslo, our newspaper, and we were all very surprised. People here are shocked that this can happen in Oslo. We're used to very peaceful circumstances, so yeah [unclear]. I think people are quite calm. They are not really running around in chaos, but I think they are surprised. Yes.

Anchor: Have you seen any indication that perhaps Norway would become a target? Have the government been warning for any potential threat?

Christina Orven: No. Not really. There has been due to the Muhammad [unclear]. Someone have thought Norway might have been a target [unclear]

Anchor: What are the conditions that you live in security wise, on a daily basis? Is there much of a security presence in Norway and is a sense that events like this are being anticipated, or did Norway always consider itself to be outside of the possibility of events like this?

Christina Orven: I think most Norwegians considers themselves to be outside such dangerous events. We are not used to these kinds of things and we are not used to seeing either, I guess.

Anchor: It may take some time to find out what was the cause of this. Christina, thank you for talking to us. Christina Overn, talking to us from Oslo, it's an on-going story, and clearly, much more to come on that.

Appendix A5: Norway witnesses recount Utoya attack

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKys0BU4DDc>

Witnesses who are on the island of Utoya have been speaking to Norwegian television about what they saw.

[speaks Norwegian] “we just started talking about what happened in Oslo and went to the refectory and everyone was running in panic. People wanted to know what happened. They thought a balloon had burst. But then people started to realise that others had been shot. They jumped out of the windows and we all ran in different directions. We were all petrified. Most people ran down the water and hid behind the cliffs. He looked like a policeman and tried to show that he was going to help us, and tried to lure us over. Then he had a gun and started shooting at us. Some people threw themselves into the waters. Others hid behind stones. I saw people get shot”.

Another witness described his account of what he saw at Utoya Island.

[speaks Norwegian] “two others and myself from the youth group had gone across. We didn’t realise until we heard shots and then we ran uphill across the main road and we hid behind rocks and trees and we saw lots of people running towards the water. We tried to call someone, it was absolutely terrible. We saw somebody heading towards land, and we ran down and started shouting. I was a little bit scared when we were pushed into the car. I felt quite sure, but was very scared inside. I had to stay in control because I was one of the people who haven’t been hurt. It was a black vehicle, and we didn’t know who it belonged to. I was very happy that I was with my girlfriend to that shop [?], because otherwise, I wouldn’t have been standing here today”.

Appendix A6: Interview Norway shooting witness

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X15M9sAReM>

A little earlier I spoke to Ali Esbati who was attending the youth camp on Utoya Island, now safely back in Oslo. He described what happened:

Ali Esbati, eyewitness: Like many other people I thought in the beginning it might be some kind of joke going on and people were over-sensitive because of the bombs that had been reported earlier in Oslo. But when we finally ran out of the building, we were heading down the slope to go down towards the water, I turned back and I saw two bodies lying there umm, just on a field, next to the building, where we slept, and that's when I realised that it was actually some real bullets being shot at people.

Anchor: Give us an idea of how many people were at this camp. Are you surprised that the death toll has now reached eighty from the possible dead people that you saw on the island.

Ali Esbati, eyewitness: I'm not surprised that the number is large, but yes, I am shocked that the number is that large. I thought it would be around 15 or 20. I did see, I think I saw three dead people and one that was badly injured, but I think that there were around six hundred people there on the island. Could be a little bit less or a little bit more. So it was impossible to have a grip on the whole situation. That's basically a situation that was chaotic.

Anchor: Of course. Utoya is an island. You get there by boat. How many routs out of the island are there, and as you said, you tried to make your way to the water. Is there more than one exit off the island?

Ali Esbati, eyewitness: Not normally. It's just one ferry going back and forth towards, to the island. But of course, some people jumped into the water and tried to swim a little bit out just to not be very close to land. Some actually managed to swim all the way to the land, on the other side. It's not a very huge distance, but I think it's not, it's one ferry going back and forth. So basically, people tried to get to the shores, tried to perhaps be picked up by some boats or just get away from the shooting. That's the instinct that most had.

Anchor: Of course the incident happened in the early afternoon, and there was great panic from what we understand and from what you're also telling us. Some people,

some security officials have suggested that there may still be people hiding on the island who don't know that they can be rescued. If they are on the island, what areas can they be hiding in?

Ali Esbati, eyewitness: I think now it seems improbable, I think the police, as far as I understand, have gained control of the island. The island is rather small, and I think they have been using dogs and camera, heat seeking cameras to see if there are any people still hiding. And, as far as I understand, in that process they have found a lot, a lot of dead bodies. And they then raise the count from ten to eighty dead people.

Anchor: Ali, as a Norwegian yourself, just give us an impression now of... you've had time to digest what happened ... what are you actually feeling now about the whole incident? What Norway has to face now in the future?

Ali Esbati, eyewitness: Obviously, this is a country in shock. The numbers would be shocking in any country, but in a small country with four million people, of course this is an even larger shock. And this is a country that hasn't experienced things like this. What it seems like, the man who did it was some kind of Islamophobic internet activist and who has simply gone one step further, and this of course might be reflected in the coming debates when we have a situation in Norway, like in many, many other countries where there was a lot of fear and anxiety about Muslims and about Islamic extremism being mixed up with that, so is supposed to be a rather different picture than that most people would think... would pop up in most people's head when they hear about bombs and terror acts like this. So maybe it will affect the coming debates. I think it should, in fact.

Appendix A7: Norway mourns victims at memorial service

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DH-pNKzRyCI>

As morning broke an entire country struggled to express its grief. But still trying to come to terms with Friday's violence, Norwegians didn't quite know how. Some spoke with flowers and candles. For many, the pain was too much for words, but others shared their thoughts.

Bystander: "Everybody, it's been hurting. It hurts. All over Norway and all over the world".

One woman said many were relieved Al Qaeda wasn't behind the attacks.

Bystander: "Since we have quite a big group of immigrants in this country, I think that that will possibly unite us all more, the fact that they are not to blame in any way".

The nation has stopped asking questions for a moment to grieve together. Norway is a small country, and the death toll here is proportionally bigger than that suffered by the Americans in 9/11. It was a service of calm dignity. The Prime Minister fought with his feeling as he remembered those who died.

The Prime Minister: "Every single one of those we have lost is a tragedy in itself. Together, it is a national tragedy".

Inside the cathedral, the words were of comfort. Norway is strong. The people are together. The nation will go on. But it's hard to see how Norway can ever be the same again.

Nick Spicer, Al Jazeera, Oslo.

Appendix A8: Haitians struggle to cope amid aftermath of earthquake

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EW1VUgH9g2s>

As we drove through the streets evidence of the damage the quake caused were everywhere. Building after building, body after body. Men, women and especially children. This is the second dark night the people of Port-au-Prince have had to suffer. Everybody here is sleeping outdoors. After what's happened, they are understandably terrified of sleeping inside. Here they are singing religious songs to get them through the night. On one side of the road, people huddle to get some rest, on the opposite side of the streets, just a few feet away – the bodies of their loved ones.

Haitian man: "The little one, take the little one".

No-one here has much food or water. We saw little evidence of international help for these people on our journey through the very centre of the city, the area that has been worst hit. We passed no rescue operations, more than twenty-four hours after the earthquake struck. This is where people have come to sleep. They say they are afraid to go back into their houses, they think something else might happen. In one corner of the square there's even a woman having a baby. It's uncertain just how bad the first days of her new child's life could get.

Sebastian Walker, Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Appendix A9: UN confronts 'worst ever disaster'

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMythR6gk0Y>

Nothing is now easy in this devastated country, even burying the dead. The last few bodies are received at Port-au-Price main cemetery before it is closed, filled to capacity. The names of the dead scrolled on loose pieces of paper. And in one of the city's rubbish dumps, officials have started burning bodies. More than two thousand incinerated together in huge piles. On the outskirts of the city, hundreds more bodies are dumped by the trunkful into [unclear]. These mass graves, a desperate attempt to avert a public-health disaster.

Alex Larson, Haitian minister of public health: "The urgent intervention here is to manage the bodies. We have to get them out and sanitise the area, disinfect it. And we have to prevent epidemics".

Outside the presidential palace, a mass outpouring of grief. Chanting pity for Haiti, thousands, many of them homeless, joining in prayer. Fears that as the situation grows more desperate, grief may turn to anger. Shots fired as ruined shops are empty with goods.

Haitian man "Who is here to help us already? We can't do nothing"

Haitian man: "I'm hungry. Everybody hungry".

David Wimhurst: "Nobody has been abandoned, but if they have that feeling, and if they see they are not getting the assistance they need, they could start take matters into their own hands, and that is always the danger that in situation like this it could become more volatile, so we are very conscious of that".

The rescue efforts continue, but with time against them, bodies are now increasingly being found. For those who remain, singing and praying is the only way to deal with their loss.

Tarek Bazley, Al Jazeera.

Appendix A10: Quake victims buried in mass graves

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlyAj3Jx1VI>

In Titanyen, outside Port-au-Prince, a truck dumps a load of rubble and corpses into a mass grave. This stretch of arid scrub has long been used as garbage dump. Now it's the final resting place for many earthquake victims. Deep trenches lie open, ready for more bodies.

Adrian [unclear name] lives nearby: "The trucks with the dead come and dump them right in the hole".

Haitian officials say their work crews have dumped about fifty-thousand bodies into mass graves like these since the earthquake. There are perhaps thousands of people buried here. Their names have gone unrecorded, and their final resting places are marked only by piles of dirt and rubbish. Such hasty treatment of the dead is against Haitian culture and religion. Many Haitians spend lavishly on funerals and grave markers. Many also believe in voodoo, an African-influenced religion that puts special importance on honouring the spirits of the dead. In this Port-au-Prince cemetery, a voodoo shrine sits among the tombs. Voodoo priests have complained the government that these mass burials are sacrilege. But in the nearby village of [unclear name], people are more concerned about the wellbeing of the living. Several houses and a church were destroyed here in the earthquake. The people say they have received no help from anyone. The mass grave has added to their misery. "The bodies are coming from far away, and they pass through here with them. They drop them nearby, and the smell hit us. It's not good for the kids". The Haitian government says it has no but to continue the mass burial to protect public health.

Rob Reynolds, Al Jazeera, Titanyen, Haiti.

Appendix A11: Haiti quake survivor's story of despair and loss

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUrGImD7uHU>

It once was where Haiti's affluent and well to do send their children for private education. For the last seven days, the St Louis de Gonzague School in Port-au-Prince has been home to fifteen thousand of Haiti's earthquake survivors. The stories of despair and loss are too numerous to recount, each one sad and heart-breaking. Josiane's story is just one paragraph in this terrible story, but so typical. Now alone with her five-month-old baby, her home crumbled when the three story building toppled on top of it, the twenty eight year old mother and her baby girl [unclear name], survived, her husband Jounieh [unclear name] was crushed and died.

Josiane: "My life changed. I had a home and a husband. We used to see these sights on television. I never imagined that I would suffer the same".

Not only was Jounieh a good husband, more importantly in a poor country, he had a good paying job as an accountant. Now she has only a few bags to her name, and is relied on outside help, help that is slow in coming. The UN has delivered water once here, foreign doctors have visited, but food has been sparse and has come not from the massive international aid efforts, but from a small charity from the neighbouring Dominican Republic. This is her home, or what's left of it. Her husband's body is still under the rubble. Locals started a fire to cancel out the smell of decaying corpses. It has estimated that around twenty thousand people have perished in this area alone, and the visit reminds her of what has happened a week ago. "It was so frightening, I was cooking and everything started to shake violently and the walls went crushing down. I was terrified. Now I always feel as if the ground is moving. It feels like a cemetery now. I don't want to come here again until everything is rebuilt". Until then, this could remain her home. She has left with sheets for cover, hand outs for food, rough ground for a floor and hopes. "I want the international community to rebuild my country, because it's destroyed. I don't want my daughter to grow up and live this kind of life. I want it to be better for her". Better now is basic. The international community say better is coming. The Haitian people are asking when.

Tony Birtley, Al Jazeera, Port-au-Prince.

Appendix A12: Haiti quake UN's most fatal incident

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mmq7gn9tns>

A new year wish from one UN family, sent just days before the quake. French-Haitian, Emanuel Rejouis and New-Zealander wife Emily with their three girls. For most of the last decade, the couple worked for the UN in a variety of trouble spots. A post into Port-au-Prince, finally a chance for Emanuel to help those in his home country.

Jules Hobbs, family friend: "Working for the UN was something that he was very passionate about, and very pleased to have met up with Emily who also had a similar passion in making a small change. He really wanted to be able to be with his family while working, so for him to take the family to Haiti was a dream".

But like hundreds of other UN staffers that dream is now shattered. Escaping from the devastated UN office, Emily found the family's apartment in ruins, but was able to pull her youngest out of the rubble, injured, but alive. Emanuel and the other two girls, trapped in the rubble, are now presumed dead.

Edmond Mulet, UN peacekeeping operations: "Of course it's a very emotional moment for me, because we had a six-storey high building standing behind me, and now as you can see it's only one storey. And we know that between fifty or up to a hundred people are buried there. Of course the first priority right now for the mission is to put the mission back on its feet, and to restructure the mission, to make it efficient, and then, with the mission back and functioning, then we will be able to be better in serving the interests of the Haitian population".

But the task of getting the UN up and running again is enormous. Dozens of key figures, including the mission's chief and deputy are dead or missing. The UN's core relief activities – security, food, and medical assistance – will rely heavily on whatever staff it can bring in. Coordinating these activities and that of the dozens of other agencies and governments will be difficult. Working amid such a mess of loss of life, the UN now has its own loss to deal with – that of its families and its workers who were in Haiti, hoping to make a difference.

Tarek Bazley, Al Jazeera

Appendix B1: Massive Israeli air raids on Gaza

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/7801128.stm

The attack began like this. Gaza has not suffered as badly in a single day since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. There were two intense waves of airstrikes. More than a hundred tons of bombs were dropped, Israel said, on dozens of targets. This was one: a Gaza city police station. A badly injured man recites the Muslim prayer for those about to die. The Gaza police chief himself was also killed. There were many civilian casualties too, including children. Gaza is one of the most crowded places on earth. Every military target has homes and families close by. The emergency services were overwhelmed. Bodies were dumped in piles outside the main hospital. Frantic crowds gathered to look for loved ones among the dead. "Even if you kill thousands of us we won't give in", says the Hamas leader in Gaza, "we bow only before God". Rescuers clawed at rubble to dig up people trapped below. Israel said Hamas was to blame in launching what it called 'terror attacks' from within civilian population centres. A short time later, rockets began falling on Israeli towns bordering Gaza, although with far less effect than Israeli airstrikes. Hamas promised revenge. Israel expected that. "There is a time for restraint, but now is a time to fight," says Israel defence minister. "It won't be easy, but we are determined". A ground attack could be next. Israel's Prime Minister warns tonight, "the operation was just beginning." So, neither side is willing to pull back. The peace process is looking more irrelevant than ever. And, despite widespread calls for restraint, the international community seems powerless to prevent further bloodshed.

Paul Wood, BBC News, Jerusalem.

Appendix B2: Israel strike 'kills 30' at Gaza school

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7813735.stm>

When people live this close together, the front line is everywhere. Gaza's population has nowhere to run or hide. Hundreds of desperate civilians had gone to a UN school building hoping to find safety, but Israeli mortars fell just outside. Many children are said to be among the dead. Much of what was filmed here was too graphic, too horrific to show. And the Israeli army did know this was a UN building.

John Ging, United Nations: "We have provided the GPS coordinates of every single one of our locations. They are clearly marked with UN insignia, flags flying lights shining on the flags at night and so on. It is very clear that these are United Nations' installations".

Israel insists it is not fighting the people of Gaza. It accuses Hamas of using human shields. This was the town of Khan Yunis this morning. The UN school was fired on, says Israel, because Hamas launched mortars from there. A two-man Hamas rocket team was also present, it's claimed. The two sides bitterly accuse each other of lying.

Fauzi Barhoum, Hamas Spokesman, Gaza: "These are baseless accusations. There was no fire from any kind from the school by the resistance. The Zionist occupier wanted to kill as many civilians as possible. The school is marked by the UN flag, and the Israelis are just trying to justify this ugly crime".

Mark Regev, Israel Prime Minister's spokesman: "Had we known there were civilians in this institution we wouldn't have returned fire the way we did. But it must be clear. Hamas brutalised the institution. They shot at us mortar shots from the institution. We were returning fire, and now Hamas, as we speak, is currently doing a cover up".

Whatever the truth, this is the biggest single loss of human life in Israel's campaign. It could add critical mass to the international calls for a cease fire. Gaza's hospitals are again overwhelmed. "Israel calls itself a great nation", says this grief stricken man, "this is the measure of its greatness".

Israel prevents international journalists from reaching Gaza, but our local producer, Rushdi Abu Alluf, was there after another UN school building was attacked.

Rushdi Abu Alluf (BBC local producer): "We are inside UNRWA school, where hundreds of people had fled their homes in the northern part of Gaza Strip, a city called Beit Lahia,

where a fighting between Hamas fighters and other Palestinians militant faction and the Israeli army. Last night, one of the tragedies happened here, where Israeli air strike have targeted this place. This is the bathroom of the school, killing three members of one extended family. I'm joining now by one of the relatives. Tamer, can you tell us what happened here?"

Tamer (eyewitness): "Last night a group of my family members came out to the bathroom. Israeli airstrikes targeted the place, killing my cousin and two other members of my extended family".

Israel moved into Gaza with relative ease. Now there is street fighting. The aim of this is not to remove Hamas from power, says Israel, but to destroy it as a military force. Israeli army claims it has killed a hundred and thirty Hamas fighters since the ground offensive began. There is precious little sign of a cease fire emerging just yet, although international demands for one are growing. That, though, could just intensify the violence, as both sides try to get something they can call victory before the diplomacy takes over.

Paul wood, BBC news, on Israel's border with Gaza.

Appendix B3: Israel to vote on Gaza truce

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7835376.stm

Ordinary men, women and especially children in Gaza feel they are living in hell. Bombs keep falling. There is nowhere to hide. 1600 people were sheltering in this school, according to the United Nations, when, it says, Israel's shells struck, killing two little boys. For the first time in this Gaza conflict, the UN is talking of a possible war crime. It has demanded an independent investigation. But even as Israel and Hamas keep fighting, there is a talk of an end to all this. Israel's security cabinet is expected to vote on a cease fire tonight. Government ministers are sounding confident.

[Israeli spokesman]: "Israel has achieved understanding and support from a great number of nations who really understand what has been going on. This can be seen in the text of the Security Council resolution and in the will of the international community to contribute actively to stop the smuggling of war materials and rockets into Gaza".

Militarily, Israel also says it's achieved its goals. Three weeks into its assault on Gaza, Israel believes Hamas has been seriously weakened. But Hamas is still standing. It still rules Gaza. It still has weapons. Neither side want to talk to the other, but both Israel and Hamas will have to find a way to make a cease fire work.

Katya Adler, BBC News, Jerusalem.

Appendix B4: Norwegian capital hit by large explosion

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14254254>

We just got these pictures in the past few minutes. We put them on air for you, but the details are still quite sketchy. Some reports are saying that the explosion took place inside the headquarters of Norway's biggest tabloid newspaper. Other people are saying that a car has been damaged and an entire building housing government offices has been damaged as well. And also, if you look on some of the social networking sites like Twitter, people are reporting a smell of sulphur in the air, a huge amount of smoke and witnesses saying that the explosion happened in government headquarters. This is a map that we're getting for you of the middle of downtown Oslo. What we can tell you for sure is that there has been a massive explosion in the middle of Norway's capital, Oslo. From what we understand, a few people have been injured. Here you can see. This is the picture I was talking to you about that we saw on Twitter. You can see smoke rising in the air there, and what we are being told that this building is a government building, and that the offices of the Prime Minister, Jens Stoltenberg are in this building as well. Different reports, though, are saying that this explosion took place inside the headquarters of Norway's biggest tabloid newspaper. So it is a slightly mixed picture, we are getting in different wire copy as well coming in. And actually Norway's news agency, NTB, has just told Reuters that the Prime Minister, Jens Stoltenberg, is safe. This is after the blast, in central Oslo, although we do understand that there has been some casualties, but the Prime Minister is in fact safe. We'll keep you right up-to-date with events in Oslo. We're working to get someone on the telephone who can tell us a little bit more about what happened there, and I'll continue to update you on that blast. Also just to tell you again – Associated Press are saying it was a large explosion, several people are injured but the prime minister is safe.

Appendix B5: death toll of at least 80 in the shooting on the island of Utoya in Norway

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&v=cuVD3qN6aul&NR=1>

A gunman opens fire at a youth camp on an island outside the Norwegian capital, Oslo. Police now say at least eighty people were killed there. Earlier, a car bomb exploded in Oslo, killing at least seven. A Norwegian man has been arrested. Local media says he has links to right-wing extremism.

Hello and welcome. Let's start the hour with some breaking news on the situation in Norway. Police there say that at least eighty people were killed on the island of Utoya, when a gunman opened fire. Now, to repeat that, the death toll at the island of Utoya is now put at around eighty. Police says that the killings were of catastrophic dimensions. Many other people have been injured. Police in Norway have confirmed that a thirty-two year old ethnic Norwegian man has been arrested in connection with that attack, and also the earlier bomb explosion in the capital Oslo.

Let's see if we can just get the very latest from a Norwegian police spokesman now. I wonder if we can open communications now.

- Can you hear me? You're speaking to BBC news.
- Yes, I can hear you.
- Just, we're hearing that eighty people were killed on the island of Utoya. Can you confirm that for us?
- Yes. I can confirm that. That is the latest figures from this island. Eighty young people were shot on this island.
- This is a shocking development, because we'd heard that around ten had been killed. We were aware of the fact that many people were escaping into the water. It's very difficult to comprehend what happened on that island.
- It's very difficult for Norwegian police to comprehend too. We have a lot of people working on this island. It's a very difficult situation. A lot of things to do. And we want to be certain about the numbers and that's the latest confirmed numbers now. It's eighty persons dead on this island.
- Are you concerned that this figure could potentially go up?
- It can, but that's not so much since the last picture.
- OK. And if you could just please get us up to date on the police operation there. Are police still searching for bodies on this island and are there still any young people on that island?
- We are still having an on-going operation on the island. We also have ambulances and health personnel on this island... it's still on-going operation on this island.

- And have the people, the bodies that have been recovered, have they been identified? Do the parents know?
- No. We are not being able to contact everybody yet. We have telephone for the parents and relatives to this eighty, and they have a telephone number they can ring or have a...
- And it is just difficult to comprehend the numbers. Is it... How is it possible that one gunman killed so many people? What kind of device was he using? Do you know that yet?
- We are having an investigation and hopefully the investigation will show how this is possible.
- And can you name yet the gunman, the man responsible for this?
- The Norwegian police doesn't want to name this person yet.
- Aners Friedenber, a spokesman for Oslo police, thank you very much with that update.

And just to bring that to you, eighty people now confirmed to have been killed on the island of Utoya, where a gunman open fire, and that was, of course, where, around seven hundred young people were taking part in a summer camp.

Appendix B6: Norway mourns those killed in Friday's attacks

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14270019>

This was Norway's day of mourning, of remembering all those who lost their lives at the hands of a man who described the killings as gruesome but necessary. In Oslo's cathedral they held a service for sorrow and hope. The people were told that the full scale of the evil had yet to emerge. The king and queen were present, aware that this is the worst violence to strike their country since the Second War World. The Prime Minister said many are still missing.

The Prime minister: "Each and every one of those who died is a tragedy. Combined, the losses have become a national tragedy".

In a small country, almost everyone knows the people who have lost friends or family, and some of those who had been on the island when the shooting started were among the crowds.

Lars Martin Haugland, survivor: "It was like hell, actually. I have no words. The feeling was that soon I'm going to die, and the fear, that I heard so many shots of this gun. He never stopped shooting".

Also there, young people who had friends at the summer camp but were still missing: "A friend of us is missing, and we haven't heard a thing about her and neither does her family".

This is a country in profound shock, numb. A society so far untouched by the kinds of violence that have scarred so many other places. And made worse by the fact that the focus of one of these attacks was a holiday island, mainly for young people.

Out on the lake, near where the gunman started killing young people, the grim task has continued of recovering bodies. Divers were still looking for the missing. Four or five students remain unaccounted for.

Adrian Pracon is a survivor who is now in hospital. He remembers hearing the gunman shouting.

Adrian Pracon, survivor: "When people ran from him. He just walked after them. He didn't run. He walked slowly, because he thought 'you may run but you can't hide. I will find you. I will kill you'. And so he yelled that this is the day you are going to die".

Reporter: "He told people that they are going to die?"

Adrian Pracon, survivor: "Yeah. He yelled 'I'm going to kill you. This is your last day. I will kill you'".

Adrian had tried to swim away from the island but feared he would drown. When he returned to the shore, the gunman was waiting.

Adrian Pracon, survivor: "I saw people standing up, start running, being shot in the head, being shot in the back. People falling over me, dead. The water turns red around me, because it was near the water. Just a complete massacre. It was something extreme. I used some bodies to hide behind, to pretend I was dead. Then I heard his breathing, his boots, when he approached me. He was, maybe, a meter away from me".

Adrian was shot in the shoulder, and a picture has emerged of the moment that the gunman Andres Behring Breivik started shooting towards him.

Adrian Pracon, survivor: "This is me, hiding here under some clothes, and between also dead bodies and this is the man shooting me at the same time in the shoulder".

For many, it is a bewildering time, discovering that a Norwegian man felt so enraged with the country's political leaders that he could turn his gun on teenagers at a summer camp.

Gavin Hewitt, BBC News, Norway.

Appendix B7: BBC News Reports 12.01.2010

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5dG6vyFWFo>

Haiti was already one of the world's poorest countries. It was already a disaster zone. And now this.

[Telephone eyewitness]: "there's... an earthquake just happened, and many people are walking in front of me, and they have blood all over them. That was a lady screaming, since she lost her son".

[Telephone eyewitness]: "The hospital is collapsed. The national palace is collapsed. I see at least five big buildings that collapsed. I think this is really a disaster".

[Telephone eyewitness]: "[mumbles] The world is going to an end!"

As the sun rose, the nightmare was only just beginning. In the streets – some screamed. Others lay lifeless. How do you explain all this to a child? They already had little here. Now many have nothing. There is a city in ruins. A country which can do little, but wait for help to arrive. At the presidential palace, proof of the strength of this quake. It wasn't just flimsy buildings which collapsed. The central cathedral caught fire, it now lies in ruins. But it is the human losses which are most shocking. Throughout the night, desperate survivors tried to rescue their family, their friends, in whatever way they could. Digging down with bare hands. The United Nations HQ building in Haiti collapsed. The UN says more than a hundred people are missing in the rubble, and survivors among the peace keeping force struggle to reach them.

Elisabeth Byrs, United Nations: "The situation is very serious and we are very anxious and concerned. It's a tragedy for the UN and also for the Haitian people. So far we have no information regarding the casualties"

[UN Security Council]: "I now invite you to rise up, and observe one minute silence".

In New York, the UN Security Council paused to mark the scale of this tragedy, while in Washington, President Obama mobilized America's search and rescue services.

President Obama: "There are just a few hundred miles of ocean between us and a long history that binds us together. Haitians are our neighbors in the Americas and here at home, so we have to be there for them in their hour of need".

This was the worst earthquake to hit this impoverished nation in two hundred years, and it is a country which has suffered plenty in its history.

Appendix B8: Haiti - the place where hell is the new normal

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/8467648.stm>

At night, Port-au-Prince is a place inhabited by shadows, and haunted by a growing list of fears: the security for food, for the simple business of survival. This is one of the dozens of caravan zones that are spread around the capital since the earthquake. This one is tantalizingly close to the airport, where all the aid is flying in. They can hear the planes land, but they have yet to see any of the cargo.

“Have you received any help?” I asked David. “No”, he said, “nothing”.

But even if aid will trickle in, is there even a future for a capital that has become a tent-city? Here is the camp outside the crushed “White House”, the president’s former home. The citizens left very much to their own resources. Here is the one in Petion Ville. The square is named after one of the former slaves turned rebel, as he defeated the French two centuries ago, and founded the second oldest republic in the hemisphere. But the dignity of Haiti’s past is long forgotten. Until last Tuesday, this was one of the richest neighbourhoods, up in the breezy hills. But Josephine, a journalist with one of the local papers, the sky is now the roof over her head.

- What about your house?
- My house is...
- Gone?
- Gone. Yeah.
- How long will you stay here?
- I don’t know. I don’t have anywhere to go. I don’t know.

From the indignity of living, to the indignity of dying. In a city that has mustered the grotesque, it doesn’t get worse than this. The open air makeshift morgue at the general hospital. The bodies are simply dumped, waiting for the bulldozers. This is where they end up, at one of the city cemeteries. The grave diggers at Port-au-Prince have been kept very busy these days. So, Charles is one of the chief grave diggers here, and what he has just explained to me is that there are three-hundred bodies in this mass grave here, and the way they did it, is that they burnt them first of all, you can still see how the ground is blackened here. This is where they burnt them, there was kind of makeshift funeral pile, and then they put the half-burnt bodies into this whole here. You can still smell it, and you can see the flies. This, then, is the final resting place for those who cannot afford the

one thousand dollars or more to buy one of these, a place in Port-au-Prince's new catacombs. When hell is the new normal, it is not surprising that this has become a city on the edge of a nervous breakdown. We came across Joseph and Michel, digging in the rubble, with a determination of expert rescuers. It has been half an hour and the entrance of this small department store is still full of bodies. And this was his trophy. A few batteries and torches. Everything is up for grabs, anything that could fetch a price. Stars and stripes curtain, a carpet role with a dollar pattern, if only they were real. Looting now is the only industry here, and this is the new rush hour of Port-au-Prince. Anything will do as a weapon. A hack sword, a stick, and of course all the machetes and guns you can't see. The airport is beginning to resemble a film set, courtesy of the pentagon's productions. Aid is being flown in by the minute. The Americans have begun distributing water and food. Haiti will soon be back on life support, thanks to the international community. But the promise of generosity also creates expectations, and expectations are creating anger. This was the scene outside one UN compound this morning. Most of the people here are looking for work. This man was looking for food. "We are thirsty and we are hungry". If there is a queue in Haiti, people will joint it, in their hope of getting something. Patience is running out, and all the ingredients for unrest now exist. At this queue alone there are perhaps two or three thousand people expecting some work. A whole city of destitute hoping for help. And at the same time, of course, we have a substantial criminal element and a history of violence. None of this work well for Haiti. US soldiers here help to deliver food and relief. 10000 of them are due in and around the city by the end of today. But if the anarchy spreads, they may soon find themselves patrolling the streets, in what will look like a full scale military operation. Hard to imagine that all this started barely a week ago, with an earthquake.

Appendix B9: Earthquake misery in Haiti hospital

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8465871.stm>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W26i0QVDiyM>

The children gather for breakfast, but there is little here to eat. Among the home-made shelters, a city struggles. These are the homeless. The helpless. They have nothing, except their dignity. From their tiny radios, comes news of the aid effort. But here, there is nothing to show for it. And the anger, which might yet tear this place a part, is growing.

Haiti Belizarte: "We don't have any houses. Most of the houses are destroyed. Even the houses that stand up, people are scared to sleep on them. Most of the people don't eat since Tuesday night. Thursday, two days after, there was some cookies. Last night they threw food in the street, we can't even get them".

Haiti's humanitarian crisis is worsening by the day, with more than a million people living out in the open the of risk disease and of death is growing. They have no money, no jobs, no way of rebuilding their houses. And without a sustained commitment from the international community, this country, already one of the world's poorest, will set back a generation. When buses arrive, there is chaos. A scramble to leave. Those who can are fleeing this city, worried that disease and violence could erupt. But this is not yet a place turning in on itself. They are organizing themselves. Putting up signs at the new homeless camps. And the government's construction teams are out, clearing the debris.

Jonny Campbell, construction worker: "We have so many things to do that we cannot go to sleep. We have so many lives that we are trying to save"

Reporter: "Have you saved any lives?"

Jonny Campbell, construction worker: "Yes. A Lot".

Haiti's agony is clear to see. But some help has arrived at the hospitals.

Sandra Hodge, Canadian medical team: "We don't really have much drugs that I can give them for pain. I'm just doing the best that I can. We have piles of people outside that require to get in here, still, so we are trying to get people out the door as quickly as possible".

Still, it is a world away from the desperate scenes we saw here a day after the earthquake. When there were no doctors, no medicine, just the dying and the dead. Today, at least, there is hope. But not for everyone. Not for nine-year-old Stephaney. Her father Carlos tells me she will die. That the hospital the hospital doesn't have the right equipment to carry out an operation to save her life. So they wait, as she slowly slips away from them.

Remarkably, some are still being pulled out alive. A six-year-old boy and a fourteen-year-old girl, this time. But these flickers of joy are few and far between. How many more could be alive after all this time? Night comes at the end of a day of despair. They bed down, anxious, but surviving. For now.

Matthew Price, BBC news, Port-au-Prince.

The tragic story of Stephaney. Now, of course, we talk about aftershocks, when one of these seismic events happens, and we felt a few while we have been here, but the real aftershocks that grip a place like this are the emotional ones. Just put yourself into the shoes of the people of Haiti. First, there is the extraordinary shock of the earthquake. One minute when the earth shakes, and everything around them either collapses into a pile of dust, or looks so bad and cracked, that they know they can't go back there and live there in the future. Then, there is a search for the bodies. Then, they wake up the following morning, and kind of wonder what has happened to their world. Everything has changed – they have no jobs, they have no food, they have no money, they have no water, they have no medical supplies. And the next phase is watching those who are not already dead dying slowly. A mother watching her child, life ate out of her child in the hospital, knowing full well that the most menial medical attention would make all the difference. I have seen quite a few of the scenes, and I have to say, having covered a few of these crises, as well, this has been one of the most heart rending. Mainly, because the people of Haiti have been left so much for their own very meager resources, indeed. And yes, there has been enormous amount of international aid and good will, and millions of dollars are poured in, and that will make a huge difference to this country, but what happens in a month? Or in a year? Or in five years? Will this be the opportunity to remake Haiti, or will it be another lost opportunity?

Appendix B10: Looking for survivors online

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/world_news_america/8460551.stm

This is the information nerve centre – the Haitian embassy in Washington. Volunteers are setting up a website they hope will harness the power of Facebook and Twitter to trace missing loved ones.

“People have use Facebook tremendously just to post information, to know, to find out what’s going on. It’s like people spend hours and hours on Facebook, posting messages, making comments, seeing pictures. It’s a great tool for us in this time of need”.

The earthquake is the biggest natural disaster so far in the age of social networking. And people are turning to their computers for information. In previous crises, the embassy itself has been the point of contact, but today, nobody is here. Mainly because they and the authorities are getting more information online, using Twitter and Facebook.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11th, people flocked to lower Manhattan to post photos of their missing relatives. Today, Facebook is the electronic post board for disasters.

“Facebook and Skype are one of the only ways that we can get communications, because the cell-phone lines are down”.

Technology is also key to raising cash. A record breaking five million dollars was quickly netted by the Red Cross through text messages alone.

Hillary Clinton: “If any of your viewers want to participate they can text Haiti, H-A-I-T-I and the number is 909999, and ten dollars will be automatically billed to your cell-phone”.

According to Facebook, there have been 1500 updates on Haiti every minute since the earthquake struck.

“We have huge social networks. I know Twitter is working on the ground there...”

YouTube, Twitter and Facebook have all carried thousands of pleas for information about missing friends and relatives. And appeals for cash. But the FBI is also warning that would be donors should be on the alert for scams. How are they communicating? By Twitter, of course.

Jane O'Brien, BBC News, Washington.