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Articles

Book Review

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The Border Crossing: the Cinematic Representation of Memory in the Autobiographical Documentary.

Jill Daniels

Abstract:

In this paper I explore the cinematic representation of memory, trauma and identity in the autobiographical documentary, with reference to my film *The Border Crossing.* I utilise and locate my own experience inside questions about the use of cinematic language in the representation of memory, trauma, and identity. Alisa Lebow (2008) asks: "do we call up our cultural ghosts, or do they call on us? Is not the latter likely… where we are interpolated into the body of (cultural) knowledge we think of as our (contested) self?" *The Border Crossing* is set in the Basque country where a young woman reconstructs my self of 40 years ago. She wanders through streets on both sides of the Spanish/French border towards a violent fate, while an unnamed man drives in the rain at night. Interweaved are narratives of Aitziber, a Basque nationalist, tortured by the Spanish Guardia Civil, and Maria, a photographer, whose niece died in a car she was driving, and whose narratives of the present and past, include references to history. My off-screen voice reflects on the past and present and difficulties encountered in making this film and the young woman's off-screen voice interacts with mine, as she recounts the story of the journey. This creates a discourse around the cinematic representation of subjectivities towards a metaphorical representation of past and present. It allows the camera and microphone to record an impressionistic landscape of sound and image to build a mosaic of exterior space that merges with an imagined space of the past to occupy the fertile space between documentary and fiction.

Keywords: Autobiography; Reflexivity; Trauma; Memory; Experimental Documentary; Basque

In this paper I explore the cinematic representation of memory, trauma and identity in experimental documentary cinema with reference to my autobiographical documentary film, *The Border Crossing* (2011):[1] The film is set in the Basque country and explores my memories of a sexual attack 40 years ago while hitchhiking. It deploys documentary realism in interviews that explore memories of violence, with two Basque women, Aitziber a young Basque nationalist and Maria a middle-aged photographer. It also documents aspects of Maria's daily life and contains extensive images of signifiers of the ongoing nationalist struggle in shots of political posters and demonstrations in support of Basque prisoners.[2] The film combines this realist strategy with performativity in the enactment of my younger self and in voice-overs.

In recent years there is general awareness of a growth in autobiographical documentary filmmaking, films that place a filmmaker at the heart of their work. Most of these films deal centrally with the filmmaker's difficult life, often within their family and other intimate personal relationships, in an effort to discover and represent their contested sense of identity. However, in this paper I will argue that there are broader possibilities for autobiographical filmmaking, drawing on the work of Alisa Lebow, Jim Lane and Janet Walker. The questions I will explore in this respect are: How does the filmmaker negotiate the representation of subjectivities when including autobiography within a film? How does the placing of the autobiographical self in the work complicate how the film represents, and refers to, the real world? Further, in relation to my film, *The Border Crossing* what form may be utilised when attempting to specifically represent autobiographical memories of traumatic events? Finally, with reference to my methodology in the representation of memory in autobiography, I refer to David MacDougall (2006), who notes that: "the encounter with visual images demands more of us than the mental facility that language has given us. There is a specificity and obduracy to images that defies our accustomed habits of translation and summation…if we are to gain new knowledge from using images, it will come in other forms and by different means." [3] Therefore it is not by talking or writing alone that I am able to deal with these problems within the world of the film to solve them, but through working on the film itself with its complex structure of sound, image and temporality.

Many influential theorists and filmmakers have viewed the autobiographical documentary film as problematic because, as Michael Renov (2004) notes: "the domain of non-fiction was typically fuelled by a concern for objectivity, a belief that what was seen and heard must retain its integrity as a plausible slice of the social world. How else to persuade viewers to invest belief, to produce 'visible evidence' and even induce social action?" [4] Richard Leacock, D.A. Pennebaker, the Maysles brothers and the proponents of direct cinema, including Frederick Wiseman, shunned an exploration of subjectivity in their documentary films in an elusive search for objectivity. Nevertheless, reflexive strategies did appear in documentary cinema in America and elsewhere, partly as an oppositional response to this claimed verisimilitude of documentary realism. Many of these filmmakers are, as Roxana Waterson (2007) notes, exploring their own

[1] Daniels, Jill. *The Border Crossing* http://www.jilldanielsfilms.com/border.html

[2] In November 2011, after the film was completed, the ETA nationalist leadership announced its commitment to end armed struggle.

[3] MacDougall, David. 2006. *The Corporeal Image: film, ethnography, and the senses.* Princeton University Press. p. 2.

[4] Renov, Michael. 2004. *The Subject of Documentary.* University of Minnesota Press. pp.XVII.

subjectivities through cinematic representation, but are also "engaged in a courageous personal quest to break officially imposed silences." [5]

Examples of autobiographical films produced over the last two decades that utilise reflexivity, not to eradicate the real but to complicate referential claims include: Rea Tajiri's *History and Memory* (1991) that explores the representation of Tajiri's Japanese-American mother's internment in the USA during WWII through Tajiri's post-memories of this event; [6] Michelle Citron's *Daughter Rite* (1998), an exploration of the difficult relationships between mothers and daughters, that deploys faux documentary of female siblings placed alongside extensively reworked home movie autobiographical footage of Citron as a child with her sister and mother; [7] Carol Morley's autobiographical film *The Alcohol Years* (2000), centred around her early life in Manchester in the 1980s, and her participation in a rich period of pop-music history; [8] Tony Dowmunt's *A Whited Sepulchre* (2009) that articulates his own position as a white 'Englishman' travelling in Sierra Leone, alongside an investigation of what might have led his great grandfather to embrace the racism underpinning British colonial rule in that country. [9]

An important component therefore, of the exploration of autobiography in documentary cinema, is the utilisation of reflexivity as a deliberate filmic strategy in order to demystify the filmmaking process, thus drawing attention to the ideological position of the film itself and also that of the filmmaker. As Janet Walker (2003) points out, these works breach the normal standards of objective documentary filmmaking by incorporating fictional and personal elements, but within that breach, "they discover new truths about the correlation between the objective mode of documentary production and mainstream history and […] the potential of experimental documentary for historical understanding."[10] On a formal level therefore, these types of films allow an extension of the possibilities for documentary cinema to represent realities. Autobiography brings one a step closer to an acknowledgement that the exploration of subjectivity and reflexivity in documentary films may provide additional rich possibilities for the cultural exploration of the social world than is allowed solely through documentary realism.

In *The Border Crossing,* I deploy a similar methodology, to the films I have referred to above, to utilise and locate my own experience of violence in order to explore the cinematic representation of traumatic memory and identity. The knowledge and experience of my own subjective memories provided a rich source of direct material to draw upon in devising strategies for this representation. Walter Benjamin (1979) provided a framework for the methodology in my use of autobiography when he notes: "He who seeks to approach his own buried past must conduct himself like a man digging […] he must not be afraid to return again and again to the same matter; to scatter it as one scatters earth, to turn it over as one turns over soil. For the matter itself is only a deposit, a stratum, which yields only to the most meticulous examination what constitutes the real treasure hidden within the earth: the images […] that stand—like precious fragments or torsos in a collector's gallery—in the prosaic rooms of our later understanding." [11] Inscribing a mediation of my subjective experience within *The Border Crossing*

[5] Waterson, Roxana. 2007.. 'Trajectories of Memory: Documentary Film and the Transmission of Testimony' in *Anthropology Today.* Vol 18. No. 1. Routledge. p.51.
[6] Tajiri, Rea. 1991. *History and Memory.* USA,
[7] Citron, Michelle. 1998. *Daughter Rite.* USA
[8] Morley, Carol. 2000. *The Alcohol Years.* UK.
[9] Dowmunt, Tony. 2009. *A Whited Sepulchre.* Thesis submitted for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Examination. Goldsmiths, University of London.
[10] Walter, Janet. 2003. *Trauma Cinema.* University of California. p.21.
[11] Benjamin, Walter. 1979. 'Berlin Chronicle' in *One Way Street and other Writings.* London: New Left Books. [1932]. p.314.

enabled me to act freely in developing strategies to call upon as a filmmaker, with the overall aim of representing traumatic memory and violence. In addition in this respect Alisa Lebow (2008) usefully asks: "Do we call up our cultural ghosts, or do they call on us? Is not the latter likely, where in the process of being called upon (to represent, to represent ourselves, to represent ourselves in certain ways, using certain, very specific tropes), we are interpolated into the body of (cultural) knowledge we think of as our (contested) self? [12] However, drawing upon our 'cultural ghosts' to represent my contested self, necessitates a measure of personal emotional distanciation that may be translated through the filmic strategies of articulating personal trauma. Achieving the emotional distance to enable me to represent my own history and memories of my own traumatic event took many years but this period of time assisted me to reflect on the nature of trauma and the difficulties of mediating it through cinematic language.

Articulating an'authentic' cinematic representation of memories of the past poses particular problems for the filmmaker. Individual memories are central components of our inner worlds and provide us with the sense of our individual and communal identity. Memories may be perceived as effected by our visual, aural and sensory inner worlds. Their perception in our interior world is subjective and takes different forms. A memory may sometimes appear to us as fixed, resembling an image of a frozen moment in time. Other memories appear fragmented and unreliable, containing significant elisions in time or place and they may continually change in form and sensation. Memories may disappear from our view altogether or reappear, seemingly

[12] Lebow. Alisa. 2008. *First Person Jewish.* Visible Evidence Series, Volume 22. Minneapolis. pp.141-42.

unbidden, or as a result of the effect of external forces. Representing subjectivities of memory is complicated by the knowledge that individual memory is cinematically unrepresentable via literal digital or analogue filmic means. 'Memory' cannot be seized and brought in front of the camera to be filmed. Further, every time we 'remember' an event, an image, sound, or a sensation from the past, we 'remember' in the present: "In the process of memory […] the 'now' is as important as the 'then'. Memory is a relationship between pasts and a particular present." (Clare and Johnson 2000).[13]

Complicating the representation of memory further in *The Border Crossing* is the additional mediation of autobiographical memories of events that have occurred in the past. This is a mode of mediation distinct in its *primacy* of subjectivity. The problems of autobiographical representation of memory in documentary cinema are further complicated in *The Border Crossing* by the articulation of memories that are centred on trauma and violence. In her analysis of memory and trauma Cathy Caruth (1996) draws on the work of Freud to note that: "*trauma* is understood as a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind." [emphasis in the original]. She also notes that the traumatic experience "is an experience that is not fully assimilated as it occurs". [14] It is the fact of the incomprehensibility of the violent event that haunts the victim and leads to its non-assimilation through direct recall. The representation of memories of trauma in documentary cinema cannot therefore avoid an acknowledgement of the incomprehensibility of the violent event alongside, and in addition, to the acknowledgement of the unreliability of all subjective memories. Caruth cites Freud to support her argument that due to the non-assimilation of the original experience: "historical memory […] is always a matter of distortion, a filtering of the original event through the fictions of traumatic repression, which makes the event available at best indirectly." (ibid. 15-16). Caruth refers to the strategy deployed in Resnais' film, *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1950): **"**it is through the fictional story, not *about* Hiroshima but taking place at its *site*, that Resnais and Duras believe such historical specificity is conveyed […] the interest of *Hiroshima mon amour* lies in how it explores the possibility of a faithful history in the very indirectness of its telling." (ibid. 27). [15] Whilst *Hiroshima Mon Amour* is a fiction film and its indexical link to actuality is conveyed elliptically via its narrative and in documentary archive footage of the affects of the nuclear explosion at Hiroshima in 1945 at the start of the film, its filmic strategy draws parallels with the strategies deployed in *The Border Crossing*. The methodology deployed in *The Border Crossing* recognises the multiple problems of representation that are outlined above. It utilises a number of distinct strategies to represent subjectivities that include trauma. At first sight some of the strategies may appear unusual in their deployment *together* within a single experimental documentary film. However as will become clear they create together a synergy of language that informs and enriches the filmic language of the film.

The Border Crossing is located at the site of the traumatic event and articulates its exploration of the past through indirect forms of mediated representation, performativity and enaction. It reprises the strategy of historical specificity deployed by *Hiroshima Mon Amour* in the creation of a direct indexical link to the site of the trauma and tells the story indirectly. It explores the fragility of remembering and forgetting and the non-assimilation of traumatic

[13] Clare, M & Johnson, R. 2000, 'Method in our Madness: identity and power in a memory work method' in Radstone, Susannah (ed) *Memory and Methodology*. Berg. p.199

[14] Caruth, Cathy. 1996. *Unclaimed Experience.* Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press. pp. 3 & 5.

[15] Resnais, Alain. *Hiroshima Mon Amour.* 1959. France. It is a fiction film set in Hiroshima, Japan, the site of the atomic bomb deployed by the USA that effectively ended WWII. The film is a love story between a French woman and a Japanese man with an elliptical structure that refers to that event.

experience in a complex layering of voice-overs that constantly make reference to 'my' unexplained desire to locate the exact site of the border crossing. However, the film represents an autobiographical event not a fictional one, the film maintains a strong indexical link to actuality. As Susannah Radstone argues: "Memory work does not reduce memory to fiction, to dream, or to poetry, for instance. Memories, that is, continue to be memories, and it their relation to lived historical experience that constitutes their specificity." (Radstone, 2003).[16] The film takes into account that the articulation of the past must take place in the present, and thus seeks to recreate the past rather than recapture it. As Naomi Green (2000) notes: "Marked by its 'distance' from history, […] memory seeks less to recapture the past than to re-create it; it wants not to confront the ghosts of history but rather to establish a place where they may flourish forever".[17] Therefore my filmic strategy is to "emphasize not the link between past and present but, instead, the absolute discontinuity" (ibid). Creating a film that consisted only of re-enactment was not adequate for my purposes in representing memory in autobiography. A fictional strategy necessitates the creation of a mise en scène that either *appears* authentic to the period or is deliberately theatrical and modern day. Therefore complete performativity deflects attention *away* from actuality in the representation of non-fictional memory.

Two distinct and separate filmic strategies, performative enactment and documentary realism are realised. They do not create distinct binary oppositions but instead underpin one another to create dialectical relationships of themes. In the performative element, a girl, a non-professional actor, chosen for her likeness to myself at her age, represents my younger self.[18] Stella Bruzzi (2006) points to the usefulness of performativity as a filmic strategy where realism is insufficient, arguing that: "the performative documentary uses performance within a non-fiction context to draw attention to the *impossibilities* of authentic documentary representation. The performative element within the framework of non-fiction is thereby an *alienating, distancing device*, not one which actively promotes identification and a straightforward response to a film's content"(my emphasis). [19] In *The Border Crossing* the spectator is thus enabled to reflect on the themes of memory and violence raised by the film and participate in the construction of identification.

In addition, reflexivity is at the heart of the making of all autobiographical documentaries. Reflexivity heightens our awareness that *The Border Crossing* is a filmic construct, because in addition to the depiction of my own self as a subject of the film, I am also the filmmaker. The film draws the spectator's attention to this reflexivity in its representation of memory at various junctures in the film. For example, during sequential shots of the girl walking through city streets the film is interrupted by a black screen and my voice-over remarks: "I lose sight of myself at this point. Not until I reach the docks and the railway do I become visible again to myself in my mind's eye." This draws the spectator momentarily away from the diegetic world of the film to a reflection on its construction and its representation of unreliable memory. The film resumes the sequential shots of the girl in a city street but in a different location to the previous sequence. This conveys a different, though non-specified, temporal point. Catherine Russell (1999) believes

[16] Radstone, Susannah. 2000. 'Working with Memory: an Introduction' in *Memory and Methodology*. Radstone, Susannah (ed). Berg. p.11.

[17] Greene, Naomi. 2000. 'Empire as Myth and Memory' in *The Historical Film*. Landy, Marcia (ed). Great Britain: The Athlone Press. p. 247.

[18] In the pre-credit sequence my voice-over points out that Sian had appeared in my earlier documentary film *Small Town Girl*, 2007, a longitudinal study of 3 adolescent girls in the UK. I refer to this prior relationship only in the pre-credit sequence.

[19] Bruzzi, Stella. 2006. 'The Performative Documentary' in *New Documentary*, ed. Bruzzi, Stella. Routledge. pp.185-86.

that these three layers of voices, the "speaker *[in voice-over]* seer and seen",[20] add richness and diversity to the work of the autobiographical filmmaker, and notes that: "In addition to the discursive possibility of these three voices is another form of identity, which is that of the avant-garde filmmaker as collagist and editor". (ibid).

In *The Border Crossing* I therefore constructed an interweaved montage of voiced memories, voices in the present and fictional enactment. Voice-overs describe the girl's journey and reflect on the fragility of memory and the affects of violence and loss. These sometimes appear to bind with the enactment on screen. At other times the voice-over describes memories of events, at an unspecified time and place, that, it says, are *prompted* by the images on the screen, evoking a fictionalized impression of the images themselves enabling memories to be recalled. Through the separation of the voice from the image a thematic relationship is created, not a narrative one, that is not fully explained, one that is resistant to definitive interpretation and referencing. The displacement of readability through a lack of synchrony of voice and image and the references to wider unexplained memories shakes the spectator's view of complete authenticity and foregrounds the film's reflexive construction. The strategy also allows the possibility of a reflection on the nature of past events and the fragile, fragmented and unreliable construction of memory and identity. The use of performativity in *The Border Crossing*, thus creates a useful method for discourse around the cinematic representation of subjectivities towards a metaphorical representation of past and present. It allows the camera and microphone to record an impressionistic landscape of sound and image to build a mosaic of exterior space that merges with and informs an imagined space of the past to occupy the fertile space between documentary realism and fictional enactment.

The performative enactment is further complicated by the use of documentary realist strategies. In documentary films realist strategies generally represent events as they unfold in the present although characters may recall to camera events that took place in the past. There may also be voice-over or a text that refers to events in the past. In the realist element of *The Border Crossing* my voice describes my encounters and growing fascination with two women, Aitziber and Maria, who have suffered from the continuing effects of violence. Over shots of Maria taking photographs in a park my voice introduces her: "I have met Maria, she is my age. If I'd stayed all those years ago her story might have been mine." Later in the film my voice-over introduces Aitziber with the remark: "I'm drawn to Aitziber, who I have met on the demonstration. She spent 5 years in a Spanish prison. I recognize in her the fragility of someone whose inner world is scarred by violence." Aitziber talks, in close up, directly to camera, offering a detailed narrative of imprisonment and sexual torture at the hands of the Spanish State.

As I point out above the juxtaposition of enactment and realism may appear to be in contradiction to the preconceived idea of what a documentary film looks and sounds like. However, in his work on the autobiographical documentary, Jim Lane (2002) points out that, "autobiographical documentaries have revealed an array of formal possibilities […] that have changed our attitudes about what a documentary should look and sound like." [21] With the utilisation of my autobiographical voice to introduce the realist sequences, I bring into the diegetic world of the film, characters and events that might not immediately appear to be contiguous with the cinematic world created through enactment. The ultilisation of enactment and realism creates layers of meaning that are richer in meaning than would otherwise be possible through the utilisation of a single one of these strategies. Enactment does not eradicate the real

[20] Russell, Catherine. 1999. *Experimental Ethnography: the work of film in the age of video.* Durham & London: Duke University Press. p.277.
[21] Lane, Jim. 2002. *Autobiographical Documentary in America*, University of Wisconsin Press. p.4.

but complicates it. Within the filmic discourse therefore, I am able to ask questions of Maria and Aitziber in my role as the filmmaker engaging with documentary realism and the filmmaker/subject of my own narrative of memory and identity. Lane argues that the representation of the self in film complicates how non fiction films represent and make reference to the world and therefore, "autobiographical documentaries use reflexivity not to eradicate the real as much as to complicate referential claims." (ibid 17-18).

Through the utilisation of my self as a filmmaker and as subject of the film with my vocalised interests and preoccupations, I may incorporate any type of seemingly disparate stylistic material into the film. Thus in *The Border Crossing* the utilisation of the girl as a character representing my younger self is not at odds with the formal stylistic strategies of documentary realism present in the rest of the film. The representation of my history and self in this work has enabled me to explore the representation of trauma and memory in the contrasting subjectivities of my self with the selves of others and to delve deeper into the representation of history and violence in the Basque country. Mica Nava (1992) argues usefully, in the introduction to her book, *Changing Cultures: Feminism, Youth and Consumerism*, that this 'kind of work' always emerges from the author's embeddedness in a specific configuration of inextricably intertwined historical, cultural and psychic narratives.[22]

In regarding myself therefore, as a contested self, with a fragmented sense of identity, embedded in a specific configuration of historical, cultural and psychic narratives, I have made choices about which aspects of my identity I have included in *The Border Crossing.* The mode of representation for my autobiography is complicated by trauma. I am not representing just any autobiographical event in my life but specifically one of violent trauma. The elisions of memory in trauma and its non-assimilability will, and must, affect the way in which I choose to represent my self in the diegesis. Janet Staiger (1996) in her article *Cinematic Shots* discusses the impossibility of representing trauma in more traditional linear narratives because, she says, it leads inevitably to a fetishism of the event. She argues that, because it tries to become a substitute narrative, trying to fill in "for the lack of an ability to describe or explain the events" (ibid 40) as I have discussed above, it leads to the narrative undoing the "process of mourning for the loss of explanation." (ibid). She argues that therefore only "anti-narrative non stories of the literary (post) modernist kind are able to represent such traumatic events; the anti-narrative form of representation is not totalizing and permits mourning to occur." (ibid).[23]

In *The Border Crossing* I do not represent the sexual attack. There is a growing anticipation of violence through much of the film in the voice-over and through the repeated shots of an unseen man driving a car at night through the rain. In the final sequence the meeting of the unseen man and the girl is implied but not specified. The sequence is set at a border crossing in shots of the girl as she sits waiting for a lift. Several cars go by without stopping, until a white car passes in front of her in the foreground close to the camera and then leaves the frame. The girl gets up and also leaves frame, in the same direction as the car, her footsteps continuing on the sound-track, until the slam of a car door is heard off-screen. The car returns into shot, its occupants unseen and drives out of sight. However, in the next sequence the girl enters a hotel room alone. Through this method of narrative elision I avoid the possibility of fetishising the representation of trauma. Nevertheless, the absence of enactment of the attack, anticipated and

[22] Nava, Mica 1992. *Changing Cultures: Feminism, Youth and Consumerism*, London: Sage. p.1.

[23] Staiger, Janet. 1996. 'Cinematic Shots'. In Sobchack, Vivian (ed) *The Persistence of History: cinema, television, and the modern event*. UK: Routledge. p.40.

hinted at throughout the film's diegesis, does not elide it from reconstruction in the imagination of the spectator.

In conclusion, I have explored how the filmmaker negotiates the representation of subjectivities when including autobiography within a film to bring one closer to an acknowledgement that the exploration of subjectivity and reflexivity provide rich possibilities for the cultural exploration of the social world. The placing of the autobiographical self in the work complicates and enhances how the film represents, and refers to, the real world. I have shown that by utilising autobiography and performativity in *The Border Crossing* I have acknowledged the unreliability of memories of traumatic events and avoided the fetishisation of trauma in representing them. Finally, I have demonstrated that by deploying filmic strategies of documentary realism alongside performativity there are rich possibilities in the development of cinematic language in representing memory and autobiography in experimental documentary cinema.

Jill Daniels is an award-winning filmmaker and Senior Lecturer in film and video practice at the University of East London in the School of Arts & Digital Industries. She is currently in the 4th year of her PhD (part-time) under the supervision of Professor Susannah Radstone (head of studies) and Dr Roshini Kempadoo. The title of her thesis is *The Cinematic Representation of Place, Memory and Identity: Experiments in Documentary Film, 1950-2010.* It is a practice-theory PhD exploring filmic strategies in experimental documentary cinema. She has completed two practice pieces for the PhD: *Not Reconciled* (2009), a 41 minute film set in the ruined town of Belchite in Northern Spain and *The Border Crossing* (2011) an autobiographical film set in the Basque country.

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Measuring a Nation's Wellbeing: A Psycho-cultural Investigation

Siobhan Lennon-Patience

Abstract

This paper investigates the cultural, social and political contexts of the Prime Minister, David Cameron's proposal to measure the wellbeing of the UK population. I adopt a psycho-cultural approach whereby theories and methods from the disciplines of psychoanalytic and psychosocial studies are combined with those from the fields of media and cultural studies. The paper includes relevant case study material taken from the UK press, television, documents and artefacts within popular culture. From this investigation, I provide a critical cultural analysis and contextualisation of the proposal to measure wellbeing. This comprises an examination of recurring themes and discourses in those texts, linking them with cultural movements and histories. I explore the position of wellbeing measurement in terms of the contemporary psychosocial debates about the nature of 'therapy culture'. The paper draws on Cooper's (2009) psychodynamic approach to the interrogation of policy processes, which explores that which is absent, suppressed or denied. I suggest that the current exposition of wellbeing measurement, as deployed by David Cameron, is underpinned by a culturally powerful therapeutic discourse, comprised of a version of self-help therapy culture that has an undercurrent of neoliberal pro-market values. This discourse has been strategically applied by the current government as a means of situating the locus of responsibility for personal wellbeing firmly on the individual. This investigation forms a new intervention in contemporary psychosocial debates about the nature and value of 'therapy culture' and is a contribution to the development of a psycho-cultural studies approach.

Keywords: Psycho-Cultural. Wellbeing. Happiness. Neoliberal. Therapy Culture.

Introduction

In this paper, I examine a particular aspect of my ongoing PhD research in which I undertake a textual and contextual analysis of the turn that positive psychology has taken in the UK.[24] My intention is to consider the notion of wellbeing measurement in its wider cultural context, taking as a methodological example the work of Nunn (2002) in her book on politics and fantasy, in which she argues for the importance of thinking about politics beyond the official regulations, policies and debates. Like Nunn, I will draw on a wide range of sources, such as speeches, newspaper articles from both broadsheets and tabloid press, political biographies and popular television, in order to explore how media representations can shape a particular discourse and how meanings associated with political and national life can be constructed. As my methodological approach is psycho-cultural, I will then try to understand it in the light of psychoanalysis. I am informed by the clinical application of psychoanalysis as a theoretical procedure as defined by Highmore (2007, 2008) whereby methodology takes the form of attention or processual awareness. Highmore has suggested that applying this form of attention to the study of an aspect of culture allows the potential for the researcher as listener to pick up on a voice in the narrative that may otherwise go unheard. This does not mean that the listener must be a passive recipient of the narrative, but they employ a form of "distracted attention attuned and attuning itself to the speech of another" (Highmore, 2007, p.96) This is the use of psychoanalysis as an interpretive strategy in order to explore, in Cooper's words, what is 'absent', 'suppressed' or 'denied' (Cooper, 2009 p.170).

The psychologist Martin Seligman and his colleagues claim that the discipline of psychology has become too focused on the negative aspects of human experience. They suggest there is a need for a branch of psychology that should dedicate itself to the scientific study of positive emotions, wellbeing and human potential. The relatively new discipline of positive psychology has sought to re-direct psychology's emphasis from the pathological to optimal human functioning and wellbeing. In doing so, it has initially distanced itself from existing psychological theories, such as psychoanalytic or humanistic traditions, in order to maintain, what it sees as its status as a separate discipline grounded in the scientific (Seligman 2000, 2002; Csiksentmihalyi and Csiksentmihalyi 2006; Wallis 2005). According to Peterson 'Positive psychology is the scientific study of what goes right in life, from birth to death and all the stops in between.' He concluded that it was right for psychology to have its own field of inquiry dedicated to the study of what makes life worth living (2006. pp.4-6). Positive psychology's proposal that positive emotional states can be scientifically studied has impressed the UK's Coalition government. In November 2010, Prime Minister David Cameron initiated a £2 million plan to measure happiness in the UK (Cameron, 2010b). This is being implemented by the Office for National Statistics asking people to rate their own wellbeing, their intention is to publish the first official wellbeing index in 2012 (ONS, 2011). A movement that can influence government policy is clearly one that needs to be engaged with and evaluated. This paper looks in more detail at how the term 'wellbeing' has been interpreted by the mainstream media to be firmly equated with the notion of happiness. It will also discuss how the narrative of wellbeing has been played out in the political arena and in the results of the public consultation on measuring the nation's wellbeing. I contend that the narrative used by David Cameron is emblematic of a version of self-help therapy culture that has an underlying discourse, which articulates neoliberal pro-market values. The measurement of wellbeing, as discussed here, is a version of governance as outlined by Brown (2005) in which human life is reduced to rational transactions with an invasion of the

market into all institutions and social actions. What results is an unlinking of the individual from their social contexts (Layton, 2006) and a society in a state of manic defense (Peltz, 2006). I argue for the intervention of a psychoanalytically inflected, psychosocial 'voice' into the debate that may invite us to consider a more nuanced way of thinking about what wellbeing means. As Bainbridge and Yates (2011) have noted, a psycho-cultural approach can allow for an understanding of the experience of living which takes into account feelings of loss and anxiety alongside our encounters with pleasures and delights.

The discourse of the therapeutic has permeated our family, social, business and political lives to the extent that it is difficult to isolate it from other dominant cultural codes, such as economic liberalism, which organize selfhood (Illouz, 2008). 'Wellbeing', arising from that therapeutic language is complex and contested concept which Carlisle and Hanlon (2007) suggest falls into four main discourses: scientific, popular, critical and environmental. Multiple terms are mobilized to define wellbeing, ranging from positive emotions, positive feelings, positive affects, life satisfaction and happiness but it is the equation of 'wellbeing' with 'happiness' that has particularly influenced current political debate and policy making (Carlisle and Hanlon 2007). I want to look at the ways in which the political concept of wellbeing has been encoded through communications of various kinds to explore how use has been made of a therapeutic discourse that has been assimilated into a neoliberal world-view.

To begin, it is necessary to unpick how the term 'wellbeing' has been defined and mobilized for the purpose of measuring a nation's wellbeing. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has been tasked with developing measures of national wellbeing and progress. Jil Matheson, National Statistician, emphasized that the term 'wellbeing' is often taken to mean 'happiness', however she goes on to say that:

> Happiness is one aspect of the wellbeing of individuals and can be measured by asking them about their feelings – subjective wellbeing. As we define it, wellbeing includes both subjective and objective measures. It includes feelings of happiness and other aspects of subjective wellbeing, such as feeling that one's activities are worthwhile, or being satisfied with family relationships. (Matheson 2011, p.2)

In my examination of the media reporting around David Cameron's announcement of his plans to have the wellbeing of the nation measured I found that in the UK popular media, the notion wellbeing was largely equated with happiness. I examined reports and articles following Cameron's announcement as they emerged in both broadsheet and tabloid media as well as on reports and discussions on UK television programmes. The overall sentiment that arose from the reporting was one of scepticism around the potential benefits that the measurement of wellbeing could have. A report in *The Times* (Woolf 2011) informs us that the Prime Minister David Cameron had 'ordered ministers to ensure that what they do puts a bigger smile on people's faces.' The article noted that ministers are required to test polices for economic, social and environmental impacts and this is to be joined by a test for whether a policy will, 'increase the sum total of human happiness—a test that will be incorporated into the Treasury's Green Book, the guide on how government should appraise what it does.

Scepticism was widely expressed in the popular media through daytime television programmes such as the ITV 1 morning chat show hosted by Lorraine Kelly, (*Lorraine ITV 1* 2011), in which the topic of happiness measurement was raised during the newspaper review. Lorraine Kelly said that she was shocked by the cost, which the papers reported as being £2 million; her guests agreed and the general consensus was that in a time of austerity 'there are better things to spend money on'. In the speech delivered by David Cameron (2010b) to launch the project to measure wellbeing, he sought to assure listeners that the concept of wellbeing

measurement was not 'woolly,' yet, this was the term used by one of Lorraine's guests. The idea that happiness is a very personal experience that is hard to define, let alone measure, is returned to by Lorraine later in the programme: 'I mean happiness for me, for example, is, you know, when it's pouring down with rain outside, but you are at home, indoors, in your pajamas, with a nice hot cup of tea' (*Lorraine* 2011).

The print media also seemed unconvinced by the proposals. Whilst *The Daily Mail* was pleased to note that happy people live longer, they invited 'family expert' and author Jill Kirby to comment: 'The whole idea that individual contentment can be measured is at best foolish and at worst intrusive. The government should be concentrating on practical things affecting our lives rather than what they think we feel' (Doughty, 2011).

The Daily Star called the government's plans to survey happiness a 'fiasco' and drew comment from the Taxpayers Alliance, who oppose what they call 'big government' and task themselves with criticizing 'all examples of wasteful and unnecessary spending'; their research director, John O'Connell described the survey as 'a complete waste of time and money' (Wall, 2011). There is further outrage in their editorial section where readers are reminded of the economic constraints the country is under, the editorial asserts 'you do not need an expensive survey to tell you how you are feeling do you? ... Especially when idiot ministers waste scarce public funds on stupid studies like this' (*The Daily Star,* 2011)

In the year that followed David Cameron's announcement regarding the measurement of the nation's wellbeing, the UK coalition government had begun to implement a programme of cuts in public spending. The journalist, Moore (2012) writing in *The Guardian,* noted that David Cameron had gone rather quiet on the subject of happiness. She argued that because the government's focus was now on austerity, happiness had been subject to the cuts, and concluded that a government concentrating on austerity would be unable to create conditions to improve the nation's wellbeing.

In addition to the more sceptical opinions expressed in popular media, there were also articles that sought to promote happiness as a lifestyle choice. *The Independent* 14/01/12) offered a special edition on happiness in their supplement magazine; and *The Observer* (29/01/12) gave readers a free copy of Tal Ben-Shahar's *Happier,* a book offering a 'crash course on happiness'. It is possible to sense a certain ambivalence then, as the same newspapers with reports that problematised the measurement of wellbeing, still wanted to offer their readers a guide on how to be happy.

The days preceding the first release of data from the ONS on the well being index were preceded by two significant events. On 29th November 2011 the Chancellor George Osborne presented his autumn statement to the house, where he had to admit that the period of austerity would be longer than first predicted, perhaps even as long as seven years as the figures for growth had been lower than expected. The following day saw what has been described as the biggest public sector strike in a generation. The ONS data revealed that the average happiness rating in their survey was 7.4. Mark Easton on *BBC News 24* suggested that this figure indicated a reasonably high level of overall wellbeing and he wondered if this figure signified a 'keep calm and carry on' attitude of the British public, he speculated that the data about the nation's happiness would now be applied to find what 'buttons to press for the feel good factor' (Easton, 2011). The rating of 7.4 for the measurement of wellbeing of a nation at a time of severe economic constraint may at first seem encouraging, however, we may do well to be sceptical, as Eagleton has noted; 'when the colonialists assure us that the natives are thriving, we would do well to be cautious' (Eagleton, 2004 p.129). I will now examine in more detail David Cameron's proposals to measure wellbeing.

Measuring Wellbeing

Prior to the general election in 2010, when David Cameron became prime minister in a coalition government, he demonstrated his advocacy of wellbeing measurement. He made his reasons clear in a TED talk[25] in February 2010 where he declares; 'we have run out of money' and he wanted to know how it would be possible to make things better but without spending any more. He argues that we are now living in a 'post bureaucratic' age where we have seen a shift in power from the local, to the central and finally to the people and what the people want is 'transparency, choice and accountability', with choice being the underpinning conservative philosophy because it 'puts people in the driving seat'. In his view the only way to succeed is to 'go with the grain of human nature' and that is where he sees the new developments in 'positive psychology' and 'behavioural economics' as having a part to play, as they will enable governments to 'treat people as they are rather than as you would like them to be.' Cameron suggests that the developments in these two sciences will enable new modes of measuring a nation's progress in terms other than those of GDP, he states that; 'If you think everything is valued in money you are going to have a very miserable time' (Cameron, 2010a).

Once in government, Cameron was able to implement his ideas and, in his speech announcing the proposals to measure the nation's wellbeing, he recounts his excitement at being able to apply something that he had talked about in opposition and that people had speculated he might never achieve once in office. Measuring wellbeing, he suggests; 'is important to our goal of trying to create a family friendly country.' He is explicit about what he sees as the basic tenet of his proposals, that the conservatives have an 'instinct that people who feel in control of their own destiny feel more fulfilled'. He thinks that central to the debate will be social mobility and the extent to which people consider 'they are authors of their own destiny' (Cameron 2010b). Cameron highlights in this speech the key areas where he sees the coalition government as having a positive impact on the nation's well-being; 'real choice' for parents over schools and patients over treatment, the understanding that having the 'purpose of a job is as important to the soul as it is to the bank balance' and their concept of the Big Society, because 'people have a yearning to belong to something bigger than themselves (Cameron 2010b). Jonty Olliff-Cooper (2011), a former adviser to the Conservative Party and now head of the progressive conservatism project at the think tank Demos, says he accepts that the idea of Conservatives backing a wellbeing agenda may seem strange at first but he claims that they are interested in how the individual's wellbeing can be maximized and that increased knowledge about wellbeing can form what he describes as a practical action guide for conservative thinking.

Prior to his election as Conservative Party leader, David Cameron presented his case for 'modern compassionate conservatism' which he defined as sharing the benefits of growth between tax cuts and public services, so that tax cuts aren't seen as 'tax breaks for the rich'; giving power back to local organisations; and of a 'small state' which must be the servant, not the master, of the people;

> But when we roll back the state, we don't leave the poor, weak and vulnerable behind, we help them by unleashing the voluntary sector ... That's what I mean by modern compassionate conservatism. Modern, because we think our best days lie ahead. Compassionate, because we care about those who can get left behind. But Conservative, because it's those insights, principles and values that we share that will make this country even stronger (Cameron 2005).

[25] www.ted.com

In his book *The Meaning of David Cameron* (2010), Richard Seymour suggests that 'Cameron is of little interest, except as a cipher, a sort of non-entity who channels the prevailing geist' (p.1). Seymour argues that in order to present themselves for re-election, the Tories felt the need to soften their image and to distance the Party from Thatcher, giving the impression that they were now positioned in the centre ground of politics. 'Cameronism' if there is such as thing, is merely an electoral formula:

> that speaks to the need for Tories to reach out well beyond their own class base – that being capital and a section of the middle class. They have donned a 'progressive' and 'centrist' outfit, borrowing extensively from the New Labour wardrobe, out of electoral necessity (Seymour 2010, p.83).

Seymour concludes; 'Cameronism is a pragmatic adaption to the needs of neoliberal statecraft' (2010, p.83). Former UK prime minister, Tony Blair described the political right's appropriation of the left's language as 'political cross-dressing' but as Elliott and Hanning (2009) point out Cameron was 'careful to include tweed, twinset and pearls in the wardrobe' (p.315).

The proposition that wellbeing could be measured is an example of this 'cross- dressing' of political thought. The Labour government under Blair was instrumental in incorporating the notion of wellbeing into policy initiatives (Michaelson 2009). In 2008 the government published the *Foresight Review on Mental Capital and Wellbeing,* which called for the development of a wellbeing index. These proposals were never to make it to fruition during Labour's time in office. However, wellbeing remained firmly embedded in the rhetoric of New Labour. It was there in their promotion of psychological therapies, through the implementation of the economist and government advisor, Lord Layard's *Improving Access to Psychological Therapies* report (Department of Health, 2008). This report initiated the recruitment of 3,500 cognitive behavioural therapists with the specific remit to suggest ways in which the people they saw could become more upbeat and optimistic (Dorling 2010). A key proponent of wellbeing measurement, Layard went on to become one of the founding members of *Action for Happiness,* which describes itself as a movement for social change, 'bringing people together to play a part in creating a happy society for everyone'.[26]

Writing in 2007, Rustin provided a critique of the proposition under New Labour that wellbeing should be measured, suggesting that it was merely a ruse to divert the public's attention away from pro-market policies. Cameron, it seems, is willing to persevere with this project, so Rustin's concerns still stand. Rustin argues that there would be considerable difficulties in replacing the one-dimensional goal of measuring economic growth with a multi-dimensional concept of wellbeing because it fails to acknowledge the system in which we find ourselves. Our current economic system, he notes, means that there is a tendency to equate greater purchasing power with more choice and opportunity for individuals. He concludes that the proposals by New Labour in 2007 may have had a kernel of good intention, but ultimately served to 'distract our attention from the 'main line' of pro market policies that are exacerbating the deep problems which such 'micro solutions' attempt to cure' (Rustin 2007, p.11). With the current government's willingness to implement the measurement of wellbeing at a time of acute economical and societal distress, perhaps the government has found another way to provide a calculus to declare success.

The first project for the Office for National Statistics in their task to measure the nation's wellbeing was to call for a formal national consultation entitled 'What Matters To You?' July 2011

[26] www.actionforhappiness.org

saw the publication of their early findings. These indicated that what mattered most to people was health; good connections with friends and family; good connections with a spouse or partner; job satisfaction and economic security; present and future conditions of the environment. The ONS also found that a consistent theme running through many of the responses was that wellbeing would be significantly improved if there were a greater sense of fairness and equality. What seemed to be missing from the findings are the notions of 'choice' and 'destiny' favoured by Cameron, just as 'equality' was conspicuous by its absence in his political rhetoric. Another theme running through the ONS findings was the need to have politicians who they felt could be trusted. I would suggest that, there is a discord between the understanding of wellbeing according to the people and the one that is advocated by the current government.

The proposal to measure the nation's wellbeing, it would seem has been met with scepticism in the popular media. In addition, public responses so far seem to indicate that there may be a discrepancy between the government's definitions of wellbeing and those of the governed. One could argue that the notion that the nation's wellbeing can be measured is merely a deflection away from more negative news, particularly as the country finds itself under increasing economic pressure. With a lack of economic growth it is perhaps unsurprising that a government would seek, in desperation, a measure to indicate that they must be doing something right, a degree of cynicism may be appropriate. However, Cameron's proposals set out in his speeches on wellbeing, will have real policy implications. A system for measuring social cost benefit analysis has been developed by the Treasury department. First published in 2003 and updated in 2011, *The Green Book* sets out HM Treasury's guidance for central government for the appraisal of policies, programmes and projects, with the statement that; 'The government is committed to improving the way that wellbeing and social impacts are incorporated into policy decisions' (p.5). From 2011 this guidance was updated to include two techniques for the valuation of non-market impacts; the stated preference method which makes use of questionnaires to estimate 'people's willingness to pay for, or willingness to accept', the other is the revealed preference approach which 'observes people's behavior in related markets'. The idea behind this is that economic methods can be used to estimate the life satisfaction provided by non-market goods (a good or service not traded on the market including public goods, health, employment and marriage). The estimation of life satisfaction is then converted into a monetary figure, that is, economists seek to monitise the impact of a policy by looking at the impact it has on 'utility' (HM Treasury 2011). It would seem that under the guise of compassionate conservatism we find evidence of the pervasiveness of the market. As Cooper (2008) has noted, the public sector is just one component of the national 'business plan' where health and welfare 'commodities' are valued as much for their export and earning potentials as they are for their potential to benefit the population.

Placing a market value on public goods is an indication of the extent that the marketisation of social life has achieved the status of common sense. Pre-dating the 2008 banking crash and subsequent economic impacts and also the UK government's policy on wellbeing, the political scientist Wendy Brown (2005) had argued that in the economic thinking of neoliberalism, we see the reduction of all human life to rational transactions; neoliberal political rationality emerges as a mode of governance which encompasses, though is not limited to the state. This form of governance, when deployed; 'reaches from the soul of the citizen subject to education practice to practice of empire' and involves the extension and dissemination of market values to all institutions and social actions (Brown, 2005, p.39). In these terms, Brown asserts, the human being is configured as *homo economicus* and all dimensions of human life are viewed in terms of market rationality.

According to Brown, not only does neoliberalism assume that all aspects of social,

cultural and political life can be reduced to a calculus, but it actively develops institutional practices for its implementation. Despite the state providing the apparatus for this calculus it remains the market that is the organizing and regulative principle of both state and society and the individual is seen as an entrepreneurial actor in every sphere of life. Just as with Cameron's vision for individuals in the UK becoming 'authors of their own destiny', citizens under the neoliberal construct are morally obligated to manage their own lives with a rational deliberation of costs, benefits and consequences. A 'mismanaged life' for the neoliberal, Brown argued, is one in which the individual has failed to navigate the impediments to prosperity (Brown 2005). There is a deeply held notion of the self as a project that is viewed both as social norm and cultural obligation (Elliott and Lemert, 2006).

The Historian, Luttwak (1995) has suggested that we live in an age of 'turbo charged capitalism' in which we see contradictions at play, on the one hand the drive to perpetuate free market dynamic capitalism, and on the other a call for a return to family and community values. This double discourse is made explicit in the figure of David Cameron and his policies, he seems able to simultaneously describe Britain as being 'broken', because in his view, government got too big and has undermined responsibility (Jones 2011); yet he is also able to see a place for the state to measure the wellbeing of the people. On the one hand he wants to roll back the state, yet he also wants the state to understand, even infiltrate, our very interiors and explore our feelings. The wellbeing of the nation, in the view of David Cameron, will be increased with the application of conservative values of choice, family values and being in control of one's own destiny. As Stuart Hall has noted, under the 'chimera of compassionate conservatism' the coalition government has used the banking crisis as an alibi while they 'seized the opportunity to launch the most radical, far–reaching and irreversible social revolution since the war' (Hall 2011). Hall argues that the 'crazies are in charge of the asylum', motivated by an ideology that the conservatives have been designing since the 1970s. In his view, the members of the government who are driving the neoliberal agenda are ruthless and single minded in their attack, and are prepared to make an irreversible transformation of UK society, caring little about the fall out (Hall 2011). I suggest that a language of therapy, that focuses on self fulfillment has been appropriated into this ideological plan as servant to neoliberal values. It is to this that I now turn.

Wellbeing Measurement and the Therapy Culture Debate.

There has been an ongoing debate amongst cultural analysts about the absorption of the language of therapy into everyday life and the coterminous preoccupation with the self. Early work by Reiff (1966) stimulated a range of social scientists and academics to examine a therapeutic culture as a negative feature of late modernity. For some (Lasch 1991; Reiff 1966; Sennett 1986) this is an indication of cultural decline. For Reiff (1966) wellbeing has become an end in itself, rather than a byproduct of striving after some superior common end. Cloud (1998) identified therapeutic rhetoric as a hegemonic force in American political life. She argued that therapeutic discourse works within what she calls the hegemonic framework of liberal individualism; with a focus on privatization which has facilitated a channeling of social discontent into an individualistic private sphere which forces reform and adaption. Furedi (2004) argues that British culture since the Second World War has uncritically assimilated the therapeutic ethos, with therapeutic language permeating government domestic policy initiatives. There are others, who offer, if not a positive, then at least a more nuanced and ambivalent reading of the therapeutic turn (see Layton 2011; Richards and Brown 2011; Yates 2011; Illouz 2008; Wright 2008; Elliott and Lemert 2006). Richards (2007; Richards and Brown 2011) proposed that emotion has become a more visible part of everyday life, which he described as a process of emotionalisation. He noted that the

development of therapeutic culture is complex and multivariate with the enabling possibility of self-reflection as opposed to self-fulfillment as an ideal. In these more nuanced readings of therapy culture we find that a better understanding of the self enables us to be more attuned to others and their suffering. I suggest that it is possible to position the proposal to measure wellbeing within this debate around 'therapy culture'. I contend that the measurement of wellbeing, as proposed by David Cameron is emblematic of a version of self help therapy culture that comes to us in the bite sized chunks of daily affirmations, positive thinking manuals and CBT, which is more akin to the consumer culture of late capitalism with notions of self development and fulfillment. As Yates (2011) has pointed out, the goal of emotional wellbeing has become a consoling promise of a happy and unified self.

I would suggest that the rhetoric of wellbeing has been appropriated from the language of therapy to justify huge spending cuts and the dismantling of the welfare state. As a precursor to the cuts to the public sector imposed by the Coalition government, the then shadow chancellor, George Osborne wrote an article for *The Guardian Newspaper* (2010) in which he unveiled the Conservative Party's 'Manifesto for Public Sector Workers'. He insisted that despite 'decades of pay rises' 40% of public sector workers say that morale is low, compared to only 16% of workers in the private sector, his conclusion therefore, was that it is not the money that matters to public sector workers but their state of wellbeing, so it is wellbeing that the Conservative Party will seek to promote, he claimed; 'The Conservatives are on the side of Britain's public servants'. Once elected, the Coalition government committed to cutting public sector pay, slash spending and cap pensions. Cultural critic Zizek (2009) contends that we are in the midst of a new process of privatization of the social by the establishing of new enclosures, the market has now invaded spaces that used to be the domain of the state such as those of education and prisons. The proposal to measure the nation's wellbeing, in conjunction with the policy to calculate the value of non-market goods, is an example of the neoliberal desire to configure us as *homo economicus*. At the heart of neoliberal economics we find what Beck (2011, p.xxi) defines as the 'autarkic human self', the individual alone is the master of his or her life. The ethics of the market place have invaded economic and political thinking with the key maxims of public life being competition, cost effectiveness and the creation of wealth, the individual is isolated, yet supposedly self sufficient, there to serve the demands and purposes of western capitalism. According to Cooper, as the state retreats from direct service provision, it still retains an inclination to govern, but this takes the form of 'governance' or 'governing yet not governing' (Cooper 2008, p.33) as it establishes ways to audit, to measure and to define standards. Contemporary social policy, Cooper says; 'is distinctive for the manner in which it aims to penetrate to the heart of how individuals function in a search for reconstruction of our civic identities' (Cooper 2008, p.36).

The model of wellbeing promoted by David Cameron is intrinsically linked to a version of wellbeing as happiness propounded by neoliberal ideals predominant in the USA and UK. At stake here is that, if unchallenged, the prevailing view of wellbeing will be underpinned by a perception that it is up to the individual to choose and design his or her own wellbeing. That construction of wellbeing will only be acceptable if it is compatible with the systematic requirements of western capitalism (Hartmut 1998). Under such constraints there is a tendency for uncritical acceptance of certain 'givens' such as 'freedom of choice' forming a key constituent of wellbeing; the notion of 'choice' being concomitant with an economic account of wellbeing that is about maximizing one's utility (Carlisle and Hanlon 2007). The usefulness of exploring such concepts as wellbeing is that it captures and reproduces important social norms, notably in a consumer society, where wellbeing emerges as a normative obligation and wellbeing practices are frequently consumerist in character (Sointu 2005). The individual is able to 'consume' wellbeing from a range of options from self-help books to life coaches. In an individualized consumerist society, failures to achieve wellbeing are perceived as personal negligence. A question that arises,

is this, is a consumer based ideal of wellbeing characteristic of an individualistic psychology, a psychology which stands accused of creating the very ills that is sets out to heal (Illouz 2008). Indeed, materialism and individualism have been shown to be detrimental to health with increased levels of anxiety, anger, isolation and alienation (Eckersley 2006). Significantly, these ailments are 'contagious' and; 'few denizens of the liquid modern society of consumers are fully immune' (Bauman 2008, p.27).

I want to argue that the public and media responses to Cameron's wellbeing measurement proposals are indicative of manic defenses as described by the psychoanalyst and scholar Peltz (2006). It is her contention that the Anglo-American model of unfettered market economy comes into direct conflict with the goals of a democratic society, committed to providing social safety nets for all its members. As a result, there is a proliferation of manic defenses to protect against feelings of loss and abandonment. These manifest as; 'resignation, psychic deadness, cynicism or over reliance on hypomanic denial, flights to action, and omnipotence' (Peltz 2006. p.73). Evidenced here with the flight to action of the Action for Happiness movement, the cynicism of the print media, the resignation of the British people with their 'keep calm and carry on' approach and the omnipotence of the very project itself, to collect the wellbeing data of a nation. As the cultural studies scholar Gilbert suggests, to 'keep calm and carry on' is 'exactly how the coalition wants us to behave' (Gilbert 2010, p.4). The phrase is at once an expression of perceived English stoicism and also an emotional clarion call by the state. The underlying subtext, however is the message: when faced with a crisis, do not show your emotions, but instead exercise reticence, passivity and control, and act as though nothing has happened. Defense mechanisms can have their protective uses, they can be psychic retreats which the individual can use to contain strong feelings of anxiety, however, they become pathological when they are unyielding; 'the the relief provided by the retreat is achieved at the cost of isolation, and withdrawal' (Steiner, 1993, p.2).

Calculating Wellbeing – An Indication of Distress?

In a letter to Marie Bonaparte, Freud noted: 'The moment a man questions the meaning and value of life, he is sick, since objectively neither has any existence' (Freud et al. 1978, p.272). Now it seems a whole strand of psychology is dedicated to doing just that, with wide-ranging influence from economics to government policy, exemplified by proposals to measure happiness and wellbeing in the UK. In the light of Freud's observation, one must wonder whether the emergence of positive psychology is, perhaps, an indication of distress from the society that is western late modern capitalism. Drawing on Zygmunt Bauman's concept of liquid modernity, Young (2007) describes the experience of late modernity forming around three axes; '... the disembededness of everyday life, the awareness of a pluralism of values, and an individualism which presents the achievement of self realization as an ideal' (2007, p.2). For Young, the presentation of self realization as an ideal contributes to the idea that there are great potentialities for human flexibility and reinvention but, he goes on to note, that the side effect of this are 'ontological insecurity' and a 'precariousness of being' (2007, p.3). According to Harvey, neoliberalism as an economic theory proposes that wellbeing is best achieved through the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms, individual liberty and freedom is seen as sacrosanct, the social good will be increased through the maximization of the reach and frequency of market transaction, as a consequence however, 'we are obliged to live as appendages of the market' (2005, p.185). Despite the recent crisis in the banking sector and the economic fall out that follows, neoliberal ideology has an amazing capacity to adapt and, far from heralding its end, we can expect to see a third wave of neoliberalism (Steger and Roy 2010). As Stuart Hall has noted:

'the present situation is another unresolved rupture of that conjecture which we can define as 'the long march of the neoliberal revolution'. Neoliberalism is a strategy for boosting profits, lowering costs and weakening trade unions' (Hall, 2011).

Elliott and Lemert propose that we have witnessed a shift from a polarized culture to a privatized culture, with the penetration of market forces into every aspect of life: 'People, increasingly, seek personal solutions to social problems in the hope of shutting out the risks, terrors, persecutions that dominate our lives in the global age' (Elliott and Lemert 2006, p.9).

The projection of social problems back onto the individual, as seen in the current rhetoric of wellbeing measurement, is symptomatic I would suggest, of what the psychoanalyst Lynn Layton (2006) describes as the dominant norm of liberal individualist ideology. That norm, as defined by Layton is the unlinking of the individual from their social contexts. She argues that there has been a subordination of 'sensuous human existence and morality' to the 'facts' of the marketplace, this technical rationality severs the individual from their social and natural world and also from each other. The split between the public and the private realms, Layton suggested, produces hostile and submissive versions of dependency on one hand and hostile and omnipotent versions of agency in the other. As Richards contends, the acceptance of our dependence on others; 'cannot be endured by the neoliberal mind' or by the 'psychologist connoisseurs of happiness' (Richards 1989, p.26). The result of this denial of dependency is a need to expunge the world of reminders of the reality of dependency as exemplified by welfare recipients or the NHS. We find ourselves in a post-dependent society, argues Dartington (2009), in which individual self-interest has become a sufficient explanation of socio economic theory. Layton (2006) points out that, in order to sustain itself, capitalism needs to foster these dominant discourses that initiate a split between the private and the public; as it prevents us from knowing the real damage that capitalism can do to our psyches, to the social world and to nature.

Drawing on Peltz's proposal that there has been a proliferation of manic defenses in western society I suggest that, so–called happiness measurement can be understood in terms of Klein's (1935) concept of 'splitting' off of an affect or object. The consequence of splitting is that we become fragmented; we spilt off parts of ourselves as a psychic defense. In the measurement of happiness we see the splitting off of an emotional state in an attempt to categorise and control it. However, we need both happiness and sadness, As Music (2001) reminds us, we need to experience both pain and exuberance and all that comes in between. He goes on to suggest that the value of psychoanalysis is that it aims at enabling a capacity for self reflection better able to experience a genuine breadth and depth in our emotional lives. I will now explore the potential for a psychoanalytically informed view of wellbeing.

The Potential For A Psychosocial Counter Discourse.

I have argued so far that the current exposition of wellbeing measurement, as deployed by David Cameron, is underpinned by a culturally powerful therapeutic discourse, comprised of a version of self-help therapy culture that has an undercurrent of neoliberal pro-market values. This discourse has been strategically applied by the current government as a means of situating the locus of responsibility for personal wellbeing firmly on the individual. However, I contend that psychoanalytic ideas could enable the retrieval of an alternative narrative, another way of thinking about what wellbeing may mean.

One might expect in the first instance that psychoanalytic ideas would play no part in the debate around measuring the nation's wellbeing; the starting point for Freud's psychoanalysis is how to live with normal unhappiness (1895). Freud's venture, according to Reiff (1966), was to

enable us to strengthen our inner resources against obsolete cultural systems of inhibitions, our inherited moral systems were no longer fit for purpose in a culture where our expectations for happiness were forever rising. As Reiff noted; 'Freud embarked on a modest experiment: His doctrine promises not more happiness but less misery' (Reiff, 1987, p.38). However, the psychoanalytically informed psychosocial project is about learning to live with tensions and it is potentially in that psychosocial space that a counter discourse may be found (Richards et al 2009).

I would suggest that the intervention of a psychoanalytically inflected, psychosocial 'voice' into the debate may enable the de–privileging of measurable data so that the analysis can include experiential and qualitative data that may incorporate the wholeness of lived experience. Cooper argues that policy analysis tends to be technocratic, rationalist and instrumental, with policy discourse seeing the subjects of analysis as whole and unified (Cooper 2009). Psychoanalysis can offer a 'yardstick' for political development because, according to Frosh (1987), its subject matter is the clarification of the needs and desires that people have. More importantly, I would concur with Rustin when he noted that: 'On a more macro-social plane, the idea that mental pain and anxiety constitute valid claims on social attention has import for broader principles of social organization, qualifying and constraining the logic of markets or burocracies as arbiters of social life' (Rustin, 1995, p.241).

Whilst it is possible to view the absorption of the language of therapy into everyday life as being coterminous with the preoccupation with the self. It is also possible to view therapeutic culture as a valuable resource both in professional and cultural terms, which has enabled a language of the self, of emotion and of identity underpinned by an emotional style with a potential for empathy and recognition of the other (Illouz 2008). Richards (2007) noted that a therapeutic culture could allow for an expressiveness of different types. Whilst it can be commandeered for the expression of selfishness and contrivance, it can also allow for the opening up of an opportunity for reflexivity and a growth in compassion. At the heart of psychoanalysis there is a call for an increased insight into our own psychic lives. This increased self- observational capacity can enable a self-awareness, to know that whilst we are able to show love, and to feel happiness, we are also able to show jealousy, anger, lust and disappointment. A psychoanalytically informed therapeutic sensibility can instill a 'reparative generosity born from a knowledge of and remorse about the damage we are capable of inflicting' (Richards and Brown 2011, p.21). I have sought to consider the issue of wellbeing measurement in its wider social context and I conclude that ideas from psychoanalysis may permit us to think with greater depth about what it means for our being to be well.

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Global Professionalism - Local Professional Identities: Journalistic Professionalism in Contemporary Russia

Marija Lobanova

This paper explores the interpretation and adaptation of journalistic professionalism in Russia. By analysing professionalism(s) thought journalists own articulation of their practices, it discusses myths, versions of cultural contexts and legitimations of journalists' social position and social trust-building. Furthermore, it challenges the idea of a 'global model of professionalism', by illuminating historical traditions and philosophical patterns, which influenced the development of journalism as a professional practice.

When writing this paper I was not even two years into my PhD and have just started my field-research. Since then, I have developed a more focussed approach to my study, a more theoretically underpinned methodology and a more buttress system of argumentation. Nonetheless, I sill hold on to the main idea of this paper –local differences matter.

Key words: journalism, professional identities, global practices, Russia

Journalistic professionalism is becoming universalised in terms of standardisation of professional ethos as well as the formation of supranational journalistic communities. A predominantly Anglo-American professional value system has been translated into a cross-nationally accepted nodal point of guidance, codex and professional discourse. However professional identities are formed within national contexts, being influenced by local cultures and myths, political ideologies and legislations. Professionalism, as a concept, is not immune to interpretations and adjustments to local or national environments, where journalistic professionalism is compared not only with international colleagues, but also with professionals in other professions. One journalist interviewed by Svetlana Pasti, a fellow researcher interested in the formation of journalistic professionalism in Russia stated: 'a journalist in not from another planet, he takes briberies just like a doctor or a pedagogue' (in Rosenholh, Nordenstreng and Trubina 2010:4). Academic debates about the meaning of the term professionalism and whether journalists should be considered professionals are ongoing. Definitions of the term vary from being identified through professional doctrines, to particularities of professional knowledge or professional appearance (in Splichal and Sparks 1994). In this study, professionalism is used as a term applied by the research participants in their professional self-identification, rather than imposing a definition on the research subjects. Furthermore, this article is going to scrutinise the relationship between national professional culture and political history, global professionalism and local context, personal professional motivations and ideology in contemporary Russia.

This study is an analysis of self- reflection of journalists on the professional transition undertaken in a wider context of the changing identities in Russia - national, international, political, geographical, social, cultural and others. By analysing accounts from the Russian history of journalism in combination with the "newly" introduced cross-national professional standards, this research investigates the changing and antagonistic discursive landscape of the Russian journalistic community. The governing argument of this article is based on a thesis that the discourse of journalistic professionalism has become universalised under global influences; however the self-identification as professional journalists remains subject to national cultural (professional) memory and institutional path-dependency. The argument will be discussed with reference to self-reflective interviews with newspaper journalists in Moscow and Nizhniy Novgorod collected in early 2011[1].

Theoretical and methodological orientation

Rooted in post-structuralist and post-Marxist thinking, and resting upon the works and concepts of Michel Foucault and Antonio Gramsci, the discourse theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe 'rejects the distinction between discursive and non-discursive practices' (2001:107). This is not to suggest that reality or the 'world external to thought' does not exist; however, for the purpose of this study, it implements a variety of 'assertions that they [discourses] could constitute' (2001:108). In other words, how is empirical reality expressed through chosen antagonism and articulations? Applying Foucault's rejection of positivism and arguing for the discursive formations of history, political order and knowledge, Laclau's and Moufee's discourse theory suggests a different epistemological position for understanding journalistic professionalism, challenging and enriching traditional studies embedded in the disciplines of sociology, cultural studies and political-economy.

[1] The four interviews presented in this article were collected using Skype software from London.

At the same time discourse theory allows us to grasp the plurality of discursive processes in professional self-identification, which are contingent and yet expressed through *hegemonic* articulation. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) argue that articulation is a dynamic process, whereby hegemonic discourses (including discourses about journalistic professionalism) are re-articulated through political or moral narratives (Howarth 2000) and are consolidated by the domination of discursive *nodal point*. Borrowed from Lacan's terminology, *point de caption* (a nodal point or master signifier) 'involves the notion of a particular element assuming a 'universal' structuring function within a certain discursive field' (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: xi). The concept of a nodal point, in the case of this study, refers to the unification of professional discourses, which are identified in literature on the normatives of journalistic roles as well as being expressed in empirical data collected so far. Nodal points help to identify the hierarchical dynamic structure of antagonism(s) providing an analytical toolbox for studying journalistic professionalism (Dobson 2003; Carpenter 2005; Sutherland 2005) . The methodological-conceptual analytical toolbox for the purpose of this study includes hegemony, nodal points, antagonism, articulation and memes.

Different from the Gramscian notion of hegemony, as a period of stability of discursive meanings, Laclau's and Moufee's understanding of hegemony is positive in the sense that it describes the vibrant articulation of prevailing discourse (Sutherland 2005). These dynamics are articulated through antagonism. Even though the term is used in its singular form, Laclau and Moufee (2001) acknowledge that antagonism exists in a multiplicity of forms, frequently in opposition to each other. What the notion of social antagonism adds to the understanding of professional identity, is the impossibility of total homogenisation, since the discourse of professionalism is never fixed. This suggests that professionalism, as a discursive concept, is time dependent, thus has to be placed within a time (and place) specific context. The formations of discursive articulations are historically non-linear, meaning that the past can re-appear in the present through discursive articulations (Splichal 2002). Thus the origins of discursive elements can be (not always) traced in history. Cultural memory will be employed for the purpose of tracing professional identity forming events, myths and stories; placing professional identities of contemporary Russian journalists not only in the existing milieu, but also into the mythical.

Discursive antagonism is a 'negotiation of a given order' (Laclau and Mouffe 2001:126). Potential elements are selected from the field of discursive antagonisms and become 'privileged signifiers' (Carpentier 2005:2000) otherwise known as nodal points or dominant discourses. In that sense, the discourse theory is similar to the theory of memetics, or cultural genetics as it is otherwise known (Epstein 2008). Memetics is applied in analysing the role of language in constructing identities and social realities, by identifying memes that transmit the cultural knowledge through words. Memes are seen as units of information, which are in competition with each other for domination. This competition of discursive elements or memes happens in the hierarchical structure of 'mega, grand and micro discourses' (Sutherland 2005). The micro discourses, expressed through journalists own narratives, are representations of professional hegemonies that reflect the culture of doing journalism.

Application of the discourse theory is particularly interesting in analysing transitional societies with changing patterns of social, political and other relations. Laclau and Mouffe argue '[t]hat the more unstable the social relations [are], the less successful will be any definite system of differences and the more the points of antagonism will proliferate' (Laclau and Moufee 2001:131). Thus there is less coherence in self-identification in the transitional professional identity of post-Communist journalists than in the established media-professional systems. Nonetheless the nodal points and the articulation of professional hegemony reflects globalised professional discourses about journalists relation to the work practices, roles and professional ethics. What do I mean by global professionalism?

Anglo-American model of journalism, which informs Anglo-professionalism (Dodson 2009), is characterised by objectivity as its key definer (Shudson 1987) and became 'the only universal model' of journalism (Mancini 2005:78). What Paolo Mancini (2005) implies by this proposition is not that this model of professionalism is becoming universally applied, but that it is becoming universally known. However, scholars, including Mancini, also suggest that the national variations have developed as a result of historical differences in the formation of journalism and media organisations (Siebert et al 1978; Hallin and Mancini 2004).

The universalised model of professionalism has developed as a result of the early press emancipation from the direct involvement of the state and the consequence of evolving market economy (Curran and Seaton 2003) in multi-party states. Anglo-American tradition is embedded in the democratic discourse of the separation of powers, referring to mass media through the myth of the Fourth Estate and is identified through its watchdog function. Philosophically developed in the period of the Enlightenment and defined in the late 19th century America, this model advocates for a pluralist political theory, suggesting autonomous media's position between conflicting social interest groups. In this tradition, the role of journalists is factually-based reporting, in contrast for example to the Marxist-Leninist propagandist model of social agitation (De Smaele 1999).

Nonetheless, one young interviewed journalist and a fellow academic researcher cogitated on the matter of the universal model of journalism and on the practical existence of a model of journalism as such:

> Indeed, the American model teaches to separate, provide facts without emotion, without any civic positions, without ideology. Then yes, in this sense the Russian model does differ. We were taught at the University somehow to live into the event, to feel it with your heart, even though it might sound very vile…Meaning that he [journalist] has to be sensitive, somehow to understand that he is writing about real people. And all these events that are happening in the society, they are not some sort of abstract events, but can have tangible consequences. Meaning that we were thought to approach [an event] with the feeling, not really to emotionalise in the text, or to use some sorts of loud epithets, no. But to understand your responsibility for your every word and really to hold a civic position…In this case yes, there is a difference from American journalism…In reality the clash of these two positions exists now in our mass media and the education system as well. But even the division itself, American, Russian it is also relatively inaccurate and rough. Most frequently, as I assume, we meet a synthesis…Journalists knowing about some sorts of foreign-Western tendencies, at the same time, combine these some sort of rules…I don't know if we can talk about some sort of European model of journalists…, but surely French journalism is different from American…In every country there might appear a precise feature of that country. (Antonova 2011)[2]

What is interesting in this quotation is not only the understanding of the theoretical separation between nationally described models of journalisms, but also from the discourse analysis point of view, the use of words 'our' and 'foreign'. The notion of 'Otherness' was popularised in cultural studies in the works of Stuart Hall (1990:1997) and Edward Said (2003) in relation to constructing ethnic identities through race and apartheid. However 'other' is a new, yet useful, concept in understanding professional identifies of media workers. Associations or dissociations with others becomes a practical tool when analysing texts of self-identification through self-

[2] All names of the research participants were changed.

reflection. This tool can be used in two ways: as an analytical instrument of relations within the work environment, as well as for identifying nodal points detached from unsympathetic elements in the field of discursive formations.

In the case of the above professional articulation, the identity is created in relation to the 'Other'. This theoretical 'Other' exists as an articulation, which forms an antagonistic relationship with the 'Us/Our'. It is becoming internalised into what is perceived as 'Our' national professional community, evident in changing traditions of mass media and the education of journalists in Russia. The idea of Western as the 'Other' in discourses defining Russian national narrative were popularised by Russian litterateurs in the 18th and 19th centuries. Many of these writers were engaged with intelligentsia political groups and acted as journalists 'of the views' in philosophical debates about Russia's political development (Amber 1972).

Nonetheless, the processes of professional globalisation are happening, as the new memes are being circulated and adopted by groups or individuals. In this pool of articulations, the dominant antagonism is present between the American model and the local model of journalism. Thus what Mancini (2005) referred to as the universal model, is actually a universal model of antagonisms. The professional universality in this case is the recognition of process, professional antagonisms and the re-formation of professional nodal points. Similar antagonisms were evident in three other interviews. For example Oksana Chizh told a story of her encounter with this antagonism between the Russian and American models:

> Like I was at the 'Moscow Times' recently and people would tell me, like the editor would call me and say 'look, this is the American journalism model, we don't do that here.' Like you can't write about yourself. Like Russians do that and we don't do that. And I was like 'I didn't know that. Nobody tell me'. (Chizh 2011)

Moreover, it was well noted by Lena Antonova that the division lines are inaccurate or do not exist at all. However, what is interesting in an analysis of professional identities by applying discourse analysis, is that the synthesis of professionalisms is hard to verbally explain; therefore, the self-identification happens in relation to the 'Other'. What is significant, is the preference of the 'Other' - in this case, the American model. This choice of preference suggests the domination of Anglo-American model in the field of discursive articulations of journalistic professionalisms[3]. Furthermore, it has to be acknowledged the existence of a rich body of literature, arguing that autonomy and objectivity are no more than marketing strategies of the Western media system. Thus it has to be stressed that what is considered as the Anglo-American professionalism, are the mythical nodal points, which are discursive rather than existent.

Professional identity in transition

The new identity of the Russian media and media workers began to be defined through liberal democratic laws and newly introduced capitalist economic system, after the implementation of *glasnost*[4] policies and the fall of the Soviet Communist system. The new 1993 Russian

[3] Even though later in the interview Antonova mentioned countries like China, she acknowledged having limited and more mythical than actual knowledge about journalisms in other than national and Anglo-American traditions.
[4] *Glasnost*, as defined by McNair using Sharon's term as 'information revolution' (1991:53) encapsulates the new information policy under three 'headings: criticism [and self criticism], access and socialist pluralism' (1991:54).

Constitution, similar to the American First Amendment, proclaims that 'everyone has the right to seek, receive, pass on, produce, and disseminate information freely by any legal means' (in Foster 1996:246). However, the Russian interpretation of these values of freedom was characterised by collective, not individual rights, and, as Frances H. Foster highlights, it was based on the 'insistence on the utilitarian value of information for democracy' (1996:245).

The transition from Communism to a desired liberal democracy, for Russian journalism, on the one hand, meant an introduction of greater freedom and transparency guaranteed by the constitution, opened up business ownership opportunities and allowed for the new genres of journalism to emerge. On the other hand, a large population, lacking in financial and cultural capitalistic capital, found it difficult to adapt to the drastic economic change and to establish independent media institutions. The Russian people became ensnared into a transitional mental state of backwards progression from a great empire to a developing country (Rantanen 2002); meaning that private and national struggles of identity formation continued, reflecting both positive cultural memory and a myth of a desirable liberal society.

A change in any legal system and political discourses does not automatically imply a change in people's attitudes and mentalities. Slavoj Zizek (2006) argues that every legal order has to rely on a complex system of informal rules. These informal social rules inform a society on how to relate to the legal rules, to know what is prohibited and what can be violated. According to Zizek the chaotic early transitional period in Russia, was a result of a disintegration of these unwritten or implicit rules. In that scenario, the organised crime functioned as a provider of knowledge about the new social order. 'The stabilisation in the last year under the Putin reign,' Zizek (2006) argues 'mostly announce precisely to some kind of newly established transparency of these unwritten rules'. Zizek continues by adding: 'It's not that now there is really more legality, it's simply that people are getting accustomed to new implicit rules.'

To give an example of how the unwritten social rules can constitute to the formation of professional identity, one young journalist in Pasti's (2010) study when asked to deliberate on the concept of journalistic professionalism commented:

> Professionalism and corruption are connected. Money is paid to professionals. Professionalism is when you are bought by money. This is, when somebody is ready to pay you do this and that. They want to use your professionalism for their own aims. They do not turn to just anybody but to the profession al who competently organises the black PR campaigns, who is competently able to raze a character and his business to the ground. (2010:66)

Clientalism and other 'non-professional' practices have been recognised by researchers as one of identities of Russian journalism (Roudakova 2008). Illegal practices: voluntary and involuntary political-elite parallelism, normalisation of hidden advertising and black market activities, became a form of journalistic professionalism not in its idealised form, but an identity of journalistic practices, which have developed into a cultural myth defining professional journalists in Russia (Pasti 2010). As a group, Russian journalists are not unique to be identified by these practices. Doctors, judges, pedagogues, every profession has its black market price value depending on individual's professional status. This black market and corruption identity is connected to the myth of Russian disorder and extraordinary powers attributed to 'Russian chaos' (Ledeneva 2001:1). Alena Ledeneva argues that one of the factors determining the prevalence of these unwritten rules is the 'future-oriented' transition of the legal rules and their incongruity (2001:10). None of the four interviewed journalists found it professionally damaging to be paid "unofficially"; however they emphasised that external money should not be accepted for violating professional ideals and civic wrong-doing.

Another intention of the above quotation was to exemplify one of the possible identifications of journalistic professionalisms. The argument that emerges from this example is that the concept of professionalism has to be analysed from the point of view and articulations of journalists themselves, rather than being assumed from the academic literature. However, in academic studies transitional professional identities of journalists are inevitably compared to the normative Anglo-American tradition. On the one hand, this is a consequence of the Westernisation of professional discourse being an identifier of journalistic professionalism and, on the other hand, the academic traditions supported by the rich body of literature. Nonetheless, empirical studies illustrate that the model of journalistic professionalism, or the formal rules, also has to rely on informal social rules in order to function and be socially recognised.

In the empirical data collected for this study, the notion of journalistic professionalism was described as a physical capacity to work in difficult environments or as an, impossible to fully explain, gut feeling. None of the interviewed journalists were able to define professionalism as a term, which could become a collective professional doctrine. Rather, they explained professionalism as a personal-individual quality. The point evolving from this argument is that in contemporary transitional Russian society, which has a long history of rejecting Western ideas, Anglo-professionalism as an identity of "doing culture" was not adopted in Russia. Instead, professionalism is associated with the state of "being". Nonetheless, despite being philosophically sceptical towards professional nodal points such as objectivity and autonomy, Russian journalists do not reject these principles and argue that these principles are applied in "doing journalism". However, they do not self-identify as professionals through these professional values. In other words the Anglo-American model of professionalism does not define professional journalism in Russia. Rather, professionalism, as a definable concept or model that gives journalists their collective identity, (Witsche and Nygren 2009) remains underdeveloped.

This can be explained by the lack of clear political and social ideology in contemporary Russia. The biggest difference between Russian and Western journalists is the lost identity of the national media system, not in the physical sense, but as a point of reference. After the collapse of the Communist ideology, a new narrative that would unify political and social Russian identity and development paths failed to form. When analysing the Russian media, this condition is best described by DeSmaele who argues that:

> The post-communist Russian model… seems to lack coherence. There is private ownership but also heavy state control. There is a ban on censorship but also pressure on journalists to write or not to write about certain things. There is decentralization but also a highly centralised state television. There are Western-style journalists who present the facts, but there are also those who are mere publicist. What should such system be called? Is there a model at all? And why is the Russian media system as it is? (2010:41)

In total DeSmaele (2010) identifies 13 definitions of the Russian political system, all of which can be submerged using a term not from an academic but from a social discourse – *dermocratic* (shitocracy)[5]. Why this relationship between the state, media system and journalism is important, is because the state gives 'credence' to professional ideology (Lin 2010: 176). The dominant logic of political ideology positions the state in its official relation to mass media and its civic responsibilities (Goldsmiths Media Group 2000). A combination of national identity and

[5] From the Russian word *dermo* meaning shit

common legal system consequently informs the social expectations and requirements of the journalists and suggests an official political role they are to play in a particular country.

Due to the lack of a coherent ideology, as well as a lack of clarity in institutional and civic relationships, political and civic transition became a professional identity in itself. Journalists actively or passively are placing themselves in the particular contexts of political and civic processes that are understood to be processes shaping something new. 'I believe that the processes that are happening now, they lead to change…But probably to the one that is only possible for Russia', deliberated Julia Petrova, an interviewed journalist form Nizhniy Novgorod. This argument, yet again, is presented with a strong emphasis on the national narrative and nationally developing paths of transition.

Maxim Pavlov, a journalist from a local newspaper in a town outside Moscow argued about the transitional processes in Russia from a similar position to Zizek's ideological paradigm.

> When the new Russian era was just beginning, yes, in 2000, when Vladimir Putin came to power, yes, people had an understanding that possibly our country is in need of certain consolidation of this existing present climate. This means, the rolling up of certain part of the freedoms. But at that time people in principle did not understand what can it end up as…It is actively being articulated that there is no civic society in Russia, however among journalists, even those working on a local level, yes, there is an understanding that in reality the civic society does exist. If in the future the political and historical situation will continue in the same furrow, then this civic society in some way will shape itself, so that the contemporary authorities will have to listen to it. (Pavlov 2011)

Debates about Russia's transition and the breakdown of civic society were intensified in 2011 after the *Council of Civil Society, Institutions and Human Rights* introduced a new scheme of de-Sovietisation to public debates. Politicians, political scientists, human rights activists and historians involved in the television debates about the scheme emphasised the importance of the Communist memory (positive and negative) on the formation of the contemporary situation in Russia. This has been characterised by political path-dependency, a lack of civic society and common national ideology.

Interviewed journalists highlighted their professional responsibilities towards building a better collective future for the country. Some of the participants argued for the importance of media workers' involvement in these processes; others identified themselves as mere reporters. However, transition, rather than democracy, is an idea that functions as is the nodal point for political-professional self-identification of Russian journalism. It also helps in making sense of the changed social-political order in which journalists operate.

In analysing the empirical data, transition is a re-emerging theme in the articulations about national instability, organisational changes and economy or professional duties and expectations. The significance of this finding is dual: on the one hand being captured in the temporality of things can lead to instability becoming a habit or an excuse for professional misconduct or negligence; yet on the other hand, transition is a dynamic time when no nodal hegemony is formed. Thus monitoring activities and aspirations of journalists is important in understanding the sedimentation and hagemonisation of possible paths for future developments.

Institutional path-dependency and professional identity

An impact of globalisation; such as cultural imperialism, hegemonisation of professional practices of media institutions and the exchange of professional values is evident in the (re)-establishment of journalism in Russia. Media institutions become subject to capitalist economic dependency (Vartanova and Smirnov 2010), the post-Perestroika media law resembles Western standards (Foster 1996), the media content is formed by both nationally and non-nationally produced programmes (Hutchings and Roulyova 2009), and the journalistic professional rhetoric of identification is developing in-line with relative autonomy (Pasti 2005). At the same time, it is impossible to tell which impacts are direct results of the globalisation process and which are of domestic origin. What is, nonetheless, tangible is the media policy, or the discursive relationship, which is internalised by the introduction of democratic models of relations between mass communication channels and the state.

Following established democratic traditions, Russian journalists began to publicly self-identify through the internationalised nodal points of professional autonomy and social-democratic responsibility in accordance with Anglo-Americanised professional vocabulary (even if translated into native language). ***Четвертая Власть*** (The Fourth Power)[6] was a name of the television programme on the REN-TV, a national television channel, launched in the 90s. Today, ***Четвертая Власть*** (4vsar.ru) is also the name of an online Russian newspaper as well as, interestingly, a Moscow based PR agency, launched in 2000 by a group of newspaper journalists (4vlast.ru).

The official Codex of Professional Ethics of Russian Journalists (1994) published by the Russian Union of Journalists, among others, proposes the following governing professional conditions: incorruptibility, truthfulness of published material, separation of facts from opinions and incompatibility of engaging in journalistic practices together with working for political parties, governments and legislative or judicial offices. In contrast, Lenin's principle guidelines for media-workers were: partiality in line with the Communist Party, linkage with the People, truthfulness and openness (McNair 1991). This example is an illustration of the hegemonisation of the nodal points articulated through the principles of "democracy" such as the separation of powers, independence from direct and indirect manipulation, as well as the separation between the identity of a journalist from the identity of the People, central to the Marxist-Leninist model.

However, there exists an opinion that the separation of powers failed to be established between the political and mass communication elite. The renowned and controversial speech was given by Leonid Parfenov[7] (November 2010) at the first Vladislav Listyev's[8] television awards ceremony to an audience of television elite[9], as Oleg Kashin[10], another Moscow journalist, was recovering in hospital after an assassination attempt in November 2010. Parfenov visited Kashin in the hospital a few hours before the ceremony and referred to the incident in the beginning of the speech. Later in the speech he continued:

[6] *The Fourth Estate and the Fourth Power translates into Russian as* ***Четвертая Власть***.

[7] Leonid Parfenov is a Russian news presenter, journalists, editor and an author of TV shows.

[8] Vladislav Listyev was a Russian journalist. Shortly after becoming a head of the ORT television station in 1995 he was shot dead outside his apartment. Nor Listev's killers nor the motives were found. One of the versions was connected to Listev's decision to cease all advertising on ORT.

[9] All except one heads of the national television stations, elite television journalists and presenters.

[10] Oleg Kashin is a Russian journalist and political activist. The violence against Kashin is believed to be connected to his article on the building of highway through Khimki Forest, which evoked aggression from a pro-Kremlin youth activist group United Russia.

> Behind every politically significant broadcast there are guessable intentions and objectives of the authority; its mood, its relations, its friends and foes... Constitutionally a correspondent is thus not a journalist altogether, but an officeholder following the logic of duty and obedience… Our television is more intricately disturbing, it enthrals, entertains, and amuses, but it can overwhelmingly be seen as public-political institution. (Parfenov 2010)

The speech itself was criticised by Parfenov's colleagues, for not saying anything new or unknown. However national television news channels chose not to broadcast the speech or dedicated minimal attention to it. Other journalists praised Parfenov for his courage, concentrating not only on the speech itself, but on the place and time that the speech was given. Nonetheless this speech created a forum for public discussions about the present political and business climate in Russia, Communist institutional path-dependency and the undemocratic performance of mass media.

A similar mood was shared by interviewed journalists. In the collected empirical data, the Soviet institutional path-dependency was also articulated through journalists' personal encounters with governmental organisations as information sources, as well as some traditions within media outlets. Oksana (2011), a journalist who entered into journalism in the early 1990s, said:

> In RIA[11] Novosti…in the Government media there are certain things like if you are mentioning you know Putin or Medvedev…, there are special people who are like if you are quoting will be checking the quotes to make sure that this is what they really said.

This quotation is only one of a number of examples representing the traditional (pre) - Soviet relationship between the mass media and the government. And even if the professional identities of Russian journalists are now being constructed through the discourse of power separation and journalists being independent agents with civic responsibilities, the articulated conditions are understood as national traditions/culture dependent. These evidences of political path-dependency are effectively descried by Maxim Pavlov, concerning the relationship between the mass media and political institutions as information sources. Maxim Pavlov declared that:

> There is no more difficult task for contemporary...journalist...in Russia, [than to access commentary from the authorities]… My colleagues working in the local television station were on an apprenticeship in Germany...One of my fellow journalists said that 'I was surprised how open the correlation in Western Europe was from the authorities towards the mass media'… Because a public official in the Western and probably in the Central Europe, yes?, he has a slightly different understanding of his official duties and why did he come to power [achieved his/her leading position] in general…And for them obviously an account about his actions.. is a some sort of a promotion, PR. At ours [in Russia] this is essentially not understood by anybody. (Pavlov 2011)

This story was told in the context of a discussion about journalists being a connecting link between conflicting social groups focussing on two categories: the People and authorities. Acting as a link is problematic due to a complex network of relationships and informal pre-democratisation era rules, not of journalism but of media-politicians and media-business

[11] RIA Novosti is one of the biggest governmental news agencies in Russia.

relationships. Self-identification as an autonomously thinking body is hegemonised in the professional discourse of Russian journalists; however the national antagonisms are articulated through acknowledging the differences between the identities of political figures in established democracies in comparison to what is considered to be an identity of the political authorities in Russia. What is interesting in this quotation is that this journalist chose to self-identify through telling an antagonistic story of cross-national comparison. As demonstrated above, the theme of cross-national comparisons was evident in other interviews, predominantly articulated through an idea of political antagonisms between democratic media-politics relationship and the present situation in Russia.

In this example, the self-identity is also constructed though an illustration of how the role of the mass media, including the work of journalists, is perceived by other public institutions. Thus the professional self-identity depends not only on the norms and models, but on the recognition of a professional community by other social groups and organisations. This recognition happens on the national as well as the international dimension, through the comparison between the experienced and the mythical hegemonic professional discourse of the American-European political systems. The term mythical in this case implies the mediated knowledge about the West, as none of the journalists have had any experience of working in media organisations outside Russia and few have visited Europe or the US.

Professional Identity and the Nation

A sense of national belonging was identified as an important feature for Russian journalists, who found professional satisfaction in being involved in the formation of the nation; which as discussed above has lost its ideology, civic society and unified people-state identity. Lena Antonova passionately expressed her views suggesting that:

> Possibly journalists and that informational realm that they create, it maybe really helps for the society not to break into separate segments…helps to connect people with each other…Meaning that this sphere of information is created, in which all people are submerged, all population of one country, Russia…Journalism somehow helps people to come closer to each other. Take Russia as an example, it is a big country. At ours it is said, that people in Moscow do not even imagine how people in Siberia live… Who said that Siberia exists, I did not see it…The same in Siberian cities. They say 'Moscow, it is far away. Does it exist at all? We have our own problems'. So maybe it is journalism that helps to overcome these distances, between time and space. Helps with self-understanding of a country as a whole. (Antonova 2011)

Journalism as a profession is at least in its ideal form linked with the notion of collective solidarity towards the people, unionised into a group called the nation. The relationship between journalistic, professional and national identities is linked by the conventions of news production. National or 'our' news subordinates professional practices to collective national interests and loyalty, at the same time diminishing professional values, applied to production and interpretation of national news by journalists. In other words, 'the journalist's domestic viewpoint is inseparable from his or her professional norms and considerations' (Nossek 2004:346). Moreover, national identity is a discursive myth reinforced by journalists themselves; be it sports, politics, culture or other. Therefore journalists work within clear lines of national identities, alliances and enemies, which are political myths assisting in making sense of the world. Through constant exposure to

mass media, as their professional instances, journalists are at the same time heavy receivers as well as creators of national identity discourse.

A nation is a discursive idea; however, national identity cannot exist without a national political community, which 'in turn implies at least some common institutions and a single code of rights and duties for all the members of the community [including journalists]' (Smith 1991:9). A lack of political community, codes of civic and professional duties de-stabilises political identity and vice-versa – a rickety political identity leaves professional communities without a pivot of identification (Tret'iakov 2007). Having weak professional nodal points accepted by the professional community generates a professional (and national) anarchy. Professions and professionalism(s) cannot exist in anarchical structures, given that they have to be recognised by the public as a group as having a particular social role and purpose. Thus, in order to consolidate a process of journalistic professionalisation, a strong sense of both professional and social political community is needed.

Oksana Chizh argued that this sense of national community or an idea of Russianness is over-emphasised in Russia. For her, this was a professional problem influencing her decision to leave the country[12].

> Well, just like many large countries, it mostly cares about itself and things that going on inside first of all. And I guess there is a bridge of, you know, a lot of international coverage has to do with imperialism. Or residual imperialism, such as, you know, Russia's role in the world. And… who Russia is in the relation to these other places… Aaa, I mean it's a big country. There are a lot of problems. And ninety nine percent of what people care about obviously has to do with, you know, what they. I guess, I don't know... And also in Russia there is not so much demand for what I would really like to write. Because I write, I like to write … about world development. You know, I like to write about things, I don't know North Korea, Palestine. International stuff. Which is not a lot of, in Russia is not really the main habit of journalism. It's not very popular. Not too many people want to know about it. (Chizh 2011)

What these two examples represent is the importance of an idea of a nation and nationalism in constructing professional identities. The formation of a social community, so called "Russianness", has to be attributed not to the state, but to Russian artists, writers, poets and philosophers, many of whom were also journalists, at least in the Russian Enlightenment period sense of the term. Being alienated from politics, great Russian thinkers and writers, who dedicated their lifetimes to grasping the thought of the nation, created a national community of values and myths (Figes 2002). Being a mythical discursive idea of a common nation, this thought of Russianness, with a distinct mentality and social logic, so precisely described in works of literature, cocoons the understanding of Russian culture today. Regrettably, there are no studies directly linking discursive ideas of national identity with the identity of journalists. However, the social patriotic duty of unifying the nation, yet again becomes a professional responsibility of the mass media and some Russian journalists in the period of transition.

Being aware of the conflicts in the elite circles for the control and domination of the mass media, media workers and audiences have continued to take a critical approach to news and political content developed in the later period of the Communist regime. In studies of media audiences in Russia, this scepticism is described as a principle of media literacy of the population

[12] Oksana Chizh was living in Moscow at the time when the interview took place, however later she left Russia not for the first time

(Mickiewicz 2000: Oates 2006). Russian audiences are 'exceptionally media-literate' (Mickiewicz 2000:15) and have a different 'media logic' (Oates 2006) from the audiences in established democracies. They, in general, distrust any form of official news sources and journalists as a whole, and deny a possibility of free and objective media existence as such. It has been observed by researchers studying Russia's cultural transition that even words like trust, democracy, freedom and other cannot just be directly translated into English, as they carry a different meaning. For example, Ellen Mickiewicz (2009:128) noted that her focus groups respondents when saying that they trusted the Channel One really meant 'indifference', in a negative sense of the term. Similarly three of the four interviewed journalists were very quick in saying that they felt professionally free; however, later told stories about fears for physical well being and learned on the job taboo topics in news. Chizh, being a journalist in an English language newspaper in Moscow, speculated:

> Now, if you write for an English language media in Russian, nobody cares what you write. They want you to write you know shit about Putin and Medvedev and what not, because this is what creates a perception of the freedom of the media in Russia. So, you know, I can write on the front page of the Moscow News, Medvedev is shit even more and Putin lies about everything. And that's gonna work very very well, because the governments is gonna say 'cool!', look, we have the free media…They will go and we will see that there is no freedom of the press. Now, Russians don't speak English generally and nobody reads this except the experts…Nobody is gonna criticise or pressurise them what so ever.

There are a lot of themes that can be identified from this quotation. Nonetheless, the decision to place it with the argument of national identity was made on the grounds of looking at national identity as mediation. The idea taken from this speculation is: we know that freedom of speech does not exist, yet it does exist in the process of articulation of this idea. It is also interesting that Oksana recognises that it is mediated to nobody, that there is no audience for this mediation. As illustrated above, there are more visible channels of mediation, such as television. However, interviewed journalists recognise that the proportion of the audience reliant on these channels is relatively small.

The media logic, institutional difference and untouchable topics have a strong influence on the identity and practice of contemporary journalism in Russia. Referring to the existing situation of television control, Parfenov (2010) in the same speech mentioned above uttered: 'and federal television channels of the country are telling about different Russias'. Interview participants had a similar view to Parfenov and recognised the importance of writing about the alternative realities to the dominant national narrative.

> Authorities and that part of the press, which serves this part of the society…is a relatively narrow area in Russia's life…And that person who gets the news from the television news belongs to also a relatively thin layer of people…And it can be said that these people are the real Russia, yes? if watching television and reading particular newspaper. But in reality life is a lot wider. And there are people who are not interested in politics, but they are doing important things…Form these informal institutions, connections between each other. (Petrova 2011)

Informing the forming society about the 'Other' side of Russia as an opposition to the 'Real' Russia portrayed on national television, about the informal institutions and people who are not dominant in state controlled media, was identified as a professional purpose for Julia (a journalists from a liberal national newspaper). Similar goals were articulated by other journalists

working at national as well as local levels. At the local level, professional and organisational objectives were also defined through being a media outlet dedicated to audience responses and public concerns, rather than hegemonisation of distrusted dominant political narrative. Returning to the notion of objectivity, objective reporting was described through the duality of juxtaposing dominant national narrative, or the narrative of Kremlin's media, with other narratives present in the social domain.

Concluding remarks

In this paper, early findings from PhD research on the topic of post-Communist identities of Russian journalists, have been presented and discussed through themes, relating journalistic professional identities to such notions as: the nation, cultural memory and path-dependency. The argument was not constructed for the purpose of negating the standardisation and globalisation of a journalistic professional ethos. On the contrary, using tools from Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, it was argued that professional identification is closely linked to the processes associated with cultural globalisation. Nonetheless, globalisation should be understood as a process in which journalists are becoming more familiar with professional work and doctrines in other countries, and not purely as a progression towards homogenisation.

Methodologically framed in discourse theory, this study set out to identify professional antagonisms, which have been articulated in the literature, as well as the empirical data. The analysis of self- reflection on professionalisation of journalism in Russia demonstrated that the creation of professional identity is dependent on both the national context as well as discursive myths about the Other. Discursive myths were further explored through such ideas as civic society, nation, memory and social recognition.

Moving beyond the sociological interest in the institutional norms, behaviour and structures, where journalists are frequently seen as powerless agents, this study contributes to the understanding of journalists as self-reliant and self-motivated individuals. The questions that this study addressed, thus, are: how are journalists making sense of their professional environment and what are the nodal point they use in self-identifying as a professional body with social responsibilities. In the present climate, which was already defined as transition, the knowledge about journalism, professional identification and responsibilities is needed in order to monitor the movement of power relationships, since journalism in any media system is seen as a binder between the governmental power structures and society. They are aware of articulations and antagonisms of the social and political discourses and assist in the construction of the nodal points of social/national/political identities.

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Marija Lobanova, born in 1984 in St. Petersburg, Russia. At the age of 5, my family moved to Lithuania. A year later, the Soviet Union began to fall apart, right by my house, right by my school next to the TV tower, in Lithuanian capital Vilnius. Maybe it was these few days, which are entrenched into my childhood memory that led me into this research topic, combining (post-) Communism and the media. At the age of 19, I moved to London. I studies media studies at the University of East London and Goldsmith University. And this idea, that there is something missing, something unsaid in the literature I was reading, about us, about homosovieticus, became my stalker. So here I am, trying to fill-in this little gap.

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Narratives of Violence and Gendered Experience: Notes on Methodology

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This paper draws on the methodology of my doctoral research that looked into the gendered aspects of the conflict in southeast Bangladesh and explored the gender specific implications of violence as well as examining the gendered embodiments of the *Jumma* nationalist project. In this paper, I endeavour to introduce my analytical approach that challenges the idea of objectivity, stresses the need for the researcher's engagement with the research topic and participants, and asserts that the researcher's subjective position has facilitated the research process, allowing me to access data on gendered violence in the conflict zone. I argue further that for an understanding of gendered aspects of armed conflict and indigenous women's subjectivity in gendered violence in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, we need to employ knowledge of both radical and deconstructive feminism. In doing so, I stress on the one hand the need for a continuous redrawing and redesigning of methodological approaches in the social sciences; and on the other I emphasise the need for a social science research 'with a heart and emotions as well as a mind' (Stanley, 2003:4).

Key words: gender relation - gendered violence - feminist epistemology - objectivity -analytical approach - reflexivity

Introduction

In all research, be it empirical or theoretical, methodology and method are deemed to be significant; and for empirical research they are probably more significant than anything else. My research is purely an empirical study of gender and armed conflict. It examines the gendered aspects of the armed conflict in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and explores gender (power) relations between women and men within the nationalist project and the gender specific implications of militarised violence in the conflict prone CHT.[13] In this paper I will seek to discuss some methodological issues relevant to my research. Analysing gender relations in conflict zones has been a long and difficult undertaking, and the methodology and method of my research are somewhat complex. As will be discussed below, there is a considerable number of ethical issues involved in my research as it combines ethnographic research with qualitative interviews with women and men, survivors and actors, and mediators and perpetrators in the conflict prone CHT.

The discussion in this paper is influenced by feminist epistemology[14] and feminist ideas on methodological matters- within the discipline of sociology as well as feminist thinking more broadly- that have contributed greatly to the production of "good knowledge" (to use Stanley, 2003: 4) within social science. I begin by engaging with the recurrent debates on the issue of objectivity in feminist research. Then I move on to elaborate my own standpoint, positionality and analytical approach and draw on the suggestion that feminist research is based on the recognition that knowledge is situated (Harding, 1987; Haraway, 1998; Stanley 1990, 2003), and that knowledge emanating from one standpoint cannot be "finished" (Collins, 1991; Stanley, 1997). I argue that my subjective (social as well as political) position in the research and my (emotional and political) engagement with the topic and participants have, essentially, informed and facilitated the research process, allowing me to produce new and good knowledge on the subject.

Finally, I seek to provide a brief explanation as to why I have drawn on radical and deconstructive ideas in the same research, and whether feminist research should combine different approaches to feminism. I argue that while we should recognise the fundamental differences between deconstructive and radical feminism for the sake of philosophical clarity, we

[13] My research looks at both women's and men's experience in conflict and violence, and thus it is not merely a narrative of "violence against women". As 'neither in talk, research, analysis, policy, nor programming can gender be equated solely with women, nor solely with women's activities, beliefs, goals, or needs' (Indra, 1999, :2), I seek to narrate the gendered experiences of indigenous women and men, and not only that of women.

[14] According to Sandra Harding, 'an *epistemology* is a theory of knowledge which answers questions about who can be a "knower" (for example can women be knowers?); what tests beliefs must pass in order to be legitimated as knowledge (that only tests against men's experience and observation); what kinds of things can knowledge characterize epistemologies as strategies for justifying beliefs such as appeals to the authority of God, of custom and tradition, of "common sense", of observation, of reason, and of masculine authority are examples of familiar justificatory strategies' (1987:3). There are important connections between epistemologies, methodologies and research methods, even though epistemology may not be directly related to research method. Epistemological issues have crucial implications for how general theoretical structures can and should be applied in particular disciplines,. and for the choice of methods of research. *Feminist epistemology* refers to alternative theories that legitimate women as "knowers" and/or "agents of knowledge". Over the last 35 years feminist epistemologists have invested much passion in understanding the ways that social science investigates social lives, and have "raised fundamental challenges"' to the ways in which social sciences have analysed the lives of women and men in society. Issues about method, methodology, and epistemology have been interwoven with discussions of how best to correct 'the partial, imagined and distorted accounts'(Harding 1987:1).

need to consider different (feminist) sources of knowledge for understanding and analysing data in the same research. I conclude by arguing that this approach can substantially enhance the production of good and new knowledge.

Objectivity, Feminist Epistemology and My Analytical Approach

Social scientists have invested much time in disputing the issue of objectivity in social science research. Scholars- from conventional methodologists to feminist epistemologists- have obscured the issue of objectivity in various ways for over three decades. Some have argued for "good enough" objectivity (Jenkins, 2002), while others have argued for 'situated objectivity' (Williams, 2005) or for "corroborative objectivity" (May and Perry, 2011). Feminist epistemologists themselves have argued much about the issue of objectivity by introducing ideas such as "strong objectivity" (Harding, 1993) and "feminist fractured foundations" (Stanley and Wise, 1993). However, one major development is the jettisoning of the positivist notion of objectivity in research, a development which has challenged the notions of a "God's eye view" (Stanley, 2003:1) and of "truth production".

Whilst conventional methodologies in social science suggest that our research should produce unbiased, indistinct and impartial knowledge, and that the knowledge-claims produced from our research should be based on fact, accuracy and truth, feminist methodologists have argued that there is no research which can be considered unbiased and/or complete in terms of accuracy and fact (see for example, Bhopal, 2012; Letherby, 2003, 2012; Stanley, 2003). Research is an embodied process and is an interrogation with the personal. It is, thus, essential to recognise that our research is fully a part of the social life it investigates and should produce knowledge on the subject which encourages its practitioners 'to act with as much care and probity in our research and writing as in the rest of our lives' (Stanley, 2003: 1).

My research is particularly based on this assumption and it aims to offer an analysis of the armed conflict in the CHT that would encourage its practitioners to act with care and probity in the field. I do not intend to produce any "ultimate truth" about the conflict. Instead, I situate myself in the (subjective) position of a feminist researcher whose aim is to interrogate the gender politics in the CHT in order to make an impact on the lives of indigenous women and men who endure militarised violence and state repression as "Others". I appreciate that feminist research project should combine analytical, ethical and political dimensions. Feminist thinking not only includes analytical, ethical and political dimensions, but 'it combines them: it refuses to separate and allocate them to separate spheres' (ibid:3). This is one of the sources of 'trouble' in the relationship of academic feminists with mainstream academia, which historically has promoted the view that science involves a strict objectivity.

Letherby (2012) argues that in order to produce 'good knowledge' we need to consider 'theorised subjectivity' rather than objectivity. The concept of 'theorised subjectivity' recognises that 'while there is a "reality" "out there", the political complexities of subjectivities, and their inevitable involvement in the research process make a final and definite "objective" statement impracticable' (ibid:1, also see 2003:14)). This suggestion is particularly important for my research. In the "reality" of occupied CHT and gender politics in Bangladesh, I situated myself in the position of a feminist researcher, whose work does not necessarily produce an "objective statement" or "impartial knowledge" on the subject, but it rather offers a "gendered analysis" of the conflict that reveals the underpinning [gender] power relations in nationalist discourse that seemingly generate and sustain unequal [power] relations between women and men within the nation building process of the *Jumma*, between [powerful] Bengali men and [ethnic] *Jumma* men,

and between the state and its "Others". I look at the conflict through a gendered lens and argue that the armed conflict in the CHT is a gendered construction and the transformations of this conflict, i.e. the militarised and communal violence generated from this conflict, have gender specific implications.

The analysis that I present in my research is not merely a narration of what my participants told me. Instead it is a critical analysis of nationalist discourse and gender politics in Bangladesh, and is informed by: feminist theory[15] and previous feminist research on the subject; work on gender relations in nationalist movements, militarization and wars in the sub-continent and elsewhere; my personal experience of gender-specific violence in the *plains* of Bangladesh as well as in the conflict zone during my fieldwork. My position in this research is not only as a listener or a narrator, who listens to the stories of participants and understands meanings in their given form, but as one who analyses them and gives meanings to the narratives in the context of feminist approaches to war and violence. I consider Ruthelen Josselson's idea (2004: 3-5) of "decoding process" appropriate for my research. Josselson, in her discussion of the practice of narrative research, stresses that the meanings produced by the narrators/analysts of testimonies and interviews are subject to the type of analysis used. According to Josselson, there are two different types of analysis in narrative research: "hermeneutics of restoration" and "hermeneutics of demystification". The former suggests a careful listening to the stories, whereas the latter emphasises the "decoding [of] meaning". My interest lies with the latter because 'it aims to constructively achieve a complete understanding of the stories' (Squire, 2008: 41). I do not simply tell the stories of my research participants. It is my intention to define or give meaning to the stories and experiences of my research participants, who spoke in colloquial language and might have not said what they meant to say. Squire notes that adopting a "hermeneutics of demystification" or "decoding meaning" approach in analysing the stories of people's lives 'is part of experience-centred narrative research'(2008: 41) and it may enhance the mode of praxis-based research.

The theoretical tool for my analysis of the stories of my participants is intersectionality, and I consider Anthias and Yuval Davis's (1989) suggestion that gender, class, "race", ethnicity, culture and nationality are interwoven and they construct each other (also see Yuval-Davis, 2006). I have seen gender as a mode of discourse, as Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992) have proposed. That is, it relates to groups of subjects whose social roles are defined by their sexual or biological difference as opposed to their economic positions or their membership of ethnic and "racial" collectivities. As already discussed in an earlier writing (in the Year Book III, 2009)[16], an intersectional approach allows us to trace the multiple oppression and powerlessness of people who are members of [other] groups and collectivities, who are different from the dominant group/nation of the state. The theory of intersectionality reflects the minority/marginalised culture rather than the culture of the majority (Knudsen, 2005: 62). It points towards the critical view of becoming "the other" in a normative setting within a general [mainstream/dominant] culture. Intersectionality has been a tool for viewing how cultural and social categories intertwine. It enables us to grasp the relationships between socio-cultural categories and identities. As Knudsen notes, it refers to an approach that is 'more than gender research, more

[15] Primarily deconstructive and post-modernist, but also drawing on radical feminist approach to gender and sexuality. The applications of these theories vary on the context and I have tried to relate and connect different approaches to analysing the gendered aspects of violence.

[16] An article on my theoretical take, entitled 'Framing Nation-State and Gender', was published in the *Year Book III: PhD Research in Progress* (2009), ed. Derek Robbins, 66-82. London: School of Social Sciences, Media and Cultural Studies, University of East London.

than studying differences between women and men, and more than diversities within women's groups and men's groups' (2005: 61)[17].

I, hence, seek to analyse the discourse of gender power in connection with the politics of identity, i.e. simultaneously exploring the links between ethnicity, sexuality, class and nationality. I show that whilst indigenous men are subjects of "otherness" in relation to ethnicity and class, indigenous women are subjects of "multiple oppression" because of their cultural, ethnic and class identities - as interwoven with their gender identities. They are the "marginalized of the marginalized", "oppressed of the oppressed" and dominated by all - the state, the military, the powerful men and women [of the Bengali community] and by the male members of their own community. Within the matrix of power and domination in Bangladesh, indigenous women have been historically marginalized and silenced. I seek to reveal their less-heard stories in my research.

Nevertheless, the analysis which my research offers may be relative and incomplete because knowledge is relative and should be contextualised based on this notion. The epistemological framework by which my work is informed recognises that knowledge is influenced by the standpoint, positionality and the situated self of the researchers – including their subjectivities and their correlations – as much as those of the research subjects (Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis, 2002: 2). The idea of an absolute, pure and complete knowledge is, indeed, indistinct. Letherby correctly points out that any research that had been undertaken by a different researcher, or by the same researcher at a different point in time, would produce different findings and the results would vary depending on the time, space and method of the research. She notes, in her methodology on auto/biographical research on infertility, that some of her respondents' experiences suggested that a repetition of her research on pregnancy and involuntary childlessness would 'uncover flavours of difference rather than result in distinctively different claims' (2002: 94).

My own research may be similar in that, despite my sincere attempts to appreciate gender relation within the *Jumma* society, some of my respondents in the conflict zone in the CHT (such as the *Jumma* male political leaders) suggested that the results of my research could have been different had I talked to or corresponded with the same individuals (survivors of gendered violence) at a different time. They might have talked about or focused on different aspects of their experiences. The knowledge-claims produced by my work are not representative of all groups/communities and of all people in the CHT. Nor can I "prove" the accuracy of my analysis in an absolute sense. I consider this research to be a comparison of respondents' experiences.

[17] The idea of intersectionality was first introduced by Chrenshaw in late 1989 as an interplay between Black feminism, feminist theory and postcolonial theory. Since then, feminists have written much on the intersectionality of gender, class, "race", ethnicity, nationality and state, and have moved away from the additive approach of the concept. Additive intersectionality means that both the subject formations based on gender, "race", ethnicity, sexuality, etc., and the orders of power that create them, are analysed as separated structures and limited units which do interact, but do not intra-act. (Lykke, 2005: 9, cited in Knudsen, 2005:63). These latter works (for example, Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992; Knudsen, 2005; Yuval-Davis and Anthias, 1989; Yuval-Davis, 2006) argue that gender, class, ethnicity, "race" and nationality do not only add to each other, but they intersect and construct each other. I consider this suggestion to be appropriate for my research.

Ethnographic Fieldwork and Accessing Data

In this section I will discuss how my activism and engagement with human rights, indigenous rights and the women's movement have enabled me to reach out to groups that are extremely hard-to-reach. I will argue that my research would have been left undone had I failed to engage with the topic. My political and emotional involvement with the topic has been immensely helpful in creating networks and forming groups that work against oppression, subordination and the victimization of indigenous women, men and powerless people in the militarised CHT. Before beginning this research I had worked with local, regional and national indigenous organisations, which was very useful in reaching out to and gaining the trust of survivors. My previous activism appeared to be the bridge between myself as the researcher and the participants, and my identity as a human rights activist became the basis of the "building bridges methodology".

I first contacted two indigenous organisations based in Dhaka, the Hill Literature Forum (HLF) and the Hill Women's Federation (HWF), which work closely with the communities in the CHT. For some communities it may seem oppressive when their first contact occurs through the national bodies which do not necessarily represent their needs and views. For this reason, approval was sought from the community assemblies in the first instance. I started to build trust with the *Chakma* people even before I started this project. I had the opportunity to work closely with them through my previous work and I helped them publish a periodical, called *Mowrum*, that documented injustices and the violation of the human rights of indigenous people by "masculine militaries" (to use Enloe, 1993) for two years, February 2005 to April 2007.

As a result of this approach the assembly of the Hill Literature Forum agreed to help me undertake the study, and the Hill Women's Federation agreed to guide me in the field. My main informant in the field was one of the coordinators of HLF, whom I had met in Dhaka during my first meeting with the HLF. He opened doors for me and became very involved in the research; he also offered to let me stay with his family in his village during my fieldwork. Although I did not take up this offer – being aware of the possible ethical issues of the research, I stayed in a government rest house in Khagrachari proper, and travelled to remote villages from the town centre as and when required – my informant and his family became an invaluable source of information for my research. They recommended me to *Jumma* communities and to indigenous leaders in Khagrachari, some of whom believed that my research was being conducted to facilitate their struggle for the autonomy and human rights of indigenous people[18].

In my contacts with research participants, I followed "dialogical epistemology" (Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis, 2002). Dialogical epistemology suggests that a dialogue between people from different positionings is the just way to approximate the truth' (ibid: 7). Although the purpose of this research is not to entrench an "ultimate truth", dialogical epistemology allowed me to reach out to research participants, especially survivors of militarised violence, which further helped me to understand the gendered experiences of women and men, and the gender-specific implications of violence in the CHT. I situated myself in the position of a researcher and "learner" whose primary role was to learn about "participants' culture" as much as "participants' experience/situation", whereas my participants were the "knowers". In addition, since work on indigenous people and other cultures involves important ethical considerations of which I was

[18] This presupposition is not incorrect in that that my research is empirical in nature and it is aimed at producing knowledge that would encourage the practitioners and policy makers to act with probity and care. The purpose of the research is to obtain an understanding of the causes of their oppression and their situation in the globalised world, and to outline the actions that need to be taken to bring an end to this situation.

aware, I often expressed an interest in learning about "their culture" (to use Clifford, 1998) and their language which enabled me to gain the "trust" of my participants.

Although power plays an important role in research, the power relation between me and my participants was better balanced. Following critical, indigenous and anti-oppressive approaches, I was able to create a common ground for the researched and for the researcher. As Bhopal (2012) stresses, power can be two-way and there may be situations in which participants withhold information that they do not want to share with the researcher, or which they do not think important. Although most of my participants (i.e., survivors) were open in sharing their experiences and confiding their stories, others, (such as, government officials, security personnel and soldiers) provided information which was either intentionally false or partial and distorted. In those cases I needed to cross-check information provided by one party with a third group (and occasionally with the opposition).

In addition, I used different strategies and methods to gain access to information. To access the survivors and gain trust I followed a "bottom-up approach". In contrast, to gain access to power-holders such as military commanders, security personnel and government officials, I used a "top-down" method[19]. These methods were first introduced by Sabin (1998), who has undertaken research with indigenous people in Peru, and were followed by Dominguez (2008) in her research on oil conflicts in Ecuador.

Generally this approach is used for participatory research. I have, however, applied these methods in narrative research as they suit my investigation. The "bottom-up" approach is one which allows research participants to contribute actively to the research process and to express their views openly. As Sabin argues, it is important to consider the knowledge of indigenous communities rather than romanticising them or presenting them as wild and primitive. I first listened to indigenous women and men about their culture, their politics and their vision for nationalist struggles. I learned about the survivors' backgrounds from my guides and interpreters before our meetings. At the start of each meeting with a participant I made sure that they knew enough about my background and the purpose and objectives of my research. This has helped in gaining trust of the participants. During the interviews with survivors of violence, I sought the consent of the participants and made sure they felt safe and were comfortable enough to talk to me. I asked them to remind me to "stop" when they felt any discomfort in answering a question.

In contrast, the "top-down" method was employed to access the powerful groups and actors in the conflict in order to make sure that they did not influence my research. The "top-down" approach allowed me to dominate the conversation with members of powerful groups through asking a series of set questions. The first phase of fieldwork might have affected the situation on the ground, as data collection in the guerrilla-dominated villages caused antagonism among the military personnel. I, therefore, always made a point to negotiate with army officials and border security personnel (Bangladesh Rifles) using the "top-down" method before starting data collection and before leaving the area.

In any case, carrying out feminist research on state-induced violence and the gendered experiences of women and men involves ethical issues concerning the safety of both the subjects of the research and the researcher (Lee-Treweek and Linkogle, 2000). Ethical considerations regarding gendered relations in conflict zones implies that the anonymity and confidentiality of

[19] The idea of bottom up and top-down method was found in the research methodology of Maria Teresa Martinez (2008) who carried out research on the indigenous society of Peru. For details of this method see Dominguez, M. T. M., 'Building Bridges: Participatory and emancipatory methodologies with indigenous communities affected by the oil industry, *ENQUIRE*, 1, (2008). No.1: 1-17.

the participants will be safeguarded by using pseudonyms and by avoiding the publication of any data before the dissertation is completed. In addition, I have not discussed my experience of the fieldwork in public in order to avoid any possible military crimes occurring on the ground after I had left the field. On a few occasions, when I considered the safety both of the participants and of the researcher, I left the field with incomplete data. In the first phase of fieldwork, I was repeatedly exposed to actual and potential forms of violence, simply by being a "female researcher" working on gendered violence in a military dominated conflict zone.[20] This, on the one hand, shaped the research findings and my analysis, and on the other made me take extra care over my research participants' safety, dignity and confidentiality. While my incomplete fieldwork on the first phase might have affected the completeness of the research, for example in producing "unfinished knowledge" on the subject, the limitations and restrictions arising from my being a female researcher in a conflict-prone society, determining "where the researcher could go", "who I was able to talk to" and "what it is possible to know" (Lee-Treweek and Linkogle, 2000), articulated the gendered nature of the conflict.

During my fieldwork, I was careful about the way I worked with the groups and individuals whom I visited and interviewed. I tried to transmit useful information from one group to another for the purpose of ensuring the validity of collated information. For example, information provided by army officers and government officials was often in direct conflict with information provided by underground activists, and I needed to cross-check this with ordinary people including Bengali women and men. Sometimes information from civil administration officials also clashed with information provided by military officers. In such cases I sought help from indigenous political leaders and policy makers to clarify the validity of the information. Similarly information provided by the leading indigenous political party often conflicted with information from the activists and militant groups. It was, therefore, important to cross check information either with a third group or, occasionally, between these two groups. All of these were made possible by my engagement with the topic and involvement with my participants. However, I was careful about the "politicisation" of the research process, because "political" and "politicised" projects are different and the knowledge produced from them would be substantially different.

[20] During the first phase of my fieldwork, I was forced to leave the field with incomplete data in the face of militarised violence and disturbance of the Bangladeshi border security agents (BDR personnel). At first they forcefully broke into my guest house at 1a.m. in the morning and ordered me to visit the nearest military camp, referring to my subordinate position as a civilian and as a woman researcher in a conflict zone controlled and occupied by the state military. When I refused to go to the Army camp, they kept me in house arrest by imposing restrictions on my movements, and prevented me from carrying out interviews with civilian women and men in the village. After four days I was released from the area under armed guard on condition that I left the field immediately. Around the same time two foreign journalists, from Spain and the Netherlands, were detained by the Bangladesh government, and an outspoken young feminist activist who had worked in the CHT for longer than a decade, Pricilla Raj, were detained for four months. Accusations against all three of these people were similar since all of them were interested in looking into the forms of violence in post-accord situations. These incidents made me concerned for my own safety and I therefore reduced my working time in the conflict zone and left the field with incomplete data.

Throughout this paper I have argued that my work is a feminist research project which combines political, analytical and ethical dimensions and that I am concerned with the interplay of all three. In order to substantiate the validity of my work I have drawn on feminist epistemology and feminist thinking derived from different feminist approaches to research methodologies. The ideas discussed herein about feminist research, its intellectual underpinnings, and the "knowledge-claims" produced from my research are influenced by a longstanding tradition of critical, post-modernist, deconstructive as well as radical feminist ideas about such matters produced within the discipline of sociology, by narrative research and by feminist thinking more broadly. My work, that is, the theoretical take of the research and the analysis of empirical data, is influenced by the ideas and approaches of different feminist strands.

But drawing on different feminist approaches in the same research is not a common trend. Especially, employing radical and deconstructive feminist theories in the same research is rare because there are considerable differences between the two. For radical feminism, gender inequality and the question of women's subordination should essentially be understood in relation to male domination and men's power. It is deemed by radical feminism that women - regardless of their class, ethnicity and "race" - in all societies at all times are oppressed by men and patriarchy, and it is male power that needs to be resisted to ensure gender equality. Conversely, deconstructive feminism argues that gender inequality and oppression cannot be understood by looking only at male domination because not all women experience inequality and oppression in the same way, nor do all men necessarily benefit equally from patriarchal projects (Bracewell, 2000: 566). According to deconstructive feminism, inequality and subordination can be found between women and women, and between men and men as much as it happens between women and men. They argue that subjectivity and agency are interrelated (Papadelos, 2006) because there are women who provide legitimacy to patriarchal projects and act as agents of the victimisation of "Other" women, that is, women of other classes, other "races", of other cultures and ethnicities) . Deconstructive feminism insists that in order to appreciate women's subjectivity in oppression and subordination we need to recognize the complex and multi-layered power relations and practices in the particular society being studied.

There is no doubt that there are considerable divisions of opinion between different feminist approaches, and the arguments for "sameness-difference"' and "universalism-relativism" demand serious attention. I am certainly concerned with these recognizable differences. Yet, I suggest that we consider the usefulness of both these approaches in the particular context of my research. We need to employ these theories to analyse different types of gender relations and gendered transformations as relevant because, despite the differences in their politics and approaches to overcoming oppression, these theories are connected in ways that aid our understanding of women's subordination, oppression and gender equality in a society like Bangladesh. I show in my research that oppression and gendered transformations in the conflict-prone Chittagong Hill Tracts can be described by both radical and deconstructive feminism, and that the historical, political and cultural context of the CHT conflict involves both material and structural power relations.

While taking a feminist stance, I have resisted the temptation to follow one particular approach because relying on knowledge produced by one particular group, I believe, may be precarious and we should avoid the temptation to follow one particular feminist approach for a gendered analysis of armed conflict. 'Feminism', I maintain, drawing on Letherby and Stanley (Stanley, 2003: 3), is a 'formal body of thought' and a 'praxis' that involves an analysis, an ethics and a politics (Letherby, 2011: 6) which is useful for recognising, appreciating and defining gender power relations and women's (and men's) oppression. As Stanley notes,

> feminism provides an analysis of the complex inter-related hierarchies of inequalities referred to through the term "oppression", it sees these as unjust, it insists they are capable of being changed, and its adherents are actively involved in producing such changes (2003: 3).

A feminist researcher would, thus, be concerned with the politics of inequalities, primarily in terms of radical feminism, but also – to be more critical – deconstructive feminism, and would invest in her work a passion for producing knowledge that would contribute to possible and positive changes in the complex hierarchies of inequalities. I, however, acknowledge the usefulness of both approaches when/as they are relevant , and I aim to incorporate different approaches in analysing women's and men's positions and positioning in the *Jumma* nationalist project and their experiences in the armed conflict in relation to their gender identities. This way I explore the contextual differences of the armed conflict, on the one hand; and on the other, demonstrate the material aspect of gendered violence in the CHT.

The politics by which my work is influenced recognises the idea of "differences over connections" (to use Brah, 1992). That is, it appreciates the notion that we need to make connections between our different positionings, ideas and actions - albeit retaining our differences. It is a politics that recognises the validity and significance of the different approaches and ideas of people from different groups and strands responding to similar issues. Yuval-Davis calls it a "transversal politics" (1999, also see 1997: 125-132). In "transversal politics", perceived unity and homogeneity are replaced by dialogues which give recognition to the specific positioning of those who participate in them as well as to the "unfinished knowledge" that each such situated positioning can offer (ibid: 131). Yuval-Davis notes that it is

> an alternative to the universalism/relativism dichotomy which is at the heart of modernist/post-modernist feminist debate. It aims at providing answers to the crucial theoretical/political questions of how and with whom we should work if/when we accept that we are all different as deconstructionist theories argue. (ibid)

Transversal politics problematises simplistic assumptions about the "feminist agenda" on the one hand, and invites coalition and connection on the other. It encourages and invites us to adopt a "connection" to form a "coalition"' – not an "uncritical solidarity" such as "sisterhood" that universalists suggest and which ignores the differential positioning of those to whom the universalist rules are supposed to apply – in which the differences among women (and men) are recognised and 'given a voice, in and outside the political units and the boundaries of this coalition set not in terms of "who" we are but in terms of "what" we want to achieve' (ibid: 126). In other words, transversal politics differentiates between social identities and social values and assumes that "epistemological communities"' (Assiter, 1996, cited in Yuval-Davis 1997: 131) which share common value systems, can exist across differential positioning and identities. In this sense, it allows the combining and sharing of ideas, information and knowledge produced or held by different groups/epistemological strands, so long as they enhance the production of "good knowledge". My approach, however, is to draw on different theories and to share the ideas of different strands of feminism and different sources of knowledge, in order to understand and analyse the narratives of violence and gendered experience in armed conflict.

Conclusion

My research, as noted above, is reflexive, dialogical, situated and political, and it is aimed at producing (unfinished) knowledge for gender studies and feminist thinking in general. Throughout this paper, I have stressed that feminist research in social science allows the researcher's engagement and emotional involvement with the topic and the participants. I have asserted that research is an embodied process. I have emphasised that my research is a gendered analysis of the armed conflict in the CHT, and that it may produce contextualised, relative, and "unfinished knowledge" on the subject. Even if I cannot "prove" the accuracy of my analysis in an absolute sense, and even if my research may not be a complete work on the subject, the research is significant because it brings new findings that may encourage new knowledge and more research on the subject. As Cockburn stresses, although substantial work has been done on nationalism, war and armed conflict there is a need for new research in this field because 'every country study in the world would bring substantially different conflict and a fresh kind of experience by women and men' (2007: 4). The forms of gendered violence that have occurred in the CHT, and the implications of this violence in indigenous women's and men's lives, are contextual and they present a discourse analysis of the history, politics and culture of that region. I embarked on a project to explore the contextual differences of the armed conflict, as well as to exhibit the similarities of this conflict with other conflicts and to make feminist sense of these differences and similarities.

In the above discussion, I have also argued that we need to consider various sources of knowledge and different feminist approaches for a gendered analysis of armed conflict and violence in a society like Bangladesh. Although it is not a common trend and it involves a question as to whether the boundaries of the feminist "epistemological community" and "coalition politics"' would work – in the context of the specific historical conditions, which can vary so much, in which any specific feminist campaign might be carried out – and 'given the fact that there are so many strands among self-identified feminists, among whom there may be very serious divisions of opinion' (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 132), I intend to apply "transversal politics" for feminist praxis, research and knowledge production. I believe that an analysis of gender relations in the indigenous society and armed conflict in Bangladesh needs to combine various feminist approaches as long as they facilitate our understanding of the subject. I draw on feminist work on the subject that is different in approach but connected in ways that substantially inform our understanding of the conflict, violence and gendered (power) relations in the CHT

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Structuring East to West Migration: A Case Study of Central and Eastern European Migrants to Britain

Jenny Thatcher

Focusing on Central and Eastern European migration from accession states to England, this paper seeks to explore how migration has been affected by global level socioeconomic and political transformations that have occurred as part of wider global integration. The study explores Central and Eastern European migrant's experiences of globalisation at a micro level. The argument in this paper seeks to conceptualised East to West migration as a structuration process: using the analytical categories of social structure and human agency, and applying the structuration model to explain the reciprocal influence of migrant's home and host societal structures in shaping their activities and goals (Morawska, 2001). The paper also aims to show that East to West migration is determined by market forces and that EU accession is used as an enabling structure by the migrants to regularise the already existing process of Central and Eastern European migration flows.

Key Words*:* Migration, EU Accession, Structuration, Globalisation.

Introduction

Migration operates differently in varying opportunity structures, and the European Union's eastward enlargement in 2004 and 2007 can be seen as facilitating the legal regularisation of migration from the accession states[1]. It is important to acknowledge that migration from Central and Eastern Europe has had a long history. Most notably with the peak of Eastern European transatlantic migration to America between 1850 to 1914 (Castles and Miller 2009). This in part induced a pioneering scholarly inquiry into immigrants' adaptation in Thomas and Znaniecki's: *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America,* which ultimately went on to influence the 'Chicago School' of sociology (Burkpwczyk, 2006). During the Cold War era Eastern and Central European migration took on a new form as migrants claimed asylum as well as it resulting in inter-Soviet-bloc labour and tourist migration. Furthermore, the collapse of the Soviet Union created a surge in migration towards the West from former communist states. Therefore, as Garapich (2008) points out EU accession can be seen partly as an enabling structure that legitimises already established flows of migration.

Nonetheless, EU enlargement on 1 May 2004 allowed immediate access to the British labour markets, to all citizens from the new Accession eight countries. In the first year 345,000 accession eight countries migrants registered their employment under the Worker Registration Scheme. Research by Anderson et al. (2006) 'estimated that up to 30 per cent ha[d] been in the UK prior to 1 May 2004' (p.2). Those migrants that had been in the UK preceding EU enlargement often used enabling resources as a way of maintaining their stay in Britain. These could include: working as self-employed, enrolling on a course to obtain a student visa or simply staying here as an illegal resident (Anderson et al. 2006).

The differential capacity structures have to enable and constrain human agency and the interdependency that exist between them, have an important role in the process of migration and the pursuits of migrants. The analytical categories of social structure and human agency will be used to conceptualise the East to West migration as a structuration process. The paper draws upon the empirical findings of eleven semi-structured qualitative interviews and utilises the structuration model as an explanatory tool to frame the data. The interviews were conducted in 2009, the twenty year anniversary of the collapse of communism.

East to West Migration

The Collapse of Communism

The Soviet Union dominated much of Central and Eastern Europe between 1945 to 1989, (with the exception of Yugoslavia in Tito's 1948 break with the USSR) and partly explains why so often the countries are referred to as a single unit. Of course no one is denying the vast differences in history, culture and traditions that exist between them, but there is a common history experienced by the countries of Central and Eastern Europe that can justify the treatment of them as a whole (Swain and Swain, 2003). After 1989 Central and Eastern Europe were rapidly integrated into the global economy. Yet between 1945 and 1989 central and Eastern Europe were

[1] Central and Eastern European 2004 eight accession states include: Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic, and two more countries in 2007: Bulgaria and Romania (Barysch, 2006).

run by Soviet-led communist parties. Volgyes (1995) states 'The birth and the demise of European communism were two of the most important political events of the twentieth century' (p.1). In 1956 the Warsaw pact was signed enabling the Soviet Union's complete rule and authority over the whole of the region (Swain and Swain, 2003). Soviet communism created a homogenous population with similar values, attitudes, behaviour and expectations that differed from those in Western Europe (Curry, 1995).

The fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 and the collapse of communism in the early 1990s ended the 40 year cold war. Hardy (2009,) claims that the transformation of Central and Eastern Europe in the early 1990s should not be seen as a move from communism to capitalism, but should instead be interpreted within the wider processes a global economic integration. The collapse did not only create new political and economic relationships, it impacted directly upon migration flows. The collapse of communism not only brought about a series of regional conflicts which created flows of Central and Eastern European refugees to the west (Gould, 1994) it also added some 20 million people to the international migration scene (Massey and Taylor, 2004). The majority of the population of Central and Eastern Europe had been isolated from the global market for over 40 years and now faced unrestrictive travel.

EU Enlargement and its Migration Patterns

The enlargement of the European Union to the East in May 2004 and again in January 2007 brought with it new patterns and forms of migration. The UK allowed citizens from eight Central and Eastern European members the Accession Eight (A8) states unrestricted access to its labour market. A8 included; the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Latvia, Slovakia and Slovenia. Romania and Bulgaria however underwent EU accession in 2007 but have been excluded from the same labour rights (Garapich, 2008). The EU's eastward enlargement brought one of the largest single waves of migration ever experienced to the UK. At its peak, the allocations of National Insurance Numbers (NINO) showed that an estimated 111,000 NINO were issued to A8 for the first quarter of 2007. The Annual Population Survey (APS) figures also show that for the year 2011 A8 citizens accounted for 872,000 (42%) of the 2,081,000 EU citizens living in the UK (Silva, 2012).

Favell (2008) argues that previous postcolonial theories of migration and settlement and ethnicity and race are outdated and ineffective in analysing the new migration movements in Europe. These new migrants are not subject to the same colonial histories, discourses of civilisation and the oppressions of racial 'distinctions' that other 'subordinate' voices have had to break with. The new East to West migration in Europe should be theorised and interpreted in its own right. As Favell (2008, p.711) states: 'Because of EU enlargement, the European migration system is probably the most dramatically evolving and changing context of migration in the developed world'.

The European Union's accession has meant that the British labour market has been opened up to allow people to come and go as they choose. This has facilitated temporary and multiple migrations. Migration strategies of Central and Eastern migrants are configured by immigration regulations and labour market structures. Often migrants develop multiple strategies in pursuing new employment, educational opportunities and family relationships. Research carried out by Ryan et al. (2008a, 2008b and 2008c) on Polish migrants highlights the contradictory aspects of EU membership. EU eastwards accession facilitates 'commuter migration' (Morokvasic, 2004 cited in Ryan et al. 2008, p.6) but at the same time EU citizenship promotes permanent migration. There are now a variety of strategies that migrants have used to developed transnational networks through the enrolment of the migration industry including

agencies, lawyers, recruiters (Garapich, 2008)[2]. Complex family structures have often resulted in many Central and Eastern European migrants becoming uncertain about whether their stay is temporary or permanent (Ryan et al. 2008c). Research by Ryan et al. 2008c also illustrates the increasing normalisation of migration for Polish people. It revealed that often Polish migrants make little preparation when coming to Britain. Many arrive with a limited if at all any knowledge of the English language in an unfamiliar environment in which they either make their own arrangements for accommodation or have to rely on informal networks or migration agencies.

Global Integration

Migration needs to be analysed in terms of the asymmetrical interdependency and internationalisation of nation state's economic functions. Contemporary East to West migration has occurred in a more intensified era of economic globalisation and is often subjected to the continuous push and pull of global market conditions. In today's global world, 'nation states' are increasingly interlinked and no longer experience the same spatial and socio-cultural boundaries they once did. The globalisation of industrial production has resulted in the growth of foreign direct investment, transnational corporations, trade liberalisation as well as a transformation in political economy (Held and McGrew, 2002). No more were these social political shifts more apparent then with the decline of the bi-polar super-power system dominated by the USA and the Soviet Union by the end of the 1980s. Post-communist Central and Eastern European migration to the West is characteristic of the broader global, economic and political restructuring that have occurred because of the transition from a communist to capitalist system and hence wider integration.

By the early 1990s Central and Eastern European countries were undergoing rapid integration into the global economy. The communist's economic reliance on heavy industrial development based on state or "public" ownership became increasingly outdated in a world experiencing a global electronic revolution. Its economic system simply could no longer compete in the era of globalisation (Volgyes, 1995). The transformation in post-communist countries were underpinned by neoliberal policies and soon the effects of widespread privatisation, foreign direct investment (FDI), budget cuts in public spending and decentralisation of state responsibility began to be felt (Hardy, 2009).

The consequences for Central and Eastern Europe's integration into the global market have been similar to the consequences for other less powerful countries. Since the 1990s Central and Eastern European countries have adopted the rules and conditions imposed upon them by the EU's body of law and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the prospect of EU and NATO membership (Swain and Swain, 2003, p.235). The conditionality of EU membership required the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to undertake a pre-accession strategy with prominence placed on neoliberal restructuring of Central and Eastern Europe. EU targets in the reduction of public sector deficits meant Central and Eastern European countries have drastically reduced their public spending, and the decentralisation of state controlled social policies and welfare have been particularly hard hit, creating a growing polarisation of income and wealth (Hardy, 2009).

[2] Garapich (2008) writes extensively on Polish migration to the UK and the development of the migration industry. The migration industry are profit-driven institutions and a specific sector of the service economy that encourages mobility and facilitate adaptation.

Central and Eastern European migration flows to the west have not emerged in a vacuum. Migratory movements within the EU are determined by today's global economy characterised by the expanding free market (Massey and Taylor, 2004). Central and Eastern European migration should be seen as a continuing process of broader economic integration that was evident before EU enlargement. The collapse of the Soviet Union transformed the organisation of Soviet satellite societies in which millions of workers were displaced from their jobs in previous state-run industries resulting in a wave of international migration towards the West (Massey and Taylor, 2004). As Garapich (2008, p.736) states: 'Our preoccupation with the phenomenon shows a change in perception rather than a qualitatively different reality on the ground'. Britain's ruling to allow unrestricted access of A8 countries to its labour market in fact only regularised an existing migration flow.

Structuration

Structuring Migration

Morawska's *Structuring Migration: The case of Polish Income-Seeking Travellers to the West* (2001) uses the structuration model as an explanatory framework for East to West migration. Morawska (2001) incorporates the structuration model with Massey et al. (1998) *World in Motion*. Massey et al. (1998) theoretical analysis on international migration argues that any understanding of international migration should include the analysis of macro and micro-level structures.

The theory of structuration was first introduced by Anthony Giddens in the early 1970s but is most significantly associated with his 1984 work: *The Constitution of Society*. Structuration theory accounts for the relation between two processes: the subjective powers that human agents draw upon to shape their social world through their individual actions and the objective powers of structures that human agents are themselves reshaped by. Giddens perceived an interdependency between the objective constraining social structures and the subjective power of the agency and therefore rejects dualism (Parker, 2000). Structuration theory argues that social structures are enveloped in action. Structures are not just constraining and objective to agency; the structure's very own existence is dependent upon the subjective power of agency to produce, reproduce or even change the structure (Craib, 1992, p.112). Therefore, structures can be both enabling as well as constraining.

This papers' research extends Morawska's (2001) Structuration approach to migration to an area which Morawska argues does not receive the attention it deserves. Yet it also reveals the localised effects of globalisation upon central and Eastern European countries (Morawska, 2001). The global structures of socioeconomic, political transformations and the national structure of migration policies impact upon the level and direction of migration flows. However, agents also draw upon their knowledge of schemes and their sociocultural resources which they apply to new situations.

The conception of social structures as rules and resources is one of the key elements of Structuration theory. The actors draw upon their 'practical consciousness' in order to use structures as rules and resources. The enabling and constraining power of the structures is however dependent upon the agents' power to use the structure. The power in turn is dependent upon the agent's knowledgeability about how to draw on the structures and that knowledgeability is past dependent (Parker, 2000, p.59). Rationalisation of action involves the knowledgeability of agency. This is the unnoticed taken-for-granted knowledge (Giddens, 1984). It is the kind of

knowledge that people only notice when it is disrupted. When actors are faced with a range of 'choices' they use their 'discursive consciousness' to make a decision. This involves the capacity of agents to make conscious decisions and to understand their social conditions (Stones, 2005). Agents can also draw upon their reflexive awareness to help cope with changes. There is an emphasis on the human's capacity to reflect and modify their behaviour, increasing the agents power to restructure themselves (Craib, 1992).

In Morawska's (2001) research of Polish migrants to the West it is argued that post-communist migrants to the west draw on their Soviet-style orientations and practices in order to overcome otherwise constraining external structures as a means to an end. Human agency commonly adjust to new environments and different structures by selecting habitual routine responses that have been used in past actions and often formed in a previous system of the migrants home countries. This engagement involves drawing on their intersubjective schemas which are modified and informs the migrants strategies in pursuit of their goals. Agents ability to draw on these schemas and even reshape them when faced with a new situation or environment has the consequence of reproducing the existing social structures, albeit in a slightly altered form. It is important to understand the historical, political and economic conditions in which these schemas have been formed. The schemas that migrants from former Soviet bloc countries bring with them and use in their practices can be referred to as 'so-called homo sovieticus syndrome' (Morawska, 2001, p.55). These are practices which were used to often overcome a highly controlled system in which bending the laws of official structures were widespread in the popular attitude.

Methodology

Choice of Methods

The paper does not set out to investigate a "problem" but instead has adopted an exploratory approach with very loose notions of what will be investigated. For this reason grounded theory[3] methods have been used. Grounded theory increases the flexibility of collecting and analysing qualitative data. Hence, the generated concepts which formed the base of the broader theories in the analysis of this study are 'grounded in the data itself' (Charmaz, 2006, p.2).

Semi-structured individual interviews were the main data collection tool. Each interview lasted between one and a half hours to two hours. All interviews were fully transcribed verbatim. In keeping with the grounded theory approach the interview transcriptions were fully coded. Charmaz (2006) argues that 'coding full transcriptions can bring you to a deeper level of understanding' (p.70). Coding using grounded theory meant that I did not start off by applying preconceived categories and codes to the data. Coding involved repeated interaction between myself and the data. Therefore, the codes emerged from the data.

[3] Grounded theory methods was first pioneered by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in their book: *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Glaser and Strauss (1967) main concern was '…how the discovery of theory from data - systematically obtained and analysed in social research – can be furthered' (p.1). Grounded theory methods advocated developing theories that were grounded in the research data.

Sampling

A purposive sampling rationale was employed for this research project. The population required were migrants from Central and Eastern Europe who had come to live in Britain and were currently living in London or the greater London area. A convenience sample was also used due to the difficulties in accessing the population. In all, fourteen individual interviews were conducted with eleven being used for the majority of the analysis. All participants had migrated from EU accession states since the fall of communism.

The respondents are what is commonly known as Generation Y children. They were born somewhere between the late 1970s to the mid 1980s. They grew up influenced by the Cold War era and were in school (although at a young age) when the Soviet Union collapsed. They were educated in a period of transition often trapped between a crumbling communist system and the influx of capitalism. All respondents were in higher education or had recently completed a higher education course in Britain. Many had gone to university in their home countries before migrating to the UK and came from families where both parents had attended university.

It is important to emphasise the exploratory nature of this research paper. This paper does not claim to report the representativeness of the sample, its intention is to reveal patterns, relations and particular tendencies that were present in the interviews. The sampling rationale 'aimed for theory construction not for population representativeness' (Charmaz, 2006, p.26).

Findings

Globalisation

In order to explore the micro world of the respondents it is important to understand its relationship with macro structures and particularly the collapse of the previous structures that influence actors' daily routines and practices. The expanding uncertainties of macro institutions in a 'post-communist' Eastern and Central European meant that agent's boundaries were subject to constant change. Many agents counter such situations by drawing on the previous order and creating symbols and language adapted from what is already known to them. It is crucial to acknowledge state-socialism's legacies on the culture of former satellites of the Soviet Union. This is especially so when looking at societies that have undergone a recent transition in order to understand what impact the past has had on the macro structures of those societies and therefore the micro worlds of its people. This section explores the ways the interviewees absorb and rejected the impact of the new market.

All interviewees expressed a negative attitude about the previous regime and many were keen to point out the benefits of the cradle-to-grave social welfare system that previously existed. Tatiana, age 27 and from Romania, who is a doctoral student studying in England, acknowledges that under communist' rule many people were guaranteed employment. During the interviews there was a large amount of resentment shown to the economic transformations that occurred in the respondents' post-communist countries. The effects of global integration and the macro policies of privatisation and liberalisation were expressed through narratives of inequality, polarisation of income and increasing insecurity in the workplace.

Tatiana talked about the impact the collapse of communism had had on her mother's and father's careers; both worked as researchers in geology. She tells us that the Romanian government: "*could not invest in research anymore. I mean that was not the priority; the priority was economy, in '89".* Her father, who had a very high position in Romania, was able to continue working for a

time without pay. His importance also made it difficult for him to be dismissed. However the situation was different for her mother:

> It was easier to dismiss the, you know, not top heads. So she was dismissed, she tried to find another job, it was very difficult for us in those days, because my father couldn't help…We were living off my grandfather's pension. It was terrible financially.

Andrus age 30 from Estonia, originally came to Britain to work on a farm in Kent to raise money for his universities studies back in Estonia. He spoke about the employment situation for young people in Estonia in the mid 1990s. He believed that unemployment had increased and that the youth population were the ones who suffered.

> Back home, being young, not young but the age of 17/18 for example…a decent paid job was nonexistent, I mean it was…a class divide anyway. It was a league somewhere and you know sub-levels of leagues all the way down to society and was like a huge mass of people who didn't know what to do and how to do it when the Soviet Union broke up, it was like five years' since Estonia had turned independent. I mean it was tough, quite tough at times.

Rapid exposure to the global economy led to an immediate increase in unemployment and full employment associated with the communist regime soon disappeared. (Hardy, 2009). Figures shows that in May 2004, when A8 countries had just joined the EU, youth unemployment was very high. Poland had the highest unemployment of all A8 countries, 39.8% of people under 25 years old were unemployed (Source: Compiled from Eurostat, 2005 and Eurostat, 2008). Barysch (2006, p.65) states:

> Almost one-third of the 15-24 year olds in central and Eastern Europe are jobless, twice the rate of the EU (15)...In the larger countries – Poland, Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Republics – wage levels are 20-30 percent of the West European level.

The lack of good jobs and the increase in the polarisation of wages was one of the reasons Minka, age 31, came from Poland to the UK.

> I felt that the effort I'm putting in doesn't bring me any outcome. I had a problem with finding a stable job, I had a problem with finding any job I would like, all the jobs I was doing, shop assistant, cleaner whatever, it was a very bad job, usually badly paid, extremely boring, so there was nothing to keep me there.

Tatiana spoke about the devaluation of qualifications on the job market.

> Even like now, it has come to this point where I just recently found out from a friend when I was in Romania last month, that they actually put as a requirement in the, in the job ad for, for a desk clerk in a retail shop for clothing that they should have a university degree. They put that in the ad, right! That was the criteria for getting the job, of being a salesperson in a clothing shop. And not any kind of university degree, but in economics.

Morawska (2001) argues that the internationalisation of post-communist economies has increased Consumerism and materialism. In Morawska's (2001) example of Poland, Polish migrants involved in back and forth travels would often use their incomes earned abroad to project a western capitalist lifestyle. Yet this effect of capitalism upon post-communist countries often produced a response of revulsion from many of the interviewees. Dusana, a 27 year old art student living in London came over to England from the Czech Republic to work as an au pair when she was 19 years of age. Dusana spoke at length about the shock she feels when visiting the Czech Republic and witnessing the effect of maketisation with the increasing materialism of attitudes and behaviours. She believed people's material appetite had increased after the borders were opened and the population was exposed to brand merchandising and 'Coca-Colonization'. Most astonishing were the changes Dusana witnessed in her mother's consumption behaviour.

> Even my mum now, it's really, really weird. Like my mum buys things because it's on offer, it's on sale rather than if she needs it…I guess in some ways they were in this for so long that they think well we deserve this now, it's completely twisted logic I think, they fall for it, the traps of capitalism, I guess in a way, having things, owning things. People borrow money to buy things for holidays, for new TV sets, for new sofas but before all those people would take care of the things for as long as they lasted. Obviously more goods are available because the border lines are open now and we can receive western goods. We wouldn't have any jeans before, for example, or Coca Cola and things like that. There was no McDonalds, no Burger King

The emergence of a manipulative and exploitative consumer society was expressed by Tatiana. Tatiana believes that employment in multi-nationals has created an emerging middle class earning higher incomes that had not previously existed under the communist system.

> In Romania, changes are happening, so now there is high consumerism… It's like somebody just turned the tap on and people just cannot stop spending…once people started having money and having choice… this was the thing, in communism, you had money, but you had no choice what to buy, right. Now, they gradually started having the money to buy and they buy….People start earning money and they start spending and they build all these big malls and there is a whole new mall culture just going there and being seen at the mall and buying good stuff. The people start making gifts only brands and stuff like this.

For the two male respondents from Estonia, Oiev, age 30, and Andrus, age 32, the collapse of Soviet Communism and global integration has resulted an increased informalisation and criminalisation of the economy. Both saw this increased criminalisation as mirroring western society and producing the inequalities associated with capitalism. Audrus tells us: *"You go there, it's highly developed, with skyscrapers and infrastructure and you know it's really cool and nice but deep inside it's a country in trouble."* Oiev talked about how the growth of the informal economy has resulted in the development of social class divisions similar to the west.

> In Estonia now, it's like people who had become rich as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, you know, they were involved in lots of illegal

> activities but somehow they've become rich so… now they see themselves as upper class.

Migration

By proposing the conceptualization of migration as a structuration process it's important to understand the role the EU has in shaping the flows and strategies of East to West migration. Migrants as other individuals and groups often evaluate their situations and adapt their strategies in pursuing their goals in different local and macrostructural circumstances (Morawska, 2001). It has already been acknowledge that East to West migration was in operation before the European Union's eastward enlargement. The collapse of the Soviet bloc as well as the demand for cheap labour in Western economies created a large reserve of undocumented labour migrants in the UK. Anderson et al. (2006) point out that before eastward enlargement; there were more Central and Eastern European migrants in Britain legally than illegally. However, many legal migrants were violating their visa conditions. Research by Anderson et al. (2006) revealed that twenty-two percent of the surveyed Central and Eastern European migrants in their study who were here illegally were on expired visas (p. 2). Minka, came here before EU accession and first worked as a self-employed decorator with her soon-to-be-ex-husband.

> My husband started to work as a decorator, not officially because we had no right to work, we've been on a tourist visa. So I have to come back to Poland during the summer just to break the period of being here and then come back and when I came back they gave me only two weeks' visa so actually for the period up to May, August to May, I was here illegally. My husband had six months' visa again but without the right to work.

Minka's example also corroborates research by Garapich (2008) who points out that since the 1990s, self-employment schemes have been commonly used by Poles in London. Garapich states: 'In the years 2001-2004 tens of thousands of Polish migrants obtained the so-called 'self-employed visa" (p. 741). Hence EU accession simply enabled those Central and Eastern European migrants from the A8 states to regularise their status (Anderson, et al. 2006). Indeed many of the interviewees were here before EU enlargement. Research conducted by Anderson et al. (2006) also revealed that 'Three-quarters of the respondents [were] on student visas' (p.2). This was another method used by other respondents before EU accession. Andrus' coping strategy when he first decided he wanted to stay in London was to become a student doing various English language courses.

> It was just a contract job for six months working on a farm but after we obviously went to London and find out about how you can extend your stay in UK and all that so the language college was just next logical step. So after we enrolled it was just literally go there, apply for a student Visa, find a place to live and find a job. It was like that.

Agency has the potential to transform structures in response to problems. Rather than migrants being completely constrained by visa conditions, they have the creative capacity to manipulate structural constraints and hence affect the social conditions of their existence. Migrants modify their coping strategies to changing situations. Morawska's (2001) gives the example of undocumented Polish tourist-workers in the United States. In the early 1990s Polish citizens were

granted multiple-entry visas for periods of six-month visits to the United States. Just as in Anderson et al. (2006) research, Morawska's example tells us that migrants often overstayed their visa, violating its conditions. In 1996 penalties from migrants on expired visas in the United States were increased. To avoid undocumented political status, Polish migrants simply increased their back and forth travel (Morawska, 2001, p.65).

The violation of tourist visas by Eastern European migrants dates back to the 1970s in which intra-Soviet-bloc vacations were used for large scale illegal commercial trading between the Soviet bloc countries. Furthermore, staying beyond the period of a work visa and working unofficially was also common place for Polish construction workers in Germany during the 1980s. As such this type of 'beat the system' behaviour from a previous era became a deeply habituated sociocultural "tool kit" which would become an operative resource used in international migration and everyday practices once the Soviet system collapsed (Morawska, 2001).

The incorporation of Eastern and Central Europe into the EU transformed immigration policies in the collaborating and receiving states. Again, macrostructures are used as a resource by migrants as practical evaluative knowledge of the destination countries. For Central and Eastern European migrants/immigrants already resident in Britain before May 2004, EU accession simply regularises their employment and resident status. For others in the (A8) Central and Eastern European countries, it provided a opportunity to migrate to Britain as Britain was one of only three countries to allow A8 accession states unrestricted access to its labour markets (Ryan et al. 2008).

Andrus's example supports the argument of Anderson *et al* (2006), Garapich (2008) and Ryan *et al* (2008) that becoming an EU citizen enabled someone already here to stay in London legally:

> it's OK for us, because now we're in European Union but back in 2001 for us to stay legally in the United Kingdom you will need to have either a student visa or self-employed visa so we all went for college and student visas.

In the structuration model agents actions are influenced by structures however these actions can often end up having unintended consequences and hence affecting and transforming those structures in the structured-praxis process. Therefore, a once enabling structure can easily become a constraining structure.

For Tatiana, EU accession has been both enabling and constraining. Tatiana, who has to pay her tuition fees out of her scholarship money, tells us that Romania joined the EU in 2007, the same year she came to Britain to study. This changed her fee status from international student to EU student, cutting her fees by two thirds. On EU accession, Tatiana said, *'It was exactly the right moment for me…I wouldn't have been able to be here if Romania hadn't joined.* Nonetheless, after less than a year of Bulgaria and Romania joining the EU the UK government made a decision to impose restrictions for low-skilled Bulgarian and Romanian nationals and those who are not seasonal agricultural workers. This created problems in her plans for her partner to come to live with her in Britain.

> After eleven months of open borders, they suddenly decide well, you know; let's put some regulations because this is not working. I had plans for my partner to come here…Now there is a huge complication because he had to find a job and going to school because part of the criteria for getting this permission to work was either you are a student like I was or you work in agriculture, which he didn't work in agriculture, or you have your own

> business, which he didn't have. So, he had now, in order to come here, he had to enrol in a… to become a student so that he could come and get a job.

By Eastern and Central Europeans drawing on the EU accession as structures of domination, they engage in the process of its reproduction. In pursuing their life goals, they not only reproduce East to West migration, but change it. Hence, when the new regulations were introduced for the Bulgarian and Romanian nationals, Tatiana's partner (a Romanian national) simply used the same strategies that the previous A8 respondents used before accession in 2004 – such as becoming a student in order to obtain a visa. Therefore neither the structure nor the agent was given primacy.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the European migration system is continually evolving. Migration from Central and Eastern Europe have played a key role in changing the face of intra European migration flows. EU Eastward enlargement in 2004 and 2007 has opened the borders, facilitating circular mobility. EU enlargement and the British government's decision to allow unrestricted access to its labour markets was a legal move that legitimised the already-established flows of Central and Eastern European migrants. The research in this study revealed that the majority of the respondents were in fact resident in Britain before 1st May 2004. Many of the respondent's decision to migrate to the UK had been influenced by the increasing polarisation and insecure low skilled and badly paid employment that have occurred as part of wider global integration. Therefore, an analysis of this migration necessitates an assessment of the global macro-structural socioeconomic and political transformations that respondents are subjected to.

The interviewees displayed a large amount of insight into the interaction between their individual experiences, decisions and the historical changes of their 'home' countries. The interplay of self and society were shown through the narratives of Dusana from Slovakia, Tatiana from Romania, Minka from Poland, Andrus from Estonia, and so on, as we are told about the impact the social and economic restructuring have had on their everyday life in their post-communist countries. The stories included: the increased privatisation, development of materialism, to growing polarisation of income, rising unemployment and mounting de-skilling of labour. The ability for these individuals to understand their own biography as intersected with the larger historical scene, may in part result from their high level of education. The majority of interviewees had gone to university in their home countries before migrating to the UK, or were currently studying in the UK and came from families where both parents had attended university.

The differential capacity structures have to enable and constrain human agency and the interdependency that exist between them were illustrated through the respondents wilful goals and actions and the ways in which tourist, work and student visas were used (often violated) to prolong their stay in the UK. Interviewees told of the relief that EU accession brought in making their stay less complicated. However, once EU regulations were restricted for Bulgarian and Romanian migrants, respondents once again bent visa regulations.

This research was an explorative project which attempted to extent Morawska's (2001) incorporation of the structuration model as an explanatory framework for East to West migration to the large-scale Eastern and Central European that was occurring in the UK preceding 2008-2009. This wave of migration was viewed by the popular press as resulting from EU eastward accession. EU accession certainly offers one explanation. Nevertheless, it was essentially the social and economic changes in post-communist countries which occurred as part of wider global

integration that impacted on migration flows and a factor that played a part in encouraging the respondent's emigration. Ultimately, this small scale project has turned out to be a validation of Morawska's approach. However, understanding the problems of individuals and their intersections with history and society is one of the most important intellectual jobs of sociologists. As C. Wright Mills (1959, p.3) once stated: 'Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both'. In this case the adaption of the structuration model to migration does that. And most interesting was the finding that the majority of respondents actually possess the sociological imagination.

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I am currently doing a PhD at the University of East London based in the School of Law and Social Science in which I was awarded a threeyear School of Humanities and Social Science scholarship. My PhD focuses on Polish migration to London and Nottingham and seeks to explore the reciprocal influences of migrants' home and host societal structures in shaping Polish parents educational aspirations for their children through a Bourdieuian framework. I graduated in 2008 in a BSc Sociology at London Metropolitan University and in 2009 with a MA in Sociological Research from the University of Essex.

I am one of the co-establishers and co-convenors for the BSA Bourdieu Study Group and we a currently working on an edited book on applying Bourdieu. Additionally, I'm one of the co-founders of The Postgraduate Workers Association, a grassroots campaign, which highlights issues in postgraduate education. I'm also one of the PhD representatives for LSS.

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Reviews

Bhagwati, J. (2008): *Termites in the trading system:* How preferential agreements undermine free trade. New York: Oxford University Press
ISBN-13: 978-0195331653; ISBN-10: 0195331656, $24.95 (hbk)

One of the world's famous international trade scholars attempts to explain the problems within the world trading system, well before the present world economic and financial crises. He clarified in this volume how preferential trade arrangements (PATs), are not really the right pathway towards global free trade. That they are dangerously serious steps further away from the main objective of unconditional free trade. Bhagwati is a very renowned personality, one of the staunchest and bravest opponents of PATs, especially between industrially advanced economies and developing nations. He skillfully explained how PTAs could promote very costly trade diversions, interferes with the efficient operation of global trade and permit super powers to obtain unreasonable trade concessions from impoverished nations. This book highlights the very essence of unconditional free trade, the need for a general tariff reduction and the undeniable wisdom of the principle of non-discrimination in matters of trade between nations. It reiterates the need to return to the founding principles of the General Agreement of Tariff and Trade (GATT) and the world trading principles of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Since, the rapid proliferation of PTAs seems to highlight a complete abandonment of the main objectives of multilateral trade liberalization.

Above all, this book argues powerfully that a return to unconditional free trade would be beneficial to all nations. However, his presentation of the dangers of the exceptions to the most favored clause (MFN) treatment may seem very arrogant, especially to proponents of conditional free trade. Notwithstanding, there is a general feeling that although many politicians and policy makers are clamoring for unconditional free trade, they still continue relentlessly negotiating and establishing diverse bilateral, regional and PTAs. Nevertheless, it is widely agreed that the exceptions to the MFN treatment has being the main driving force behind negotiations and the establishment of these discriminatory trade agreements. Richard Pomfret wrote in the *Economics of Regional Trade Agreements* (1997) that there is no clear distinction between sanctions and preferences, that as soon as either is introduced, MFN treatment itself becomes discriminatory in one direction or the other. Apparently this assertion is very true today.

Furthermore, in chapter 4, Bhagwati posed this question: What can we do now? This same question is apparently being asked today again, in the global trade arena; following the global financial and economic difficulties the world is currently facing. It is worth noting that the need to return to unconditional free trade is the main argument of this book. He succeeded in clearly presenting the argument that all is not lost, that there are many remedial policies that could be initiated to rectify the situation.

This is a very slim volume, as compared to other important books on trade agreements in the market. It is made up of only four chapters, with no theoretical trade concepts. However, Bhagwati recommends *Trading Blocs: Althernative approach to analyzing preferential trade agreements* (1999). A book he edited together with Krishna and Panagariya; as a book, where theoretical trade concepts could be found, for those interested in trade policies and concepts.

Interestingly, Bhagwati succeeded in stating his case in favour of a return to unconditional free trade. This book is a must read for students of international trade, trade-policymakers and anyone involve with institutions tailored for trade policy design. One cannot fail to acknowledge the fact that the prosperity of many nations, depends very much on the success of the global trading arrangements. However, the more multilaterally liberalizing these arrangements are, the more beneficial they would be. Nonetheless, over 481 PTAs have been notified to the WTO as at now. Bhagwati shines light on the fact that the incessant proliferation these trade agreements turn to undermine the very essence of the non-discriminatory element of the GATT; thereby recreating the unhappy situation of the world trade system before World War 2, when protectionism was the order of the day. Bhagwati asserts that PTAs are disguised protectionist instruments and a counterfeit free trade mechanism. Bhagwati actually regard PTAs as stumbling blocks rather than building blocks to the MTS. He estimated that the true purpose of the non-discriminatory element of the GATT treaty has nearly been destroyed by what he coined as a "spaghetti bowl" of PTAs. Bhagwati succeeded in illustrating why he described PTAs as *termites in the trading system.*

Finally, Bhagwati points out that the only way to bring sanity, consistency and stability into the world trading system and help solve our economic woes is by returning to the very underlining principles of unconditional free trade. However, Bhagwati failed to knowledge that it would be very difficult for some nations to turn their backs on already negotiated lucrative bilateral, regional or PTAs, simply to promote multilateral trading arrangements. Although it seems the notion of unconditional free trade is now almost completely forgotten, nonetheless, the nagging question that still plagues the world economy is what do we do right now, to bring some needed sanity, consistency, and stability into the global trading system, without endangering the benefits currently being enjoyed by certain nations through already negotiated bilateral, regional or PTAs? This book however, is really an eye opener, in identifying some of the major difficulties faced by multilateral trade liberalization.

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