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Political discourse cultures in Europe: Explaining the multi-segmentation of the European public sphere

Andreas Hepp, Katharina Kleinen-von Königslöw, Swantje Lingenberg, Johanna Möl-ler, Michael Brüggemann, Anke Offerhaus

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1. A research challenge: Explaining the European public sphere

When researching the transformations of the state in Europe, the possible articulation of a European public sphere remains a challenge: If we consider the transnationalization of politics as one moment of the present transformations of the state within Europe, its main manifestation is the supranational institution of the EU. Reflecting the arguments of present political theory, such transnational institutions are confronted with various problems of legitimization (cf. Habermas 2009; Scharpf 2009): Beside elections, political legitimation is mainly understood to be realized through a functioning political 'public sphere'. As a logical deduction, therefore, the EU as a supranational institution must be accompanied by a 'European public sphere' in order to be properly legitimized. However, any attempt to capture what might be called 'Europe-an public sphere' in the frame of an understanding based purely on concepts of the national public sphere must fall short: The EU as a supranational institution is not accompanied by a Europe-wide political media system and a shared language but by different forms of media regulation, various languages and only very few transnational European media (Brüggemann et al. 2009, Gerhards 2001, Hallin/Mancini 2004, Hardy 2008). Therefore, in the frame of a 'national measuring', a 'European public sphere' is automatically discussed with signs of deficits, and in an extreme position it simply does not exist (Baisnée 2007).

Within this article we want to take a more balanced view. Our starting point is that a European public sphere has to be understood as something different than a national public sphere, exactly because of its various languages, media systems and media

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organizations. Like other researchers (cf. AIM 2006, Eilders/Voltmer 2003, Kantner 2004, Preston & Metykova 2009, Trenz 2004, Vreese 2007), we share the fundamental position that we have to analyze the European public sphere as a process of transnationalizing national public spheres, rather than describing it as an independent unit. However, such a process of transnationalization is itself not linear and teleo-logical, but contradictory in various ways.

These general reflections frame our following analysis: For the period 1982 – 2008 we conducted a longitudinal newspaper-content analysis of the leading quality and tabloid newspapers in six European countries (Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Poland and United Kingdom). Based on this, we can describe several processes of transnationalization; but they remain segmented, not only nationally – something that is a logical consequence of our theoretical starting point –, but also transnationally in relation to types of newspapers. Therefore, we are confronted with a multi-segmented European public sphere. To explain these complex results, we had a close transnational look at the practices of journalists producing this newspaper media coverage. Based on newsroom observations and qualitative interviews we found different moments of what we call 'political discourse cultures'. Many moments of these political discourse cultures remain national, however, we could also identify orientations that are present transnationally, but segmented in relation to newspaper types.

This overall argument already indicates a certain understanding of 'explanation' serving as the baseline of our research. We do not use this term in the sense of a one-dimensional causal explanation, conceptualizing it as the logical derivation of an explanandum from an explanans via a general law and its further constraints (cf. Hempel/Oppenheim 1948). Rather, we are interested in explaining the multi-segmented European public sphere by the social processes through which it is constructed. Generally spoken, we use the term 'explanation' for the subsumption of an explanandum in a more general context of an explanans with the aim of understanding it more thoroughly. Therefore, in the sense of an "interpretative understanding" as outlined by Max Weber (1978: 4) we share an approach that wants to explain the multi-segmentation of the European public sphere by researching the practices of its re-articulation in their context – that is: by the 'doing' of the journalists. It is this ex-

planatory scheme we introduce in the following section, before going on to present our core research results.

2. An explanatory concept: Cultural patterns as modifiers

Although the concept of the public sphere was conceived of in the 18th century and has only been further theorized since the 1960s (Habermas 1989), within a short time it rose to become a key concept for research on political communication. Without going into too much detail, we want to define public sphere in an overall empirical orientation as a generally accessible thickening of political “forums” — networks, legitimating political decision-making and actions (Ferree et al. 2002; cf. also Nieminen 2009). Therefore, a public sphere is a space of political communication, “characterized by a higher density internally than that across borders” (Peters 2008: 218).

Such an understanding of public sphere makes it possible to theorize national public spheres within Europe as well as a transnational public sphere, without one precluding the other: While national public spheres remain as national thickenings of political communication, we can understand the European public sphere as 'layering' in a lesser intensity across these national public spheres, concretizing in processes of transnationalization. However, as already mentioned, this European public sphere remains segmented not only nationally but also in relation to certain kinds of news-paper outlets.

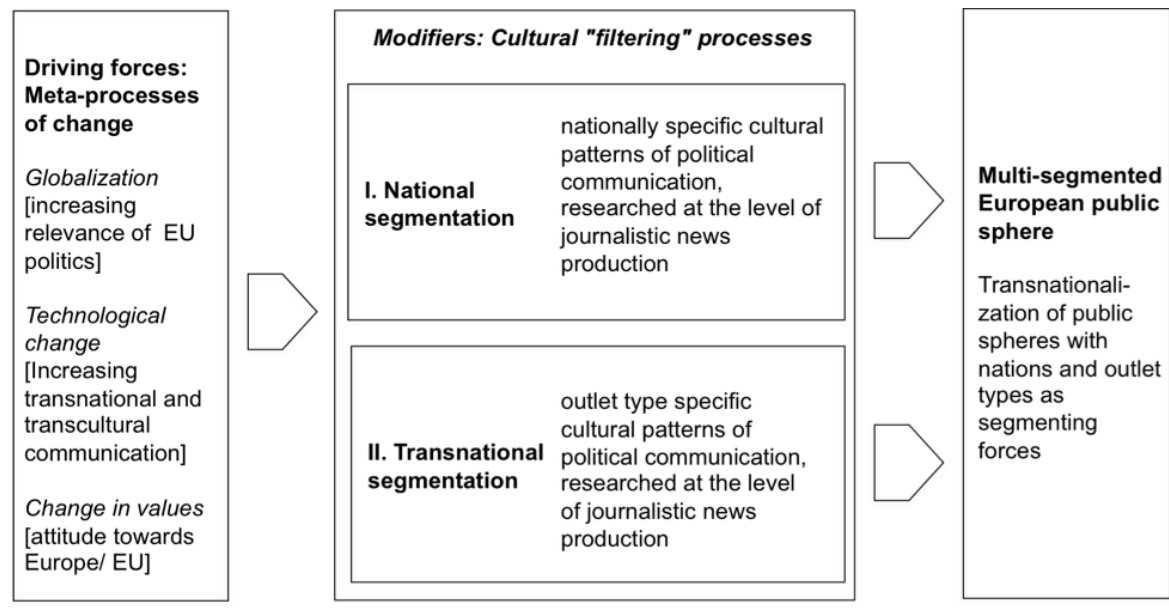
We would like to propose that this multi-segmentation of the European public sphere can best be explained culturally. An argumentation simply within political economy falls short, as newspapers across all the different researched countries are in private ownership and therefore do not exhibit any differences with respect to state, public or private ownership. Additionally, a shared transnational ownership, as is the case of the Polish Fakt and the German Bild – both part of the Springer press consortium – does not result, for example, in shared transnational coverage. Moreover, language is – though highly important – not a sufficient explanation, as national segmentation also occurs between countries with the same language (Austria and Germany). However, as Bernhard Peters (Peters 2008: 246) has argued, “public spheres have a

social and cultural foundation that extends well beyond the framework of media markets and media organizations.” In our perspective this “foundation” can be theorized as “political discourse culture” (Hepp & Wessler 2009). In core, we understand a political discourse culture as a specific thickening of cultural patterns producing, representing and appropriating political communication as well as related cultural patterns of regulation and identification. While political discourse cultures therefore constitute multi-level phenomena related to the process of mediated political meaning production in total, one moment of political discourse cultures becomes especially relevant for our explanatory task: Their re-articulation in the everyday practices of journalists. These patterns of political discourse cultures¹ are much more 'stable' than the – in some cases highly situational – political discourses on a certain topic, substantiating in their totality the communicative spaces of national and transnational public spheres.

Such an approach helps to explain the present multi-segmentation of a European public sphere. The figure visualizes the complex interrelationship between meta-processes understood as driving forces of changing political communication, cultural patterns as modifiers and the resulting multi-segmented, transnational European public sphere. On the one hand, we argue that each country in Europe is confronted with comparable meta-processes of change. That is, first, an increasing globalization (Tomlinson 1999), which is, beside others, reflected politically in the project of the European Union that concentrates more and more of the fundamental political decisions in Europe (Beck/Grande 2007). Because of this, we find a growing national relevance of European Union politics, which explains the increase in transnationally shared monitoring of EU politics. Second, a technological change is taking place, offering easier possibilities of transnational and transcultural communication via different satellite technologies and digital media (Thussu 2006; Hepp 2008). These technological conditions affect any transnationalization of national public spheres. Finally, a change in values in relation to political and social attitudes occurs with a shared tendency to individualization across Europe (Inglehart 1997; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2007).

¹ The term pattern tries to express the idea that we do not analyze just the single thinking, discourse or practice of the journalists, but typify, based on an analysis of different single phenomena, their typical 'way' of thinking, discourse or doing in a certain cultural context that is produced by this (Hepp 2009: 25).

Figure 1: Explaining the Multi-Segmented European Public Sphere



These meta-processes do not automatically compel a homogeneous transnational communicative space. Our research outcomes display a double modifier: First, we found nation-specific differences in the practices of journalists – that is: national cultural patterns of political communication. Second, we are confronted transnationally with differences in types of newspapers – that is: outlet-related cultural patterns of political communication. These different kinds of modifiers “filter” the meta-processes of change nationally as well as transnationally and they subsequently constitute a multi-segmented European public sphere. While the first kind of filtering process – rooted in the relative stability of national patterns of political communication – is described in other research too (cf. for example Adam 2007, Pfetsch 2001), the second kind of filtering process has been stated more as a general possibility in relation to a transnational and transcultural professionalism in journalism (cf. Mancini 2007), but has not been researched in detail.

However, it would be a misunderstanding to reduce this explanatory approach to the idea that the researched cultural patterns of political communication would be something 'just there', that can be reduced to an intervening variable: As Bruno Latour (2007: 35) outlined, there are no "social inertia" of a culture beyond the researched field. In everyday thinking, discourse and practices, patterns of culture are continuously re-articulated — and only in this ongoing process of their 'doing' might they

have a segmenting status. In other words: In the sense of ethnomethodology (Garfinkel 1967) we do not find a cultural explanation 'behind' but in the everyday thinking, discourse and practices. This said, we can characterize our research so far as being part of the cultural studies (or cultural analysis) tradition, as we understand culture not as a dependent variable explaining something else but focus in our research on the everyday re-articulation of culture itself (Hall 1997: 220) and through this arrive at an explanatory understanding of the multi-segmentation of the European public sphere.

We can break these general reflections down to a double research question on which our research was oriented. First, how can we describe the European public sphere on the level of media contents in its multi-segmentation? Second, how can we explain in an understanding way these forms of multi-segmentation by the re-articulation of cultural patterns in the everyday doing of the journalists? While the first research question will be answered in the next section, the second one is the subject of the following two.

3. A multi-segmented phenomena: The 'European public sphere'

In respect to our outlined theoretical approach, we investigated the articulation of a European public sphere empirically across three dimensions of the transnationalization of national public spheres:²

- 1. Vertical dimension, in the case of the European public sphere, a shared monitoring of EU politics.**
- 2. Horizontal dimension, which means a shared discussion about each other across national borders.**
- 3. Collective identification, the expression of a shared sense of belonging, for example through European we-references.**

² Each of the three dimensions was analysed through two indicators, for a more thorough discussion of the methods, see Wessler et al. (2008), Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010) and Hepp et al. (2012).

Based on these considerations we have conducted content analyses of the most important “quality” and “tabloid” newspapers in six European countries (Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Poland) over two constructed weeks in the years 1982, 1989, 1996, 2003 and 2008.³ We focus on the press because quality newspapers can be considered as containing the most transnationalized media content, much more, for instance, than television news (Groothues 2004; Kevin 2003), while tabloids can be understood as their opposite in this aspect. Additionally, a focus on print media makes historical content analysis possible. The main focus of our content analysis was on discursive articles in the political section of the newspapers.

I. Vertical Europeanization: An increasing interest in Brussels until 2003

All six countries and all newspapers in our analysis display some trend of vertical Europeanization, i.e. of an increasing discussion of EU institutions and EU politics. However, this pattern clearly differs between the two types of newspapers: In the quality papers, vertical Europeanization shows itself both in an increasing mentioning of EU institutions and in a growing focus on EU politics, even though by 2008 this development had stagnated (Germany, Poland) or even been reversed (Great Britain, France, Denmark and Austria). In contrast, in the tabloid papers EU politics as the main topic of debate appear to be a lost cause; the share of articles focusing on EU politics peaked in 1996 at a mere two percent. The role of the EU is mostly limited to the mentioning of EU institutions in the discussion of national politics, and even this happens a lot less than in the quality press (on average only in four percent of all articles, compared to 21 percent in the quality press). Still this role of EU institutions has increased since 1982 and continues to grow even in 2008 when most of the quality papers have already lost interest in EU institutions.

³ Our content analysis newspaper sample consists of: Austria: Die Presse, Neue Kronen Zeitung; Denmark: Politiken, Ekstra Bladet; Germany: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, BILD; France: Le Monde, Le Parisien/Aujourd’hui en France; Great Britain: The Times, The Sun; Poland: Gazeta Wyborcza, Super Express.

II. Horizontal Europeanization: An intense, but stable interest in the topics and opinions of European neighbours

In contrast, the interest in the affairs and opinions of the neighbouring European countries remains stable over time for most of the analyzed newspapers. While the shares of articles discussing other EU countries or quoting speakers from EU countries may fluctuate somewhat, no general trend emerges. Nevertheless, the EU member states play an important role in national public debates, in the quality papers on average 18 percent of the articles discuss other EU countries. Somewhat surprisingly, the interest is almost as high in the tabloid press (15 percent), however, a closer look at the concrete topics reveals that here the tabloids are even less interested in politics than usual: Foreign VIPs, catastrophes or weird stories set in foreign countries are the focus of these articles. The gap between the two newspaper types is significantly larger where the cited speakers are concerned; in the quality press speakers from other EU countries make up 16 percent of the debate (while half of the cited speakers have national origins). In the tabloids, national speakers completely dominate the public discussion (at almost 80 percent of all cited speakers), and the European speakers are relegated to the sidelines (8 percent of all cited speakers). An important exception displaying a clear trend of horizontal Europeanization is Poland: Both Polish newspapers have become more open for the concerns and voices of their (West-)European neighbours since 1989, even though the trend levelled off in 2008.

III. Collective Identification: Tentative glimpses of a collective European identity

In the third dimension, the differences between the types of newspapers are the most striking. In the quality press, collective identification with Europe appears to grow both in the use of the more distant "The Europeans" and in the more evocative "We Europeans". Between 1982 and 2008 the importance of "The Europeans" as a collective has doubled from four to eight percent, and while direct identification as "We Europeans" peaked in 2003 at five percent, it nevertheless remained stronger in 2008 than in the preceding decades. At the same time in the tabloids, collectives such as "The Germans" and "The Europeans" are used so sparingly that no meaningful inter-

pretation is possible. But even among the more prevalent we-identifications, “We Europeans” never reaches a frequency to be noticeable to tabloid readers, less than half a percent of all we-phrases in tabloids refer to the European identity.

IV. Patterns of Europeanization specific to certain countries and types of newspapers

The following diagram provides a useful visualization of the two key results of our content analyses. It shows the relative position of each newspaper on two dimensions of Europeanization, vertical and horizontal Europeanization.⁴

Figure 2: Level of vertical and horizontal Europeanization for quality and tabloid newspapers

Erforderliche Parameter fehlen oder sind falsch.

Basis: Average deviation from mean for both indicators of vertical Europeanization (visibility of EU institutions/focus on EU politics) or horizontal Europeanization (focus on other EU countries/extended quotations of speakers from other EU countries).

Legend: Tabloids are in italics, dotted lines connect newspapers from the same country.

As we can see, quality and tabloid papers are clearly separated by their respective level of vertical Europeanization: The French Le Monde achieves by far the highest score; it is followed at some distance by the Austrian Die Presse, and then finally the remaining four quality papers from Germany, Great Britain, Denmark and Poland. By contrast the tabloids all show a very similar level of interest (or disinterest) in EU affairs.

⁴ It was determined by calculating, first, how much each newspaper deviates from the mean across all analyzed newspapers for the whole time-period (1982-2008) for a specific indicator. Then the mean of the two indicators for each dimension of Europeanization was taken for each newspaper. For example, the share of articles monitoring EU institutions in Die Presse is ten percent higher than the mean across all newspapers (13 percent), the share of articles focusing on EU politics 0.3 percent higher than the mean (three percent). Taking the average of both indicators for the dimension vertical Europeanization, Die Presse is thus five percent above the mean for all newspapers. The dimension of collective identification was excluded due to the low number of cases for the tabloid newspapers.

On the dimension of horizontal Europeanization, however, similarities between the quality and tabloid newspapers of each country become apparent: Austrian papers, for example, are the most interested in their European neighbours, the Austrian tabloid Kronen Zeitung even achieves a higher level of horizontal Europeanization than the quality papers from Denmark, France, Poland and Great Britain. Runner-up for both media types are the German papers, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and Bild. At the other end of the scale, not only is the British The Times the most parochial of all quality papers,⁵ in a similar manner the British tabloid The Sun also shows the least interest in the concerns of its European neighbours.

Thus the complex results of our analysis can best be condensed using the already mentioned concept of a multi-segmented European public sphere: Across all countries a European public sphere exists in the sense of a transnational shared monitoring of EU politics. However, this remains segmented in relation to nations (first the vertical monitoring of EU politics carries on being in the frame of a national reporting, second the horizontal discussion does not increase) as well as segmented in relation to the type of newspaper (the quality press is much more Europeanized than the tabloid press).

4. National Segmentation: Journalistic practices of “Nationalization”

In order to answer our second research question – that is to gain a grasp on these forms of multi-segmentation by the re-articulation of cultural patterns in the everyday doing of the journalists – we conducted qualitative newsroom studies in our six researched European countries aiming at the description of cultural patterns in the production of EU and European foreign news in relation to both national and transnational commonalities. The studies were undertaken synchronously in autumn 2008 and consisted of interviews with EU and foreign news editors, chief editors and foreign correspondents of 23 quality, tabloid and regional papers,⁶ participatory obser-

⁵ See also Brüggemann & Kleinen-von Königslöw 2009: 31.

⁶ Our newsroom newspaper sample consists of: Austria: Die Presse, Der Standard, Kleine Zeitung, Neue Kronen Zeitung; Denmark: Politiken, Berlingske Tidende, Jyske Vestkysten, Ekstra Bladet; Germany: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung,

variations of two newsrooms per country over three to five work days and the research diaries of each researcher (cf. Quandt 2008 for reflecting the approach of news room observation, Hannerz 2004 for a general ethnographic approach, in his case on for-foreign correspondents). This material was coded following Grounded Theory methodology and analyzed from a transcultural perspective (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Hepp 2009). The aim was to discover national specifics by country-specific comparison and, moreover, to explore transnational patterns of journalistic news production pointing to outlet type specific cultural forms.

With respect to our second research question, we first of all focused on patterns of nationalization for of a double reason: First, this is one main area of constructing 'the nation' in journalist practices. Second, as the self-construction of the nation differs we can also expect here substantial national differences. 'Nationalization' as a set of journalistic practices describes the articulation of news content in a way that a reader living in a given country will be able to relate it to his own national experiences. Nationalization thus refers to journalistic practices of embedding foreign issues in the 'context' of one's own nation – and by this: the ongoing re-articulation of this context. In order to identify nationalization practices in our data collected in the newsroom studies, especially the following categories developed in our open coding process were relevant: the preferred topics of the journalists as well as their ways of constructing the importance of reporting on EU, the importance of reporting on EU countries and the importance of reporting on other foreign news. By a second level "axial coding" (Strauss/Corbin 1998: 123) of the sections of our interview and observation data coded by the categories above, we could identify four patterns of nationalization in the journalists' practices: 'national embedding', 'transnational contextualization', 'national hierarchization' and 'transnational ritualization'. Although these are common to all countries, there are national differences in the specific way of their articulation and by that also how nationality is articulated.

BILD; France: Le Monde, Le Figaro, Ouest France, Le Parisien/Aujourd'hui en France; Great Britain: The Times, Manchester Evening News, Daily Express; Poland: Gazeta Wyborcza, Rzeczpospolita, Dziennik Zachodni, Fakt.

I. National embedding: Relating Europe and the world back to the nation

The journalistic practices of national embedding depicts relating Europe and the world back to national contexts and pointing out the relevance and consequences of foreign events to one's own nation. Hence, journalists locate foreign news in national contexts by linking them to national political, social or economic events and developments as well as to experiences and problems the readers feel familiar with in their given national contexts and lifeworlds. In some cases journalists perceive the national relevance of foreign news as 'natural', so that the national relevance only needs to be explained (which is of course also a form of construction). In other cases journalists construct the national link in their perspective purposefully. For example, a French journalist states: "EU politics have a direct impact on French politics and social developments. [...] It's our task to explain how this influence works." (EU-editor, Le Monde, F) And a Danish journalist considers a way to construct the link to one's own nation by interviewing a "Danish policeman [...] working in Kabul" (editor-in-chief, Politiken, DK) in order to make the EU's Afghanistan policy accessible for Danish readers.

Focusing on the national specificities in journalists' practices, we find journalists in Austria repeatedly pointing out that they link EU and foreign news not only to national but also to regional and local contexts. Moreover, Austrian journalists tend to construct historical links, especially when reporting about Eastern European neighbour countries with which Austria shares a common history. Accordingly, one of the Austrian interviewees states that the staff correspondent in Zagreb is regarded as "a tradition, because the Eastern European region is of high importance for us." (political editor, Kleine Zeitung, A) Similarly, we find historical embeddings characterizing journalists' practices in Germany. However, historical references are primarily related to the experience of Nazism and World War II. Typical of Danish journalists' practices is the fact that national embedding plays a pivotal role. The obvious relevance of foreign issues for national contexts often serves as a selection criterion: "Regarding the EU there is some kind of self-censorship. [...] The international agenda is not easy to put across to the readers. They usually want something concretely related to Danish political topics." (foreign news editor, Berlingske Tidende, DK) Like in Austria and Germany, journalists' practices in France are characterized by the doing of historical references. These mainly refer to French colonialism, especially when reporting

about topics related to North Africa. The journalists stress that there are not only many Africans living in France but that there also exists a certain sense of historical responsibility. Also specific for France is the fact that journalists often make comparative references when reporting about European countries: “Important for us is whether the story from abroad can serve as an example for us in France, so that we can learn from it.” (editor-in-chief, Le Parisien, F) In Great Britain, journalists tend to construct humorous-satiric links – especially when reporting about EU-neighbour countries. In doing so, the British’s distanced attitude towards the EU is being reflected in a rather ‘light-hearted’ manner. Similar to Denmark, in Poland national embedding plays a central role in journalists’ practices. Moreover, Polish journalists construct historical references to the national experience of Communism and World War II. For example, one of the interviewees states to have introduced the German chancellor-candidate Steinmeier as “pro-Russian” presuming that this would “attract interest among Polish readers” (foreign news editor, Dzennik Zachodni, PL) due to the historical associations with Polish sufferings following the German-Russian Alliance in World War II.

II. Transnational contextualization: Europe and the world as a horizon of the nation

Transnational contextualization means using 'the transnational' (including Europe and the world) as a context of the nation by accentuating the importance of national events for the transnational context. Transnational contextualization aims at reporting the national against a transnational background and thereby making the national easier to understand. The journalistic practice of locating the national in the transnational can either be realized by explicit or implicit links. More precisely, national events can be contextualized explicitly in a transnational context, for example by stressing the national contribution to certain transnational political developments. Or, transnational developments can be reported with implicit links to the own nation, so that the national relevance manifests itself only in the fact that the transnational is reported in a national political discourse.

In Austria, journalists often realize transnational contextualization without explicit links to national contexts on the grounds that foreign news comprises “issues that are

always attractive” (EU-editor, Die Presse, A). Similarly, in Germany transnational contextualization without direct links to the own nation plays an important role in journalists’ practices. Here, the interviewed journalists perceive the own nation as already being a self-evident part of transnational contexts, so that no explicit emphasis needs to be put on the own nation’s contribution. Journalists in Denmark also employ implicit links to national events when reporting about transnational developments. However, in contrast to Austria and Germany, the interviewed Danish journalists do not consider their own nation as a natural part of the transnational. On the contrary, by not explicitly locating the own nation in transnational contexts, Danish journalists aim at taking up a distanced position. In France the journalistic practice of transnational contextualization is characterized by explicit links to national contexts. Hence, French journalists tend to emphasize the own nation’s role in transnational frameworks, and at the same time they perceive national politics to be increasingly difficult to understand without referring to the transnational: “It is clear that all considerations, all debates, all reforms in France constitute an echo of what is going on in other countries.” (EU-editor, Le Monde, F) Similar to Austria and Germany, journalists’ practices in Great Britain are characterized by implicit links to national contexts. Hence, transnational politics are often reported without explicitly stressing the inherent British role. As the interviewees state, they regard international news as a quality feature which makes readers feel like being part of a transnational community. In Poland we find strong explicit references to national contexts when reporting on transnational developments. Accordingly, Polish journalists tend to emphasize the Polish role in transnational contexts.

In all, the distinction between explicit and implicit links to national contexts in journalists’ practices in reporting transnational developments helps to arrive at a better understanding of differences in national patterns. Whereas the use of implicit links in Austrian and German journalists’ practices points to an openness towards Europe and the world as well as an unproblematic self-positioning in transnational contexts, in Denmark the absence of explicit links points to some kind of dissociation of the own nation from transnational contexts. In France and Poland, however, we find journalists locating the own nation explicitly in transnational contexts. Whereas French journalists rather aim at portraying the own nation as being part of the trans-

national, Polish journalists aim at emphasizing the Polish role and impetus in trans-national contexts.

III. National hierarchization: Prioritizing the nation over Europe and the world

The journalistic practice of hierarchization illustrates how more importance is placed on the own nation than on Europe and the world. Hierarchization points to the relevance journalists attribute to national and foreign news within their everyday routines. Our analyses indicate that throughout the whole sample journalists tend to consider national matters more important than the news from abroad. Nevertheless, the intensity of national hierarchization and the order of second priorities (Europe or the world) in journalists' perceptions and practices varies.

In Austria, for example, national hierarchization is quite moderate in journalistic practices, that is to say journalists consider foreign news nearly as important as national news. Moreover, Austrian journalists tend to prioritize Europe over the world on the grounds that news from Brussels is not really “foreign politics [...], but the extension of national politics” (editor-in-chief, Kleine Zeitung, A). Equally, the practices of German journalists are characterized by rather moderate national hierarchization and a prioritization of Europe over other foreign matters. In Denmark, by contrast, journalists' practices are characterized by an intense national hierarchization. Furthermore, European issues are ranked lower than other foreign news: “The more international news, the less EU-news – seen over the last six years” (editor-in-chief, Ekstra Blad-ed, DK). In France, journalists' practices are marked by national hierarchization. However, similar to Austria and Germany French journalists tend to rank European issues higher than other foreign issues. In Great Britain and Poland national hierarchization is rather intense in journalists' daily routines. Moreover, in both countries journalists rank news from Europe lower than other foreign news – for example news from the USA or Russia.

Summing up, the Austrian and German journalistic practices are marked by a rather moderate national hierarchization. In Denmark, Great Britain and Poland, by contrast, journalists' practices are characterized by rather intense national hierarchization. Re-

garding second priorities in journalists' practices, our analyses show that in Germany, France and Austria European issues rank in front of other foreign news, whereas in Denmark, Great Britain and Poland other foreign matters rank in front of Europe.

IV. Transnational ritualization: Europe as an unproblematic part of the nation

Transnational ritualization (Veralltäglicung) as part of journalistic practice means in the Weberian (1978) sense to integrate 'Europe' and 'the world' into the everyday journalistic routines, resulting in a 'permeation' of EU-related content that can no longer be categorized as either foreign, economic or national news.⁷ In other words: Europe becomes an unproblematic part of journalists' daily practices, implying that European issues are treated by journalists in evermore newspaper resorts. In our newsroom studies we find that transnational ritualization mainly occurs with regard to European, not with other foreign, issues.

Aggregating our findings, one can say that transnational ritualization, especially the ritualization of European issues, is rather advanced in journalists' practices in Austria, Germany and France. For example, one of the French interviewees states that European issues have literally become a 'natural part' of his daily routines, so much so that he does not even think about it any more: "Everyday we talk about Europe. [...] It's part of an actuality of proximity." (editor-in-chief, Le Monde, F) Similarly, an Austrian journalist states: "The question is whether to publish a European topic in the economic or the EU-section, but not whether to publish it at all." (EU-editor, Die Presse, A) In Denmark and Poland, however, transnational ritualization is only partially present in journalists' practices. Hence, journalists underline an increasing importance of Europe in their practices, but at the same time Europe is not unproblematic or completely integrated in their routines. Accordingly, reporting on Europe is regarded as a duty: "We report many EU issues only because we have to – as a quality paper." (GB-correspondent, Berlingske Tidende, DK) Journalists' practices in Great Britain depict a special case: there is no transnational European ritualization to be found, as journalists do not regard Europe as self-evident part of daily routines. Ac-

⁷ In this sense the term 'ritualization' might be misleading if one understands it as 'becoming a ritual' in the narrow sense of this word (Turner 1995). However, as 'ritualization' is the established translation of Veralltäglicung in the Weberian sense we use this word for practical reasons.

cordingly, one of the British interviewees points out that he needs to fight for the inclusion of European and other foreign coverage in his newspaper: “I almost feel like a political activist for the foreign news resort.” (editor-in-chief, The Times, GB)

Table 1: Country-specific nationalization practices

| | A | D | DK | F | GB | PL |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| National embedding | regional embedding historical embedding (Eastern Europe) | historical embedding, partly (national socialism) | national embedding as selection criterion | comparative embedding (EU-neighbors) historical embedding (colonialism) | humorous-satiric embedding (EU-neighbors) | historical embedding (communism/national socialism) |
| Trans-national contextualisation | implicit national reference (transnationalisation) | implicit national reference (transnationalisation) | implicit national reference (dissociation/nationalisation) | explicit national reference (as part of the transnational) | implicit national reference (as part of the transnational) | explicit national reference (accentuating national role) |
| National hierarchisation | nation, Europe, world | nation, Europe, world | nation, world, Europe | nation, Europe, world | nation, world, Europe | nation, world, Europe |
| Trans-national ritualization | advanced | advanced | partially present | advanced | not present | partially present |

By this analysis of journalists’ interviews and observation protocols we can give a first answer to our second research question on the re-articulation of cultural patterns as part of the journalists everyday doing: Basically, we see an ongoing re-articulation of the nation as the reference point of the journalists coverage practices and in that again national differences how this takes place (see table 1). This makes the specificity of the national segmentation of a European public sphere more concrete. However, within this nationalization of the journalists we also find transnational moments: First, we can consider nationalization itself as a European wide set of practices. But moreover we identified as part of this a practice of the Veralltäglicung (ritualization) of Europe. While the articulation of the nation remains the main point of the journal-

Hepp, Andreas; Kleinen-v. KönigsLöw, Katharina; Lingenberg, Swantje; Möller, Johanna; Brüggemann, Michael; Offerhaus, Anke (2015): Cultures of Political Discourse in Europe. Explaining Multiple Segmentation in the European Public Sphere. In Heinz Rothgang, Steffen Schneider (Eds.): State Transformations in OECD Countries. Dimensions, Driving Forces and Trajectories. Basingstoke / New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 145–166. Available online at https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137012425_8.

ists doing, it becomes nevertheless a European nation marked and influenced by the European Union.

5. Transnational Segmentation: Addressing audiences

With relation to our second research question we also have to have in mind that besides national differences in patterns of nationalization, journalistic practices differ among newspaper types. Our analyses allowed the typification of different kinds of newspapers, distinguished by their way of addressing imagined audiences in the journalists' practices. In order to shed light on the second segmentation of the European public sphere, the outlet-type specific segmentation, we analyzed our empirical material with regard to transnationally existing similarities in journalistic production processes. The four types of addressing publics that we found in the material move beyond the simplifying distinction of quality and tabloid newspapers. Our analysis again relies on a number of categories developed in an open coding process in the sense of Grounded Theory: The categories journalistic reader's image, journalistic self-conception, importance of/attitude towards EU, importance EU-countries as well as nationalization practices were crucial in order to clarify the journalist's rationale behind their EU and foreign news coverage, having imagined audiences in mind. This becomes concrete in four types of constructing and therefore addressing the audience in the daily practice: the analyst, the ambassador⁸, the reporter and the caterer.

I. The analyst

As analyst we can characterize in direction the journalists typical for Die Presse (A), Der Standard (A), FAZ (D), SZ (D), Le Monde (F), Le Figaro (F), Rzeczpospolita (PL) and – in part – The Times (GB). These journalists' practices highlight the significance of an ambitious, extensive and in-depth analysis of political processes. They consider

⁸ The term “ambassador” was first introduced by Heikkilä & Kunelius 2006. However, they theorize them in a different way than we do.

a differentiated, profound and diverse EU and foreign coverage as a key requirement within their daily journalistic routine. The reader's images of the analysts can be summed up by the term 'well educated elite'. As one journalist says: "we have an educational mandate, at least towards the elites" (EU-correspondent, FAZ, D). It is thus not surprising that analysts conceive their professional specialization as well as their own in-depth interest as significant: They want to 'sell' arguments and therefore underpin the importance of constantly keeping track of relevant and complex processes, presenting manifold perspectives and background information. Structural restraints such as limited economic resources (e.g. little space, little time) as well as limitations in the reader's knowledge of EU and foreign affairs seem to have no relevant impact on this self-conception. In contrast, he underlines the necessity of even higher demands.

Journalists of the type "Analyst" describe their daily working routines with regard to EU and foreign affairs coverage by clearly distancing themselves from other journalists who rank news values such as topicality and sensationalism first. In total, EU and foreign affairs are characterized as "extremely important" and "essential" (London-correspondent, The Times, GB). Both Europe and the world are perceived as natural surroundings in which relevant political action and communication take place. Transnational political processes such as globalization or the European integration are objects of regular discussion and coverage. It is thus not surprising that analysts mainly refer to the nationalization practices of transnational ritualization and contextualization. As they perceive the transnational political environment as a relevant and natural arena, it is merely a logical consequence to integrate transnational references into daily production routines. Analysts mainly realize transnational contextualization in an implicit manner – references to national frameworks somehow merge into an integrative perspective on transnational political processes.

II. The ambassador

As ambassador we can typify journalists in the newsrooms of Kleine Zeitung (A), Politiken (DK), Ouest France (F), Le Parisien (F) and Gazeta Wyborcza (PL). The ambassador's way of addressing audiences can be characterized by a pedagogical

approach. Similar to the analysts, journalists of the ambassador type aim at discussing political processes and favour background analyses rather than recency and sensationalism. Their specific profile, however, relates to the way that they highlight the importance of being close to the reader's, often nationally and locally framed, everyday life. The ambassador's readers' image integrates people from all societal strata – in other words: everyman. One of the French journalists puts it as follows: “In comparison to Le Monde [...] we admittedly address a readership somehow more at the grass-root level” (editor, Le Parisien, F), however an Austrian adds that coverage is also directed towards the “elite stratum” (editor-in-chief, Kleine Zeitung, A).

Coping with the challenge of creating a comprehensible coverage on EU and foreign affairs issues is typical for the ambassador's journalistic approach. The ambassador approaches his readers by trying to explain and facilitating the understanding of political processes within transnational political contexts: “We simply want the people to understand what we report on. [...] So, it's in a very pedagogical manner that we try to make the world more comprehensible.” (EU and foreign editor, Le Parisien, F). This specific mandate becomes apparent in the fact that they promote a constructive, sometimes even enthusiastic image of the EU and the idea of European integration. The ambassador aims at meeting with the reader's need of recognizing the relevance of a respective story in his everyday life. In this rather euphoric approach, the ambassador doesn't necessarily feel obliged to follow the news agenda. He tends to report on issues meeting with his pedagogical mission (e.g. the building of a European civil society) towards readers. With regard to nationalization practices, journalists of the ambassador type on the one hand thus put strong emphasis on national embedding. On the other hand, they practice a European hierarchization, i.e. they tend to favor articles on European topics over coverage concerning the rest of the world.

III. The caterer

A third journalistic type of addressing audiences is the caterer, which is characteristic mainly for the Kronen Zeitung (A), BILD (D), Ekstra Bladet (DK), Daily Express (GB), Fakt (PL) and – in part – The Times (GB). His main characteristic is to put strong emphasis on delivering readers' expectations – including reporting on surprising and

shocking topics as well as on topics easily relatable to the everyday lives of people at the bottom of the social scale. The caterer thus imagines his reader as someone “whose hand we need to take” (EU and political editor, BILD, D). Especially with regard to EU-related topics, the caterer addresses those “who are maybe not in favour of the EU, who are fighting a losing battle against constraining life conditions” (editor-in-chief, Fakt, PL). Especially with regard to research and writing routines for EU and foreign affair topics it is specific for this type to be mainly concerned with being the ‘little man’s voice’. He neither aims at presenting ambitious analyses of political processes nor at approaching readers pedagogically. The question of whether and how he could realize coverage from the life perspective of the reader thus becoming the little man’s voice is an integrative part of the caterer’s self-conception. The respective journalist’s personal evaluation of the importance of the EU takes a backseat compared to this service orientation.

Reporting on the EU and other European countries seems to be of significantly lower relevance than reporting on nationally relevant issues; in some cases it even does not play a role at all. In this respect, journalists heavily refer to structural constraints, such as limited space, personal resources and time. Beyond that the caterer is characterized by a hypocritical attitude towards the EU: on the one hand journalists of this type present themselves constantly as being in favour of the EU, on the other hand they feel obliged to provide their readers with sceptical, sometimes negative and in many cases sensationalistic coverage in this area. Against the background of all these characteristics it seems quite plausible that journalists of the caterer type put strong emphasis on the journalistic practices of national embedding and national hierarchization which seems to result from powerful reader’s images: the ‘simple reader’ would only consider those issues as relevant which he is able to relate to a political context he is able to understand and which he lives in – the national.

IV. The reporter

There is a fourth and last type of addressing audiences that is best characterized by the term reporter. This type is dominant among journalists working in the newsrooms of WAZ (D), Berlingske Tidende (DK), Jyske Vestkysten (DK) and Dziennik Zachodni

(PL). While describing his daily working routines this type strongly puts forward a pragmatic perspective presenting himself as being subject to structural constraints, such as resource restrictions in searching background information on EU and foreign news issues or writing articles. The reporter imagines an average citizen without any special demands as being representative for his audience: “people without especially high education” (journalist, Dziennik Zachodni, PL). From a reporter’s perspective this reader expects an overview on crucial political events rather than ambitious in-depth analysis of processes. His main task thus is to present issues in a manner people can easily relate to the local and national context they are experiencing daily life in. Doing so, journalists of this type underpin the necessity of being ‘objective’ and thus distance themselves from a moralizing way of reporting. Altogether, he is in fa-vor of stories “providing the people with a good experience“ (editor, Jyske Vestkysten, DK).

Reporter type journalists assess their EU attitude as supportive while avoiding any explicit enthusiastic or sceptical commitment with regard to this area. This attitude again results from their specific reader orientation: “In sum, we have to be pragmatic and follow a pro-European line [...] People are not stupid and understand what are the obvious advantages resulting from the European development” (editor, Dziennik Zachodni, PL). This statement indicates that coverage on the EU countries has an average importance for the reporter – and less even in case of reporting on other European countries. Important and relevant events are covered mainly if they are obviously relatable to reader’s (imagined) needs. It has thus become clear that journalists of the reporter type put forward strong references to the journalistic practice of national embedding. Their pragmatic perspective, mainly resulting from economic constraints, meets with their reader’s image of an average citizen who is mainly interested in localizing news immediately within his personal regional and national context.

Table 2: Types of addressing audiences

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|
| | Analyst | Ambassador | Caterer | Reporter |
| Journalistic readers images | well educated citizen | elite everyman | little man | average citizen |

| Journalistic self-conception | extensive analysis of political processes | pedagogic treatment of political processes | little man's voice | pragmatic view of political processes |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Importance of/attitude towards EU | EU as relevant framework to be discussed critically | EU as complex project in need of support and explanation | hypocritical: Pro European position/sensationalistic critique | EU as a duty, accepted as everyday reality |
| Importance EU-countries and world | Europe and world as self-evident framework | Europe as illustrational moment for the national | Europe as marginal boulevard resource | Europe as marginal news resource |
| Practices of nationalization | transnational contextualization, transnational ritualization | national embedding, European hierarchization | national embedding, national hierarchization | national and regional embedding |

In order to explain the outlet-type specific segmentation, we argued in favour of differentiating transnationally existing types of addressing audiences as opposed to a rather simplifying distinction of quality and tabloid newspapers. Journalistic types of addressing audiences have thus been described as patterns of profiling with regard to imagined readers and related journalistic self-conceptions (table 2). Relating types of addressing audiences back to specific newspapers shows that types of addressing appear in different media outlet contexts. It is not that surprising that the analyst type is mainly present in quality papers; the caterer typically appears in tabloids, the reporter in regional newspaper frameworks. Interestingly, the ambassador type over-comes any typical attribution, as he appears in all three types — quality, regional and tabloid papers.

6. Explaining multi-segmentation: Political discourse cultures in Europe

Relating our empirical analyses back to our more general reflections, we realized how far patterns of “nationalization” and “addressing” in journalistic practice help to explain in an understanding way why we are confronted with a multi-segmented European public sphere: On the one hand we are confronted with the more or less stable national patterns in the journalists' doing, on the other hand we find patterns in relation to certain types of outlets which concretize especially in the way of addressing audiences. While the first kind of patterns explains the more or less stable national segmentation of articulating a European public sphere, the latter explains that there is additionally a transnational segmentation. As argued in the beginning, these kinds of differences are best understood as manifestations of certain 'political dis-

course cultures': thickening of cultural patterns along which the discourses of political communication are produced by the journalists. Reflecting our empirical research in such a more general frame, we can argue that political discourse cultures therefore are relevant at least in threefold respect.

First, our analysis substantiates the relative stability of national political discourse cultures, especially in relation to the journalists' practices of nationalization. It is not only the case that nation itself is a main reference point of the journalists' work. Additionally, we find across the researched 'nations' differences in the doing of this nationalization. Therefore, the journalists basically act as part of their national political discourse cultures, and by this re-articulate these cultures continuously.

Second, we realize moments of more outlet-type related political discourse cultures. Our main point is that we have across national political discourse cultures specific moments of political discourse cultures that are more related to the 'type' of newspaper than the nation of its origin. This helps to understand the segmentation of the European public sphere across the countries. These transnational similarities of outlet-type related patterns of producing political discourse might have various further reasons. While it might be empirically an endless task to describe all relevant driving forces⁹ in total, the following main point crystallized from our empirical research: Differences in European political discourse cultures are not necessarily national, even though national moments still dominate in Europe.

Third, we finally gain an impression of what we might call an emerging European political discourse culture: we can see in the journalists' practices at least rudiments of cultural patterns we find across all nations and outlets. Basically, the 'everyday doing' of most journalists is marked by a fundamental acceptance of Europe as a shared meaning horizon of political media coverage, whereby this meaning horizon is not replacing the nation but transcending it. Also the fundamental forms of nationalization in the journalists' practices seem to be Europe-wide: National embedding, trans-

⁹ The shared economization of journalism in Europe (and beyond) might be one, resulting in certain 'transnational models' of organizing journalism and related segmenting forces (cf. Henningham/Delano 1998; McMane 1998; Odledki 1998; Reese 2008; Weischenberg et al. 1998). In this sense also Néstor García Canclini (2001: 120) characterizes the "segmentation of publics" as "the most salient feature in the restructuring of the market". But also the main driving forces distinguished by us in figure 1 – globalization, technological change and change in values across the European countries – might result in a limited number of 'ways' for handling them in the journalistic practices.

national contextualization, national hierarchization and transnational ritualization in relation to Europe are typical for media coverage across all countries researched by us. We can capture this on a fundamental level as rudiments of a common European political discourse culture. For sure, this is much less distinct than national political discourse cultures are (and also less than the moments of outlet-related discourse cultures). Beside that, the specificity of these cultural patterns could only be captured in an appropriate way if one would additionally compare them with other transnational cultural patterns of doing political discourse for example in North or Latin America.¹⁰ However, if we understand these shared patterns insofar as expressions of a rudimentary European political discourse culture this also helps to understand why beside all opposing and segmenting forces the process of Europeanization of public spheres in Europe does not decline.

If we link this back to the fundamental questions of the European public sphere discussed at the beginning of this chapter, we can add in our perspective one important point to the discussion: If we consider the journalists practices as well as the newspaper content, 'nationalization' and 'transnationalization' are not contradictory. Rather we realize in Europe an interference of both. This said, it might be useful to conceptualize the legitimation of the EU as something that also takes place through a discourse of 'monitoring Brussels nationally' as long as the European Union is considered in some way as a legitimate horizon of the national. However, whether such thinking makes sense or not can only be answered if one also starts to understand legitimation empirically, not only on the level of media discourse and its underlying journalist practices, but also on the level of the everyday understanding of the people. Therefore, a final step in researching the multi-segmented European public sphere would necessarily be an audience study.

¹⁰There might be a certain evidence for something one might call Latin American political discourse culture if one reads the comparison between Europe and Latin America by Néstor García Canclini (2001: 97-109).

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