

Forord

Nærværende projekt handler om symboludvikling i nyhedsformidlingen, nærmere bestemt udviklingen af et fjendebillede i TV2 Nyhederne i optakten til krigen i Afghanistan i 2001.

Projektet er udarbejdet som den afsluttende del af kandidatuddannelsen i Humanistisk Informatik – Medieformidlet kommunikation på Aalborg Universitet.

Projektets teoriafsnit indeholder en redegørelse for Peirces pragmatisk semiotik og symbolbegreb, samt teori om mediernes formidlingsmiljø og symbolopbygning i forbindelse med tidligere tiders væbnede konflikter. Herunder anvendes bl.a. Gramskis teori om hegemoni, Barthes' mytebegreb og diverse litteratur om udviklingen af et fjendebillede i krigstider. Analysen omfatter TV2 Nyhedernes præsentation af fjendebilledet i perioden mellem den 11. september og 10. oktober 2001.

Appendiks 1-4 indeholder de arbejdsdokumenter jeg har anvendt i analysen, en indholdsbeskrivelse af TV2s nyhedsudsendelser i perioden¹ og en afgrænsning af Nyhedernes præsentation af de tre mest fremtrædende symboltemaer; 'dem', 'os' og 'krigen som løsning på konflikten.'² I indholdsbeskrivelsen og analysen henvises der til dvd'er med de pågældende nyhedsudsendelser, som på grund af ophavsrettigheder ikke kan afleveres sammen med projektet. Udsendelserne kan bestilles hos Statens Mediesamling på Statsbiblioteket i Århus.

Projektets omfang er 89,8 sider á 2400 anslag, i alt 215.524. Den engelske abstrakt er på 1,8 sider á 2.400 anslag, i alt 4.383.

Jeg vil gerne takke min vejleder, Christian Andersen, for konstruktiv vejledning og Thorkild Leo Thellefsen, som vækkede min interesse for Peirces semiotik og symbolbegreb i medieforskningen. Tak også til Statsbiblioteket i Århus og Center for Semiotik på Århus Universitet for lån af faciliteter og adgang til litteratur og nyhedsudsendelser, til Jón Hrói Finnsson og Ulrike Marie Steen for konstruktiv dialog i projektforsløbet og til Mie Just for korrekturlæsning.

God fornøjelse,

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¹ Appendiks 01

² Appendiks 02-04

Abstract - The Pragmatic Enemy Image

The object of this thesis is to describe the development of the symbolic value of the enemy image that emerged and evolved in the lead up to the war in Afghanistan in 2001. The knowledge about the enemy image, acquired through the news, was a significant precondition for the recipients to be able to form their opinion on the war as a solution to the conflict that arose after the attacks of September 11, 2001.

The primary theory of the thesis is Charles Sanders Peirce's pragmatic semiotics. The thesis accounts for the most important principles of Peirce's pragmatism. The pragmatic maxim states that a symbol acquires meaning through the conception of its potential practical consequences under any possible circumstances. If the interpreter of the symbol considers which practical effects it could have, the conception of those effects is the interpreter's whole conception of the symbol. This understanding will constitute the basis of the analysis of the enemy image in the news.

Peirce's semiotic theory is based on his phaneroscopic categories, Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness. The categories are the ground pillars of his semiotics, the theory of human cognition and accumulation of knowledge through interpretation of signs in an infinite semiosis. I will account for Peirce's understanding of the categories and the sign, which comprises of a representamen, an object and an interpretant, and of the sign's function in the process of human interpretation. I explain the definition of the main sign types, icon, index and symbol, and their function and relation to other elements of Peirce's theory architecture.

To explore the media's presentation of the symbols of war in the news, I have included theories about the media's work environment and ability too provide neutral, objective and well informed knowledge about the events that they convey. This includes reflections on the media's relationship to the hegemonic powers of society, which are the media's most important sources of information in times of war, and at the same time involved in the conflict. I also describe how the news supplies their audience with cognitive shortcuts about the social and cultural processes in society. Roland Barthes' definition of the myth is used to describe how the realities of war historically have been presented in simplified terms that make the audience's decision making process regarding whether to support the war or not, less complex.

The analytic method is a qualitative semiotic, and thereby pragmatic, content analysis of the Danish TV2 News. The analysis covers the period between September 11 and October 7, 2001, which marks the start of the war in Afghanistan. It also includes the presentation of the situation in the first days of the war, until October 10, 2001.

One of the most important characteristics of the Peircean symbol is that it has the ability to grow and develop through time. Every interaction with the media adds something to the symbol interpreted, and it is this development that is the main focus point of my analysis. It describes how the enemy image develops from being an enemy whose identity and intent are unknown, to Osama bin Laden being identified as responsible for the attacks of September 11, 2001. I also examine the TV2 News' presentation of the links between bin Laden and al Qaeda and how those links support the perception and acceptance of Taleban and Afghanistan as an integrated part of the enemy image and as the direct opponent in the war in Afghanistan. I look at how the enemy's history, actions and intentions are presented and how these elements contribute to the symbolic presentation of the enemy image, including Osama bin Laden, al Qaeda and Taleban.

The enemy's potential practical effect is a prominent factor in the definition of war being the only effective solution to a conflict. The analysis examines how the news contributes to the construction of an image of an enemy that must be identified and fought to prevent the potential damage it can cause in the future. The choice of war is based on an assessment of the war's consequences, compared to the consequences of not taking action against the enemy. I examine how these elements are presented in the news and how this contributes to the justification of the cost of war and the use of violence against the enemy.