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## **"With a lot of fairness..." - Analysis of German Coverage during the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games in Salt Lake City 2002**

### ***Introduction***

Sport and media are closely interrelated with the development of society. The performance principle and the standardisation of human activities that are characteristic of modern industrial society are also in the centre of sport activities. However, one cannot assume a simple one-to-one correlation between performance in sports and performance in the working process, but in connection with the development of society and the changes in the way people live, alterations have also taken place in the structure of sport (cf. Rowe 1999, 13 pp.). The most obvious expression of the sporting achievement principle in the industrial society are the Olympic Games. They did not only boost the performance principle to become an Olympic principle but also propagated the Olympic idea as the integration of the community of performers. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a development that let this "simple idea" (Real 1998) fade along with the growing professionalisation of sports. In the post- or late modern society with all the pluralism of life forms and the penetration of everyday life and media, we notice a growing development from professionalism to commercialisation of sports that has taken a global character (cf. Maguire 1999; Real 1998; Rowe 1999).

In this context it is the media that play a remarkable role. It is the media that ensure all profit-focused institutions (sports equipment industry, teams, associations, advertising industry etc.) an utmost number of consumers. In this context it seems to be reasonable and justified to speak of a sport/media complex (cf. Jhally 1989) or even a global media-sports complex (Maguire 1999, 144 pp.), because sports and media cannot be separated from one another. That the media play a decisive role in the process of professionalisation and commercialisation of sports can also be seen, among other things, in the fact that the majority of people do no longer attend sporting events in the stadium or indoors, but use the media, in particular TV channels (cf. Jhally 1989, 78). Since the invention of the TV set, the Olympic Games have been a recurring highlight of the broadcasting programme every four years and apart from the World Championship in football they significantly contributed to the establishment of a global TV market, even prior to the development of a global programme market for TV formats such as serials, series and game shows. In particular it is the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games that have so rapidly developed into a media event of gigantic visual attractiveness. The staging efforts for this have become even more extravagant. At the same time they also demonstrated the interrelation between sport and the advancement of society.

In modern society, class, gender differences and ethnic affiliation as traditional categories and structures play a less important role and do no longer form the basis for the establishment of the identity of people and/or nations (Crook et. al. 1992:35). On the contrary, they are more and more replaced by the offerings provided by the consumer society: leisure time, media and industrial goods form the framework for the constitution of identity. (cf. examples in: Featherstone 1991; Crook et. al. 1992; Friedman 1992). There is also no doubt that the media play a major role in the formation of this identity concept. This, however, does not mean that the media are in the very centre of identity formation. They are not necessarily the primary

impact factors for the formation of this concept but major ones. In our analysis we consider them as such factors.

Sport itself provides identity concepts of its own due to the symbolic adaptation of cultural standards: "Sport can become a symbolic extension of various collective identities." (Boyle; Haynes, 2000; 147).

This paper investigates to what extent sport coverage can, on the one hand, form a national identity concept when using certain intercultural patterns of interpretation and, on the other hand, form a personal pattern of the recipients. The analysis is based on the reports during the Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City with a specific emphasis on the opening ceremony.

To investigate this issue, we opted for a research design that uses three elements of national coverage to focus on patterns of interpretation: First, the visual staging of the opening ceremony and its patterns of interpretation are considered; second, the verbal commentary on German TV programmes is analysed and finally we focus on a comparison between TV broadcasting and German press reports.

### ***Analysis Level 1: The visual staging of the opening ceremony on TV***

The opening ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games held in Salt Lake City was broadcasted live by ARD (the first public German channel). The programme started at midnight with a brief introductory presentation in the broadcasting studio before the programme switched to the reporters on-site in the stadium. A professional presenter and a well-known figure skater, Katarina Witt, commented on the programme which finished at 3 a.m. During the pre-show, which lasted about 6 minutes, the two presenters set their commentary into the current political and societal frame (cf. analysis level 2). More interesting, however, was the visual structure of the pre-show. It opened up the staging level that was used as the central theme throughout the entire show: First a tourist gaze is thrown on Salt Lake City. The camera presents the audience a total view of the city, in which the illumination of the city lights are in optical contrast to the bright colours of the sunset sky. A bird's eye view on the stadium shows that this stadium is actually located in the city centre and in the very centre of the sunset. Then the interior of the stadium is presented, with changing images of the Stars and Stripes and the Olympic flag. The visual staging follows along the lines of the classic narrator style of Hollywood movies. This movie, a TV broadcast, starts with a so-called 'establishing shot' providing the audience an overview of the place of action. Picturing the Olympic flag at the same time provides a functional introduction to the event, the Olympic Games, and therefore also sets a timeframe. This staging can rely on the knowledge of the audience about the calendar ritual recurring every four years. After having established place and time, it is more than reasonable to continue with a step-by-step introduction of the agents (actors). The short spot into the stadium is now supplemented by a camera tour over the stands. This enhances the expectations for the actual event, because, as the TV audience knows from their experience: if spectators are present, there will also be an event starting soon.

The pre-show that follows introduces a second pattern of staging for this (media) event. The global pop culture, the worldwide expansion of which is also closely connected to the media. Prior to the official ceremony, the R&B artist R. Kelly is on stage, wearing a Stars-and-Stripes coating with the label "Hero" on his back. His outfit opens up an interpretative frame that is connected to the political events and their ideological reappraisal in the United States. On the visual level the pre-show ends as it began: A total view of Salt Lake City is presented with the capitol in the centre of the scene in the full blaze of sunset colours. The camera perspective provides the TV audience the imagination of a peaceful idyll of the venue and so

they are familiarized with the ideology of the games – the contribution to peace between the various nations of the world.

The staging of the official opening ceremony also follows the rules of the classic Hollywood narration. It starts with an animated flight (arriving from space) into the stadium of Salt Lake City. This animation can be tracked by both spectators and TV audience on a big screen, however, the TV audience can benefit to watch this scenario in the context of the stadium. This way all spectators are introduced in the place of action – the venue of the games. Firework and light effects boost the visual spectacle. The show following this illumination is built according to a third pattern that is central to the entire opening ceremony: it provides an insight into the history of the games and creates an Olympic memory. Ice skaters enter the stadium carrying the Olympic flag and the names of all previous venues of Winter games. On the one hand, this staging is oriented towards the Olympic symbols (due to the flags); on the other hand, it creates an iconographic frame for the Olympic memory that is also supported by the labels of the previous venues. The Olympic memory is not only represented by the flags but at the same time provoked in the mind of the spectators – both in the stadium and worldwide for those in front of the TV. The pictures call up the memory of the audience, not the general memory, but the very precise memory of the past Olympics, both in the framework of the own event and experience connotations. In this case the reporters are also part of the spectators, since they have own thoughts and memories that are provoked and stimulated by the evoked pictures. Although the same pictures are broadcasted around the world, the national presenters as well as their audience can call up their own experience and thoughts, their personal Olympic memory. This way the global world of pictures from the Olympic Games mixes with local experiences.

The chronology of events inevitably leads to the current venue - the last flag in the row. Now the actual opening address can be started by the representatives of Olympia, the IOC president Jacques Rogge, and the president of the hosting country, US president George W. Bush. The staging of symbols is continued with the US flag from Ground Zero being carried in by firefighters. On the iconographic level this means that both Olympic and national symbols are set into the scene that provide for the unity of the Olympic movement and the American nation. This again provides the opportunity for both presenters and spectators to incorporate their own thoughts and experience.

A revue on ice is the next step in the staging which again provides the audience the historical iconography of American myths and the symbolism of American popular music, partly being a fixed component of international pop culture. The entrance of the nations gives both reporters and audience plenty of opportunity to update the own Olympic memory. The highlight, the lighting of the Olympic Flame merges Olympic history and present into one act. Athletes, official representatives, spectators in the stadium and TV audience have reached the moment of reality. The ritual at the same time opens enough potential space to refer to the forthcoming sporting events and evokes the expectations of the audience. The visual structure of the opening ends as it began – with a tourist spot of the camera on Salt Lake City, but now with the Olympic Flame in front of the city's skyline. This also contributes to the fact that the expectation of the audience is bound to a place. The place of action of the Olympic Games is now finally established in the memory of the spectators.

#### Summary:

Considering the TV broadcast, the opening ceremony follows the classic pattern of narrative Hollywood movies. At the beginning the venue of the celebration is introduced, at the end the venue of the games. In this context three elements dominate: (i) the tourist view of the venue, (ii) the international pop culture as a show element, (iii) the visual staging of the Olympic

memory via iconography and symbolism – and this memory only develops due to the knowledge of the spectators and reporters, in which the national importance of the Olympic Games plays a big role. All of these three elements provide the audience and the reporters enough starting points to make meaning to the global media event of the Olympic opening ceremony within the framework of both national and regional contexts.

## ***Analysis Level 2: Verbalisation of Differences – Commentary Patterns in Coverage***

What Elliotts (1982: 244) calls "a shift from involving people in society as a political citizen of nation states towards involving them as consumption units in a corporate world" will be the focus of this analysis. Both coverage and applied patterns of interpretation are now considered with regard to their impact potential on the formation of a personal, local and national identity of the recipient. This does not involve the global consumption behaviour but the orientation towards the cultural values, norms and interpretation patterns of a "corporate world". The communicative acts on the part of the presenters are at the centre of the analysis with regard to their formation and enhancement but also with regard to blurring the set boundaries of national as well as occidental identity concepts.

In the second part of this contribution the media offering is analysed focusing on "maintaining the standards" of own national values and the defence against any violation.

Starting Point 1: Drawing of boundaries as a condition for the formation of identity

Both communication and identity are always – as has been pointed out in the work of Levi-Strauss – "a matter of the drawing of boundaries and the preservation of the proper distance." (cf. for example Clement, 1987) – a matter of demarcation and maintenance of safe distance, an ability that is supplemented by the socialisation to the identity proposals. This fact is a first aspect to be considered in the analysis of sport coverage, seen from the angle of its relevance for the establishment of identity: **In which form, intensity and quality are boundaries provoked, drawn or blurred through coverage? Which *intercultural or national patterns of interpretation* are applied for the interpretation of the discussed events and persons?**

Starting Point 2: Protection of national identity concepts by the media

Modern states are characterised by their global actions: internationalism, international economy and cultural exchange, competition and expansion are their outstanding features, in the context of which the national language and culture have to be subjected to international standards. Contrary to the propagation of these values and the expansion of the impact there is **the protection against everything that may violate this world of values and degenerate the achievements (the so-called societal status quo)**. Public service broadcasting in western Europe as example for highly sophisticated, bureaucratic and centralistically governed as well as politically influenced institutions of the modern state has a protective function and is part of the propagation of the western "cosmos of values". Therefore this analysis will also focus on the question inasmuch sport coverage or coverage on a sport/media event (having the dimension of the opening ceremony of Olympic Games) may have an impact in this way.

## ***Analysis and Results***

To what extent is it possible to attest and claim that coverage can have an impact on the formation of a national identity concept as well as on the personal identity of the recipient?

Being merely aware of the dimension of the actual impact potential of the German coverage, an assumed potential impact formed the basis of the theoretical consideration for this analysis

in agreement with the assumptions made by media impact research and the concepts on the impact of media for the formation of national, local and personal identities.

Permanent and basic interpretation patterns were:

1. allocation and consolidation of stereotyped features predominantly for persons and nations that cannot be assigned to the own cultural environment,
2. the significantly different allocation of attention applied throughout the commenting and the orientation of the amount of value guidelines along the hypothetical category "successful winter sport nation",
  - 2.1 marginalism of smaller nations that did not provide any reason for further comments due to outstanding personalities or performance, (Reference of other, not the German nation, to the U.S.A. were predominantly made on the proximity level (Mexico, Canada), persons (Venezuela), topicality/potential conflict level (on the political level) (Iran, Korea) and on the relevance (Russia, Czech Republic). Taking these facts into consideration, one can derive the decisive parameters of ethnocentric commentary which were the news values of the respective individual events (occurrence and visualisation of people).
  - 2.2 the above-proportionate reference to German athletes or Germany as such as well as to the hosting country (the U.S.A.) for commenting on international athletes and teams. One can state the following: In most cases, the basis to establish reference to Germany was laid on the sporting level or the relevance of the mentioned people/nations for the German athletes. To enforce reference to Germany, the reporters did not spare the tiniest or most macabre opportunity. Therefore, the corresponding commentary was of fairly low 'quality'.
3. utmost harmonizing coverage and commenting for problematic topics beyond sport that were also indicating conflict such as restrictions regarding the security requirements, the carrying in of the "WTC flag", the stigmatisation of certain nations as the "Axis of Evil" or the expected patriotism.
4. A latent but less explicitly marked commentary pattern was the uncritical admiration of the giant character of the event. This, for example, was reflected in the commentary of the American co-presenter who compared this event to a magnificent broad-way show. Any negatively connoted conclusions or parallels to the (sport) celebration culture of communist propagandists and other autocrats was - as expected - not used. An explicitly negative evaluation of this kind would have resulted in an infringement of the maxim to protect own value standards.
5. A more differentiated view is required for the interpretation of the assumed reduction of sporting standards or the comparison via measurable value categories. The coverage explicitly renounced the formulation of sporting expectations. That this was done by intention was evidenced by the statement of the reporter Rubenbauer during the marching in of the American team. He said: "We consciously renounced to use sporting expectations during this opening ceremony..." to state the exception and consecutively its reason:"...but after all the gazettes in the U.S.A. are full of it - they do not want to be number 5, as they did so often, but be on the medallist's podium."  
Corresponding to the relevance of the event there were statements on the sporting achievements of individual athletes or teams in the run-up to the Olympics. This pattern was - all in all - only moderately used as coverage pattern.
6. On the other hand, the sporting framework itself represented a pattern of interpretation which is inherent to the character of the opening ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games: Comparisons and descriptions were often referred to but not exclusively provided in the sporting frame. In contrast to this, sparing of stereotyping resulted in the fact that "non-sport-

related“ aspects and events often served as stimulus to assign relevance to certain actions and persons.

### Interpretation regarding "Drawing of boundaries" and "Protection"

Both the intensity as well as the quality of patterns of interpretation and commentary were used differently. They also contributed to a different extent to the consolidation and determination of the general patterns of interpretation "Drawing of boundaries" and "Protection". Following the order of their significance we could reveal the following results:

#### Pattern of Interpretation: Stereotypes - racial and ethnic stereotyping and marginalisation

"Sport can function on an international level as a site in which advanced countries can and must act out their preferred myths through self – and other – stereotypes, and celebrate those qualities which, in their own eyes, make them more modern, more advanced, in short superior...This process routinely involves downgrading other national groups" (O'Donnell, 1994:353). This "more" is the expression of the already mentioned demarcation and grading that is used to both degrade (discriminate) or upgrade nations or persons via stereotyped patterns of interpretations.

Reports being explicitly racist or against women could not be noticed. Consciously or unconsciously used: Awkward coverage patterns support the hypothesis of the demarcation of own values and norms as well as the propagation of this demarcation. Both stereotyping and marginalism are the basis for this and can be noticed and determined within sport reports.

Stereotyping provides the recipient the reduction of sophisticated relations to almost schematic and cartoon features assigned to the described person and thus consolidating certain images of "being different". The audience also experienced a potentially already existing and repeatedly reflected world of values in the German coverage: the Asian being reserved, the Jamaican fairly outgoing, the Kenyan nice, but also: the American - prone to patriotism, the South Tyrolean - nationalistic. The latter aspects have been part of a fearful discussion in Germany for many years, when it comes to discuss issues like Germans' own patriotism and nationalism. The reason for this can be seen in the fact that potential impacts or the occurrence of nationalistically tinged events were considered to be problematic and contain conflict potential. Finally one can state that this and other international problems are not treated differently, despite being an explicitly non-political programme, than in a discussion of own problems: it will be harmonised, the consistency and the inner solidarity of the system are not questioned. The coverage is aimed at the attempt to appeal to the Olympic spirit of "One World", however, this coverage is not in a position to hide any problem issues. By reconciling conflict parties verbally for the time being (e.g. American audience giving a friendly applause to the teams of Iran and Korea - representatives of nations that belong to the "Axis of Evil"-, the problem itself will be at the centre. The supposed blurring of existing boundaries to call a global community articulates these borders.

Open discourse on the background of these problems seen from the perspective of "foreign" nations or the integration or the unselfish adaptation influences of "being culturally foreign" in the own argumentative pattern did not occur throughout the commentary.

Marginalism that is always accompanied by an above-proportionate, ethnocentric reference to own horizons and the distraction of attention from smaller nations or nations in larger cultural distance could also be proved in this research as a significant fact to base the demarcation aspect. One can state that the amount of comments predominantly increases with labelling nations as "successful winter sport nation". This is a pattern of interpretation that creates other elites than, for example, the one regarding the political significance.

Moreover, a fairly technical parameter is significant in this context, too, namely the size of the teams when marching into the stadium: the bigger team "occupies" more time during

visualisation, a time slot in which the presenters do not want and cannot keep the audience alone. Since the so-called smaller nations (Gordon and Sibson, 1998 ) only have teams that sometimes consist of just one participant or a few more (e. g. Nepal, Libanon, Hongkong, Cyprus) the opportunity of a longer slot for commenting is limited if one does not want to leave the team to come next without any comment. This aspect has to be considered in the interpretation and qualifies the marginalism of smaller nations in comments.

The strong reference of comments to the German team in the event received an own accentuation with regard to national preferences. At the same time these references were used as fixation and orientation points for the audience. If one supplements this fact by critical comments and statements, one can provide arguments for a moderate "opposite offensive" of the German coverage that can be qualified as "reserved" against the "Americanisation" of the ceremonies and the interpretation.

Interpretation strategy: Defusing of conflicts

Affiliation to the global village in which so far only inhabitants have built their homes in the tradition of the occidental culture, people are united not just officially but by a jointly shared "media and consumer culture" into a community that Dobbelaere (1991:221) calls "Wahlverwandtschaft" (engl. optional affinity) - a more appropriate term. In this context the problems are harmonised and evened out, in particular those that are evident on an international level. Harmonisation and de-escalation provoke a blurring process of boundaries in two directions: On the one hand, the boundaries are blurred within the globalised "Wahlverwandtschaft" (optional affinity) of similar cultural frames (e. g. between Germany and the U.S.A.) and, on the other hand, between this structure and the rest that is not included in the markets and which is subjugated to standards of other nations (Western Europe – Asia).

The reports on the investigated opening ceremony receive a particularly volatile character because of the clear positioning to the politically unified community with the U.S.A.: In the context of "fighting off terror" and as response to the event of September 11 in New York, George W. Bush created the term "Axis of the Evil" in a press-conference just one week prior to the opening of the Olympic Games. Apart from Iraq this axis also included the Olympic guests from North Korea and Iran.

Nonetheless, the predominant mode of the coverage on the problem of "patriotism" is fairly harmonising despite some reserved but not explicitly stated criticism for the manner of president Bush. The restrictions set by the security requirements are taken with humour, the audience is relieved from "unhealthy patriotism". The bonds between the nations U.S.A.-Germany were, however, not glorified, previous conflict declared as resolved (WTC flag) and deprived of its strictness.

The initially presented patterns of interpretation, drawing of boundaries and protection against "violation" of own values are the framework conditions of these harmonising coverage strategies. The attempt to emphasize fairness and kindness of the American audience is the conclusion drawn from the case study: the patient has nearly recovered from (almost) all illness such as hatred, envy and eagerness. The system is consistent – in advanced and globalised humanism and jointly shared cosmos of values there is no room for any contradictory tendencies resulting from the interior and that might oppose the cultural commonsense of the "community".

The strategy of avoiding conflicts or the harmonisation also provide ground for their protection - if, however, reference is established to own values and norms. Any change in the interpretation, any "commenting out" of conflicts offers the recipient the illusion of a principle solution potential of intercultural problems. This solution potential basically includes the own cultural achievements and qualities.

**Summary:**

Due to linguistic expressiveness as well as expertise and insider knowledge of the presenters, the reports during the opening ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games provided the German audience enough opportunity to confirm their images of a national identity and those of other nations identity, based on the predetermined interpretation frame. The audience can find their personal identity in the communicated world of values. The expressed criticism and the fears followed the German commonsense of a public problem consciousness which was clearly evidenced by the analysis of the printed media.

***Analysis Level 3: Metacommunication***

The opening ceremony was broadcasted live on the ARD (first German public channel) and repeated on Saturday morning (time postponed). Longer extracts were presented in the extensive coverage at the weekend, short extracts in all news. Since the medium press does not allow reports on Saturday it had to consider that their audience had already informed themselves in brief or more extensively about the ceremony. This in fact meant that it was no longer a coverage business but a matter of reviews and interpretation – both on the event itself and on the presented TV coverage. The audience therefore received additional patterns of interpretation which went beyond the ones broadcasted; moreover, these patterns of interpretation on the television are accompanied by comments for discussion.

Subject of this part of the analysis are the commenting strategies used in the following dailies: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Welt*, *Frankfurter Rundschau* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung* which were published most immediately after the opening ceremony. The Sunday editions of FAS and WamS were studied and the Monday edition of FR and SZ. These four editions count for more than 90% of national press editions in Germany, if one spares the tabloid *Bild* (BamS). All four editions included extensive reports on the title page as well as in the sports column. However, we only analysed the articles referring to the opening ceremony.

In general, the German national press draws a specific picture of the ceremony. Characteristic for all four newspapers is that they assume readers to have basic knowledge on the rituals of the procedure and elements (carrying in the Stars and Stripes and Olympic flag, the „ordinary“ opening formula presented by the president of the hosting country, the marching-in of the nations, lighting the flame, the symbolism of the Olympic peace). Only those things that were exceptional were mentioned: that it was not an ordinary US flag, but the Ground Zero flag, that the Olympic flag was carried by international personalities and not by a military formation; that president Bush “extended” the opening formula and joined the US team; that the Olympic flame was collectively lit and not by a singly person etc.

At the same time the events are interpreted from the perspective of the „general expectations“ to such a ceremony, making these expectations explicit. The FAS speaks of an *unexpectedly relaxed atmosphere*, FR considers this not an *ordinary opening ceremony*, the WamS speaks of *tremendously less pathos of the hosts than feared*.

Within these two frames – the focus on the deviations from the scheme on the one hand and thematisation of the expectation on the other hand - one can distinguish four patterns of coverage:

a) Focus on particular moments: The opening ceremony represents both history and a media event, the press does not need to invent and supplement any procedures. In contrast, it focuses on what they consider highlights. This focus starts with the headlines and the – mainly large-format – photos on the cover page and the leading sports column and continues in the articles. All newspapers consider: the Ground Zero Flag, the presence of the president (in contrast to the president of the IOC who plays a subordinate role), the show itself (fascinating landscape of ice and light). *Fairytale hour* – SZ; *some bits of “Holiday on Ice“ and some history to touch* - WamS), the lighting of the Olympic Flame with regard to the Miracle of 1980 and the Cold War as well as the security issues (which the FR devotes a separate background article to). Surprisingly, the newspapers renounce a direct national perspective. The German team is presented on the photos (WamS, SZ), but it only plays a subordinate role in the text material.

It is only the SZ that, among other things, cites German trainers, sportsmen and politicians in their brief evaluations of the ceremony.

b) Atmospheric items are verbalised: What can be presented on TV has to be verbalised in the press. Since there is no coverage on the event required (any longer), the press is interpreting it. Most remarkable in this context is that all four newspapers speak in their main article of the coincidence of the silence in the stadium during the flag of Ground Zero was carried in and the helicopter buzzing above the stadium. *Silence is, when 55, 000 people are silent and one wants to take away the helicopter from the sky like a nasty fly* (WamS). *In this moment the noise of the control helicopter above the stadium, the view on the two snipers on top of the skyscraper in the neighbourhood, in this very moment the most severe competition of the Olympic Games 2002 is thrown into light: Can these games only be performed in the security wing?* (FAS). *Extraordinary the silent moment when the flag from Ground Zero was carried into the stadium. When this occurred ... it was a strong moment not just for the U.S.A., because one was reminded in a subtle way, how different everything has become: The deep buzzing of the helicopters, that stood in the air like watchful wasps ...* (SZ). *Anxiety and fears not to be reached, the mood - ... - was not exuberant but cheerful. However, deep inside a certain unease remained. An insecurity which turned into a martial noise that could not be missed and that accompanied the by no means too pathetic or even chauvinistic ceremony* (FR).

c) Events and signs are condensed to symbols and interpreted as such: Newspapers are an excellent medium to interpret the sense of this entire procedure, however, keeping to the things that were observed – and presenting them with slightly different focus. One of the newspapers discovers *two messages of the pleasant non-exciting ceremony* (*zwei Botschaften der angenehm unaufgeregten Zeremonie*). The first is: *Those who hold together will succeed*. (*Wer zusammenhält, schafft alles*). Evidence for this slogan are the heroes of American sport of the last decades who carry the Olympic fire and finally light it. The second message considers the international carriers of the Olympic flag as *representatives of the five continents and as symbols for the three Olympic columns (sport, environment and culture) ... The surprise during the opening ceremony and a what a successful one* (*Repräsentanten der fünf Erdteile und als Sinnbilder für die drei olympischen Säulen (Sport, Umwelt und Kultur) ... Die Überraschung bei der Eröffnung und eine gelungene noch dazu* (FR), evidence for *the international flair of the ceremony* (*das internationale Flair der Zeremonie*) (FAS). The other newspapers provide a disparate interpretation of the ice show (Light the fire within). *The CV in stop motion: from the first steps of a small ice skater to the overwhelming elegance of the Olympic champion* is the interpretation. (*Der Lebenslauf im Zeitraffer: von den ersten Schritten eines Eiskunstlauf-Kückens bis zur überwältigen Eleganz der Olympiasiegerin* (FAS).) The other interpretation is: *The frame was provided by the fairytale of the Olympic spirit that should burn inside everyone like the fire against the cold and the evil in the world*. (*Den Rahmen gab das Märchen vom olympischen Geist, der in jedem lodern möge wie das Feuer gegen die Kälte und das Böse in der Welt*) (SZ). No deeper interpretation receive the scenes symbolising the settlement process around the Salt Lake, of the Indians and the Western trails. These only seem to be perceived as folk element in the programme.

Nonetheless the Ground Zero Flag – remains the core for the interpretations. (*A highlight not just for America*), *the longest and most intensive break of thoughts within a 3-hour ceremony*) *Ein Höhepunkt nicht nur für Amerika* (SZ), *die längste und intensivste Gedankenpause in der dreistündigen Zeremonie* (FAS), *no continuation of memorial services* (*Fortsetzung der Gedenkgottesdienste*) (WamS). *The Ground Zero Flag is also a*

*symbol against anxiety and for life under changed circumstances. Die Ground Zero Flag ist auch ein Symbol gegen die Angst und für das Leben unter veränderten Umständen (SZ).*

Condensation can also be traced in the summarizing judgement that is often already provided in the headlines: *Staging of the silent sounds (Inszenierung der leisen Töne) (FAS), Moving start/ The Winter Games started with a magnificent show (Ergreifender Auftakt/Die Winterspiele in SLC begannen mit einer tollen Show (WamS), The Opening - An event that will go down in history (Eine geschichtsträchtige Eröffnung) (FR), (the story time of the Olympic Spirit. ... the usual thing) (die Märchenstunde vom olympischen Geist .Naja, das Übliche eben (SZ).*

d) Remarkable emphasis is also given to the relationship between TV broadcasting and reality, however, only related to the US TV stations (NBC). There was no commentary on the German broadcasting in this respect. SZ speaks explicitly of *two celebrations: the one that actually took place in the stadium and the second opening ceremony, ... the one the TV wanted so see. TV has the power to set something that is in the scene already again into scene and changes its contents.* The article mentions president Bush as one example, having been the most important person on TV, but not in the stadium. *For the TV this was only another American show, that one probably has to understand, if the consecutive TV news still have subtitles like 'America in War'.* The other newspapers papers also make the ceremony on TV a subject of discussion. *The performance was completely to the taste of the audience ... as well as to the American TV program (FAS) and NBC interpreted the opening ceremony by far more patriotic than the organizers of the event.*

#### Summary:

The opening ceremony is interpreted and commented on both as a national American and global event, Germany is only attending and (sharing) it. The Olympic peace as the central value is fragile and has still *be to fought for with gun power (allerdings noch mit der Androhung von Waffengewalt erzwungen) (FAS).* It is still not clear whether the *Olympic cheerfulness can develop in this utmost military occupation scenario (olympische Fröhlichkeit unter größtem Militärschutz aufkommen kann (FAS), whether cheerfulness and fairness, hospitality, exciting competition, that means the "big issues", that such a thing like Olympia has to be today (SZ) can take place. September 11 "directs and dominates the coverage and is present all over. And this is why the celebration is also part of curing a nation that has been hurt deepest in its soul" (FR).*

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