Introduction to Media Anthropology
22. & 23.10.10.2015

Agenda:

Second Day 23.10.15

• Exploring local media fields & Cultural Translation
  – Bollywood, Joint Reading VJs in Tanzania
• Current Debates
• Perspectives & Summary
Media Anthropology

Global media & the significance of local counter flows

contra-flows:

“the semantic and imaginative referents for the institutional, cultural and political matrix of a world framed by processes of global cultural power and local negotiation: a world experienced through the identity politics of nations, individuals and cultures and negotiated through contestations of locality, nationality and global citizenship”
### Table 1: Types of flow

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of flow</th>
<th>Source of Production</th>
<th>Destination of production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Markets</td>
<td>Hegemonic Audiovisual Production country (US, Western Europe, Japan)</td>
<td>Western Europe, Canada, US, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core to Peripheral Markets</td>
<td>Hegemonic Audiovisual Production country (US, Canada, Western Europe, Japan)</td>
<td>Any country (or countries) not belonging to the Core Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral to Core Markets</td>
<td>Small or Regional Production Country (Latin-America, Asia, Eastern Europe)</td>
<td>Western Europe, Canada, US, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral Markets</td>
<td>Small or Regional Production Country (Latin-America, Asia, Eastern Europe)</td>
<td>Any country (or countries) not belonging to the Core Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant flows</td>
<td>Contra-(subaltern) flows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global</strong></td>
<td><strong>Transnational</strong></td>
<td><strong>Geo-cultural</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollywood</td>
<td>‘Bollywood’</td>
<td>Phoenix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTV</td>
<td>Al-Jazeera</td>
<td>Zee TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disney</td>
<td>Telenovelas</td>
<td>TRT-International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>TV5</td>
<td>AI-Hayat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery</td>
<td>Telesur</td>
<td>Baidu.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>Radio France Internationale</td>
<td>MBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESPN</td>
<td>CCTV-9</td>
<td>NHK World TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google</td>
<td>RTDTV</td>
<td>islamonline.net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNBC</td>
<td>Euronews</td>
<td>Roj TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall Street Journal</td>
<td>M-Net</td>
<td>Korean films</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese animation</td>
<td>Korean films</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example of India:

dominant regional broadcasters

– some of them with international links
Example 1: Global Media Events

• staged, scripted and mediatized sequence of actions
• transnational connections
• aim and necessity of mass reception AND emotional effects, creating ideas of immediacy, synchronicity, Particularity ->(Remediation), but:
• Tendencies: ritualization, repetition, standardization, multiplication
• narrative & -dramaturgical- ritual components
  (Victor Turner-> liminoid stages, appeal on communitas)
  – Ex. Lady Diana 1997, 9/11, Fukushima, Chilean Miners, FIFA World Cup, Olympics
  – community of audiences- >“global village“
(Marshall Mc Luhan 1964) or enacted illusion?
Bollywood

- refers to Hindi cinema produced in Bombay/Mumbai (not Indian Arthouse Cinema)
- Aesthetically and different form Hollywood, but as prolific in its production & distribution
- Importance of film music
- Indian music as a part of religious ceremonies
- Beginning Sanskrit Theatres, later marathi language-film sounds
- Combination of music- fashion- storytelling
- Love & family conflicts,
Bollywood

- First blockbuster: What I am to you?
- Proliferation of studios, cinemas, exports->subregion
- From 1990 to 2000: growing exports from 10 to 100 mio $/year
- 2000s: Global Distribution:
  a) Indian Diaspora
  b) Globally dispersed fanhood (Shah Rukh Khan)
  c) Awareness of major festivals, media groups
Discussion:

Bollywood- regional counterflow:

Bollywood & Hollywood:

• Cultural differences
• Regional distribution
• Marketization /foreign investments, adaptation
-> World wide circulation
Bollywood- Nationalism, Ideals of Indianness:

„This is an industry where there are no divisions based on caste, language, religious or region“ (Pramod Navlakar)

- quality of nationalism:
  - Hindi as main language
  - Diversity of music and settings
    - Appeal to Indian Diaspora
    - Global Fanhood
    - Festivals & Global Marketing
Cultural Translation

- Part of a logic of (re-)mediation: communication & act of representation

- Inherent & explicit acts of translating cultural differences

- Particular modes of decoding & encoding
Cultural Translation

Example:

VJs in Tanzania -> Reading

Figure 3: Translation of Indian Films into Swahili.
VJs in Tanzania -

- cultural entrepreneurs
- importance of orality
- commentators & guides
- translation as cultural creativity
Media Anthropology-Current Debates

1 Virtual worlds –

methodological challenges
Virtual worlds – methodological challenges

a) Virtuality and the Possibilities and Limits of Fieldwork

--- internet-> growing importance for various local communities
Problem a)
--- classical approach: fieldwork within communities, participant observation, direct access
--- internet-> rather indirect access, dispersed information -> how to do fieldwork? Offline/online?
Problem b)
--- communities in the internet-> loose relations, rather “virtual communities”
--- not” real” communities? no immersion possible?
Virtual worlds – methodological challenges

Alexander Knorr (Munich): „The online nomads of cyberia“ (2006)
– Game modders – degrees of involvement:
  – Inner circle -> cohesion -> community
Virtual worlds – methodological challenges

Networking & Translocality

– new concepts of representation

e.g. “Rhizomic” research
Virtual worlds – methodological challenges

2. Produsage-

media producers & users – growing indistinction
Produsage (Axel Bruns) (2008:23p.)
« fluid movement of *produsers* between roles as leaders, participants, and users of content “
- produsers may have backgrounds ranging from professional to amateur;
- artefacts always unfinished, continuous process
- open participation; permissive regimes of engagement which are based on merit (ad hoc meritocracy) more than ownership, heterarchy, common property, individual rewards

Examples:
- Wikipedia
- Vloggers
Objectives:

• Understand central perspectives of media anthropology

• Learn more about particular fields of study central concepts & debates
Summary

I Media anthropology:

studying

• media actors, media & cultural construction(s) of societies & lifestyles

• media in a comparative perspective

• media as a central field to understand the global-local-nexus

•→ no cultural homogenization
Summary

II Concepts:

Appropriation
small alternative media
cultural translation

III Debates:

Virtuality
Produsage
Summary

Media Anthropology:

Vibrant, open field of research, debate & engagement