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America's Global Standing According to Popular News Sites
from Around the World

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Abstract

The growing popularity and use of news websites around the world provides new possibilities for studying the position of the US in the world system charted by digital news items. In this paper we look at 35 popular news sites in 10 different languages over a two-year period, in order to assess the position of the US in world news as well as to identify possible explanations for it.

Our findings show that the US is by far the most prominent country in the news sites that we studied from around the world, except for the French and Arabic ones. The network structure of news-links clearly exhibits its key position as the centerpiece of a global system. Economic factors better explain America's news prominence than political, social and geographical factors. Yet, none of the many variables we examined could explain the large gap between the news prominence of the US and that of the rest of the world. The article discusses possible reasons for these findings and suggests directions for further studies in the field.

Keywords: Americanization, globalization, hegemony, news sites, news flow, international news, news prominence, news-links, network analysis

America's Global Standing According to Popular News Sites from around the World

News websites have become in recent years a common way of acquiring news. A report by the Pew Research Center (2008) reveals that 40% of Americans get their national and international news from the internet. Similarly, Wurff and Lauf (2005) and Schifferes et al. (2009) showed a continuous growth in online news consumption in Europe. The increasing availability and use of online news sources provides new possibilities for data assembly as well as advanced tools for theorizing in the field of political communication. In the present case, we leverage the massive data and new methods to study the way the world is being constructed and represented by media outlets around the world. But it also raises questions about media's geopolitical biases, which could affect the world picture they depict, and consequently—at least to some extent—people's perception of the world we live in.

In *The Media Were American* (2008), Tunstall demonstrates how American media have been systematically losing their power and influence around the world. He finds that while in the 1950s the US led the world in the production and international dissemination of news (as well as of radio and TV programs and films), thereafter the international media power of the US went into decline. The decline was noticeable not only in terms of spreading the content it produced, but more importantly, in terms of its presence in localized media content around the world. In contrast, several overviews of trends in international communications (Mowlana, 1985; Schramm, 1964; Thompson, 2000) and recent empirical studies of international news (Chang et al. 1987; 2000; 2005, Change & Lee, 1992; Kim & Barnett, 1996; Peng, 2004; Segev, 2008, 2010; Wu 2000) indicate that media in general, and international news in particular, are still predominantly US-centered, with coverage focusing on the US and on countries with political and economic ties to it.

The main purpose of the present study is to address this quandary as to America's standing in today's news market. It does so by charting the countries and entities¹ most frequently mentioned in popular digital news sites around the world over a period of nearly two years, from February 1, 2009 to December 31, 2010. Its findings can shed light on the current standing of the US and on its relations with other countries as reflected by online news worldwide. In doing so, this study uses our 2005 and 2006 studies of *Google News*, as well as other studies in the field, as a baseline for gauging America's standing in digital world news (Segev, 2008, 2010). But beyond diagnostics, this study tries to construct

¹ The study includes also the Palestinian Authority, not strictly a country, as well as the UN and the EU.

a heuristic of America's international news presence over time by analyzing political, economic, social and geographical factors and circumstances underpinning America's news presence.

American dominance and international news flow

When assessing American presence in online news around the world, it is important to bear in mind that news flow is merely a reflection of primary processes of interaction and exchange of materiel and symbols (Thompson, 1995). The convergence of economic and symbolic powers may be seen as a direct result of improved connectivity and the increasing flow of information, people, and materiel on a global scale. It also gives rise to the notion of “soft power” or even cultural imperialism (Schiller, 1992) that stresses the mutually reinforcing play of dominant values, practices and structures of the center and their effects on vast peripheries. Schiller finds that global media and communications play a particularly important role in this process. Unlike other industries, the communication industry can potentially affect human consciousness and mind, and consequently, as many assume, also politics, society and culture (Blondheim and Shifman, 2009). Thus, in Schiller's view, the worldwide penetration of the western—predominantly American—media industry leaves little room for the development of opposing or even alternative views and agendas.²

When it comes to international news flow, previous studies have provided strong evidence for an asymmetrical pattern, dominated by the large news agencies and reflecting mostly the interests of large news producing countries (Schramm, 1964; Galtung and Ruge, 1965; MacBride Commission, 1980; Thompson, 2000). From a broader perspective, Mowlana (1985) proposed a model that takes into account news sources, messages, distributors and destinations on the one hand, and communication hardware and software on the other. He then charted the international network of actors that are involved in the process of news production, dissemination and consumption, as well as the technological means that they employ.

In the resulting international network, Mowlana found a pattern of few dominant and central countries serving as the main providers for many recipient countries. He demonstrated that there is only meager, if any, news flow on the return path, from the peripheral players to the central ones, nor is there much news exchange between the peripheral players themselves. As a result, the content of international news is heavily biased: certain countries are neglected, practically non-existent in the imaginary world constructed by the news, while others are central to it. Mowlana's findings are fully congruent with consistent results of studies inspired by Wallerstein's (1974) World System Theory (Chang et al. 1987;

² By “alternative views” we refer to views that differ from or oppose American and western priorities and agendas. See also Barber (1996), Herman & McChesney (1997) and the well-known debates in UNESCO mainly during the MacBride Commission (1980).

2000; 2005, Chang & Lee, 1992; Kim & Barnett, 1996). They are also congruent with findings of news flow studies focused on the internet. A recent example is the study by Chang et al. (2009) that surveyed the structure of hyperlinks in news websites, and found that core countries (such as the US and the UK) get much more incoming links from news sites than peripheral countries.

However, Mowlana's model and Chang's partial confirmation are limited in that they focus on the "West" as a composite center. They fail to point out divisions within it, as well as regional trends of news flow. In this regard, an emerging literature effectively extends and fine-tunes the thrust of Mowlana's model (Bicket, 2005; Boyd-Barrett & Thussu, 1992; During, 1997; Thussu, 2000; Tomlinson, 1997; Straubhaar, 1997, 2002; and UNESCO, 2000). As noted, Tunstall (2008) believes that the US nowadays plays a less central role in the international news flow. He points out that in the 1990s some European countries took the lead in the production and dissemination of international news (as well as of TV and radio programs), especially to the Middle East, Africa and South Asia.

Moreover, although the US and Europe are still the main exporters of media content, Tunstall argues that in many countries content has become predominantly local. He does attenuate the claim by differentiating between big and small population countries, finding that small countries still produce less local content than large ones, and tend to import more from the US, the UK and France, as well as from their larger neighbors. He therefore sees the news-world divided into regions, based on geography, religion, culture and language (or groups of languages). In the most highly populated regional centers, to include China, India, Russia, Brazil and Mexico, the overall level of imports is as low as 10% of all TV content, including news, or even lower.

Similar trends of "contra-flow" in global media, and in global news in particular, were observed by Boyd-Barrett & Thussu (1992) and the subsequent studies cited above. Their findings suggest that the decline in share of American media in many countries is also a result of the continuous development of local and regional media channels as well as national regulation and censorship. Thus, for example, over the years China has successfully resisted the penetration and dissemination of western media into its territory. Today it produces much of its own media content, and its remaining imports are increasingly from other Asian countries rather than from the US or Europe. Thus, in terms of news supply and flow, the US is argued to be losing ground in the international news arena to both western competitors and to emerging regional centers. However, this does not necessarily mean that its salience in the news of the world declined too. In what follows we will investigate this latter factor—America's actual presence in the news, and moreover, we will try to explain it.

Why some countries are more newsworthy than others

The prominence of a foreign country in the news is traditionally attributed in the literature to three groups of variables: (a) *national traits* (e.g., the size and power of the foreign country), (b) *events* (e.g., disasters, wars, conflict, local protest), and (c) *relatedness*, namely proximity to that foreign country in terms of geography, demography, etc. (Wu, 2000; Sheafer et al. 2011).

National Traits. Variables of this group often measure the size of a country and its economic and political power. Following Wallerstein's (1974) World System Theory (WST), Chang (1998) classified states as core, semi-peripheral, or peripheral, and found that core-countries get much greater news attention than semi-peripheral and peripheral countries. Particularly, the economic power of a country was found to be a strong indicator of its news prominence (Kim and Barnett, 1996; Lee, 2007). Military power is another important indicator for locating countries on that divide (Kariel and Rosenvall, 1984; Shenhav et al., 2012), followed by population size (Charles et al., 1979; Dupree, 1971; Rosengren, 1988).

Events. This second group of variables measures the deviance of a country, in other words its involvement in conflicts (Golan & Wanta, 2003), as well as political, economic and social changes it is experiencing (Chang et al., 1987). The recent uprisings in the Middle East are a good example in this regard, demonstrating that smaller and less powerful countries such as Tunisia and Syria can get very high news attention worldwide, at least for a time, due to their provision of outstanding news events. The tsunami in Japan or earthquake in Haiti underscore the same point.

Relatedness. The third group of variables measures the economic, political, social and cultural ties between a reporting and a reported country. It was found, for example, that bilateral trade is a strong predictor of mutual newsworthiness of two countries (Ahren, 1984; Charles et al., 1979; Kariel and Rosenvall, 1984; Lee, 2007; Rosengren, 1988). Geographic proximity (Dupree, 1971; Galtung and Ruge, 1965) and cultural proximity, which often refers to ethnic similarity (Shoemaker et al., 1991), as well as immigration, travel, and shared languages (Chang et al., 1987; Kariel & Rosenvall, 1984), were also found to be determinants of international news coverage.³

In the case of the US, almost all of these factors can lead us to expect high prominence in the news sites of other countries. It has the greatest military and economic power worldwide, it has been continuously involved in international conflict in recent decades, and has deeper demographic and cultural ties with foreign countries than any other nation (for instance, as the destination of large populations of immigrants from many countries). And indeed, a series of previous studies found America to be very prominent in

³ Although several studies found post-colonial ties to be good determinants of news-flow between countries (Atwood, 1985; Nnaemeka and Richstad, 1980; Meyer, 1989; Skurnik 1981), a more recent study rejected this hypothesis (Wu, 2000). A possible reason would be its strong association with the bilateral trade variable that Wu calculated.

international news. Wu (2000) studied the frequency of news items mentioning different countries in the international news section of newspapers from 38 countries. His study found that the US was dominant in almost every country, capturing approximately 18% of world news. Much lower than the US, but still relatively prominent were France (8.5%), the UK (6.2%), Russia (5.4%), Bosnia (4.4%), China (4%), Germany (3.6%), Italy (3.1%) and Japan (2.4%), reflecting to some extent their economic and geopolitical power as well as their involvement in conflicts (as in the case of Bosnia). Similar gaps between the news prominence of the US and that of the rest of the world were previously found to be highly significant (Segev, 2008, 2010; Cohen & Hanusch, 2011). It remains to be seen, however, whether this enormous gap between the news prominence of the US and that of other large and economically, politically, and linguistically powerful countries can be related to the three groups of factors surveyed above.

This present study, therefore, both measures American prominence in world news, and analyzes the extent to which constituent variables of each group of factors (i.e., national traits, events, and relatedness) are related to it. The measurement element of the study offers a broad period of analysis (two years) and a large sample of news sites. Software tools developed specifically for this study (described below) allowed for a large-scale real-time frequency analysis of countries mentioned in different topical categories of news sites from around the world. By surveying two years rather than a period of a few weeks as previously done, the distortion due to serendipitous news spikes and waves (Wolfsfeld, 2004) can be minimized.

Based on the previous studies surveyed above (Chang et al. 1987; 2009; Segev, 2008, 2010; Wu, 2000, 2007), our first hypothesis is:

H_{1a}: The US will be the most frequently mentioned foreign country in all news sites around the world

In the context of this general hypothesis, and linking it to a world-system perspective, we presume that as the central country in world news,

H_{1b}: The US will be mentioned more frequently than any other country in tandem with other countries

When trying to explain the news prominence of countries, the empirical studies mentioned above agreed on the importance of their absolute economic power. Our second hypothesis is therefore:

H₂: National traits, and particularly economic related variables, will have a high positive correlation with news prominence in news sites around the world

But more specifically, and based on the findings of the past studies surveyed, when looking at the economic and military power of the US alone, we expect that:

H₃: National traits, and particularly economic and political related variables, will better explain the news prominence of the US in news sites around the world than event or relatedness factors

Our final hypothesis is a conservative one, regarding the predictive power of those variables:

H₄: The observed news prominence of the US will be equal to prominence predicted by those variables, and thus fully explained by them

Methods

The data analyzed for this study were collected from news sites in 11 different countries (the US, the UK, Germany, France, Spain, Russia, China, Japan, Iran, Egypt and Israel). These countries were selected on the basis of several considerations. First, we included countries with a large number of online users, since as previously argued, they often act as cultural and media centers for smaller countries in their peripheries (Tunstall, 2008). Applied to the internet, this factor must reflect the popularity of the language used in the country (the most popular online languages being English, Chinese, Spanish, Japanese, French, German and Arabic were preferred for the sample).

Second, we included economically leading countries. As previous studies surveyed above suggest, economic factors have a strong influence on the prominence of countries in the news. We therefore included countries with high GDPs such as Japan, China, Germany, the UK and France. Finally, when addressing the question of American dominance, it is important to examine countries with varied relations with it. Iran and Israel can serve as good examples: while Iran is considered an opponent, Israel, despite its small size, has a very strong alliance with the US. It may also attract media attention around the world due to a particular set of national trait: its historical and religious resonance (see also Segev & Blondheim, 2010, forthcoming). Egypt was also closely allied with the US in the sampling period, and moreover, due to its national traits, particularly its political and military power, it is a central force in the Arabic-speaking world, one of the most popular internet languages.

In each of the countries selected for analysis, three popular news sites were chosen for tracking. Two of them were the online versions of well-established traditional news sources, such as the websites of the *New York Times* or the *BBC*. The third news source was the *Google News* site of each country, a news aggregator of several hundreds and sometimes thousands of popular country specific news sources.⁴ In each of these news sources we mined all news items, every other day using RSS feeds when available, from five main categories: “top news”, “world news”, “business and economy”, “technology” and “entertainment and culture”. These categories were consistent for all news sites. The data of each of the

⁴ The popularity of news sites was determined by cross referencing of several indicators and sources, including the recent statistics provided by the World Association of Newspapers (<http://www.wan-press.org/worldpresstrends/articles.php?id=18>), the State of the News Media in 2008 (http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/2008/narrative_yearinnews_online.php?cat=2&media=2), Nielsen online (<http://www.nielsen-online.com>), IVW (Informationsgemeinschaft zur Feststellung der Verbreitung von Werbeträgern e.V.), news rating surveys in Russia (<http://www.superjob.ru/research/articles/613/>), BBC News (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5334828.stm) and direct surveys among media scholars from different countries. The list of popular news site was further supported and validated by online tools such as Alexa, Google Trends and Google Insights for Search, and is available on demand.

chosen news sites was sampled over a period of 23 months between the 1st of February 2009 and the 31st of December 2010 at 12:00 UTC, using data mining software, which was specially developed for this study. In total, 845,700 news items from 35 news sites⁵ were collected and analyzed.

The software identified and documented the date of each news item, its title and content, the countries mentioned in it, and its source. The countries mentioned in each news items were extracted automatically. For this purpose, we built a database of 195 country names in 10 different languages.⁶ Native-speaker research assistants were employed to translate country names into these languages. For each country name, we asked the research assistants to provide all the common names and alternative names (e.g. “United States”, “USA”, and so on). Then they were asked to omit all alternative country names that might be ambiguous and therefore yield irrelevant search results.

On the basis of this list, the software enabled us to measure the number of news items mentioning each country in news sites of other countries. It also allowed us to focus on news from specific countries. For example, we could obtain the number of news items in American news sites mentioning Iran and vice versa.

We validated the software output by randomly choosing 100 news items and manually coding the mentioned countries. There was 78% of agreement between the human coder and the software. This was mainly since the software counts only nouns (such as “the US” or “USA”), while human coders also include adjectives (such as “American”). This decision to focus on country names and not include nationalities was based on the fact that it would complicate the translation process due to divergent grammatical rules in different languages. Our previous studies (Segev, 2008, 2010) show that focusing on country names in a high volume of news items provides a very good proxy of the actual attention a country gives to another in its news outlets.

Network analysis of news-links

We used the corpus of sampled news items to study news-links, i.e., co-mentions of several countries in a single news item. For example, a *New York Times* news story: “Pointing to a New Era, US Pulls Back as Iraqis Vote”⁷ mentioned the US and Iraq in the same item and thus providing a news-link. News-links are the building blocks for a *network analysis* of countries in the news. This method provides a useful framework for displaying the complex web of relationships between countries, thus

⁵ Google News did not include special Egyptian or Iranian editions in the course of our study, but we used its Arabic edition as well as Al Jazeera as more general and popular news sources in the Arab world.

⁶ Based on the most complete list of country names available from ISO (International Organization for Standardization). This list was translated into the following languages: English, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, Persian, Arabic and Hebrew.

⁷ Rubin, A. J. (2009). Pointing to a New Era, US Pulls Back as Iraqis Vote. *The New York Times*, January 31, 2009. Retrieved 2 May 2010 from <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/01/world/middleeast/01withdraw.html>

constructing the world map emerging from online news worldwide. A cumulative international network emerges when countries are considered as nodes, and news items about them provide a descriptive map of the links between them (see e.g. Segev, 2008, 2010). Accordingly, network analysis provides the international *context* of a country, information that cannot be obtained through frequency analysis alone. Most importantly, network analysis can help identify countries that are dominant hubs in the network, vis-à-vis countries that are less interconnected and play a more marginal role, at least as popular news sites would lead us to presume. It should be noted that the analysis that follows is not necessarily a representation of actual political relations between countries, but rather a representation of the international network as reflected by popular news sources.

A series of previous studies (Barnett et al., 1996; Chase-Dunn & Grimes, 1995; Maoz, 2010; Maoz et al. 2007; Nemeth & Smith, 1985; Snyder & Kick, 1979) demonstrated the benefits of network analysis in understanding the world's political and economic systems, the position of countries and transnational interactions. Network analysis has also been used to chart and display the structure and flow of international and intercultural communications (Barnett, 2001; Barnett, Danowski, & Richards; 1993; Barnett & Lee, 2002; Barnett & Sung, 2005; Kim & Barnett, 1996; Monge & Contractor, 2003; Park, 2003; Smith, 1999; Weimann, 1989). In line with the WST, many of these studies emphasized the centrality of North America and Western Europe in the production and dissemination of information and particularly of international news.

However, unlike these previous works, in the present study network analysis emerges not from patterns of news *flow* but rather from the actual *content* of news. It is beyond the scope of this study to consider sentiments reflected in the news-links (i.e., the positive and negative connotations), due to the complexity of international contexts and the need to build a unique glossary for each pair of countries (see for example Segev & Miesch, 2011). Hence, the present network analysis indicates only the existence of mutual issues between each pair of countries. We used *Visone* software (Brandes & Wagner, 2004), for network analysis, in order to produce visual representations of networks of news-links between countries and calculate the relative centrality of countries in the entire network.

Factors explaining news prominence

While the news prominence of countries (as measured by the frequency of their mention in the sampled news sites) is operationalized as our dependent variable, a series of political, economic, social and geographic indicators we have gathered serve as our independent variables. These indicators reflect the three groups of variables (i.e., national traits, relatedness and event-oriented variables) suggested by the literature on international news flow surveyed above. Our initial list included some 30 variables, but

we report here only on 15 variables that were found to be the most significantly correlated with news prominence, and therefore used in the actual analysis. These variables included:

National Traits:

CINC (political) – the Composite Index of National Capability developed by Singer et al. (1987) is a comprehensive index for the general power of a country based on its population, urban population, iron and steel production, energy consumption, military personnel, and military expenditure. The latest CINC scores are from 2007 (<http://correlatesofwar.org>).

Military Capability (political) – based on a qualitative assessment of the Economist Intelligence Unit’s analysts, this variable measures the level of military sophistication and extent of research and development in each country on a scale of 1 to 5. We used the 2010 scores (<http://www.visionofhumanity.org/gpi-data/#/2010/mcap>).

GDP (economic) – calculated in US dollars and based on the World Economic Outlook Database of the International Monetary Fund. We used the 2010 data (<http://www.imf.org>).

Population (social) – based on the World Population Prospects of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division. We used the 2010 data (http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/unpp/panel_population.htm).

Area (geographic) –the size of a country in square kilometers based on the Demographic Yearbook of the UN Statistics Division (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2008/Table03.pdf>).

Relatedness:

Conflict Relation (political) – the extent of a conflict between two countries on a scale of 0 to 2 is based on PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset v.4-2011 (Gleditsch et al., 2002; Themnér & Wallensteen, 2011). For our study we counted only conflicts reported between 2009 and 2010 (http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp_prio_armed_conflict_dataset).

Trade (economic) – the total value of imports and exports between two countries in US dollars. The 2010 data is based on the Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook of the International Monetary Fund (<http://www.imf.org/external/data.htm>).

Foreign Population (social) – the foreign-born population measure is based on national censuses conducted between 2000 and 2011 as reported by the UN Statistics Division (<http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=POP&f=tableCode%3a44>).

Region (geographic) – a binary variable that indicates whether two countries are from the same region based on the UN classification of regions (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm>).

Border (geographic) – a binary variable that indicates whether two countries share the same border based on the CIA World Factbook (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook>).

Event-oriented:

Conflict Intensity (political) – the involvement of a county in international or national conflicts between 2009 and 2010, based on PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset v.4-2011. See also the ‘Conflict Relation’ variable.

GPI (political) – the Global Peace Index is composed by the Institute for Economics and Peace, and measures the level of country’s peacefulness. It comprises various conflict-related components such as the number of external and internal wars, the death toll from conflicts, the potential for terrorist acts, and so on. It is scaled from 1 to 5, the lower the score the more peaceful the country. The 2010 data is available from <http://www.visionofhumanity.org>

Unemployment (economic) – the unemployment rate measures the percentage of economically active individuals without work. The 2010 data is based on the CIA World Factbook (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook>).

GDP Change (economic) – the change in percentages between the GDP level of 2009 and that of 2010. See also the ‘GDP’ variable.

Death Disaster (social) – is the total death toll from natural disasters that occurred between 2009 and 2010, based on the International Disaster Database (EM-DAT) (<http://www.emdat.be>).

In order to study which of these variables has the best predictive power, we first tested their correlation with the news salience of each country in the news sites we sampled (H₂ and H₃). Then, to evaluate the predictive power of these variables in the specific case of the US (H₄), we measured the gap between the US observed news prominence and its expected news prominence in a regression model. The regression model uses news prominence as the dependent variable and each of the political, economic, social and geographic variables we collected as the independent variables. A multiple regression model was tested as well, but it proved inappropriate due to the many inner correlations between the independent variables. We then look at the standardized residual of the US for each variable. A smaller residual value of a variable indicates that it better explains the US news prominence than others.

Results

The news prominence of the US

Table 1 presents the 15 most prominent countries in online news worldwide during the nearly two-years period between February 1, 2009 and December 31, 2010. Since most countries tend to report themselves much more than other countries, we omitted self-reporting from the analysis. In other words, the prominence of the US in American news or the prominence of China in Chinese news was not taken into account. The column labeled 'Global' refers to the average prominence of each country in a cumulation of all news sources from all countries in the sample.

[Table 1 about here]

Table 1 shows that the US is by far the most frequently mentioned country in news sites around the world. In average 18.6% of news items from non-US news sites mention it. China is the second most frequently mentioned country with an average of 5.5% of the news items mentioning it. Table 1 also provides the results of a z-test between these first and second most frequently mentioned countries, indicating that the difference between the worldwide news prominence (labeled as 'Global') of the US and China is highly significant ($Z=157.168$, $p<.001$).

In fact, the US gets the highest news attention in most other countries. In British news it reaches an exceptionally high level of 34% of news items mentioning foreign countries. In Japan and Germany the US is also by far the most prominent actor, mentioned in 28.6% and 27.7% of their news items respectively. In contrast, in French news the US gets the least attention, with only 4.3% of news items mentioning it. Likewise, Egyptian news tends to focus on Middle Eastern countries and the US is mentioned in only 6.4% of its news items. Hence, H_{1a} was mostly confirmed: In the aggregate, and in all countries except France and Egypt, the US is by far the most prominent country in the news sites included in our sample.

Other prominent countries, such as China, the UK, France, Iran, Israel and Palestine get much lower news attention than the US, ranging from 3% to 6% of the news items. It is worth noting here, that notwithstanding the long sampling period, world events did influence the news prominence of some countries. In particular, the contested election in Iran and its alleged attempts to develop nuclear arms attracted much news attention around the world. China, the UK and France, on the other hand, have always been prominent actors due to their economic and geopolitical power (Wu, 2000). Israel and Palestine routinely attract high international news attention mainly in European and American news sites for mostly political, historical, journalistic and religion reasons (see also Salwen & Matera, 1992; Segev & Blondheim, 2010, forthcoming; Wanta, Golan, & Lee, 2004). During 2009 and 2010 the US and some other European countries still had a lingering military presence in violent and volatile Iraq and in

Afghanistan, hence the relatively high news prominence of these countries in American and European news. But when adding Asian news sites, the average news prominence of Iraq and Afghanistan drops below the 3% of news items.

Figure 1 shows the results of a network analysis in news sites of all the countries we studied during the two-year sampling period. The entire network includes 5,490 pairs of countries that were mentioned in 307,471 news items. For each country we calculated its “degree centrality” (i.e., the number of countries with which it was mentioned), and their scale (i.e., the percentage of news-links in which it was mentioned out of the total number of news-links). Table 4 in the Appendix includes the full list of countries and their degree centrality and scale. In order to limit biases of self-reporting, we did not count in the analysis news-links in which the reporting country was mentioned. For example, we did not count news-links that mentioned the US in American news sites. In the cause of simplification, the network charted in the figure only presents pairs of countries that were mentioned in at least 2% of the news-links. The size of the nodes indicates their scale—the percentage of news-links in which they are mentioned, and the width of the links indicates the percentage of news items that mentioned the two countries together.

[Figure 1 about here]

Figure 1 clearly indicates that the US is positioned at the center of the world network. It is mentioned in 20.7% of all news links, compared to the next highest, UK and France, both are mentioned in 7.3% of all news links. It is also mentioned together with 177 countries, compared to 156 and 155 countries with which the next highest—the UK and France—are mentioned respectively. Thus, H_{1b} is amply confirmed. Apart from the very frequent news-link of Israel-Palestine—they receive 3% of news attention alone—the US appears as the top partner with most other countries. Highly mentioned US news links are with Afghanistan (1.3%), China (1.3%), Iran (1.3%), North Korea (1%), Russia (0.9%), and Iraq (0.8%). Not surprisingly, all these countries are involved in one way or another in a conflict or tension with the US.

The opposite perspective on the importance and centrality of the US in news reporting around the world emerges when artificially eliminating it from the network. Figure 2 shows a news-link network based on all news items that do not mention the US. Here too, we counted only news-links that did not mention the country reporting them in order to limit biases of self-reporting. What we get is a dramatically different world order: the global system featuring a single center breaks up into a lateral aggregation of nodes, with noticeable prominence to regional clusters and their hubs.

[Figure 2 about here]

In this would-be world China emerges as the dominant center in the Asian cluster.⁸ Palestine serves as a center of news attention in the Middle Eastern cluster, mentioned mainly together with Israel but also with other Middle Eastern countries. France and the UK are central in the European cluster. Finally, Iran and Russia serve as mediating hubs between Europe and Asia, reflecting their geographic position as well as their economic and political ties or tensions with the east and the west. Hence, when removing the US as a world player, it becomes possible to identify a certain relation between news-links and geographic proximity. There are no significant world centers, but rather regional hubs with a more or less similar degree centrality. In short, the emergent network suggests that the world of news-links without the US has a radically different shape. It is much more flat and lacks a center, or in other words, a hegemon. This perspective further illustrates America's importance and dominance in the world news, and serves as a secondary confirmation of H_{1b} —that the US is indeed mentioned most frequently in tandem with other countries.

Factors indicating the news prominence of countries

Table 2 summarizes the results of a Pearson correlation between the news prominence of countries and the political, economic, social and geographic variables composing the three groups of explanatory factors discussed above. Variables from the national traits and the event-oriented groups were tested for correlation with the observed news prominence of each country. For example, the news prominence of countries in American news was tested for correlation with their GDP, so was their general level of conflict, etc. Variables from the relatedness group, on the other hand, differed for each country and were tested separately for correlation with the news prominence of each specific country. Thus, for example, the prominence of countries in American news was tested for correlation with the US level of trade with those countries (imports and exports).

The average prominence of countries (labeled as 'Global') was tested for correlation with the accumulated value of the relatedness variable of each country. For example, the correlation of global news prominence with the trade variable was tested by calculating first the total imports and exports of each country with all other countries. Likewise, the correlations of the global news prominence with the conflict or the border variables were tested by calculating first the total number of countries with which each country has conflicts, or the total number of countries with which each country has common borders respectively. In order to ensure the normal distribution of the variables we used a logarithmic transformation for most of the variables (excluding binary variables). Non-significant correlations are marked with gray fonts, and the strongest correlations in each group are marked with gray shadows.

⁸ The prominence of North Korea can be attributed to its launch into international news by its 2009 conflict with South Korea and the US.

[Table 2 about here]

Table 2 shows that all variables from the national trait group in almost all countries are highly correlated with news prominence. In other words, the size and power of a country are very strong predictors of its news prominence. The only exception is Egyptian news in which news attention is given mostly to neighboring countries and thus the variables from the relatedness group have a stronger correlation with news prominence. Looking more specifically at the national trait variables it shows that the GDP has the strongest correlation with news prominence of countries. Again, Egyptian news is the exception with CINC (political power) having the strongest correlation with the news prominence of countries. Hence, H_2 was confirmed as well, the national trait variables and particularly the economic power are the strongest predictors for news prominence in the news sites of almost all countries.

In fact, the economic power of countries has also the strongest correlation with news prominence among relatedness variables. In other words, countries in a trade relationship are more likely to mention each other in the news than countries with mutual conflicts, shared population or shared borders. However, within the group of event-oriented variables, economy does not play a significant role. Instead, conflict intensity has a weak but still significant correlation with news prominence, followed by the death toll from natural disasters. Economic instabilities, as measured by changes in GDP between 2009 and 2010 and unemployment rate, are not correlated at all with news prominence.

The US is currently the leading economic power in the world, but it is also involved in many of the world's conflicts. In order to identify which of the variables explains best its high news prominence in the world, Table 3 presents the gap between the US observed news prominence and its expected news prominence in a regression model (we report here the standardized residual values). In order to avoid problems of non-linearity and ensure the normal distribution of the variables we used here also a logarithmic transformation for most of the variables (excluding binary variables). Non-significant correlations are colored in gray, and the smallest gap in the group of variables (i.e., the smallest standardized residual value) is marked with a gray shadow. The smallest standardized residual indicates also the best variable to explain the US news prominence.

[Table 3 about here]

Table 3 shows that the standardized residual value of the US is more than two for almost all variables. This means that the observed news prominence of the US is higher by more than two standard deviations than its expected value for any of the given variables. This is of course a resounding contradiction to our H_4 . The smallest average value of the standardized residual is of the GDP variable (standardized residual of 1.614 for the general news labeled as 'Global'), suggesting that the GDP is the best predictor of US news prominence around the world. Still, US news prominence is higher by at least

one standard deviation than its expected value if predicted by the GDP alone. The only exceptions are the US prominence in French news (standardized residual = .476), Iranian news (standardized residual = .602) and Egyptian news (where the GDP is not significant explanation, and the CINC provides a better explanation for US news prominence with a standardized residual of .92). This is mainly because in the news sites of these countries the US is significantly less prominent, mentioned by less than 10% of the news items. Hence, the gap between the observed news prominence and the expected news prominence of the US based on GDP is lower but still positive, lending additional support to H₃. National traits, and particularly economic variables, indeed best explain America's news prominence, yet in all countries it is mentioned much more than expected.

In the group of relatedness variables trade with the US is the best predictor for its news prominence, followed to some extent by the mutual presence of foreign population between the two countries.⁹ In terms of events, conflict intensity is a better predictor of US news prominence than natural disaster. Still, with regard to these factors too, America's economic power provides a better explanation for its news prominence than its political power, let alone its economic and political relations with other countries, or its internal and external conflicts. However, it also falls short of explaining the levels of news prominence we found.

Discussion

Our study aimed first at examining the state of the American nation in online news, given the disagreements in the literature concerning its standing. While Tunstall (2008) reported a decline in the presence of American media as well as a purported decline in US mentions worldwide, others (e.g. Wu, 2000, 2007; Segev, 2008, 2010), found it robust and much higher than that of other countries both in online and offline outlets. Either way, the question of America's standing in world news and the ways to measure it was not given sufficient methodological or theoretical attention.

Our most significant finding is that the US remains by far the most prominent country in the news of the world. It was mentioned in more than 18% of the news items in non-American news sites, while other countries were mentioned in no more than 6% of the news items. This figure—18%—which is surprisingly close to what previous studies found over the past generation (see introduction), albeit using very different samples and methods, would seem to be meaningful to the current debate over American *declinism*. It would suggest that the news about America's demise as a world power may be “premature

⁹ The negative standardized residual values in the case of Iran, Japan and Egypt indicate that the observed news prominence of the US in these countries is actually slightly lower than would be expected if predicted by the mutual foreign population.

and exaggerated”. Thus, our first hypothesis that the US would be the most prominent country in the news was mostly confirmed.

A network analysis provided a more comprehensive overview of the international structure, the position of the US therein, and its relations with other countries. While the US may no longer be a dominant producer and distributor of international news, it remains at the center of the imagined international network spun by the world’s news stories. Its robust news links with almost all countries of the world indicates that very many meaningful political, economic, technological and cultural events worldwide are found relevant to the US. One of the strongest demonstrations of this is the network that appears after technically removing the US. What emerges is a flat network with several regional hubs in Europe, Central and East Asia and the Middle East. This difference suggests that media globalization, at least as reflected in news-link analysis, is essentially based on US centrality, and its leading political, economic and to an extent also cultural standing vis-à-vis other countries. In other words, when it comes to news, the media are still pretty much American.

Thus, WST is both supported and challenged by our findings. On the one hand, the unipolar hierarchy portrayed in news sites provides empirical support for WST, adding a more international and longitudinal perspective to previous studies based solely on English speaking newspapers (Chang et al, 2000; Galtung and Ruge, 1965; Kim & Barnett, 1996). On the other hand, the relatively equal centrality of many European, Asian and Middle Eastern countries when removing the US from the analysis, supports the findings on regionalization (Bicket, 2005; Boyd-Barrett & Thussu, 1992; During, 1997; Straubhaar, 1997, 2002; Thussu, 2000; UNESCO, 2000), and therefore also challenges the original division of countries into core, semi-peripheries and peripheries proposed by WST.

An important caveat in evaluating the results of previous studies in the field concerns their emphasis on “news flow”, implying the provision of news from one country to another. Our study shows that the mentions of a country in the news of other countries do not necessarily reflect the flow of news from one county to another predicated on the provider’s power, size, relations with the recipient country, etc. It may as well be a result of the specific interest of one country in another: on “pull” rather than “push”. For instance, news about the US in Chinese outlets may indeed indicate a flow of information from the US to China, but it may also indicate a Chinese-launched news initiative, resulting from interest in the US. This interest is not necessarily instigated by a composite of the volume of trade between the countries, the level of political tension between them, the flow of people between the two countries and such like.

We thus posit that the singling out and unique focus on the US is, to an extent, both the foundation of hegemony and its consequence. This Janus faced interpretation of hegemony as both cause and effect

of interest is our general proposition when trying to explain the very high centrality of the US in the world's news which, we found, could not be attributed to its economic or military power alone. In this respect, the vast amount of indecisive literature in the field of "news flow" calls for a new framing of the issue, and investigating additional reasons for country mentions in the news.

When trying to explain the gap between the news prominence of the US and that of other countries, Wu (2000) suggested that it could result not only from America's political and economic power, but also and perhaps more importantly, from its cultural and media dominance. The link between US news prominence and its soft power (i.e., its growing influence on popular culture around the world) may be a particularly important subject for further studies. Our argument may be seen as a modification, perhaps an extension, of Wu's suggestion. The findings above clearly show that the economic dominance of the US is indeed the best explanation for its news dominance, confirming our third hypothesis. Yet, even the economic factor cannot account for the very high news prominence of the US, with an observed value of more than 1.6 standard deviations from its expected value if explained by the GDP. This unexplained "surplus" of news attention is precisely the manifestation of the idea that the hegemon gets heightened news attention merely for being a hegemon, or put differently, when you are a hegemon the whole world watches.

France and Egypt were found to be the exception, the US being mentioned much less frequently in their news sites. For Egypt the reason seems to emerge when looking at the top ten most frequently mentioned countries. Apart from Palestine and Israel, Sudan, Syria, Lebanon and Turkey—countries that do not appear in other lists—are most frequently mentioned. This suggests that Egyptian news are much more regional in their focus, perhaps indicating its engagement in local rather than global affairs, and hence the much smaller role the US plays in Egypt's imagined global community. France, on the other hand, cannot be understood as mainly a regional player. This is clearly indicated in its list of the top ten most frequently mentioned countries that includes Iran, China and Afghanistan. The perspective proposed above may help explain this French anomaly: perhaps it resents, and therefore resists acknowledging American hegemony, a resistance both demonstrated and practiced by diverting attention—including news attention—from it. For instance, the major focus in French news on nuclear developments in Iran or on the economic crisis in Greece—both more prominent stories than news about America—could provide such a diversion from the hegemonic effect of the US.

There is of course a very large gap between this kind of speculation and our study's heavily documented concrete findings. Using quantitative and automated techniques, our study leaves room for future qualitative investigations that would extend and deepen the finding through deciphering and

interpreting the news texts themselves, seeking an in-depth understanding of the variety of discourses on the US in the news of different countries.

However, even in its own brand of inquiry our study can be extended and expanded. It is based on a two-year sample, a span that is insufficient for uncovering meaningful long-term trends in the news prominence of the US around the world, and should be extended. Another extension would be including in the sample news content of more peripheral countries and of less dominant languages. Notably, further studies should also take into account news content from Brazil and India, two rising and influential regional powers. Finally, our study is focused on online news, and there is room to apply similar methods for other media, and particularly television, which remains a dominant channel for news consumption.¹⁰

Yet with all these possibilities for meaningful extensions, the central finding of this present study remains simple and basic. In all indicators we used for measuring the expected news prominence of countries, the US was the uncontested leader. Furthermore, its observed news prominence was far greater than would be expected by any and all indicators that the previous literature proposed. To complement this fundamental finding, one should notice the rest of the field: not a single international player seems to be departing from the pack and trying to establish a lead. China and the UK, France and Russia, show similar prominence rates, and they are dramatically lower than America's. In other words, from the vantage point of international news, there seems to be no competition over world hegemony. The uncontested nature of America's news prominence seems to indicate that its hegemony may be with us for many years to come.

¹⁰ For example, the recent cross-national survey of television news channels in 17 countries (Wilke, Heimprecht, & Cohen, 2012) shows remarkably similar figures when it comes to the prominence of the US around the world.

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Table 1

The 15 most prominent countries in news sites around the world (by country)

Global		US		UK		Israel		Germany		France	
N	306,471	N	21,280		53,623	N	17,911	N	17,981	N	18,331
USA	18.6%	China	10.8%	USA	34.0%	USA	21.2%	USA	27.7%	Iran	5.1%
China	5.5%	UK	6.5%	China	7.3%	Palestine	8.7%	Afghanistan	5.7%	China	4.9%
Palestine	4.6%	Iran	5.0%	France	7.3%	Iran	7.3%	EU	5.7%	Greece	4.7%
UK	4.3%	Pakistan	4.5%	Germany	5.6%	UK	6.7%	Iran	4.3%	Afghanistan	4.4%
France	3.9%	Afghanistan	4.1%	India	4.6%	France	4.5%	China	4.1%	USA	4.3%
Iran	3.9%	Russia	3.9%	EU	4.3%	Germany	3.2%	Israel	3.2%	Germany	3.5%
Israel	3.9%	Iraq	3.9%	Russia	4.2%	Russia	3.1%	UK	3.1%	Israel	3.4%
Russia	3.3%	France	3.8%	Japan	3.7%	Lebanon	2.7%	France	2.9%	UK	3.3%
Germany	3.3%	Israel	3.8%	Australia	3.6%	Egypt	2.6%	Russia	2.7%	Palestine	2.8%
Afghanistan	2.8%	India	3.1%	Afghanistan	3.4%	India	2.2%	Pakistan	2.5%	UN	2.7%
EU	2.6%	Japan	3.1%	Iraq	3.3%	China	2.2%	Switzerland	2.2%	Pakistan	2.5%
Iraq	2.5%	Palestine	2.7%	Iran	3.2%	Spain	2.1%	Italy	2.1%	Russia	2.4%
Japan	2.5%	Germany	2.5%	UN	3.2%	Turkey	1.9%	Iraq	2.0%	Italy	2.3%
UN	2.3%	UN	2.0%	Pakistan	3.1%	Syria	1.8%	Palestine	2.0%	Haiti	1.8%
North Korea	2.2%	North Korea	2.0%	Ireland	2.7%	Italy	1.6%	Greece	1.8%	EU	1.8%
Z-Score	157.168		15.698		107.915		33.037		55.8		0.702
	p<.001		p<.001		P<.001		p<.001		p<.001		n.s.

Spain		Russia		Egypt		Iran		China		Japan	
N	14,968	N	60,877	N	9,752	N	18,427	N	50,504	N	20,244
USA	11.5%	USA	18.3%	Palestine	27.5%	USA	8.5%	USA	20.5%	USA	28.6%
EU	6.6%	UK	5.7%	Israel	17.5%	Iraq	7.0%	Japan	7.0%	China	17.4%
France	4.6%	France	3.0%	Sudan	6.7%	Egypt	6.4%	UK	6.1%	South Korea	8.5%
UK	4.1%	Iran	2.9%	USA	6.4%	UK	5.4%	South Korea	5.4%	North Korea	8.3%
China	3.9%	Georgia	2.9%	France	5.3%	Germany	4.2%	North Korea	5.2%	UN	8.1%
Afghanistan	3.6%	Ukraine	2.2%	Iran	4.9%	Saudi Arabia	4.2%	Russia	4.3%	Russia	4.9%
Germany	3.4%	Germany	2.1%	Iraq	4.7%	Palestine	4.0%	India	3.0%	Thailand	3.9%
Iran	3.3%	UN	2.1%	Syria	3.7%	Afghanistan	4.0%	France	2.7%	India	3.3%
Israel	3.0%	India	2.0%	Lebanon	3.6%	France	3.7%	UN	2.4%	Iran	2.9%
Russia	2.7%	China	2.0%	Turkey	3.1%	Israel	2.7%	Iran	2.3%	UK	2.8%
Brazil	2.7%	Afghanistan	1.8%	Russia	2.8%	Russia	2.6%	Afghanistan	2.1%	Iraq	2.3%
Italy	2.5%	Japan	1.6%	UK	2.7%	Japan	2.5%	Taiwan	2.0%	Mexico	2.1%
Cuba	2.2%	EU	1.5%	Jordan	2.6%	Spain	2.4%	Germany	2.0%	Chile	2.1%
Venezuela	2.1%	Israel	1.4%	Somalia	2.6%	India	2.4%	Pakistan	1.7%	Afghanistan	2.0%
Pakistan	2.0%	Italy	1.3%	Germany	2.5%	Brazil	2.3%	EU	1.6%	Greece	2.0%
	14.643		67.706		16.792		5.538		62.516		26.828
	p<.001		p<.001		P<.001		p<.001		p<.001		p<.001

Table 2
Pearson correlations of country characteristics with its news prominence (by reporting country)

		Global	US	UK	Israel	Germany	France	Spain	Russia	Egypt	Iran	China	Japan
National Traits	CINC	.649**	.664**	.663**	.565**	.636**	.586**	.499**	.606**	.330*	.612**	.666**	.622**
	Military Capability	.470**	.359**	.439**	.411**	.374**	.354**	.266**	.429**	.207	.507**	.419**	.428**
	GDP	.791**	.684**	.806**	.669**	.707**	.597**	.633**	.642**	.158	.705**	.797**	.703**
	Population	.654**	.636**	.694**	.485**	.500**	.489**	.464**	.482**	.178	.560**	.726**	.602**
	Area (km2)	.491**	.455**	.526**	.369**	.355**	.303**	.340**	.365**	.161	.437**	.555**	.433**
Relatedness	Conflict Relation	.316**	.197**	.325**	.197*	.247**	.157*	.184*					
	Trade	.727**	.639**	.690**	.686**	.661**	.626**	.579**	.424**	.472**	.667**	.830**	.785**
	Foreign Population	.654**	.473**	.598**	.566**	.658**	.519**	.350**	.171*	.258*	.249**	.246**	.284**
	Region	.002	.074	.171*	.102	.235**	.118	.142	.248**	.341**	.048	.338**	.333**
	Border	.409**	.132	.120	.318**	.228**	.208**	.112	.267**	.386**	.249**	.241**	
Events	Conflict Intensity	.328**	.347**	.310**	.265**	.329**	.305**	.253**	.227**	.297*	.249**	.299**	.320**
	GPI	.133	.242**	.053	.020	.128	.137	.105	.067	.409**	.060	.081	.105
	Unemployment	-.030	.001	.042	.046	-.014	-.043	-.058	.023	.238	-.052	-.106	-.138
	GDP Change	.052	.163*	.034	.001	.027	.024	.017	-.018	.123	.074	.172*	.137
	Death Disaster	.293**	.333**	.348**	.188*	.253**	.225**	.265**	.227**	-.023	.128	.345**	.316**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 3
US Standardized residuals

		Global	UK	Israel	Germany	France	Spain	Russia	Egypt	Iran	China	Japan
National Traits	CINC	2.259	2.426	2.209	2.225	.806	1.725	1.808	.920	1.268	2.013	2.000
	Military Capability	2.071	2.362	2.067	2.195	1.048	1.788	1.685	1.192	1.046	1.952	1.829
	GDP	1.614	1.805	1.620	1.739	.476	1.104	1.272	1.195	.602	1.517	1.587
	Population	2.454	2.684	2.460	2.572	1.247	1.940	2.153	1.237	1.608	2.267	2.242
	Area (km2)	2.574	2.711	2.639	2.729	1.558	2.096	2.261	1.356	1.805	2.340	2.363
Relatedness	Conflict Relation	2.538	2.709	3.033	2.775	1.708	2.228					
	Trade	2.119	2.485	2.002	2.651	1.045	1.936	2.412	.941	2.345	1.646	1.583
	Foreign Population	1.757	2.614	2.219	2.687	1.440	2.120	2.546	-.211	-.733	3.057	-.468
	Region	2.990	3.321	3.043	3.374	2.053	2.652	2.975	1.829	2.352	3.257	3.216
	Border	3.445	3.133	3.157	3.210	2.045	2.500	2.867	1.692	2.405	3.009	
Events	Conflict Intensity	2.568	2.745	2.614	2.706	1.496	2.181	2.390	1.299	1.956	2.497	2.492
	GPI	3.109	3.318	2.963	3.025	1.962	2.436	2.727	1.726	2.293	2.892	2.759
	Unemployment	3.172	3.369	2.985	3.056	1.980	2.476	2.720	1.629	2.318	3.000	2.840
	GDP Change	3.133	3.229	3.017	3.159	2.031	2.566	2.706	1.722	2.376	3.190	3.045
	Death Disaster	2.849	3.005	2.717	2.845	1.761	2.254	2.547	1.503	2.154	2.728	2.648
	Average	2.577	2.794	2.583	2.730	1.510	2.134	2.362	1.288	1.700	2.526	2.164

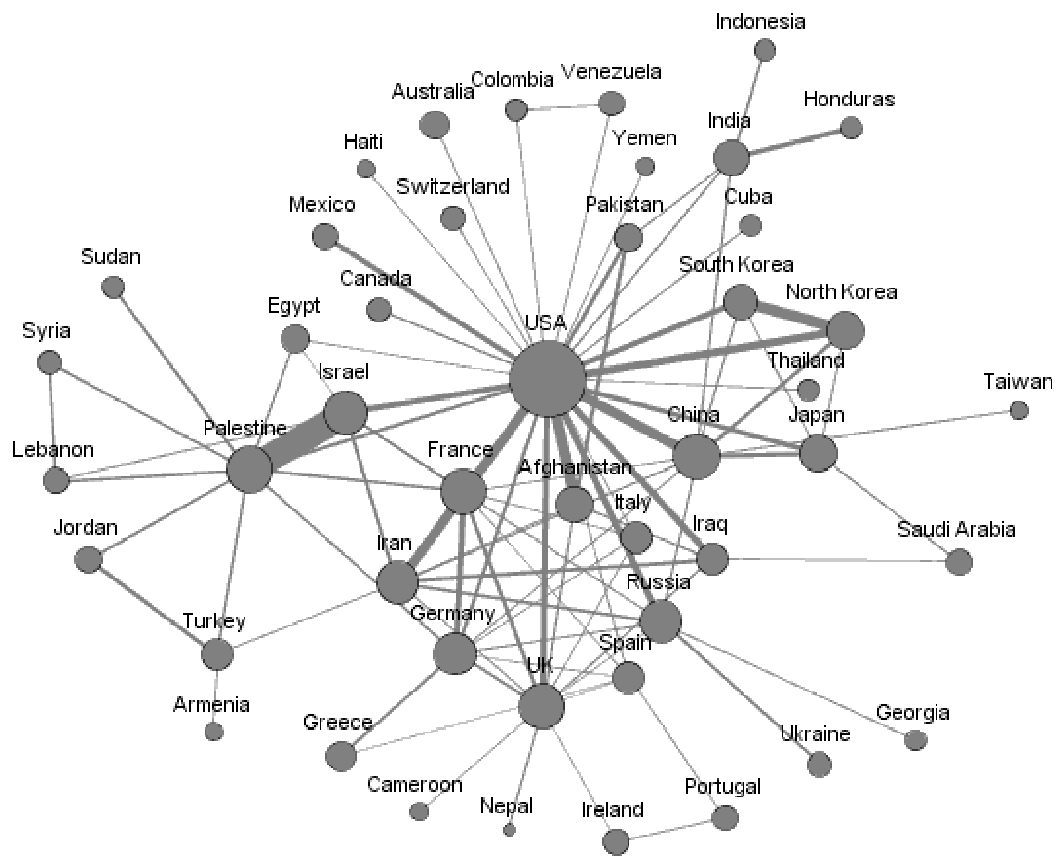


Figure 1. *Network of News-links from news sites around the world*

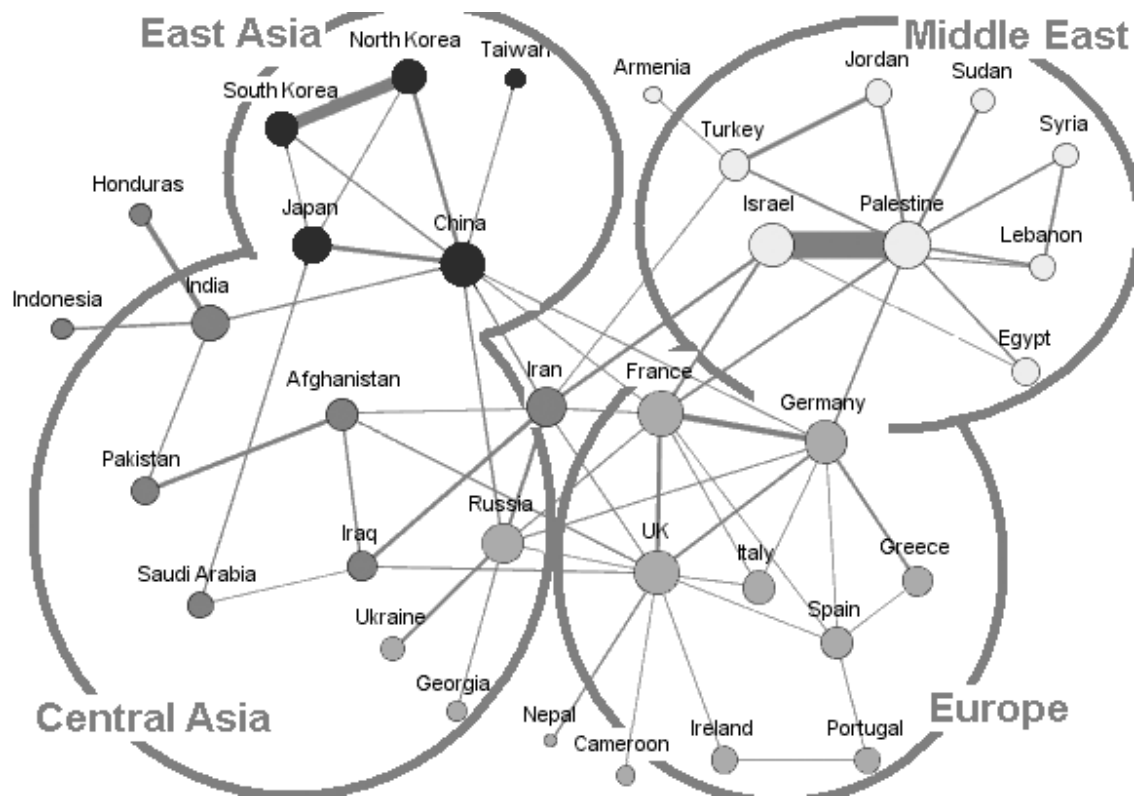


Figure 2. Network of news-links omitting the US

Note: Clusters of countries are marked with different gradients of gray based on automatic calculation using the Iterative Conductance Cutting (ICC) method with a granularity of 0.3 (Brandes et al, 2003; Kannan et al. 2004).

Appendix

Table 4
Centrality of countries in the news-link network

Country	Degree Centrality	Scale (% of News-links)	Country	Degree Centrality	Scale (% of News-links)	Country	Degree Centrality	Scale (% of News-links)
USA	177	20.5	New Zealand	79	1.2	Bangladesh	49	0.5
UK	156	7.3	Taiwan	79	1.2	Malta	46	0.6
France	155	7.3	Austria	78	1.5	Jamaica	45	0.5
India	144	4.6	Georgia	78	1.4	Senegal	45	0.8
China	138	7.5	Indonesia	78	1.6	Costa Rica	44	0.7
Germany	137	6.6	Serbia	77	1.4	Mozambique	44	0.4
Russia	137	6.3	Jordan	76	2.5	Nicaragua	44	0.6
Japan	124	5.1	Finland	75	1.0	Sri Lanka	44	0.5
Spain	124	3.5	Vietnam	72	1.2	Mauritania	43	0.7
Brazil	122	4.3	Kazakhstan	71	1.5	Bahrain	42	0.5
Iran	122	6.5	Morocco	71	1.1	Tunisia	42	0.8
Australia	119	2.9	Algeria	70	1.4	Cambodia	41	0.4
Afghanistan	118	4.8	Bulgaria	70	1.0	El Salvador	41	0.6
Egypt	117	2.7	Peru	70	1.3	Kosovo	41	0.6
Israel	111	7.1	Qatar	70	1.4	Moldova	41	0.4
South Africa	111	2.0	Congo	69	1.1	Myanmar	40	0.7
Italy	110	3.6	Haiti	69	1.2	Panama	39	0.5
Turkey	110	3.4	Czech	68	1.7	Guatemala	38	0.5
Netherlands	106	2.7	Philippines	68	1.0	Oman	38	0.6
North Korea	106	5.0	Malaysia	66	0.8	Vatican	38	0.6
Switzerland	102	2.1	Slovenia	65	1.2	Albania	37	0.5
Palestine	101	7.8	Uruguay	64	1.3	Azerbaijan	37	0.9
Canada	100	2.0	Hungary	63	1.1	Liberia	36	0.6
Pakistan	100	3.0	Cameroon	62	1.1	Tanzania	36	0.4
Argentina	99	2.6	Latvia	61	0.9	Chad	35	0.4
Greece	99	3.1	Ethiopia	60	0.6	Monaco	34	1.0
Iraq	98	3.8	Luxembourg	60	0.9	Macedonia	33	0.7
Nigeria	98	2.4	Romania	59	1.2	Burundi	30	0.4
Ukraine	98	2.0	UAE	59	0.9	Dominica	30	1.0
Kenya	97	1.3	Angola	57	0.9	Nepal	30	0.5
Mexico	97	2.4	Rwanda	57	0.8	Sierra Leone	30	0.6
Venezuela	97	2.1	Estonia	56	0.8	Trinidad	30	0.4
Ireland	96	2.5	Honduras	56	1.7	Montenegro	29	0.4
Cuba	95	1.6	Ivory Coast	56	1.4	Zambia	29	0.3
Denmark	95	1.5	Lithuania	56	0.7	Dominican	28	0.6
Niger	95	2.6	Yemen	56	1.1	Malawi	27	0.3
South Korea	95	4.4	Zimbabwe	56	0.6	Mali	27	0.5
Portugal	94	2.2	Croatia	55	0.9	Gabon	26	0.4
Norway	91	1.4	Ecuador	54	1.0	Maldives	26	0.2
Thailand	89	1.7	Laos	54	0.8	Mauritius	26	0.4
Iceland	88	1.6	Mongolia	54	0.5	Togo	26	0.5
Singapore	88	1.4	Libya	53	1.0	Cape Verde	25	0.4
Sudan	88	1.7	Armenia	52	1.1	Tajikistan	25	0.4
Sweden	88	2.0	Guinea	52	0.9	Comoros	24	0.3
Colombia	87	1.9	Cyprus	51	0.7	East Timor	24	0.2
Poland	87	1.8	Slovakia	51	0.7	Turkmenistan	24	0.3
Saudi Arabia	86	2.3	Uzbekistan	51	0.7	Guinea Bissau	23	0.4
Chile	83	1.9	Belarus	50	0.7	Samoa	23	0.3
Belgium	81	1.5	Bolivia	50	1.0	Benin	22	0.5
Ghana	81	1.4	Burma	50	0.7	Kyrgyzstan	22	0.3
Somalia	81	1.3	Kuwait	50	0.7	Guyana	21	0.3
Syria	81	2.2	Paraguay	50	1.3	Madagascar	21	1.0

Table 5
Most frequent news-links and their share from entire sample

Countries	% of News Links	Countries	% of News Links
Israel-Palestine	3.0	Nepal-UK	0.3
North Korea-South Korea	1.5	China-Iran	0.3
Afghanistan-USA	1.3	Iraq-UK	0.3
China-USA	1.3	India-Pakistan	0.2
Iran-USA	1.3	France-Iran	0.2
North Korea-USA	1.0	France-Russia	0.2
Russia-USA	0.9	Cuba-USA	0.2
Iraq-USA	0.8	Georgia-Russia	0.2
Brazil-Madagascar	0.8	Germany-Russia	0.2
UK-USA	0.8	Israel-Lebanon	0.2
Israel-USA	0.7	China-Taiwan	0.2
South Korea-USA	0.7	Japan-North Korea	0.2
France-Germany	0.7	Iran-UK	0.2
Niger-Nigeria	0.7	China-Germany	0.2
Mexico-USA	0.6	Andorra-Monaco	0.2
Japan-USA	0.6	Australia-USA	0.2
Honduras-India	0.6	Japan-South Korea	0.2
France-USA	0.6	Afghanistan-Iran	0.2
China-Japan	0.6	China-France	0.2
Pakistan-USA	0.5	Spain-USA	0.2
Afghanistan-Pakistan	0.5	Iran-Turkey	0.2
Jordan-Turkey	0.5	Switzerland-USA	0.2
France-UK	0.5	USA-Yemen	0.2
Iran-Iraq	0.5	Ireland-Portugal	0.2
China-North Korea	0.5	Dominica-Jordan	0.2
Palestine-USA	0.5	Italy-UK	0.2
Iran-Israel	0.4	Thailand-USA	0.2
Germany-USA	0.4	Portugal-Spain	0.2
Palestine-Sudan	0.4	Argentina-Chile	0.2
Iran-Russia	0.4	Germany-Italy	0.2
Russia-Ukraine	0.4	France-Italy	0.2
Germany-Greece	0.4	USA-Venezuela	0.2
Jordan-Palestine	0.4	Ireland-UK	0.2
Germany-UK	0.4	Colombia-USA	0.2
Lebanon-Palestine	0.4	Egypt-Israel	0.2
France-Israel	0.4	Armenia-Turkey	0.2
France-Palestine	0.4	Iraq-Saudi Arabia	0.2
Lebanon-Syria	0.4	Italy-USA	0.2
Palestine-Syria	0.3	Russia-UK	0.2
Palestine-Turkey	0.3	Egypt-USA	0.2
India-Indonesia	0.3	Sweden-Tunisia	0.2
Germany-Palestine	0.3	France-Spain	0.2
Afghanistan-Iraq	0.3	Germany-Spain	0.2
Egypt-Palestine	0.3	Colombia-Venezuela	0.2
China-Russia	0.3	Spain-UK	0.2
China-India	0.3	Haiti-USA	0.2
Canada-USA	0.3	Cameroon-UK	0.2
Afghanistan-UK	0.3	Greece-Spain	0.2
India-USA	0.3	Italy-Spain	0.2
Kazakhstan-Monaco	0.3	Greece-Portugal	0.2
Angola-Benin	0.3	Ireland-Spain	0.2
Japan-Saudi Arabia	0.3	Turkey-USA	0.2
China-South Korea	0.3	Burma-Myanmar	0.2