Struggles of identity in the age of globalisation

Elirea Bornman[*]

Abstract

This article explores the intricate interrelationships between discourses on, and struggles of, identity and the multiple processes associated with increasing globalisation in the modern age. Globalisation is often exclusively associated with worldwide economic integration and the emergence of a borderless global market. However, globalisation also involves sweeping changes on the social, cultural and political terrains. Globalisation furthermore entails apparently contradictory processes of, among other things, homogenisation and universalisation on the one hand and localisation and differensiation on the other. Various analysts point out that the often contradictory processes of globalisation have led to wide-ranging changes in the processes of identity formation that have, in turn, resulted not only in a flourishing of discourses on identity, but also in struggles of identity involving various minority and marginalised groups. Apart from exploring various definitions of identity, discourses and struggles of identity are discussed on five levels, namely the individual, subnational, national, supranational and global levels. Attention is given to the role of the media, and information and communication technologies in these struggles and the implications for policy-making within the media and communications sector. The far-reaching implications for Africa, and South Africa in particular, are also considered.

1 Introduction[1]

The opening of a new century has always served as a symbolic turning point in human history. The twenty-first century is no exception. A significant feature of the present juncture is the sweeping economic, social, cultural and political changes often referred to as *globalisation* (Tehranian 1999).

In general, the term *globalisation* refers to the transformation of temporal and spatial limitations, that is, the shrinking of distance due to the dramatic reduction in the time needed to bridge spatial differences which has, in turn, resulted in the gradual integration of political, economic and social space across national borders. Although globalisation is often exclusively associated with the economic sphere, that is, with processes of production, distribution and consumption as well as with ever-increasing global trade and financial services (Le Pere & Lambrechts 1999), economic globalisation is intricately interwoven with changes within the social, cultural and political spheres (Featherstone 1990; Waters 1995).

Globalisation is an extremely complex and multifaceted phenomenon. On the one hand, there is the tendency towards homogeneity, synchronisation, integration, unity and universalism. On the other hand, there is the propensity for localisation, heterogeneity, differentiation, diversity and particularism. These processes are intricately interwoven and represent, in reality, two faces of the same coin. Thus the term *globalisations* is sometimes used to indicate that globalisation is not a ubiquitous or uniform process, but involves various terrains, manifests differently in various contexts and has different effects for people

---

* Elirea Bornman is associate professor in the Department of Communication Science, University of South Africa, Pretoria. e-mail: bornme@unisa.ac.za

in different contexts (Braman & van Staden 2000; Kloskowska 1998; Tehranian, M & Tehranian, K K 1997; Servaes, Lie & Terzis 2000).

Within this fast globalising world with all its contradictions, struggles for identity have emerged as one of the most striking characteristics of the social, cultural and political scene. One of the most important features of the identity discourse is the relative recency of its emergence and proliferation. In 1996 the prominent British cultural scientist, Stuart Hall (1996a:1), remarked: 'There has been a veritable discursive explosion in recent years around the concept of ''identity'' '.

According to the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (2001a:140), this 'explosion' has since 1996 triggered an avalanche. Few other aspects of contemporary life have succeeded in attracting the same amount of attention. It is not only that 'identity studies' have become a thriving industry. The concept *identity* has also become the prism through which most other aspects of contemporary life are studied. Even established issues of social analysis are refurbished and reformulated to fit into the identity discourse. Thus discussions on 'justice' and 'equality' are debated in terms of 'recognition' (of the right to a separate identity); the concept *culture* is studied in terms of individual, group and/or categorical differences and concepts such as 'creolisation' and 'hybridity'; and political discourses often centre on individual or group rights.

Discourses on identity are, however, not restricted to the ivory towers of academia. Struggles of identity have also become an integral part of intra-individual processes as well as of the social and political scene. As such, discourses and struggles of identity have important and far-reaching implications for policy-making on all levels. Also, in an attempt to develop global, national and local people-centred policies with regard to the media and information and communication technologies, cognisance will have to be taken of these discourses and struggles.

Given the prominence and importance of these discourses and struggles, and their far-reaching implications, I will, firstly, explore some definitions of identity. I will also address the intricate relationship between processes associated with globalisation on various levels and struggles for identity. In contemplating identity discourses on various levels, attention will also be given to the role of international communication – and especially the role of the media and information and communication technologies – in the processes associated with globalisation and concomitant identity issues. Lastly, the implications for South Africa and policy-making with regard to the media and information and communication technologies in South Africa are addressed.

2 The discourse on identity

The term *identity* first gained salience through the work of the psychologist Erikson (1968). While Erikson associates identity as a definition of personhood that is, with sameness or continuity of the self across time and space, other authors also emphasise uniqueness, that is, those characteristics that differentiate a person from other people or the whole of humankind (Baumeister 1986; Brewer 1991, 1993; Rouse 1995). Erikson uses the term *identity crisis* to refer to individuals who have lost a sense of sameness or continuity. While he

regards an identity crisis as a normal and passing stage in adolescent development, he holds that it should be regarded as pathological in adults. He typifies a healthy state of identity development as an invigorating subjective awareness of sameness and continuity.

Although Erikson (1968) theorises on identity from a psychoanalytic point of view, he also emphasises the role of the environment, and particularly the social environment, in the development of identity. He uses the term *psychosocial identity* in this regard. Psychosocial identity refers to the awareness of who a person is, both as individual and as a member of a family, various societal groups and a particular society. The prominent role of social groups in identity formation has been emphasised by the social psychologist Tajfel (1981). Tajfel holds that membership of social groups is internalised as part of the self-concept and as such forms an integral part of the identity of an individual.

Brewer (1991, 1993) typifies social identification as a compromise to solve the internal conflict between two contradictory needs. These needs are, on the one hand, the need of an individual to be unique (i.e. to be differentiated from other people) and, on the other hand, the need for security and assimilation. Identification with social groups fulfils the need for differentiation by emphasising the unique characteristics of the own group as well as the differences between the own group and other groups. The need for assimilation is fulfilled by the feeling of solidarity between members of a particular group.

Whereas the social process of group identification is emphasised within the social sciences, cultural studies focus on the origin, history and culture of groups or communities. The term *cultural identity* has a twofold interpretation (Hall 1996b). It is, firstly, associated with a shared culture, a collective 'true self' that is shared among people with a common history and ancestry. Thus cultural identity reflects common historical experiences and shared cultural codes that serve to unify and to provide stable, continuous and unchanging frames of reference of meaning amidst social and political changes. This conceptualisation of identity lies at the root of struggles to reveal the true essence of a particular identity, for example, the search for the essence of being British or African. It is also associated with the exploration of history in order to reveal 'hidden continuities' and 'hidden roots'.

The second view not only emphasises similarity, but also recognises points of difference in the course of history in 'what we are' and 'what we have become'. Thus the second conceptualisation emphasises cultural identity as an interactive process that involves 'becoming' as well as 'being' and belongs to the future as well as the past. Although rooted in history, cultural identity undergoes constant transformation and is also rooted in the present where it provides a framework for the different ways in which people are positioned by, and position themselves in relation to, present realities and narratives of the past (Hall 1996b).

The changing nature of identity, and cultural identity specifically, is also emphasised by Barth (1969) who defines identity in terms of boundaries. Boundaries can be psychologically, culturally, socially or politically defined and include some people as members of a group, while others are simultaneously excluded. According to this perspective, social or cultural identity cannot be understood in terms of fixed categories or unchanging phenotypical or other characteristics and/or cultural practices. Barth perceives identity as a dynamic process

in which the characteristics, cultural practices, symbols and traditions of a group might change due to interaction with the physical, social, cultural, economic and political environment. What is important is not the content of a particular identity (characteristics and practices), but rather the existence of boundaries between the own group and other groups.

However, as already mentioned, the discourse on identity is not restricted to academia. From academic circles it has spread to the centre of social and political events where it is increasingly associated with the social struggles of various dominated or repressed groups such as people of colour, racial, ethnic and religious minorities and/or feminist groups (Rouse 1995). These pursuits, often labelled *identity politics* are collective, not merely individual; and public, not only private. They are struggles, not merely groupings. The outcomes are partially determined by power, but power relationships are also changed by these struggles. The struggles involve not only the pursuit of expression and recognition, but also of legitimacy and also power. They call for a response from other people, groups and organisations (including states) (Calhoun 1994).

The discourse of identity has thus become the primary medium for not only understanding and explaining the relationship between the personal (subjective) and the social, but also for discourses on the relationship between the individual and the group, the cultural and the political, as well as the group and the state (Rouse 1995).

3 Globalisation and struggles for identity

According to Bauman (2001a), the spectacular rise of the discourse on identity since the last part of the twentieth century should be perceived as a reflection of human experience in the age of globalisation. He holds that the obsession with the 'identity discourse' *per se* reflects more of the current state of human society than all the theorising and analytical results of 'identity studies' do.

Frankly, Bauman (2001a) states, that something has gone wrong with the formation of identity in the (post)modern age. Whereas past generations seemingly handled identity formation and related problems and issues in a matter-of-fact way, new dimensions have been added to old problems. Circumstances in the current world have not only changed the processes of identity formation, but have added new dimensions to both personal and collective identity. Furthermore, whereas the term *identity* implies continuity, that is, a solid basis in which people anchor themselves, the rapid changes that characterise the age of globalisation, eroded most of the bases on which people used to anchor their identity. The age-old 'problem of identity' has thus changed its shape and content.

In a similar way that things often go unnoticed until they disappear or stop behaving as monotonously as they did before, Bauman (2001a) argues that the new centrality of the identity discourse is a reflection of the fact that identity issues are not as simple and straightforward as they used to be. Indeed, the acquiring of identity has become problematic: a task, a struggle, a quest. These struggles are waged on various levels – from the individual to the local to the global. However, these struggles are closely interconnected and often represent different facets of the various homogenising and diversifying processes associated with globalisation.

Some aspects of the interplay between struggles for identity and the processes associated with globalisation are discussed in the following sections.

3.1 The individual level

Notwithstanding the fact that globalisation as well as struggles for identity is mostly associated with the economic, political and social spheres, these processes also have far-reaching effects in the lives of individuals. According to Bauman (2001a), disruptions in identity formation on the individual level can be ascribed to the combined effects of globalisation, on the one hand, as well as to the new and extreme forms that liberal ideas on individualism have acquired in the modern age.

In traditional societies individuals' identity was largely based on their position within the social hierarchy that, in turn, have mostly been determined by birth. However, owing to the widespread acceptance of the principle of the equality of all people, traditional hierarchies associated with, for example, estate or caste have melted down and lost their significance. The individual has thus been emancipated from the ascribed, inherited and/or inborn nature of his or her identity (Bauman 2001a; Taylor 1991).

Furthermore, whereas the emphasis on the individual and individual rights can be regarded as one of the most important achievements of modernity, the postmodern age has given rise to more extreme forms of individualism (Taylor 1991). In this more self-centred form of individualism the emphasis falls almost exclusively on the fulfilment and authenticity of the individual. Moreover, the notion of individual freedom emphasises that all humans are free to self-create, to realise their own authenticity. However, individuals not only have the freedom to become whatever they want to; they also have the responsibility and obligation to realise their own authenticity and to fulfil their potential, that is, to *become* what they already *are*. Self-constitution, self-assertion and self-transformation have thus become the slogans of the time.

Thus, according to Bauman (2001a), the determination of social standing has been replaced with compulsive and obligatory self-determination. Identity formation can therefore no longer be regarded as a given. It has become a product of self-construction, open to free choice; a task; an obligation which the individual has no choice but to fulfil to the best of his or her ability.

However, modernity has not only melted down the placements in society. The forces of globalisation have also led to the melting down of the places to which individuals may gain access to or where they may wish to settle so that they could hardly serve as so-called life projects: 'It is not just the individuals who are on the move but also the finishing lines of the tracks they run and the running tracks themselves' (Bauman 2001a:146).

In the age of globalisation few localities for embedding or anchoring identity are solid enough to stand the run of an individual's life. Disembeddedness has consequently become a frequent life experience as people are forced to be continuously on the run with little hope of ever reaching their destiny.

However, as identity theorists such as Erikson (1968) and Tajfel (1981) point out, identity achievement is not solely an individual venture. Identification with social groups is, however, also complicated and eroded by the increasing prevalence of ideas that individual identity is seen as a product of self-construction, open to free choice and not simply given by birth or divine will. Hence group identification has also become largely a matter of individual choice (Calhoun 1994).

Furthermore, in an era characterised by what Max Weber calls 'instrumental rationality', human relations are perceived to be merely functional to the individual's striving towards self-actualisation and personal happiness. As freedom of movement is regarded as being a primary or meta-value that stands above all other values, it demands that options should always be kept open. Gaining or obtaining an identity that offers 'sameness' or 'continuity', usually implies the forfeiting or closing of other options. Identities are consequently sought that can be adopted and discarded like a costume. Although they are freely chosen, these choices seldom imply commitment and the acceptance of responsibility of the consequences of an enduring relationship.

Thus in many instances globalisation and modernity have brought about the collapse of a sense of community (Bauman 2001a; Taylor 1991). The loss of the safe shelter offered by communal relationships has, in turn, reinforced the fear and anxiety associated with identity achievement. It has also left the highly privatised and isolated individual powerless and defenseless against the powers of the state. Feelings of powerlessness are enhanced by the fact that the powers that shape the conditions under which people have to live and solve their problems are becoming increasingly global in nature and therefore almost completely beyond the reach of the individual. Social atomism bears little hope of joining forces with others against national and global powers to change the rules of the game.

As individuals cannot change what really matters, they turn to things that they can change, even if these are trivial in nature. Activities such as compulsive shopping, and those associated with self-improvement and the health industry are some examples of substitutes for social and political involvement. This so-called consumer culture has also become more than the mere consumption of consumer goods. In the age of globalisation consumption and commodities have become important ways in which individuals acquire and express their identity. According to Hattori (1997), the spread of the consumer culture has also supplanted human relationships with material relationships.

Furthermore, while globalisation has increased the options for identification on a personal and collective level, it has also contributed towards the fragmentation of identity (Servaes, Lie & Terzis 2000). The forces associated with identity formation are thus no longer restricted to the local space, but have their origin on different levels varying from the local to the global. Individuals' identities have consequently become a complex mixture of both local and global elements. Some of these forces are discussed in the following sections.

These changes to identity formation on the individual level have important implications for the media. The role of the national media and public broadcasters has long been perceived as promoting nation-building and identification with the state and state nation (Baoill sa). However, not only has the processes of individualisation and globalisation alienated the

individual from the state and society in general, but the individual requires from the media that they cater for his or her individual needs and preferences. The public sphere is increasingly supplanted by privately produced, privately owned and privately administered spheres (Bauman 1998). Owing to technological development and digitalisation, national media now also have to compete with local and global media frameworks for the attention of the individual consumer.

Bauman (2001a) comes to the conclusion that the experience of an identity crisis can no longer be regarded as a passing phase in adolescent development or a rare mental condition. It has become a common condition in modern human beings as humans have largely lost their grip on the present and the self-confidence to control their own destiny. An invigorating sense of sameness and continuity (Erikson 1968) has indeed become a rare experience for modern human beings.

3.2 The sub-national level

Despite the emphasis on individualism, self-construction and self-assertion, as well as the many offers of disposable communities in the modern and fast globalising world, secure identity development requires a sense of belonging and community that will stand the test of time; that cannot easily be called redundant and be shed; that involves life-long commitment and solidarity. Men and women are thus still looking for groups they can belong to, certainly and forever, in a world where almost everything is shifting and nothing is certain (Bauman 2001a).

The term *community* conveys warmth, comfort and cosiness (Bauman 2001b). It offers a place of relaxation and safety sheltered from a world rife with conflict, danger and uncertainty. It implies an understanding shared by all its members – an understanding that precedes all agreements and disagreements. Such understanding is not a finishing line, but the starting point of all forms of togetherness; a reciprocal and binding sentiment. It is due to this understanding, and this understanding only, that the members of a community remain united in spite of all separating factors. The Swedish analyst, Göran Rosenberg (in Bauman 2001b), uses the term *warm circle* to depict a sense of community. Human loyalties offered within this warm circle, are not derived from social logic or cold cost-benefit analyses. Membership does not need to be 'owned' and within this circle, the members do not need to prove anything; and whatever they do, they can always reckon on sympathy and help.

However, in order to offer security as well as distinctiveness, true communities mean clear boundaries that signify a division into insiders and outsiders; 'us' and 'them' (Barth 1969). It is, furthermore, crystal clear who are members and who are outsiders; no cognitive ambiguity or behavioural ambivalence exists. Protecting the unity of a community often implies blocking the channels of communication with the rest of the world. However, the globalising world is characterised by the shrinking of spatial and temporal limitations, and an increase in international communication due to the development of transport technology, the electronic media and information and communication technologies. The balance between 'inside' and 'outside' communication – once heavily skewed towards the 'inside' – has thus been skewed, thereby blurring the distinctions between insiders and outsiders. For

many communities it has become increasingly difficult to draw and sustain the boundaries between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. Thus the globalising world has seen the 'melting down' of many traditional communities and society as a whole.

Moreover, the emphasis on individualism, self-choice and self-achievement in the modern world has resulted in the rise of 'hand picked' and artificially 'produced' communities where membership is usually based on individual achievement. Interest groups, professional groups, virtual groups – are but a few examples of surrogate communities that characterise the current age. However, owing to the fact that membership of these communities mostly has to be earned and/or the temporal nature of the groups, the identities they offer remain insecure, fragile and vulnerable – forever in need of vigilance, fortification and defence.

In contrast, ethnic communities, and ethnic minorities in particular, represent an important and perhaps the sole exemption to the disintegration of enduring communities in the globalising world (Bauman 1998). The strange thing is that the ascriptive nature of ethnic identities is not a matter of choice and, in fact, goes against the grain of the principle of free decision-making imprinted in the liberal, modern society. However, according to Margalit and Raz (1990:44a), the lure of ethnic communities lies exactly in the fact that the ascriptive nature of their membership does not rest on individual achievement:

> Identification is more secure, less liable to be threatened, if it does not depend on accomplishment. Although accomplishments play their role in people's sense of their own identity, it would seem that at the most fundamental level our sense of our own identity depends on criteria of belonging rather than on those of accomplishment. Secure identification at that level is particularly important to one's well-being.

Other authors such as Kymlicka (1995) and Kloskowska (1998) emphasise the role of the ethnic culture that, despite the universalisation of cultures and an emergent world culture (see section 3.5), still provides the framework for major, and particularly early, human experiences. Although global and supranational identities may play an important role, they do not provide a secure basis for the development of identity in a similar way that ethnic groups do. In the global insecurity and constant flux, the blood brother, ethnic cohort, communal kinswoman or tribal clansman has become for many the only remaining source of community, security and stability (Le Pere & Lambrechts 1999). The more so, as ethnic communities offer lifelong membership that allows no termination on demand (Bauman 1998).

The erosion of the legitimacy and authority of the nation-state has resulted in a weakening of the association between the state and ethnicity (see section 3.3 – Bauman 1998; Featherstone 1995). Ethnic and cultural minorities that have been subjugated or absorbed by the state, have thus been 'freed', resulting in the worldwide revitalisation of ethnic and cultural loyalties, and the mobilisation of ethnic groups both within and across the borders of nation-states. In contrast to the homogenising effect of global identities and the spread of a Western consumer culture (see section 3.5) ethnic movements as a form of localisation focuses on the differences between cultures rather than on similarities. However, these movements are 'global' in the way that they use modern information and communication

technologies to communicate with fellow ethnics that have migrated all over the world (Servaes, Lie & Terzis 2000). It is, however, not only cultural and religious identities that have become sites of localised identities. Regional and religious identities have also become ways in which groups and communities resist the hegemony of global processes (Tehranian 1999).

Another factor that plays a role in ethnic identification and the revitalisation of ethnicity in the modern world is the globe-wide migration associated with globalisation. Appadurai (1993) speaks in this regard of 'ethnoscapes', that is, the worldwide spread of mobile human groups such as tourists, government officials, guest workers, exiles, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The consequence is that the 'local space' of many ethnic or cultural groups is becoming more and more heterogeneous, while more people than ever before have contact with a culture or cultures different from their own. According to Featherstone (1990), the term *multicultural* should consequently be used instead of *intercultural* when referring to the new cultural sphere. One of the consequences of multicultural interaction within local spaces is that the enhanced need for sustaining boundaries between the own group and other groups fosters ethnic identification and ethnic mobilisation.

A further consequence is that many cultures are no longer restricted to the borders of a single state (Featherstone 1995). The ethnic diasporas of globalisation have to deal with identity struggles of their own. They have to incorporate the transnational experience of displacement, disembeddedness, adaptation to, and hybridisation with, the culture of their host societies in their identities. For many migrants this process of identity formation and reformation is aided to some degree by the availability of the electronic media and information and communication technologies that provide a link to their 'home' communities. However, their communities of origin can offer little help in the lived experience of hybridity, the migrant's so-called double vision, which often leads to feelings of not belonging to any community or culture and the longing for the recovering of the cultural purity that has been lost (Corcoran 1998).

Bauman (2001b, 1998) comes to the conclusion that the contradictory forces of globalisation and localisation are, in fact, resulting in the pulverisation of society which, in turn, reinforces the processes associated with globalisation. It has consequently become almost impossible to halt or reverse these processes: globalisation has become the intractable fate of the world.

3.3 The national level

Globalisation has far-reaching implications for the position of the nation-state, that is, the medium-sized, territorial, centralised, sovereign type of polity that has become the dominant, if not sole form of political organisation in the post-1789 era. During the period of the dominance of the nation-state the 'global scene' was a theatre of inter-state politics where states – through actions such as armed conflict, bargaining and negotiation – drew and defended the boundaries that set apart the enclosed territory of each state's executive and legislative territory. Global politics were therefore almost exclusively concerned with sustaining the principle of full and uncontested sovereignty of each state over its territory (Bauman 1998; Lacarrieu & Raggio 1997; Le Pere & Lambrechts 1999; Waters 1995).

The executive and legislative sovereignty of the modern state was based on a tripod of military, economic and cultural sovereignties (Bauman 1998). The ability to function as an effective order-making entity rested in the first place on its ability to defend its territory effectively from external as well as internal challenges. It, furthermore, had to have the ability to balance the books of the national economy as well as the cultural resources to sustain the state's identity and distinctiveness from those of its subsidiaries.

The fact that the nation-state held territorial sovereignty over a particular area, also implied that pride of place was primarily vested in the state (Bauman 1998, 2001b). A shared nationhood, that is, a common national identity, played a crucial legitimising role in the political unification of the state. The invocation of common roots and a common character were of the major tools for producing patriotic loyalty and obedience, the main principles for ideological mobilisation. The 'state nation' becomes one of the major sources, if not the most important source, in which the citizens of the state found a sense of community and collective or group identity.

However, in the term *nation-state* lies a contradiction. The term *nation* is derived from the Greek *natio* which is associated with ethnicity and a common culture. According to Habermas (1998), nations were originally communities with a shared descent and culture. In contrast, Rhoodie and Liebenberg (1994) write that only ten per cent of the member states of the United Nations in 1994 could be described as homogeneous on the basis of ethnicity. In most other states there is a lack of convergence between the political (the state) and the cultural (the nation). To comply with the characteristics of a true nation-state and to implement their executive and legislative sovereignty successfully, governance of homogeneous states often also involves the suppression of the ambitions of lesser population (e.g. minority groups) towards cultural and political autonomy. Pradip Thomas writes in this regard in Baoill (sa:4): 'The health of a national identity can be measured by the extent to which the various "nations" comprising the nation-state willingly subsume their parochial identities to that of a supranational identity. In real life, however, a consensual example is hard to come by.'

As the above quotation suggests, ethnic and/or cultural groups are often reluctant to succumb their uniqueness and distinctive identities to become part of an overarching state nation. A strategy of nation-building became one of the major tools in the pursuit of the 'one state, one nation' ideal in heterogeneous states (Bauman 1998). Thus it is now commonly recognised that national identities are seldom natural or prepolitical. They are socioculturally constructed identities. The term *imagined communities* or *imagined communalities* is often used in this regard (McCarthy 1999). Nation-building often implies the denial of the diversity of the citizens of a state. From the nation-building perspective the differences in language, culture and/or religion found under the state's jurisdiction are regarded as undesirable not-yet-fully-extinct relics of the past, often also associated with backwardness and a lack of progress. 'Enlightment' and 'progress' usually mean forsaking diversity and ethnic, cultural and religious distinctiveness in favour of a common-to-all-level of citizenship, community or nationhood.

According to Bauman (2001b), the practice of nation-building can have two faces. The nationalist perspective usually implies that the various means available to the state (e.g. political institutions, national symbols, the educational system as well as the media) are employed to forge an overarching national identity. In so doing, the variety of languages is usually replaced with one standard national language, and the traditions and habits of diverse groups by one standard historical narrative and calendar of memory rituals. However, when education, persuasion and indoctrination do not work or their fruits are slow to come, states often resort to measures of coercion such as the criminilisation of struggles to defend the diversity or autonomy of minority groups. The nationalist plan is therefore to assimilate the variety of cultural forms under the state's jurisdiction and to dissolve them in one standard national form by making use of the powers vested in the state.

The liberal strategy appears to be the complete opposite of the nationalistic face. It is primarily based on the liberal ideas that regard the freedom and autonomy of the individual as the primary political values (Kymlicka 1995). The ideal state is perceived to be a collection of free and unbound individual citizens. Ethnic and other local communities are regarded as primary sources of intolerance and parochialism and, most importantly, as conservative coercive forces that hold the individual back from self-assertion and self-determination. As liberalism believes that true freedom will emerge only if freedom is refused to the enemies of freedom and the enemies of tolerance are no longer tolerated, ethnic and other sub-national forms of community become the targets of state action. It is believed that the annihilation of these enemies to freedom and tolerance will, in the end, result in all citizens of the state freely choosing the singular loyalty and state identity offered to all (Bauman 2001b). However, as the cultural forms and practices of the state often reflect those of the majority of dominant group, Rex (1996) warns that the modern state is not necessarily the product of an abstract process of modernisation, but could become the way in which a dominant or majority group asserts its rule over groups or communities.

Bauman (2001b) holds the opinion that, although nationalism and liberalism might follow different strategies, they share the same purpose. They leave little or no room for forms of community beyond the levels of the state and loyalty to the state. Whereas nationalism aims to annihilate difference; the purpose of liberalism is to annihilate the different. In both cases the 'others' have to be stripped of their 'otherness' in order to become indistinguishable from the rest of the nation. Ethnic and other forms of local identities have thus to be melted down to become part of the singular mould of the national identity.

However, the winds of change represented by the forces of globalisation have – probably irreversibly – changed the position and role of the nation-state (Bauman 1998). The sovereignty, legitimacy and authority of the nation-state have come under constant siege. The eroding forces are both global and local; transnational as well as subnational; centrifugal as well as centripetal. According to Bauman (1998), all three legs of the tripod on which the executive and legislative powers of the state rest have in the process been broken beyond repair.

On a transnational level, states are no longer able to control the flow of capital and information via the media and information and communication technologies across their borders. Owing to the unqualified and unstoppable spread of free trade rules and the free movement of capital and finances, the economy – and thus the ability to balance the books of the national economy – is progressively exempt from the nation-state. Not only have the borders of states become porous, but global forces beyond the reach and control of the nation-state are also imposing their laws and precepts on the planet. In order to function more effectively in the global economy and to retain some degree of its law-and-order policing ability, the governments of nation-states are increasingly forced to seek alliances with other states. Thus at least part of the state's legitimacy, sovereignty and authority has to be surrendered to larger power blocs. In so doing, nation-states have also given these power blocs to make a claim, at least partly, on the collective identity of its citizens (see section 3.4). The predicament of the nation-state is enhanced by the fact that many of the transnational forces that shape its destiny are blurred in a mist of mystery. They are largely anonymous and therefore difficult to identify, manipulate or control.

The loss of the economic and legislative legs of the tripod makes it extremely difficult for states to control the cultural and ideological mobilisation of their citizens (Bauman 1998). The nation-state is no longer the only or principle viable political context within which citizenship and collective identity are 'housed'. The weakening of the authority and legitimacy of the state undermines the emotive and normative commitment to membership of a nation-state. The state's monopoly over the emotive commitments of its citizens – at least on a collective level – is challenged by global, supranational as well as subnational and localised forces.

As discussed in section 3.2, the weakening of the nation-state has 'freed' ethnic and/or cultural groups from the bonds with a national identity. The consequence is revitilisation of even those ethnicities that have been believed to have withered away or died long ago. Thus the sovereignty, legitimacy and authority of the nation-state is not only challenged by global forces, but also by localised forces from within. The presence of ethnic diasporas – due to their permeable, overlapping and shifting nature – presents a further challenge to the hegemony of the claim of the nation-state over the citizenship, collective identity and loyalty of its inhabitants (Skinner 1999). Migrates are largely impervious to the nation-building strategies of their host governments. Enhanced cultural differentiation and hybridisation – in the 'host' as well as diasporic communities – have thus become a common feature of society in most nation-states (Corcoran 1998).

Furthermore, the presence of ethnic strangers in the form of migrants also have complex cultural effects in their host countries. What is often experienced as 'cultural invasion', triggers ethnic instincts also in local majorities which leads to the re-evaluation of the value of so-called national identities – a process that is stimulated by membership of supranational power blocs. Thus an inflow of migrants and the issue of membership of the European Union have led to a reinvestigation and re-evaluation of what it means, for example, to be 'British', 'Irish', 'French' or 'Norwegian'. The strategies that follow these instincts are often similar to those of ethnic minorities: separation, self-closure, xenophobic attitudes and strategies to strengthen boundaries, and separate and ghettoise foreign elements. The

confusion related to former certainties and unquestionable assumptions can be observed in the right-wing political movements in various European countries (Bauman 1998; Corcoran 1998; Eriksen 1996).

The predicament of the nation-state has, on the hand, problematised the role of the media and especially the national press and public service broadcasting. The special relationship of the press and public service broadcasting with the national identity and nation-building has always been one of its key tenets. According to Habermas (2001), national consciousness as a modern form of social solidarity – as opposed to loyalties to communities shaped by descent, language and history – could indeed be regarded as a product of the development of new forms of communication and especially mass communication. Within the new international environment, governments of nation-states usually expect the media to continue their role in the protection and continuance of a sense of national identity amidst global, supranational and subnational threats. However, the heterogeneous nature of their populations as well as the renewed importance attached to ethnicity and other local identities demands not only tolerance for diversity, but also diversication in the contents, control and ownership of the media. Failure to cater for the cultural and identity needs of various groups and communities within the boundaries of the state could not only alienate certain groups and individuals, but could also result in the national media becoming increasingly irrelevant.

The media and information, and communication technologies in particular are, important role-players in the processes that are contributing to the decline of the nation-state (Baoill sa). The borders of nation-states have not only become porous due to their inability to control the flow of information via the media and information and communication technologies across their borders. Information and communication technologies have led to a devolution of power downwards to the people and the liberation of ethnic and other groups from the constraints of the power of the state and the singular voice of the national press and public broadcasting media. The development of technology has promoted the development of local media that, in turn, play a vital role in the strengthening of these identities and maintaining the links between diasporas and their communities of origin.

The conclusion can be drawn that, due to the contradictory forces of globalisation and localisation, the two-pronged strategy of nation-building has become largely unrealistic; less eagerly sought; regarded as undesirable by significant sections of the populations of heterogeneous states, and unlikely to succeed. As the existential security offered by the state has been shattered; the old identity stories that have replenished a sense of belonging in the state have largely lost their credibility. As the old certainties and loyalties are swept away, people increasingly seek for new or alternative communities in which they can vest their sense of identity. The normative void left open by the state and state regulation offers more freedom – freedom that has been seized by both supranational and global power blocs as well as by ethnic minorities to claim and reclaim the collective identities of the citizens of nation-states (Bauman 1998).

3.4 The supranational level

As discussed in section 3.3, the emergence of a global market and the reduction of trade tariffs and other factors in the way of a free flow of capital are increasingly forcing nation-states to become members of larger regional power blocs in order to be able to be more competitive in the new world economy (Bauman 2001b; Lacarrieu & Raggio 1997). The most well known of these power blocs are without doubt the European Union (EU) – other examples of regional power blocs are Mercosur (the unity formed by a number of countries in South America), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the newly formed African Union (AU).

However, the influence of these power blocs is not restricted to the economy (Schopflin 1997). They also create new power relationships, new forms and hierarchies of power, and new forms of social knowledge and information. Apart from the fact that nation-states succumb part of their authority and legitimacy to these power blocs, they are also in a position to side-step the governments of nation-states and to establish direct connection with sub-national communities and other groups. These power blocs are also increasingly filling the void left by the withering away of the authority and legitimacy of the nation-state.

The identity struggles emerging from these regional power blocs have the potential to restructure and recast regional, national and local power structures and identities. It is almost self-evident that nation-states have to share the commitment and loyalty, that is, the collective identity, of their citizens with these units. Furthermore, many of these power blocs actively strive towards the forging of supranational identities. As the EU was one of the first supranational power blocs to be formed outside the United States of America (US), it has always set the tone for supranational integration and its concomitant processes, problems and challenges (Rex 1996). The discourses on, and struggles for, identity associated with European integration are thus most probably exemplary of what is already happening or could happen in other unions.

European integration has moved through various stages (Delanty 1998; Habermas 2001). The project of European integration started after the end of World War II and was viewed as an attempt to ensure peace on the continent, to solve the German problem and to contain the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of Rusia (USSR). At this stage it was believed that integration would enhance the sovereignty of nation-states. As the memory of World War II faded and the Cold War ended, economic imperatives became paramount within the context of increasing economic globalisation. In general, the idea was then to rescue the nation-state through co-operation. A second vision of European identification was the federal vision of unification. According to this view, Europe is perceived as a cultural and political unity with common historical roots. This vision of Europe can be perceived as the reproduction on a transnational European level of the project of nation-state-building where the existing nation-states are regarded as subordinate to the larger unity. Although the federalist idea has not been very popular, it has been the first to introduce the debate on culture, cultural and symbolic integration, and the nature of a European identity in an otherwise culturally deficit project.

A third vision of European integration has evolved since the 1980s. This vision represents, according to Habermas (2001), a new political form that lies somewhere between the federalist model and the model of co-operation. This model, the product of the increasingly global world order, sees a united Europe not merely as the co-operation of nation-states, but more as a regulatory order. The union is perceived as a functional entity that takes over the dysfunctional aspects of national governance and compensates for the weaknesses of the nation-state within the new global environment. However, the uncertainty of the regulatory model has brought the need for a degree of social integration and cultural cohesion, that is, of a supranational European identity, again to the fore. The failure of European integration on certain fronts is ascribed to issues of social integration and identity. The process of institution-building has transformed the transnational polity into a social, political and cultural framework, which has led to the re-emergence of old questions traditionally associated with the nation-state and nation-building: How is social order possible? What is the collective representation of Europe? Who are Europeans and who are not? What is the basis of social integration? What constitutes a European identity and/or a European nation? How can social integration and a supranational identity be constituted?

Although the need for a cultural dimension for the project of uniting Europe has been voiced, Delanty (1998) is of the opinion that Europe lacks the key elements that usually support national identities: a common language, a shared history and religion, an educational system, and a press or media. In his view the only substantial sense of an emerging European identity is emerging around boundaries for the inclusion of Europeans and the exclusion of non-Europeans. The uncertainty regarding internal commonalities, the political vacuum in the institutions of the emerging polity and the lack of a true sense of community are resulting in Europeans inventing an identity based almost exclusively on exclusion.

However, a European identity based on contrast with non-Europeans faces the danger of resistance from the complex nationalisms and ethnicities that form the population of Europe (Rex 1996). The position of minority groups, and especially immigrant minorities, is becoming particularly precarious. An identity of exclusion usually implies differentiation in terms of race and religion. Europeans are defined as white Christian nations. Non-white and non-Christian minorities have been grouped as *Gastarbeiters* in an organisation called the *Migrant Forum*. Most of these minorities enjoy full political citizenship in the nation-states in which they are living and might use the forum to negotiate more effectively with their nation-states. However, if there were a European identity and citizenship, they would not be part of it. According to Rex (1996), the problems with regard to these minorities are far from being resolved and will probably haunt the EU for years to come.

Various alternatives have been suggested to overcome these dilemmas. One of the most prominent is the vision of Habermas (2001) that a European identity should be forged in a similar way that national consciousness and solidarity have been created in the traditional nation-state. This identity should be based on democratic citizenship rather than on features associated with ethnic communities such as common descent or a common culture. Communication plays a central role in this theory of European integration. According to Habermas, a European-wide public sphere has to be created that is embedded in the context

of a freedom-valuing political culture supported by the liberal a-sociational structure of a civil society. This view involves public communication that transcends the boundaries of the various nation-states. However, Habermas does not foresee the creation of a European public broadcaster. He holds the opinion that a European public sphere should rather emerge from existing national universes opening to one another, yielding to the interpenetration of mutually translated national communications. A first step would be for national media to cover the substance of relevant controversies in the other countries so that the various national public opinions converge on the same set of issues. Such a communicative democracy or identity, or 'discursive democracy' as Habermas prefers, is not located in the state or an ethnic or cultural community, but in the discursive spaces of civil society.

A suggestion put forward by Castells (1998) is based on the idea of the network society. The network society does not have a centre, but consists of nodes that may be of different sizes and can be linked by asymmetrical relationships in the network. A network is an open structure that expands in different directions. It is not a functionally integrated body with a central principle of organisation. Its distinctive feature is that it is formed through the global diffusion of information. The network society is thus an information society. Unfortunately, Castells does not explain how European integration might be conceived as a network society apart from visualising European polity as multi-levels of power. However, Delanty (1998) believes that the notion of the 'knowledge society' might be a more appropriate model for social integration in Europe as knowledge has also become a medium for social and cultural experience. He uses the concept *knowledge* to refer to the wider cognitive capacity of a society to interpret itself and to imagine alternatives. The question that arises is whether there is an imaginary dimension to European integration. Delanty asks the question, in the light of the fact that Europe lacks the characteristics of a political or cultural community, whether it should not become a virtual society. A virtual society is not constituted as a system of values but as a discursive framework.

Similar to the position of migrates, the position of ethnic groups is also a bone of contention within views of European integration. According to Schopflin (1997), there are already signs that ethnic actors engage direct with supranational governments. In this way they are side-stepping the governments of nation-states and are obtaining direct access to the resources held by the regional powers. The emergence of power blocs therefore brings a new fluidity to regional and local societies that will, in the end, not only reshape the nature of political organisation in these regions, but have the potential of recasting the nature of collective identities. The notion of Europe as a union of ethnicities or so-called ethno-states rather than a union of nation-states is also mentioned in this regard (Europe? Which Europe? Which future Europe? ... sa).

The scope and intensity of the discourses on a European identity serve as a clear indication that supranational unions are fast becoming much more than economic, political and/or regulatory superstructures. They have indeed become sites of identity struggles. The emerging issues such as inclusion and/or exclusion, the position of migrants and ethnic minorities, transnational public spheres, the role of the media and informational and

communication technologies are not only relevant for the EU, but also for the populations of other unions such as the AU.

3.5 The global level

Various analysts point out that the globalisation of capital and labour markets, production and consumption, communication, information, technological and cultural flows are posing problems that cannot be resolved within the borders of individual nation-states or by means of interstate treaties. Whereas partisans of globalisation advocate unconditional subordination of the state and other power blocs to the imperatives of the global market, the sociologist Richard Münch (in Habermas 1999) points out that there are good reasons to fear that the world could be faced with the depletion of non-renewable resources, cultural alienation on a mass scale and social explosions unless we succeed in implementing some form of political control over global market forces.

These problems are aggravated by the decline in the powers of the nation-state and the struggle of supranational units such as the EU in finding appropriate forms for political and cultural integration. The possibility of one or other form of global political unit and/or cosmopolitan government is therefore suggested more and more as a solution for the problems associated with globalisation (Bauman 1998; Habermas 1999; McCarthy 1999). However, Habermas (1999) believes that, similar to supranational units, a global political integration requires a political culture shared by all world citizens in order to act effectively in the new global environment. An important question is this whether global nationhood or a world identity is at all possible (McCarthy 1999).

There are many reasons to predict that the notions of a common world identity and globe-wide cultural integration are not at all farfetched. The forces associated with globalisation, among other things, the global production and marketing of consumption goods; international information flows disseminated through liberalised media and telecommunications networks and the spread of 'global English' have already resulted in far-reaching global changes within the social, cultural and political spheres.

The social sphere is characterised by the emergence of a global society, the so-called global village (McLuhan 1964) and by placeless, distanceless and borderless interactions that unfold in the world as a single space. The consequence is that both individuals and societies conceptualise themselves to a large extent as part of a world system or a world community. Globalisation is thus more than mere cosmopolitanism as it implies a capacity for global self-reflection and thus for identification with world citizenship and/or the total of humankind (Frederick 1993; Waters 1995).

The cultural terrain is characterised by homogenisation, that is, cultural convergence. The growth of consumer capitalism has brought about a convergence in cultural habits and the spread of hegemonic ideas, lifestyles, popular symbols and other mass cultural products which are marketed by means of superior technology, thus creating a demand for them across the globe. Terms such as *cultural imperialism*, *Americanisation* and/or *Coca-Colanisation* are used to refer to the spread of a hegemonic American–Western consumer culture that is believed by many to supplant and even obliterate local cultures gradually (Tehranian 1999).

However, Fukuyama (in Economic globalization and culture ... sa) challenges the view that the cultural flows of globalisation are leading to cultural homogeneity. He holds that the cultural changes associated with globalisation are mostly superfluous. Conclusions about increasing cultural homogenisation are often made on the worldwide appeal of particular consumer goods that Fukuyama regards as a superficial aspect of culture. The deeper cultural levels of cultural and ethnic identities, such as language, religion and race, are much more important and change at a much slower rate. In fact, these elements of culture are not easily abandoned.

Other analysts point out that global influences do not follow the 'hypodermic needle' model. Rather than supressing local cultures from the top down, they give rise to a complex and ongoing interaction between foreign and local cultural elements in which foreign goods might be taken over *in toto*, but might also be translated into the local idiom (a process typified as *localisation*), mutate, or mix with local elements (also called *hybridisation* or *creolisation*) (Tehranian 1999). Giddens (1991) speaks in this regard of a global-local dialectic, while the term *interpenetrated globalisation* is used by Braman (1996).

Fukuyama (in Economic globalization and culture ... sa) agrees that people are becoming more homogeneous in terms of large economic and political institutions and value systems. Tehranian (1999) also mentions that globalisation has led to world-scale convergence of legal and ethical principles, the universalisation of the discourse on human rights and the spread of democracy as a dominant form of political organisation. The emergence of a global civil society in the form of various groups that mobilise on the basis of so-called global issues such as nature conservation (e.g. the Greenpeace movement), human rights, feminism and consumer issues. Global mobilisation with the aid of technology is based on the belief that these issues concern all inhabitants of the world and should thus be addressed on a global level. Urry (2000) mentions that, similar to the role that national media and public broadcasters have played in the forging of the 'imagined' communities of nations-states, the global media flow, and especially global television, are also propagating globalism. The signs are everywhere that the principles of a world society and a global identity could already have taken root.

In contrast to these globalising trends, the worldwide spread of information and communication technologies appears to strengthen ethnic, cultural and other local identities. It has already been mentioned that these technologies are empowering local communities and ethnic groups in mobilising against the constraints of the governments of nation-states. The revitalisation of ethnic and other local identities is illustrated by emerging tendencies in the contents of the very symbol of global media, the Internet. Against general expectations, the contents of the Internet are becoming more and more diverse. Although English-language contents still dominate the Web, this is rapidly changing. Hunter (2000) quotes predictions that by 2003 non-English material will account for more than half of the contents of the Web. It is believed that users based in the US will account for less than one-third of the wordwide population of Internet users in 2003. In fact, the Web is on its way to becoming the most lingually diverse medium in history.

Technology, and particularly the Internet, has opened various other alternatives for identity formation (Suler 1999, 2000). On the individual level, cyberspace becomes for many individuals a type of a global extension of their intrapsychic world and a transitional space between themselves and others. This space opens the door for all kinds of fantasies. People can use this space for the exploration of their own identities. They can, furthermore, assume a variety of identities by changing their age, history, personality, physical appearance and even their gender.

The Internet also offers individuals the opportunity to join virtual communities that transcend time and spatial constraints, and enables both individuals and groups to interact and mobilise worldwide on the basis of common interests and life experiences (Suler 2000). Most virtual collectivities also fulfil the requirements for personal freedom of liberal individualism (Bauman 2001a). Individuals can keep their options open. They have a choice about how much, if any, personal information they want to reveal. Sometimes groups encourage or even require that members assume an imaginary persona. There are normally no strings attached to these groups. People can join and leave at will. Membership is mostly completely subordinate to the whims and needs of the individual. However, the instrumental nature of virtual communities does not allow for continuity and secure identity development. Virtual identities could, in the end, heighten the fear and anxiety of individuals in an ever-changing world.

The globalising world has also given rise to a new type of individual identity, namely that of the 'cosmopolitan' (Bauman 2001b). Cosmopolitans are usually members of the business and professional élite that travel extensively all over the world in the course of their work. They are truly world citizens, often with no permanent address except for an e-mail address and mobile telephone number. They are not defined by any locality; they are fully exterritorial. National boundaries and societal ties are increasingly becoming irrelevant to them. Wherever their travels lead them, they prefer to interact with other globalisers. They live in a socio-cultural bubble which insulates them from the harsher realities of the communities in the countries where they reside. Their lifestyle celebrates one of the distinguishing features of globalisation, namely the irrelevance of place.

The conclusion can be drawn that identity struggles on the global level are largely a reflection of, and complexly interrelated with, those on the other levels. As globalisation changes the power relationships on various levels, it also has far-reaching consequences for identity formation on both individual and collective levels.

4 Globalisation, issues of identity and South Africa

With the advent of a new political dispensation in 1994 – the most important political development of the 1990s – South Africa was once again accepted into world society and thus became part of the globalising world, marked by the paradoxical tendencies and impulses discussed in the previous sections.

However, the country stands before the challenge of dealing with the demands of increasing globalisation and competing within the global capitalistic system (Le Pere & Lambrects 1999). The new government is forced to form new modes of allegiance to, and identification with,

the abstracted international community and to negotiate its national identity in the light of its international relations. To be able to compete effectively in the global economy and with other international power blocs, southern African and African countries are also forced to form power blocs such as SADC and the AU. In so doing, the South African government is also succumbing at least part of its authority and legitimacy, as well as the commitment of its citizens, to these power blocs. The fact that a black government came into power and the formation of SADC and the AU has reaffirmed political, social and psychological ties with Africa. Thus many South Africans are increasingly perceiving themselves as an integral part of the African continent and hence see Africanism and/or pan-Africanism as an important component of their identity. Identification with Africa has also given rise to the notion of an African Renaissance that envisions the social, political and economic reformation of Africa on the basis of African values and culture (Mbeki 1997). Iniatives of the South African government and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) with radio stations such as Channel Africa and Africa-2-Africa and the television channel SABC Africa that broadcast to Africa can also be regarded as attempts to create an African-wide public and/or discursive sphere. However, as in the case of the EU the nature of an African identity is still a contested terrain and many questions remain: Who are Africans and who are not? What are the key elements of an African culture? Can whites of European descent also be regarded as Africans? What about groups such as Indians, coloureds and migrants from other parts of the world?

Within the borders of the newly constituted nation-state, new images are being advanced that emphasise the market, democracy, individual rights and liberties, technocratic rationality in public policy and universal values. However, South Africa is also a deeply divided and heterogeneous society characterised by wide-ranging racial, linguistic, cultural, religious and socio-economic differences (de la Rey 1991; Horowitz 1991; van den Berghe 1990). Colonialisation and apartheid have left South Africa even more divided than inherent differences, as it accentuated racial, ethnic and class differences, and set groups against other groups; not only black against white, but also black against black, coloured against Indian, and so forth (Coetzee & Wood 1993). The introduction of a new political dispensation has brought the negotiation and reconciliation of heterogeneity and citizenship, that is, loyalty to the state versus loyalty to ethnic, cultural and religious groups, to a head resulting in the invention of the 'new South Africa' (Le Pere & Lambrects 1999). Nation-building has become a government preoccupation. Not only is a common South Africanness propagated in new national symbols and the notion of the 'rainbow nation'. Nation-building has also become a key principle in policy-making on all levels and thus also in policies concerning the media, and information and communication technologies.

However, in becoming part of the international world, South Africa is also exposed to the worldwide centripetal tendencies associated with the revival of ethnic and other local identities. Moreover, on a grass-roots level these groups probably continue to fulfil an important emotional and social needs of their members. In the new non-hierarchical society, people may even experience a greater need to identify themselves by contrast, to emphasise social boundaries and to confirm their ethnic and/or racial identity (Horowitz 1991). Indeed, the results of research since the early 1990s indicate that despite the government's emphasis

on unity, ethnic, cultural, language, religious groups have remained important components of the identity structures of most South Africans (Bornman 1995; Bornman & Olivier 2001; Mattes, 1994, 1997). It appears that language in particular remains one of the most important denominators of sub-national identities in South Africa. Identity formation is complicated by the establishment of new forms of provincial and local government which creates new opportunities for sub-national identification. Class or worker identities as those represented by the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and Solidariteit are also making a claim on the identities of South Africans. What is of particular significance is the way that these subnational groups make use of the Internet to foster identification and to mobilise groups.

Thus, similar to other nation-states in the current age, the new South African state has also become the site of struggles of identity on various levels. These struggles will without question also have a wide-ranging influence on all media and information and communication technologies. Nation-building is already a priority in policies within the communication sector. However, if cognisance is not also taken of the impact of the multiple processes of globalisation and the concomitant identity struggles and the identity needs of all sectors of the South African public, the South African media and communication sector run the risk of failing the communication needs of their clientele.

5 Conclusion

The contemplation of struggles for identity within the age of globalisation brings Bauman (2001a) to the conclusion that the term *identity* should be replaced with *identification*. *Identification* implies a never-ending, open-ended activity that is always incomplete and never finished. Human's frantic search for identity in the current age cannot be regarded as a residue of pre-modern and pre-globalisation times. It is a side-effect and by-product of the combination of globalising, localising and individualising forces themselves and their concomitant tensions. They are legitimate offsprings and natural companions of the multiple and often contradictory processes associated with globalisation. They are in reality the oil that lubricates the wheels of globalisation.

South Africa and the South African media and communications sector cannot escape either the effects of globalisation or the struggles of identity associated with these effects. In the years to come the identity needs of South Africans will have to be seriously considered if the South African institutions associated with the media and communication are serious about developing people-centred policies that address the needs of the people in addition to those of the government of the day.

Note

1 The idea for this article originated at a multidiscplinary workshop attended by various South African scholars involved in the study of globalisation, identity and democratisation. This workshop formed part of a project funded by the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation in the US.

References

Appadurai, A. 1993. Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy. In *The phantom public sphere*, ed. B Robbins. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Baoill, A O. sa. *Into the future: National identity, public service media and globalisation.* [O]. Available: <http://funferal.org/essay/psbnatid.html>. Accessed on 2003/04/03

Barth, F. 1969. *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of cultural difference.* Bergen-Oslo: Universitets Forlaget/London: George Allen & Unwin.

Bauman, Z. 1998. *Globalization: The human consequences.* Cambridge: Polity.

—. 2001a. *The individualized society.* Cambridge: Polity.

—. 2001b. *Community: Seeking safety in an insecure world.* Cambridge: Polity.

Baumeister, R F. 1986. *Identity: Cultural change and the struggle for the self.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Bornman, E. 1995. Etnisiteit in 'n oorgangsperiode: 'n Sosiaal-sielkundige studie. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Bornman, E and Olivier, J. 2001. Patterns of social identification in the post-apartheid South Africa. Paper presented at the 2nd Biennial Congress of the International Academy for Intercultural Research. Oxford, Mississippi.

Braman, S. 1996. Interpenetrated globalization. In *Globalization, communication and transnational civil society*, ed. S Braman and A Sreberny-Mohammadi. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press: 21–36.

Braman, S and van Staden, C. 2000. *Globalisation and culture.* Study guide for Unit 12 of the Postgraduate Diploma in Telecommunications and Information Policy. Department of Communication, Unisa: Pretoria.

Brewer, M. 1993. Social identity, distinctiveness, and in-group homogeneity. *Social Cognition*, 11(1):150–164.

Brewer, M B. 1991. The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17(5):475–482.

Calhoun, C 1994. Preface. In *Social theory and the politics of identity*, ed. C Calhoun. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell:1–7.

Castells, M. 1998. *End of millenium.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Coetzee, J and Wood, G. 1993. Understanding group formation amid eroding identities and neotribalism: alternative narratives. *Acta Academica*, 25(2&3):65–91.

Corcoran, F. 1998. *The refugee challenge for Ireland: Cultural globalisation or identity crisis?* [O]. Available: <http://www.wacc.org.uk/publications/md/md1998-3/corcoran.html>. Accessed on 2003/04/17.

Delanty, G. 1998. *Social theory and European transformation: Is there a European society?* [O]. Available:<http:/www.socresonline.org.uk/3/1/1.html>. Accessed on 2003/05/07.

De la Rey, C. 1991. Intergroup relations: theories and positions. In *Social psychology in South Africa*, ed. D Foster & J Louw-Potgieter. Johannesburg: Lexicon:27–53.

Economic globalization and culture: A discussion with Dr Francis Fukuyama. [sa]. [O]. Available: <http://www.ml.com/woml/forum/global.htm>. Accessed on 2003/04/.

Eriksen, T H. 1996. *Globalisation and Norwegian identity.* [O]. Available: <http://odin.dep.no/odin/engelsk/norway/history/032005-990471/ index-dok000-b-n-a.html>. Accessed on 2003/04/17.

Erikson, E H. 1968. *Identity: Youth and crisis.* New York: Norton.

Europe? Which Europe? Which future Europe? [Sa]. [O]. Available: <http://web.inter.nl.net/users/Paul.Treanor/which.europe.html>. Accesssed on 2003/03/04.

Featherstone, M. 1990. *Global culture: nationalism, globalization and modernity.* London: Sage.

—. 1995. *Undoing culture: globalization, postmodernism and identity.* London: Sage.

Frederick, H H. 1993. *Global communication and international relations.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Giddens, A. 1991. *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Habermas, J. 1998. The European nation-state: On the past and future of sovereignty and citizenship. *Public Culture*, 10(2):397–416.

—. 1999. The European nation-state and the pressures of globalization. *New Left Review*, 235:46–50.

—. 2001. *Why Europe needs a constitution.* [O]. Available: <http://www.newleftreview.net/NLR24501.shtml>. Accesssed on 2003/05/07.

Hall, S. 1996a. 'Who needs identity'?: In *Questions of cultural identity*, ed. S Hall and P du Gay. London: Sage.

—. 1996b. Cultural identity and diaspora, In *Contemporary postcolonial theory*, ed. P Mongia. New York: Arnold:110–121.

Hattori, M. 1997. *Identity and desire in consumption: Interaction between consumers and industry by the use of commodities.* [O]. Available: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/7606/mathesis.htm>. Accessed on 2003/03/05.

Horowitz, D L. 1991. *A democratic South Africa?: Constitutional enigineering in a divided society.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hunter, C D. 2000. *From cultural hegemony to the culture of code.* [O]. Available: <http://www.asc.upenn.edu/usr/chunter/iic.html>. Accessed on 2003/05/07.

Kloskowska, A. 1998. The responses of national cultures to globalization and its effect on individual identity. *Polish Sociological Review*, 1(121):3–19.

Kymlicka, W. 1995. *Multicultural citizenship: A liberal theory of minority rights.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Lacarrieu, M and Raggio, L. 1997. Citizenship within the globalization context: An analysis of trends within Mercosur. *The Mankind Quarterly*, 37(3):263–281.

Le Pere, G and Lambrechts, K. 1999. Globalisation and national identity construction: Nation building in South Africa. In *Identity? Theory, politics, history*, ed. by S Bekker and R Prinsloo. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council:11–38.

Margalit, A and Raz, J. 1990. National self-determination. *Journal of Philosophy*, 87(9):439–461.

Mattes, R. 1994. Survey unpacks April '94. *Democracy in Action* 8(7):12–14.

Mattes, RB. 1997 July. Social diversity and democratic stability in South Africa: identity, citizenship and nation. Paper presented at the international conference 'Identity? Theory, politics and history?' held at the Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria, South Africa.

Mbeki, T. 1997. Address by executive deputy president Thabo Mbeki, to Corporate Council on Africa's: 'Attracting capital to Africa' summit. [O]. Available: <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mbeki/1997/sp970419.html>. Accessed on 2003/05/19.

McCarthy, T. 1999. On reconciling cosmopolitan unity and national diversity. *Public Culture*, 11(1):175–208.

McLuhan, M. 1964. *Understanding media.* New York: Signet.

Rex, J. 1996. *National identity in the democratic multi-cultural state.* [O]. Available: <http:/www.socresonline.org.uk/1/2/1.html>. Accessed on 2003/05/07.

Rhoodie, N and Liebenberg, I. 1994. Preface. In *Democratic nation-building in South Africa*, ed. by N Rhoodie & I Liebenberg. Pretoria: HSRC:1–5.

Rouse, R 1995. Questions of identity: Personhood and collectivity in transnational migration to the United States. *Critique of Anthropology*, 15(4):351–380.

Servaes, J, Lie, R and Terzis, G. 2000. Introduction: International communication: From media imperialism to cultural globalisation. Study guide for Paper 1 of the Master's in Arts in International Communication. Pretoria: Department of Communication, University of South Africa.

Schopflin, G. 1997. *Civil society, ethnicity and the state: A threefold relationship.* [O]. Available: <http://www.sseas.ac.uk/gs1.htm> Accessed on 14/07/2003.

Skinner, J. 1999. Review article: Globalization and the age of migration. *The Editorial Board of The Sociological Review:* 603–08.

Suler, J. 1999. *Cyberspace as psychological space.* [O]. Available:
   <http://www.rider.edu/~suler/psycyber/psychspace.html> Accessed on 2003/05/07.

—. 2000. *Identity management in cyberspace.* [O]. Available:
   <http://www.rider.edu/~suler/psycyber/identitymanage.html> Accessed on 2003/05/07.

Tajfel, H. 1981. *Human groups and social categories.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, C. 1991. *The ethics of authenticity.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Tehranian, M. 1999. *Global communications and world politics: Domination, development and discourse.* Boulder: Lynne Riener.

Tehranian, M and Tehranian, K K. 1997. Taming modernity: towards a new paradigm. In *International communication and globalization*, ed. by A Mohammadi. London: Sage:119–167.

Urry, J. 2000. *The global media and cosmopolitanism.* [O]. Available:
   <http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/sociology/soc056ju.html> Accessed on 2003/04/17.

van den Berghe, P L. 1990. South Africa after thirty years. *Social Dynamics*, 16(2):16–37.

Waters, M. 1995. *Globalization.* London: Routledge.