

ERASMUS MUNDUS MASTERS
Journalism and Media within Globalisation:
The European Perspective

***Blue Book
2005-07***



The 2005-07 masters group covers participants from all over the world: Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, India, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Russia, The Netherlands, Ukraine, USA, Wales, Zimbabwe

Introduction

This Blue Book covers the short stories of the very first participants in the Mundus Masters Journalism and Media within Globalization: The European Perspective. The Consortium who offers this Masters is very proud to present a group of students who is truly global as to professional interests and with representation from all over the world. The group has been carefully selected within a pool of more than 150 applicants, so a lot of expectation is put to the outcome when hopefully all participants graduate with this Masters summer 2007.

For the Blue Book the participants have interviewed each other with the following questions as a template:

- An interesting story from your life
- Why do you participate in this masters
- What will you use this masters for
- The three most important developments/trends in journalism in your country
- The three most important developments/trends in the media in your country

One of the participants from this Masters group Bakyt Azimkanov from the Kyrgyz Republic has made an interesting survey to find the average Mundus Masters students. The first article of the Blue Book shows the results of the survey.

The Consortium for this Mundus Masters: Amsterdam University the Netherlands, City University, London United Kingdom, Hamburg University Germany, University of Wales, Swansea United Kingdom and Aarhus University/Danish School of Journalism Denmark welcomes this very first group of the Mundus Masters Journalism and Media within Globalization: The European Perspective, and look forward to hopefully providing the best conditions for excellent course works, so the Masters group will have the next two years of professional and cultural experiences as ever memorable.

Inger Munk

Coordinator the Mundus Masters

Journalism and Media within Globalization: The European Perspective

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WHO ARE THE ERASMUS MUNDUS STUDENTS?

Written By Bakyt Azimkanov from the Kyrgyz Republic

AARHUS, Denmark — The Codd Building on Finland Street of Aarhus, the second largest city in Denmark, became an area for hot debates, brilliant ideas and academic growth for 27 graduate students of the Erasmus Mundus Master's Program in Journalism and Media within Globalization: the European Perspective from Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Great Britain, India, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, The Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Russia, Ukraine, United States, and Zimbabwe. Relations between the above-mentioned countries might be tense but not between the Erasmus Mundus students.

Once competitors in space exploration and military potential, East and West are partners for peace and development. The same is true for this group of young scholars. One can hear English coupled with Russian phrases and time to time Danish and Spanish expressions in the classroom. Students from all parts of the globe discuss world issues face to face.

Geography of the Erasmus Mundus students

*Western Europe/European Union – 25.9%;
Eastern Europe/Former Soviet Union – 25.9%;
North America – 22.2%;
Asia – 14.9%;
Africa/Middle East – 7.4%;
Latin and Central America/Caribbean – 3.7%.*

Languages spoken by the Erasmus Mundus students

Azeri ■ Belarusian ■ Croatian ■ Danish ■ Dutch ■ English ■ Finnish ■ French ■ German ■ Hindi ■ Indonesian ■ Italian ■ Kalanga ■ Kamba ■ Kazakh ■ Kyrgyz ■ Latvian ■ Mandarin Chinese ■ Ndebele ■ Polish ■ Portuguese ■ Punjabi ■ Russian ■ Serbian ■ Shona ■ Slovenian ■ Sotho ■ Spanish ■ Swahili ■ Swedish ■ Turkish ■ Ukrainian ■ Urdu ■ Uzbek ■ Venda ■ Welsh ■ Zulu

This group is very diverse in many senses. Opinions of both 22-year-old student and 38-year-old student are given a fair opportunity despite the age difference. Current journalism requires a lot of traveling and knowledge of various languages. Average Erasmus Mundus student speaks three languages and has visited 14 countries. In total, the Erasmus Mundus students speak 37 world

languages that include the top ten most widely spoken languages as well as some smaller languages in Europe, Asia and in Africa.

In the past century, the political map of the world has changed several times — after the World War I, World War II and Cold War. Journalists are known for being well-traveled and having a good knowledge of current geography. Every Erasmus Mundus student would pass the geography test since the total number of countries visited by the members of this group is almost 100. Almost every country of the alphabet in every continent on the planet—starting from Afghanistan to Zambia.

Contemporary technology allows people to communicate more efficiently and produce better work. Laptops have become a part of everyday life for many journalists in the world, and the Erasmus Mundus students are no exception

Countries visited by the Erasmus Mundus students

Afghanistan ■ Andorra ■ Argentina ■ Australia ■ Austria ■ Azerbaijan ■ The Bahamas ■ Belarus ■ Belgium ■ Benin ■ Bolivia ■ Bosnia and Herzegovina ■ Botswana ■ Brazil ■ Bulgaria ■ Cambodia ■ Canada ■ Chile ■ China ■ Congo (Zaire) ■ Costa Rica ■ Croatia ■ Cuba ■ Cyprus ■ Czech Republic ■ Denmark ■ Dominican Republic ■ Ecuador ■ Estonia ■ Ethiopia ■ Finland ■ France ■ Germany ■ Ghana ■ Greece ■ Hungary ■ India ■ Indonesia ■ Ireland ■ Israel ■ Italy ■ Jamaica ■ Japan ■ Kazakhstan ■ Kenya ■ South Korea ■ Kyrgyzstan ■ Laos ■ Latvia ■ Lesotho ■ Liechtenstein ■ Lithuania ■ Macedonia ■ Malawi ■ Malaysia ■ Mauritius ■ Mexico ■ Moldova ■ Monaco ■ Montenegro ■ Morocco ■ Mozambique ■ Namibia ■ Nepal ■ The Netherlands ■ Nigeria ■ Norway ■ Pakistan ■ Paraguay ■ Peru ■ Portugal ■ Romania ■ Russia ■ Singapore ■ Slovakia ■ Slovenia ■ South Africa ■ Spain ■ Sri Lanka ■ Swaziland ■ Sweden ■ Switzerland ■ Tanzania ■ Thailand ■ Togo ■ Ukraine ■ UAE ■ UK ■ USA ■ Uzbekistan ■ Vatican City ■ Venezuela ■ Vietnam ■ Zambia ■ Zimbabwe

Politically biggest portion of the Erasmus Mundus students are very liberal — 29.6%. All members of this group have valuable experience in various kinds of mass media — from news clipping to war reporting. Young scholars have different opinions on dissimilar matters; however, they share coming values — both professional and moral. They hope that a diversity in all senses of this group will make its contribution to academic growth. Graduate students of this program will promote and set new standards of international journalism in today's transforming and changing world.



Belarusian lady journalist picked for Erasmus Mundus Masters

For 24-year-old Alesia Sidliarevich, journalism was not in her mind when she started off her university studies in Belarus, about seven years ago. Then she was a student of History at Hrodna State University. She had configured of becoming a high teacher but she ended up not liking the career.

Though Alesia's friends encouraged her to take up a career in journalism at an early stage, it was only after the completion of her university studies that Alesia ventured into the noble profession. That was in 1999 when she started writing for the "*Pahonia*", an influential, regional opposition newspaper in the former Soviet Union breakaway republic of 10 million people.

She wrote articles critical of President Aleksandr Lukashenka's leadership and protested bitterly over the arrest of two of her fellow reporters, accused of libeling President Lukashenka. Since then, she has not looked back.

In 2001, when the authorities in Belarus ordered the closure of the newspaper over its critical view against the government, Alesia was among a group of other media professionals who launched a website that, due to its immense pressure, forced the President to order the release of the two arrested journalists.

She is one of the pioneer students taking part in the Erasmus Mundus Masters: Journalism and Media within Globalization; European Perspective at the University of Aarhus in collaboration with the Danish School of Journalism. She had just completed a one-year Masters degree in History from the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary, shortly before she got admitted to the Erasmus Mundus Masters.

But why did she think of joining the Erasmus Mundus Masters?

She said, "I love being a journalist and I have always wanted to get the best training out of it. When I saw this program, then I thought this was the best opportunity of my lifetime."

According to Alesia, the program is superb, education-packed and exciting as students get to travel to and learn in three different countries throughout Europe. This will enhance "our journalistic skills" in reporting Europe and the world in the global arena.

As a young journalist from a country that has suffered years of oppressive rule, Alesia stresses that journalism is a noble profession that should be used to correct evils in society. The power of the pen, she says, could make the world a better place if and when used properly.

On completing the program, the Belarusian historian-turned-journalist plans to join one of the major international media networks as a special correspondent for the former Soviet Union. She also intends to use her new skills towards pushing for effective media development in her own country.

According to Alesia, the people of Belarus do not enjoy the freedom to free press since the media laws in the country are oppressive and do not allow the independent media to thrive. In the recent years, the government has closed down several privately-owned newspapers in Belarus, dealing a major blow to the country's media development.

Alesia Sidliarevich from Belarus was interviewed by Reuben Kyama

UKRAINIAN YEARNS FOR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Alexander Belyakov is a living metaphor for the changes that have occurred in his country recently. With the Mundus degree, hopefully he can continue to contribute to Ukraine's growth

BELYAKOV, from Kyiv, Ukraine, has spent time in 20 countries. On a trip in 2002, he went to an Environmental Journalism Workshop in Hawaii, the United States. He said his group was invited to witness a religious ceremony that normally doesn't allow tourists. The ceremony involved a lot of dancing and praying to the local gods and paid special attention to wind, earth, fire and water.

"When they prayed to the wind god, the wind stopped," Belyakov said. "When they prayed to the sun, the sun came out. For these people, water is very important and their dances to the water god were intense and with oars and a lot of sexual energy. A little funny for me, but with very deep meaning, I know. As the dance ended, the rain started again, heavily, and we were soaked. It didn't stop until morning.

"Indigenous people have a special intuition, like a connection to nature, and they enjoy their lives," Belyakov said.

For Belyakov, he said he enjoyed and found inspiration in globalization and glocalization in Ukraine. He said he was participating in the Mundus program for a deeper understanding of international journalism. He said it was important to have because of Ukraine's possibility to become a regional leader as it tries to become a real part of Europe and the world.

"For this, global knowledge is important to local agendas," Belyakov said. "Journalism education during the Post-Soviet transition was not an easy time and many things are still old fashioned. Ukrainian journalism is still in transition and looking for something new. I want to keep myself updated with journalism knowledge, especially in the era of life-long learning."

Belyakov said he was attracted to this program by the rare opportunity to earn a degree from three countries and to really get a European perspective.

"Since the Orange Revolution in late 2004, our main goal has been to become a part of the EU," he said. "The knowledge I gain here will be valuable and I can imagine it taking me in many directions."

He said he could cover international issues for national or international media. For more academia, he said he thought globalization was a good issue to study and enjoyed the thought of working at or even leading a research institute.

In Ukraine, Belyakov said three important developments in journalism were real freedom of press, more Western-orientation via more entertainment shows and less opinion in news, and the potential perspective offered by public television that may be created in the near future.

He said three important developments in Ukrainian media were Internet media as the only free space for journalism before the Orange Revolution, increasing foreign investment in media, and the growing interest in the Ukrainian language as Ukraine emerges on the world stage.

Alexander Belyakov was interviewed by Daniel Clifford

Alison Stauffer

Alison is one of the youngest members of the 2005-2007 Erasmus Mundus Masters in Journalism and Media class. She was born just north of San Francisco, California, USA 22 years ago. She grew up there with her brother, sister, and parents. She recently graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication.

In 2003, Alison participated in the 'Semester at Sea' program, which entailed spending four months on a cruise ship that had been converted into a university campus. She traveled around nine countries that included among others Cuba, Vietnam, China and India. It was quite fascinating for her to have an opportunity to brush shoulders with Fidel Castro who shelved his differences with Washington and took time to give the participating American students a lecture on the socio-political situation in Cuba. His lecture projected Cuba in a much different way from the stories she had read in America, and he did not even at one time mention or refer to the bad blood between the USA and Cuba. She was also able to socialize with Cubans who idolized Fidel Castro and do not believe Cuba would be on the world map without Castro. Traveling to Vietnam presented her with the opportunity to hear many diverse stories of the Vietnam War, and then to rise above much of the emotional baggage that characterizes the traditional American perception of Vietnam.

Alison decided to participate in the Erasmus Mundus Masters in Journalism program to get an outside-America perspective on politics, globalization and the media, subjects she has always been interested in. She believes the media is one of the driving forces behind globalization, and the program will undoubtedly equip her in reaching a better understanding of this phenomenon.

The standard of journalism in the USA has been decreasing in the last few years. Of particular concern to Alison is the sacrificing of objectivity by journalists who now tow political party lines thus becoming more or less extensions of the public relations departments of either the liberals or the conservatives. Additionally, American journalism and media are now more concerned with business and making money than informing the public, hence more air space is devoted to advertising than hard news. Young and beautiful anchors are now used by the various news stations to draw audiences instead of the content drawing attention of the public to the stations.

Another development in the US media today is the merger of various media organizations, which has affected diversity of opinion and ideas. This has also contributed to the trend toward narrow news coverage. More outlets are covering the same stories in-depth, but consequently leaving many other issues under-reported and stories untold. The media has thus ceased to be the mirror of society but has instead become agenda setters and opinion builders. People only hear what the media wants them to hear and there is little follow up on any issues.

Alison Stauffer from USA was interviewed by Sayi Zwakele

Young Indian Passion

The human approach to global issues

Controversial. That's how 23 year old Ankeeta Munsli from Bombay describes her first ever published story at the biggest daily Indian newspaper, The Times of India. Her dreams for the future are just as controversial. "I am going to study 'War and Conflict', but I want to use it for peace."

Being the youngest at a newspaper is tough. But being the youngest freelancer and getting into trouble over a story is more than challenging. It happened to Ankeeta right at the beginning of her impressive career at the Times Group (India). However, the newspaper gave her all the credits.

"It was difficult at times. I was not even twenty-one when I started writing for the Times Group. I just called them up one day and asked if they were interested in a story." A friend who was studying at the leading fashion institute of India had provided her with some delicate information. Ankeeta got her first story. Alongside it, an angry college director.

Ankeeta's story claimed mismanagement at the famous fashion college. "The institute, which is known for the many Indian top designers who attended it, was badly organised at that time. They were charging a lot of money, but they were not giving enough facilities to the students."

Right after the publication, trouble started. "They were not treating my friend well; giving her bad grades and so on." The college then called the newspaper claiming the story untrue. "The newspaper said: 'we stick by our journalist'. That was very funny because I had never written for them before. They just met me once."

After this challenging start Ankeeta stayed with the Times Group. She worked for the Economic Times, on the editorial desk and wrote analysis stories. Meanwhile, she graduated from Mumbai University with a bachelor in journalism, and pursued her PG Diploma in journalism at the Symbiosis Institute of Mass Communication, India with specialisation in media laws.

Contemplating future work, the human aspect of a job is of great importance to this young journalist. One of her dreams is to help a friend who is starting an aid project for children in India's region of Kashmir. "I would like to be there and report on the things that are happening in that region. Especially, because I am so close to the subject."

During her work as a journalist in India, Ankeeta did voluntary work with NGOs to help orphan girls in Bombay. She was shocked by the horrible things some of these girls had to endure during their short lives.

Ankeeta always wanted to work for the United Nations. However, after getting a closer insight into the structure and the efficacy of the UN during her work and studies, she got very critical of this international institution. Amongst other things, she believes that the UN is not effective yet. She now wants to travel to and report on troubled regions, especially Congo and other African countries.

Journalism, she thinks, at least provides an opportunity to draw closer attention to the hardship many people are dealing with every day. Therefore, Ankeeta wants to use her

journalism experience, and the knowledge gained from the Erasmus Mundus Masters, to tell the story behind a stream of general images of poverty and conflict in the media. “As journalists we are exposed to the best and worst of humanity. This has inspired me to deal with war and conflict in a more ‘human way’.

Her critical approach to global issues and the fact that Ankeeta entered the profession at a young age seems to fit well into a new trend that is gradually evolving in journalism in India. “Now we get young people who come directly from the universities. They have jobs at newspapers before they even graduate. The old people are being looked at as experts.”

Alongside a pattern of informality is evolving. “Indian media are becoming more and more informal. For example, in print journalism we now use a lot of ‘hinglish’, which is a mix of Hindi and English. It’s becoming more like people talk.”

Another important development that she observes is the ‘analysing of news’. “It’s no longer just reporting and giving the information. Now journalists talk more to the people; they get experts in and ask for opinions. That’s due to the fact that we’re getting a lot of private television networks. We never had Indian private media, it was all state owned. Now we’ve got a sudden mushrooming of news channels.”

Ankeeta believes that the ‘Erasmus Mundus Masters programme, ‘Journalism and Media within Globalisation’ provides the tools to gain better understanding in how globalisation affects nations in all corners of the world. Recent major developments in India’s media are a good example of that. Due to globalisation India is finally opening up. “We never allowed foreign media in and they couldn’t be published or printed here. We used to import all the foreign publications, like Cosmopolitan. That costs about a hundred rupees, which is about one pound, but that’s a lot of money for us. But now we have the Indian version of Cosmopolitan and Indian version of Elle.”

Ankeeta Mundi from India was interviewed by Stephanie Engel

American journalist in Europe

Art Patnaude looking to learn more, more, more

Art Patnaude graduated in 2004 from the University of Missouri School of Journalism, in the United States, with a Bachelor of Journalism and an emphasis in magazine writing. After graduating, Art escaped the balmy swelter of Missouri and took a job at a weekly newspaper in Wyoming. Working as a reporter and photographer at the Thermopolis Independent Record, he helped the paper achieve the status as “best weekly newspaper” in Wyoming.

Why this masters

A semester stint at the Danish School of Journalism during his undergrad whet Art’s international reporting palette. Like many of his classmates, he took to poking around the world wide web in search of something that would clear a swath into what Art refers to as a “stirring” international profession. With a keen interest in global affairs and a disposition for writing and photography, the Erasmus Mundus program seemed to offer a seamless opportunity for him to move in a positive direction.

Trends in journalism

Art is an American with a university degree, a year of work in the field, and internships at magazines and a daily newspaper. However narrow youth makes his view, he has some perception of where the business of journalism is going.

For one, he notes it is important to recognize journalism as a business. Yes, it provides a link between policy makers and the people, but there is also money to be made, and in the U.S., opportunity is rarely left idle.

The consolidation of large media corporations, also known as vertical integration, is playing a major part in what journalists have to consider while on the job. Their editors and publishers are no longer their only bosses.

The rise of war on terrorism has also had an effect on journalism. Although it is not the first time, the role of the journalist is coming into question, as well as the opinion of just what journalists should be allowed to know. What is, according to Art, possibly a misconception of what the first amendment has achieved could change the way journalists have to report.

Journalism is now also moving into a new media: the Internet. At this point, the ramifications of where this will lead the business can only be imagined.

Trends in media

The Internet is an issue for all of those involved in any media group. As the media sells information for a living, then the fastest, most sophisticated communication invention can only mean a big change.

Although nothing could be bigger than having a whole new news medium, technology is also helping things move quicker (which, of course, does not necessarily mean better). For example, digital camera and editing equipment is forging new rules in both timeliness and ethics.

The media is also facing a new question: what is news, what is infotainment, and does the media sphere need to make an obvious distinction?

The future

Art hopes to use the program to polish his rough conceptions of journalism and the media to make them more practical and useful in a future job as an international writer.

Art Patnaude from USA interviewed himself

From Extreme Sports to Global Journalism

Aarhus, Denmark-What is one to make of journalist Audrey Sykes? In a competitive world obsessed with profit, she focuses on writing and, in her free time, pursues simple outdoor pleasures like hiking and snowboarding. In an industry with more than its share of scandal, she simply writes about what she loves. In a society increasingly full of posturing and make-overs, she stands for simplicity and honesty - in a word, authenticity.

The attractive Sykes, who grew up in Florida but went to school in Colorado, recently took time from her busy schedule in Denmark to discuss with me her latest endeavor: pursuing a full-time Master's degree in journalism and media in Europe.

"I wanted a different perspective," she says, "from US journalism."

After digging around on-line, Sykes says she eventually found the Erasmus Mundus Journalism program in Journalism and Media within Globalization. This is an initiative of the European Union which relies on the collaboration of four academic institutions across Europe.

"It was right up my alley."

With a freshly minted bachelor's degree in journalism, Sykes was, until recently, the editor and writer for a Colorado-based publication that she and high school friend founded to cover extreme sports like skateboarding and snowboarding. They themselves had long been active in these sports.

"But we started to write about them and gave them Colorado coverage," she says in a disarmingly soft voice. "And it became really popular and circulation grew."

The forty-page seasonal publication had, at its peak, a circulation of 5,000.

Because snowboarding and other extreme sports have long been dominated by males, Sykes and her friend initially did not list their own names on the masthead of the publication.

"Most people didn't know we were girls," she says.

Often, while requesting interviews during their coverage of different events in Colorado, they would be met with requests to see their editors. "I am the editor," Sykes would then reply firmly, which was often met with surprise.

Sykes and her friend even designed their own logo - Triple SSS (for skate, snow, and sound) -- for clothing and other merchandise which they later marketed and sold with great success.

But in addition to her writing, reporting, and entrepreneurial activities, Sykes is also an astute observer of the times. In conversation, she identified several trends in the world of journalism that are a cause for concern.

For example, the increasing concentration of media power in the hands of a few conglomerates bodes ill for smaller publications like the one that she and her friend founded in Colorado.

At the same time, she adds, it is important to recognize that print media are simply not as popular as before because of the proliferation of on-line media. These are significant changes.

Another trend that Sykes points to are the increasing complaints over "bias" in the media - whether from the Right or from the Left.

"All media outlets are now labeled as slanted in the eyes of society," Sykes says. This raises questions as to the perceived credibility of the media. "I wonder how this will develop."

Sykes is a thoughtful, energetic young woman whose adventurous and independent spirit will help her become a formidable journalist. Her curiosity - and the willingness to "always try something new" - will give her a special advantage.

Asked what she expects to do after she receives her European Master's in two years, Sykes smiles and says, "save the world."

Audrey Sykes from USA was interviewed by A.M. Fantini

A Cultural Hybrid Takes On Europe

Bakyt Azimkanov, the Kyrgyz participant in the Erasmus Mundus Program, can be called a cultural hybrid. His family, studies and work connect him with the Kyrgyz, Russian and American cultures and now he is exploring the European perspective on current global issues.

AZIMKANOV, from Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, started his journalism career in 1998. The interactive shows, *Vremya Vstrechi* and *Gülgün Jash*, were implemented at one of the Kyrgyz local broadcasting companies due to his initiative. A year later, he started the school newspaper, *Jetigen*, and later, while studying at Pasco High School in Washington State, he wrote articles for the school newspaper, *Wasco*. News stories produced by Azimkanov about Afghani refugees in Kyrgyzstan were broadcast on the *Mir* Interstate Broadcasting Company, which is based in Moscow. Photographs taken by him were exhibited in the Kyrgyz National Fine Arts Museum in Bishkek. Azimkanov's thesis study "The Impact of the Brazilian Soap Opera, *O Clone*, on the Attitudes and Behavior of Its Fans in Kyrgyzstan. A Qualitative Analysis" got encouraging reviews from the Harvard University and Boston University. This young journalist is a constant contributor to national and foreign print and electronic media.

After graduating from the American University with a Bachelor's degree with honors, Azimkanov decided to go further in his education. He sees getting a Master's degree as the first step towards success in his career. He finds the prospect of living and working in a foreign and new place exciting and feels it can educate a person in ways that dry academic studies cannot hope to. Previous academic exchange programs have enabled Azimkanov to experience both the American and the European educational systems firsthand. In addition they have exposed him to American and European cultures. He loves studying foreign languages, different cultures, geopolitics, and experiencing the "global village". Azimkanov hopes to gain more in-depth exposure to groundbreaking and world-class journalism tools and concepts. Certainly, this participant in the Program from Central Asia will contribute his knowledge of various languages and cultures, his qualifications and experience in developing countries, and more to the Erasmus Mundus Master's Program, while, at the same time, gaining a top quality background for himself and improving his skills as a journalist.

In the former Soviet Union, the government controlled the media and set journalism standards. These standards are outdated; however, they are still widely used in the former Soviet nation of Kyrgyzstan. Azimkanov sees it as his responsibility to try to implement international journalistic standards in Central Asia upon completion of this Program. He believes that the Soviet method of "broadcasting to the masses" is obsolete and that contemporary media consumers need a different approach – one that communicates with each individual viewer, listener and reader.

The global environment is changing rapidly and, with it, the communication process, which is becoming more diverse in every sense. However, there is a gap between developed and developing nations. Azimkanov believes this Program can play an important role in "shrinking" this gap, by approaching each case with balanced practical and applied research – a technique he hopes to apply in his career.

Azimkanov believes that journalism is in his genes. His father, Alymbek Azimkanov, is a well-known war and conflict reporter in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Bakyt Azimkanov's grandfather, Azim Khan, was an editor-in-chief of the *Kök-Art*

Nuru newspaper in Jalal–Abad, the third largest city in Kyrgyzstan, during the 1950s. Azimkanov's family is scattered throughout the world—in South Africa, Israel, Greece, Hungary, Russia, Kazakhstan, the United States and the Kyrgyz Republic—but today's methods of communication bring these cosmopolitan relatives closer.

A quick overview of Azimkanov's biography illustrates that he grew up in a very dynamic environment while moving from one place to another. He is indeed a cultural hybrid: throughout his life he has been influenced by several cultures and lived in a number of countries. This young media scholar combines the best traits from various ways of life: the hardworking attitude of the Kyrgyz, the volunteerism of Americans and the fun-loving nature of Russians. He is fluent in several languages and easily adapts to whichever society he is currently in.

He is open to new ideas, an independent journalist with a strong sense of community service. Azimkanov looks forward to traveling throughout Europe and learning more about this part of the world. The motivation of this diligent young Kyrgyz is impressive. He hopes to find a good job where he will be able to utilize and practice his knowledge and skills in the best possible way.

Bakyt Azimkanov from the Kyrgyz Republic was interviewed by Rikke Skovgaard Andersen

Waging War on Journalism

Portuguese Bruno Alves is studying to make his dream to provide a new approach to reporting on war become a reality

Bruno Alves, 24 years old, worked as a print journalist in Portugal's capital, Lisbon, for one year. In that time he acquired a taste for what the world of journalism requires, but without the chance to delve into what really interests him- war reporting. His long-time interest in international war correspondence reached its peak after a month long venture through the rough villages and neighborhoods of Brazil's Rio de Janeiro. It was there that his eyes were opened to what he calls "the perverse effects of economic segregation". In a place where the people live without racism and in general with a happy and joyful ambience, there dwells a deep divide between the rich and poor. This separation of classes gives birth to the infamous stories of violence and drug wars among desperate Brazilians. As a European, it was the first time Alves was subjected to images of 12 year-olds carrying guns, Copa Cabana drug wars, and social separation due to economic classism. Alves reflecting on his experience and the way of life commented, "This is real- we could often hear gunshots. But you just get used to it." After his Brazilian discovery, his return to Europe made his home seem much more peaceful. However, these types of experiences have only made his interest in reporting news stronger.

Now, Alves has the dream to use his journalism and travel experiences to build a more specialized knowledge in globalization and war reporting. As a student of the Erasmus Mundus Master in Journalism, he is working to gain traditional journalism knowledge in order to provide a contemporary method for reporting our world's news. His real goal is to focus on the innovations of war and how journalism must change. "War is taking on a new direction; it is no longer fought on the traditional battlefield but rather it's technological war. Nowadays, terrorists have Internet chat sessions instructing their "soldiers" on tactics. We, as journalists have to progress as well in order to provide information on how war is changing", says Alves.

After a dictatorship ending in 1974, Portugal has embarked on a new set of regulations for free press. They are making journalists more responsible for their content and this is limiting unbiased information. The rise of "infotainment" is creating what Alves calls, "a superficial analysis of information which distances the people from the information they deserve". Like war, media is changing with more technology advancements.

Traditional print media is more impersonalized. The conglomeration of huge media giants results in cost cutting. Consequently, journalists no longer capture and provide the mood and true story but more a briefing made up of generic information. In Portugal, like many other western societies, media companies control content making private and public news organizations homogenous. In Alves' eyes there is a light at the end of this information tunnel. In Portugal there is an emergence of individual citizen participation in journalism. Recent technology allows the individual to participate in what is news. Cell phones and personal communication devices are changing the face of journalism and giving the public the chance to take part in providing news coverage. This summer, many news stories were made possible due to local Portuguese citizens providing images and information. As a journalist, Alves believes the public needs to participate in news production.

The new challenges to print journalists are very real. Bruno Alves is working to keep this medium ethical, unbiased, progressive, and alive. We as journalists are not entertaining the public, we are informing the public. That is our responsibility.

Bruno Alves from Portugal was interviewed by Katherine Riser

Hola! Yo soy Christian Hudtwalcker. Usted miráis noticias

Christian Hudtwalcker Pinilla is a native of Peru, the third largest country in South America, and one of the highly rated news anchors in Lima. His job on air begins with “Hello. I am Christian Hudtwalcker. You are watching news”. After getting a Bachelor’s degree in Law and Political Sciences, he joined his father’s business and to give entrepreneurship a try. Hudtwalcker believes that journalism is not a profession but a passion and that made him to begin a new life in cable television

He recollects some interesting moments from his life as a Peruvian journalist and he distincts some. One of the things as a news anchor, he introduced some innovations to the news program. He replaced dry and politicized news texts with lively words and vivid descriptions of the events coupled with facial gestures, voice tone changes and hand motions. His bosses were afraid of trying new things on the channel. However, after some audience surveys, Hudtwalcker’s bosses were more than happy to have him as news anchor for the prime time news.

Hudtwalcker believed fate led him to this Master’s Program. For a 30-year-old Peruvian, journalism was always an intriguing discipline and after working for his father he started to follow his dream. After International Journalism training in France led by the French Foreign Affairs Ministry, Hudtwalcker decided to shift his focus from domestic news into international news with a closer look at European news. Throughout his journalism career he traveled throughout the Americas and Europe. Luckily, he was able to gain more knowledge and skills during his previous visit to Denmark and the Netherlands as a participant of the Europe in the World Program.

According to Hudtwalcker, that was the very program and the very visit that caught his interest in continuing education in journalism with a specialization in European news. In his opinion, this program can give him a bigger scope for the long run. He is fluent in Spanish and has a good knowledge of several regions that he believes will help him to land a nice job.

Hudtwalcker plans to start his own television show back in Lima, 10,950 km. (6,805 mi.) away from Aarhus, Denmark, after completing his education in Europe and some traveling. He is hopeful that the knowledge he will gain during this program will equip him with the necessary skills that can be of good use in his home country.

Lima, that has almost Denmark’s whole population of five million, has about seven daily newspapers and most other cities have at least one. Most Peruvian newspapers are privately owned and they represent a variety of political viewpoints.

According to Hudtwalcker, radio is an important means of mass communication in Peru. Most Peruvian families own a transistor radio. Programs are broadcast in both Spanish and Quechua, the second official language of Peru mostly spoken by Peruvian Indians.

Peru has an average of about one television set for every ten people. Many people watch television in public places. Television offers both local programs and foreign programs with Spanish sound tracks. The government operates some radio and television stations. Others are privately owned.

In 1992 when Alberto Fujimori came to power in Peru, media was controlled by the government, except some cable channels. Hudtwalcker worked for one of those cable channels and as he recalled that they were always ready for a surprise visit from the government or a notice from the government. The Japanese-Peruvian leader was re-elected in 1995 and 2000. Media were oppressed, owned and ruled by the Fujimori’s government. Because Fujimori is in political exile in Japan, media have started to develop in a steady way. Many views are represented in the Peruvian media and censorship officially no longer exists.

Hudtwalcker believes he will contribute to the development of the Peruvian media and his knowledge will be in demand and used for the common good of his people.

Christian Hudtwalcker Pinilla from Peru was interviewed by Bakyt Azimkanov

American on the Move

Despite common stereotypes about Americans, Daniel Clifford is one of those people who do really care about what is going on outside the United States

He was home only for a few weeks during the last years and will not be back for at least two more years exploring other continents. Daniel has many stories to tell, and most of them are, of course, about travel.

While living in China, he took a vacation to Bali, a small island in Indonesia, with his Chinese girlfriend Claudia. They rented a moped to drive around. As they were traveling during the rainy season, it started raining. It was getting more and more difficult to drive, thus Daniel and Claudia found a parking lot by a store for a short stay. The store was full of Balanese food, drinks, snacks and vine, and they had samples of everything. Daniel and Claudia tried all the different things and became friends with people working there. Even though they didn't go all the way around the island, their trip was still a wonderful experience.

Daniel decided to participate in the international masters program because of his interest in bilingual media. It may be a foreign language on a domestic market or printed products in two languages with different texts next to each other. Daniel has seen such products in Hong Kong.

He was trying to do the same when he was in Spain, where he designed a magazine. However, the man who was helping him was distracted by other investments. They are in contact now and hope to renew this project.

"With many people in the U.S. coming to work from Central and South America, Spanish is taking on a new level of importance and I think the media in the U.S. overlook this," Clifford said. He is at least happy to see a Spanish newspaper in his home city Minneapolis.

Daniel's expectations for use of this master program are mostly related to his second year of study. He signed up for specialisation in business and finance journalism in London. He is hoping to get some practical knowledge and experience on the business side of mass media and to learn how to run a media business.

Daniel paid attention to sensationalism as a trend. It is especially in Fox news. He also observed a trend in media to select stories that are easy for everyone to follow. "Many reporters and journalists are "spoon-fed" information by the government and corporations, and more in-depth journalism is needed," Clifford said.

Most important developments in the U.S. media include conglomeration and joint-operating agreements between competing newspapers. They often combine their advertising departments, but have different editorial departments. Combining printing costs lowers competition.

Also, Clifford mentioned more newspapers going to the Internet. However, people do not want to pay for an Internet subscription. Finally, satellite-radio is a trend similar as cable TV once was. As listeners have to pay for it, broadcasters are getting more liberty.

Daniel Clifford from USA was interviewed by Alexander Belyakov

The unique chance

Erasmus Mundus is an opportunity to gain two goals: to get your masters and to find out what is it - to live in Europe

Why did I decide to participate in this masters? First of all, because officially I don't have journalistic education. I am a linguist by education. I can say that I have some practical experience, but still I feel there is a gap in my knowledge. Naturally, I would like to fill this gap. The masters is a really good opportunity to get education without spending too many years at the university again! Another question is why did I decide to choose this very masters? Well, I really think that Erasmus Mundus is a great chance to reach two goals at once: we can both get our masters' degree and see how the education systems work in different European countries. There are so many talks about the European integration in my country so it is an opportunity for me to feel how it does look like ~ to live in Europe.

I think that my master degree can help me in my career in my country as well as if I choose to go abroad. The young people who have master degree have the better chances to get a good and well paid work especially if they studied at the well known universities of Europe. Europe is famous for its perfect education system and excellent universities. Sometimes the name of the university mentioned in your CV can make your potential employer think you are worth of inviting for a job interview! It goes without saying, you should really be worth of it and have a deep knowledge in your work sphere if you dared to mention the name of well known university in your papers.

When I come back to my country I will go on with reporting. I used to cover cultural and social topics but I think in the future I will be an international news reporter. I expect to cover topics that refer to the European integration of my country. Reflecting the European integration is one of the main priorities of Moldovian media.

At present, the new independent states that used to be in socialist block are hoping to be a part of the European society. Some of them are already in the European Union. Naturally, that the European integration is a really fruitful area to cover for the mass media of these newly formed states. And I can say that about Moldavian media as well. Many officials of the European bodies visit our country in order to consult Moldavian authorities and state bodies about what the latter should do to bring Moldova to Europe. Also, many officials from the new EU members come to us to share their experience. So I would like to stress once more that the European integration is a gold vein for reporters in my country and I am really interested in covering this very topic.

Elena Coretcaia from Moldova interviewed herself

Just call me Frank

“Excuse me could you repeat that”, is the first phrase that pops out a western persons mouth, when Chinese Renfeng introduces himself by the hardpronounceable first name. “But you can call me by my western name, “Frank”, he says with a smile showing that this clearly isn’t the first time people have trouble understanding his name. After his studies in the US, Frank has been working as a business journalist for “China Daily”, the only English language paper in China. In the spring 2002 he, and four other journalists, were invited to the Indonesian province “Pupua” by the British gas and oil company “British Petroleum” in connection with Indonesian gas export to China.

During the visit Frank got the opportunity to interview the governor of Pupua about the problems and issues that arises when a high tech company intervenes in a primitive society where most of the population still live in symbiosis with nature. According to the governor globalization needn’t be a zero-sum game where modernisation and technological progress took place on behalf of local culture and environment, but could in fact be an opportunity to modernisation while preserving the local culture and environment. According to Frank globalisation is here whether we want it or not and like the governor he feels that people that live in countries with natural resources also should have the opportunity to benefit economically from the growth these resources can promote. “But how do we do that without destroying the local environment – how do we improve corporate social resposability?”, Frank asks. He stresses that with the low cost of labour and escalating growth rate, China is at present the centre of gobalisation. Therefore he as a Chinese naturally sees globalisation as positive. But especially the trip to Indonesia, was an eye-opener to the complexity of dealing with issues created by the globalisationprocess. “I think journalists should be able to have their own critical thinking and we should have our own knowledge of globalisation. That’s why I’m here”, he says as the explanation for him taking the Erasmus Mundus master. He points out that the critical thinking is getting even more important for Chinese journalists nowadays with the freedom of speech playing an increasing role in Chinese media. The freedom of speech also implies more criticism against the government and in the end this raises the bar for the qualifications needed to become a good journalist. Among the general media trends Frank points to the increasing role of the Internet and a parallel decrease in print media, primarily newspapers. Another trend is a wider selection in Chinese produced television programs alongside an expanding import of foreign programs, primarily from the US.

Renfeng Zhao (Frank) from China was interviewed by Marianne Rasmussen

A Perfect Mundus Match

Geoffrey Carliez is an example of the kind of journalist that the increasingly global media of today requires. A 24 year old of French/Dutch origin he brings a certain level of journalistic zest and curiosity, as well as impressively diverse experience for a career in its infancy, to the Mundus programme. He could be considered an ideal candidate.

A recounting of Geoffrey's life brings home the sense of adventure inherent in his personality. His family left France for the Netherlands when he was 2 years old, living all over the country as he grew up. As he says, since arriving in the Netherlands he has basically never stopped moving. Leaving home at 17 to pursue his joy of travelling and indulging in new experiences, it became clear that journalism was where his future lay. "Curiosity is an essential part of it, but also Journalism is a way in which I can exploit my own interests" he says.

A passion for film, philosophy and art reflects his open mindedness and thirst for knowledge. When he enrolled in the Utrecht School of Journalism in 1999 his key interest was documentary film making. Since then, his career path in the journalistic world could be simply described as pro-active. Geoffrey has spent time in Southern Africa studying media, secured placements and traineeships at many Dutch publications, worked as a freelance reporter at home and in Indonesia, and held editorial positions on publications such as *Global Medicine* and *Havana* magazine. Additionally, events during an early internship show how this pro-active approach in gaining media work can place you in some bizarre and dramatic circumstances. A hostage siege occurred in the former Amsterdam Phillips building across the street from where Geoffrey was working. As authorities attempted to deal with the situation – where some thirty people were threatened by an armed man – the young student was able to shoot pictures through the window. It illuminates his rebellious streak – an often vital ingredient for any reporter. His office sent the images to a major national newspaper, and just two hours later was accredited on the front page as his pictures led the news of the day. It was some debut in a national print daily.

Such circumstances hint towards his choice of specialism for the second Erasmus Mundus Masters year of study – reporting war and conflict. Geoffrey has already undertaken a war training course for journalists at the Dutch School of Peace Missions, learning about first aid, negotiation, dealing with road blocks and even explosives. It is clearly an appealing brand of reporting that suits his journalistic acumen.

Today, he observes a Dutch print media scene in transition. Magazines are thriving with plenty of freelance opportunities, but newspapers struggle to survive with spiralling sales, making employment in the industry increasingly unstable. Regardless, there is great value to living and working abroad, "It helps you to reflect better on your own country" says Geoffrey. For a reporter who has a genuine and unyielding interest in foreign affairs the Erasmus Mundus instalment in this trans-national journey is an ideal tonic, "It connects perfectly". Despite the plurality of experiences, he maintains it is a gradual progression.

Supplementing practical skills and knowledge with an understanding of media intricacies in a global framework was a major carrot for Geoffrey when applying. He sees the value in acquiring the broadest of outlooks. "A good journalist should be able to see the global aspects of stories and be aware of international factors, so that he/she can frame and conceptualise them correctly. It make's you a better journalist".

As such, this new Erasmus Mundus programme seems the perfect new adventure for his incessant curiosity.

Geoffrey Carliez of the Netherlands was interviewed by John Rowlands

Searching For Truth Beyond Borders

Being one of the first Erasmus Mundus Masters in Journalism students ever, John Rowlands' (24) interests in journalism, foreign policy and globalisation has taken him beyond borders. Literally. Now studying in Denmark, this Welsh journalist tries to expand his knowledge about the world as it is. "I do not want to shelter myself from reality."

John's mission in journalism almost seems to reveal all misconceptions and lies about the world out there. Whether it is by covering doping scandals in sports as he did for the popular Italian based football website Goal.com, or as it will be later in his upcoming specialism on war and conflict correspondence. A clear understanding of current world affairs is deemed as important to his audience as it is necessary to him. He trusts that the Erasmus Mundus Masters and more general experience abroad will benefit this: "It is good to hear completely different opinions from people around the world in our class. This and just being away from your own country makes you look at things from different perspectives and helps you to better reflect on your own country."

Even though people in Wales, John's place of birth, and in the entire United Kingdom do not seem to be that interested in foreign policy as he is, says John: "The foreign affairs section of the BBC-website must be the least visited by British citizens. They just really do not get a sense of what is going on outside their country and I am not sure if they care greatly either. He sees Welsh citizens, who are known to be quite patriotic, as quite inwardly focused. Why might I be different? Sigmund Freud would probably refer to me as isolationist!"

In his interest for foreign policy, globalisation is one of John's biggest themes. No wonder he chose to study this particular Master programme, as he says himself. "It took me two years to find a Master course which appealed as much as this. The world is in a state of transition from very national towards more global and journalists should focus on these developments. Nowadays less people have real roots in one place anymore. This can also be seen while looking at the immense power that transnational corporations have gained, and can even be witnessed when looking at big media companies that merge together. Developments like these might be risky for citizens in the future since there might be less differing opinions reaching them. However it is still uncertain to say that we are on any kind of downwards spiral."

Among the biggest media developments in his own country, John mentions commercialisation to be a big aspect. The high competition between broadcast stations, newspapers and the fast emergence of the internet has made television as well as newspapers in his country 'very tabloidish'. The result? Different paper formats for newspapers and less attention for in depth news. The good thing according to John however is that: "the BBC now has a far broader policy beyond nation-building and public serving since there is now far more UK broadcasting competition."

After completing the Erasmus Mundus Masters in Journalism, John is looking forward to gaining as much knowledge in the practical fields of journalism as he can. However, fame is not his target is all this, since his main purpose is only to become a greater journalist. John: "I will do journalism in my own way."

John Rowlands of Wales was interviewed by Geoffrey Carliez

“I want to be this century’s Noam Chomsky”

Katherine Riser: From Utah to the World

Katherine Riser is a 25 year old vivacious American girl with big bright blue eyes and an easy smile. She has been living in Spain for the last two years – a long way from her native Utah – and she doesn’t expect to go back home anytime soon.

“For me, travelling is like an existential experience. When I was 18 years old I had to decide what to do next with my life. But whereas everybody else just wanted to go to the university, I wanted to go to Argentina, buy a piece of land, and just farm it in order to survive”, says Katherine.

Coincidentally, her wanderlust seems to have come included with her name. “In the Germanic languages my last name is written ‘Reiser’, which actually means traveller. So maybe I was influenced by it in some subconscious or divine way”, she says, laughing.

Despite her initial intentions, she ended up going to college. And that was when she first got interested in globalization, which would eventually lead to her enrolment in the Erasmus Mundus programme.

“Globalization is such an abstract and constantly changing concept. I am really interested in exploring the relationship between culture and globalization, to have an overview of the web of globalization”, explains Katherine.

Actually, she already has a head start. “I wrote a thesis called *Mass Media creating Mass Culture: Global Media and its effects on Cultural Identity Construction* and I plan to use the knowledge gained in this master’s to expand and publish it. I want to be this century’s Noam Chomsky.”

So how does this young thinker view the current journalistic panorama in America?

“I think one of the most important recent developments was caused by the war in Iraq, since it got people really interested about the Middle East.”

Katherine goes on to explain how the war has spurred new voices, like the Adbusters magazine, and how they try to awaken the people by providing in-depth knowledge about this subject.

However, she points out a tough obstacle for these alternate sources to overcome: conglomeration. “I think people in America tend to rely more on the mainstream news coverage, so they don’t really get any of the global news. But these conglomerates try to westernize cultures that shouldn’t be changed.”

One positive trend concerns the way technology is allowing journalists to provide a lot of first hand information, and give more news to the public. And then there is the internet.

“The internet is a great medium because you can receive everything, but it also poses new threats that we don’t even begin to conceptualize”, she says.

Another trend concerns the media’s entertainment value. “This can really distract the people, since they can spend their whole lives just consuming these new media”.

Perhaps because of this, Katherine finds it sad that we are moving away from print journalism. “Print is the one of the most important medium because it explains things, and you can go back to it, whereas television is just very quick. It makes people lazy and unquestioning.”

Katherine Riser from USA was interviewed by Bruno Alves

In Search of Deeper Understanding

Khatira Shikhiyeva: *“People are able to overcome any obstacles and crises if they are told the truth”*

Khatira Shikhiyeva, Azerbaijani student from shores of the Caspian Sea, jumped at the chance to enroll on the Erasmus Mundus Masters Programme in “Journalism and Media within Globalization: The European Perspective” in order to better her understanding of the common European perspectives and approaches in media within globalization.

Khatira, schooled in the Art of journalism in Baku State University, where she completed her Master degree before embarking on her career as a journalist. She has background experience in both print and television media in the capital city, Baku.

It was long ago when she dreamed of becoming a lawyer. But later she realised that journalism better matches to her passion and rebellion nature to protect human rights and interests and that the pen is better tool to pursue this lifetime goal. However, it was not a coincidence but the fate to land in a work where she was only journalist surrounded by lawyers. Khatira has a couple of years exciting and rewarding experience working for the Legal Project of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation, prominent German Organization operating worldwide, as Media Programme Manager. She believes in the power of journalism and the media has as “the fourth power”. “People are able to overcome any obstacles and crises if they are told the truth”, Khatira says.

In 2004, Khatira was chosen as the only participant from Caucasus to attend the first European Journalism Institute in Prague, Czech Republic. Being part of a very multi-cultural programme, gave her insight to common European Perspectives and approaches in media within globalization. With a hunger to master these approaches and perspectives, she believes that by having a broader perspective is of great value to her in her future career as a journalist back in her home country of Azerbaijan.

What do you think you will get out of this Master programme?

- This course will open up for me the possibility of my own professional growth. I will gain a deeper and better understanding of the European perspective; tools for journalism and media within globalization, the processes of integration and disintegration, a global world marked and global challenges and the policy context in which they operate. It will also help me to analyze more meaningfully the role of media in cultural globalization processes and the important impact the media has on cultural globalization, cultural exchange and challenges to existing local and national cultures, Khatira explains.

Azerbaijani Media

The Media in Azerbaijan is experiencing a wind of modernization, mostly seen in the strive towards supplying more variety in electronic media. Soon most of the popular newspapers will have managed to provide readers with on-line farcicalities as well. The print media is solely divided to three major newspaper groups, one pro-governmental, the opposition and the independents.

The print media used to have larger circulation, but now the television channels have the most influence on people. In the coming months a new public TV channel will launch transmitting and will join the competition for viewers with four independent and a state TV channel.

The most recent trend that can be seen in the Azerbaijani Media is the emergence of large Media Houses that encompass not only print and broadcast media but also publishing houses, filming and dubbing studios, which is said to better the quality of broadcast and reporting and boost the plans of modernization. However, in fact the media and journalism are politically influenced and in the future it is expected that political polarization of the media is going to grow.

Khatira Shikhiyeva from Azerbaijan was interviewed by Ville Saikku

Globalization changes lifestyles in Africa

Benin trip inspires new thought on international journalism

There's one major reason to add Benin to your next travel destination. And no, it's not because of the country's tropical environment, exotic food or primitive people.

This western African country boasts all these enticing things for a globetrotter, but for Marianne Rasmussen, on top of them, is a DVD movie.

The Danish student in journalism would never forget the *Romeo and Juliet* after her trip to this country four years ago, because, not the movie, but the experience was just too surprising.

"I was invited to a typical dinner by a local family in their houses. They were primitive people, and we were having primitive food, which was just natural in the African country," said Rasmussen. "After the meal, as I relaxed, the hostess in the family asked me a question which just amazed me -- she was asking me what DVD movies I would like to watch."

You picture it: Tropical environment, simple houses and primitive people watching DVD movies at their homes.

No, it is not a TV commercial hyping how powerful the new technology is. It is only a matter of a fact in West Africa. Isn't it amazing?

"I think it is a very good case reflecting the impact of globalization in Africa," said Rasmussen. And a similar scene is that indigenous women use cell phones in the streets, according to her.

"The mixture of local culture and modern technology gives a new pattern of lifestyle in the country, which really amazed me," she said.

While Western European countries gradually embrace new technology after a series of stages of industrialization development, primitive people in Africa get in touch with new inventions within a very short period of time.

The new wave of globalization has changed in many ways what people think and how people live. The Benin trip also shifted Rasmussen's observation of globalization and her career goal.

"Issues are not limited to the national boundaries now. Journalism is transnational and we need to have critical thoughts about globalization," she said.

Rasmussen is now taking the Erasmus Mundus programme on journalism and media within globalization, which will hopefully land her a very good job in the future.

With the move of globalization, Danish media are having great changes. Newspaper offices and news agencies want journalists to have more specialized skills than before.

They should be very knowledgeable in the areas which they report, on the one hand; they are also expected to have broad vision of the world. As competition among various media industries in Denmark are becoming quite intensive, media should also learn to play a role as a both educational and entertaining channel.

Rasmussen aims to become a person with broad international experience and she may also move to other third-world countries to contribute to the local community.

Marianne Rasmussen from Denmark was interviewed by Renfeng Zhao (Frank)

About Mario Fantini

Mario Fantini considers himself new flesh in the realm of media, though his previous experience begs to differ.

Fantini's journalistic juices began to flow during a five-year excursion in LaPaz, Bolivia, working as a business reporter for American publications. He eventually returned to Vermont in 2003, after a political article on a corrupt Bolivian judge placed Fantini's life in danger.

"I had to get protection by people of the government and was promised safety, but I still got real paranoid," says Fantini. "I didn't answer my phone for three weeks, and hid inside my home for a long time."

Until his departure, Fantini continued to report on local business affairs involving natural gas, oil and mine conflicts in Bolivia. In Vermont he tested his freelance abilities before moving on the the Erasmus Mundus program.

Fantini sees growth in online media an important development in recent times, and is confident that the tools he needs to be a part of this trend will be offered to him by Erasmus Mundus.

"You no longer have to pick up a newspaper and find what's interesting to you. Online media sends news that's tailored to you and useful to you," says Fantini. "I think online journalism has become a major force and it's making the big media companies more vulnerable."

Fantini is confident that Erasmus Mundus will direct him to an area of media where his talent as a journalist can thrive.

"I'm hoping Erasmus Mundus will give me a jumpstart in journalism," says Fantini. "Maybe some street credibility, too."

Mario Fantini from USA/Bolivia was interviewed by Audrey Sykes

Fate led her to Erasmus Mundus

Martina Topic believes that that fate led her to Erasmus Mundus. A journalist at the business monthly «Profit» in her native Croatia, Martina is covering Economy and EU issues. Besides that she is regularly covering section entitled «How did the world's greatest companies started». However, for one of the issues, as she didn't have any ideas about which company to write about, she decided to Google and in the search field she wrote Danish companies. The Erasmus Mundus journalism program was first one of the search results she got!?

«To me, Denmark was the magic word», said Martina. I have always been fascinated by this country and I believed that I will get the stipend as Danish institution was the one to made the admission decision.»

That the program would give her opportunity to study at Aarhus University, the Alma mater of Danish royal family, enticed her all the more.

By participating in the Erasmus Mundus Masters, Martina hopes to gain some theoretical knowledge about globalization and the media. She is already a professional journalist, with three years of experience at Croatian papers and journals: business monthly «Profit», the «Croatian International relations review» and «Croatian Review.»

While Martina has two Bachelors Degrees in both Journalism and Political sciences, her area of specialisation is economic journalism. Interested in international relations, geopolitics, history and foreign languages, Martina has never been particularly enthusiastic about Economics, but once again, an extraordinary chain of events led her to the field. A two years ago, the reporter in charge of the economics section in political weekly where she worked, was on vacation. Martina's editor asked her to temporarily fill in. «I was angry because I used to hate Economics but I couldn't refuse», said Martina, «but my editor was great. She showed me how to deal with economic topics in an interesting way.» After that, she continued to work in Economy section and year later she became an economy journalist in leading business monthly «Profit».

During her second year, Martina will specialise in Business and Finance Journalism at City University, London. She finds this Masters Degree particularly advantageous as studying in three different countries will open more doors of opportunity for her. After completing the program, she plans to continue with her education. She would like to get a second Masters Degree in Political Sciences and International Relations, and eventually, a doctorate in International Security and International Economy. For the time being though, Martina plans to exploit the unique opportunities offered to her by Erasmus. «I have always been interested in world states, political systems and culture, she said. «There are people here from all over the world, this is the perfect chance to meet them and get their stories first hand.»

Martina Topic from Croatia was interviewed by Neha Sud

From an Erasmus Mundus scholar to Indian politician

Look there is a programme you might be interested in....."

Neha has BA Degrees in International Relations and French and during the study she spent a year in Paris at University of Sorbonne and at Institute des Etudes Politiques. By doing that she gained a valuable experience which helped her to obtain her Degrees and she got the opportunity to live in a country which plays a big role in the area that she is coming from and that she is interested in.

Her interests are related to International Politics but her passion has always been writing. Therefore, this Masters is a kind of 2 in 1 because it's the perfect combination of her interests and passion.

Explaining the reasons for wanting to do the specialisation in Swansea, Neha states that, according to her opinion, the reasons why the wars are waged is that they are getting less geopolitical and more based on religion and ideals. According to her opinion, objective reporting of war is extremely important and that's why a good war correspondence became so crucial and needed.

When she was on the last year of the BA study she decided to apply to Law school and at that time she really wanted to be a lawyer. However, that summer, while spending summer vacations in India she worked for the National Human Rights Commission and basically she did a lot of paper work regarding human rights. Then she concluded that she could never study Law because it's too boring and that she could never work in a non creative profession like Law is. Therefore, when she came back to USA she filled up the Law School application because she didn't know what else to do since the deadlines for admission were about to be closed and it takes a lot of time to prepare for the admission in the States, due to the preparation tests that have to be taken in order to apply for the admission in a first place. Since she has already taken Law school aptitude tests that she successfully passed she sent the documents for admission to some Law Schools in January and on the day that she sent them her roommate got a newsletter from one international page referring to the different study opportunities. Then she told her : "Look there is a programme you might be interested in...."

"At that time it was like faith", states Neha explaining that for whole her life she was working for magazines and newspapers, but which is unbelievable concerning her passion for writing, she never even considered the possibility to actually study Journalism. "I worked for all sorts of student newspapers and for national newspapers in India ("The Statesman") during the summer and I was always very excited with going home for holidays because of the fact that I can do some real Journalism", she explains. Regarding that, this Masters was a opportunity to study Journalism which came out of nowhere and in the moment when she had to make a decision about her future career she decided to go for it because in her heart she knew that she could never give up from Journalism. Therefore she applied and although she was admitted to a couple of Law schools as well there was no doubt that she would choose this one. This programme particularly appealed to her also because it will give her "the opportunity to travel through the Europe and to gain more valuable experiences", Neha concludes.

As far as her present career is concerned, Neha still works as a freelance Journalist for her College magazine "Colby College" (Neha earned her High School Degree in USA as well, a.c.) and for the "The Statesman".

After the Masters she is looking forward in working full time because so far she didn't have the opportunity to do so while going to school. After completing the degree and hopefully working as a full time Journalist she hopes to enter the Indian political arena and to become a politician. And all that thanks to the opportunity that she got by becoming an Erasmus Mundus scholar.

Neha Sud from India was interviewed by Martina Topic

Knowledge and Experience for the Benefit of Our World and My Country in Particular

About Oxana Davydenko

I graduated from Voronezh State University, Russia, in 2004, where I studied Journalism, Public Relations, and Advertising. For some time I combined work with studying, and had a string of jobs on TV programs, public radio stations, local newspapers, and marketing departments in several companies. After graduating I lived in South Korea for one year working for the Seoul Times, an online English-language newspaper, and the Seoul Herald, a Korean Russian-language newspaper.

Why this programme

Although I have been studying journalism for five years, and I have a working experience in various media, I have only scratched the surface. The point is that the subject of journalism is boundless.

The programme of Erasmus Mundus Masters in Journalism and Media gives young reporters a unique chance to get professional bearings in journalism, which is a field undergoing a fundamental transformation nowadays. First of all, we have an opportunity to acquire knowledge from European theorists and practical workers first hand. Moreover, due to our multinational group we will meet new foreign friends, which will broaden our outlook as far as other nations. And another point is that the Masters will be based in a group of countries, so it gives the programme distinct advantages. Without a doubt, the benefits offered by the programme make it well worthwhile.

What the Erasmus Mundus Masters will be used for

Considering my keen interest in journalism, I think that the course is optimal for my professional development. I am going to adopt the ideas and successful experience of European journalism. And after studying this Masters I would like to return to Russia better equipped to make a valuable contribution to the prosperity of my country through journalism.

The modern trend in Russian journalism – a dependence

What I am suggesting is that the journalism in my country, unfortunately, tends to become more dependent on political authorities or owners. For some time, after the ‘perestroika’ in Russia, journalism has been run by conglomerates which, in my opinion, often stifle good journalism. Some journalists find their jobs are fully dependent on their business owner and have to create news in order to promote the proprietor’s corporation and avoid losing their job. So, surrounded by and pressured by the authoritarian government and fiscal realities of the media business, journalists cease to perform their top priority duties – to inform independently and impartially.

The three trends in Russian media – entertaining shows, monopolization of media and abundance of advertising

Statistics demonstrates that the modern Russian media abound in programs for entertainment - lots of reality-shows, talk-shows, etc. We can see a similar situation in many countries. Also to be considered is a growth of advertisement in media. But as the ad market has reached its limit now, ‘new’ advertising is moving to the Internet. Also, it is evident that the processes of monopolization and concentration of media continue.

Oxana Davydenko from Russia was interviewed by herself

A Lucky and Optimistic Journalist from Kenya

Reuben Kyama from Nairobi (Kenya) is the only African correspondent for the news agency Kyodo News (the largest Japanese agency, which has about 50 million subscribers). His dream is to become an international advisor for Africa and to contribute to the development of his home continent, advocating interests of its inhabitants. But he would never realise his dream if a few years ago he did not leave US Embassy for about an hour. It was the 7th of August in 1998, when 23-year-old Reuben survived in bomb attack of US Embassy in Nairobi.

Hundreds of people were killed that time in simultaneous car bomb explosions at the United States embassies in the East African capital cities of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and Nairobi (Kenya). Reuben went to the US Embassy early in the morning to apply for a visa. But he forgot some documents and returned to his office to pick them up. When he was going back to the Embassy he met many people crying and running out from the city. By that time, Reuben was working as a freelancer for Germany's International Broadcaster *Deutsche Welle*. Journalists from *Deutsche Welle* started to call him, seeking for information about bomb explosions. That is how, Reuben saved his life and started his career in international journalism

“Africa is a part of the international system. We cannot be left behind. The global changes also affect people in Africa”, Reuben considers. Looking to find answers to questions, like “what makes Europe a tick?” and “why is Africa so problematic?”, Reuben decided to apply for Erasmus Mundus Masters “Journalism and Media within Globalisation”. He found information about this programme through the Aarhus School of Journalism, where he was on a one-month scholarship several years ago.

“It is a boiling pot of many cultures. Here we can exchange our ideas and find solutions for global problems”, he says about the programme. After this programme, he will probably continue his studies in International Relations.

Obviously, Kenyan media still face a lot of problems. The most important among others is corruption of state authorities that reflects in the media market. Though, local Journalism is undergoing significant changes recently. Few years ago, there was only one private television channel in Kenya while now there are 25 TV channels. The readership of the local newspapers grows and the cooperation between mass-media improves. A lucky and optimistic journalist from Nairobi, Reuben Kyama believes that journalism in his country has “a bright future”.

Reuben Kyama from Kenya was interviewed by Alesia Sidliarevich

A Bicycle trip into Politics

It is another sunny day of the beautiful Danish fall. The red leaves in the street are crushed by the bicycle that takes Rikke Skovgaard Andersen everywhere she wants in Aarhus, the city she has lived for the last four years. Up hill or down hill, doesn't matter. At the end of her long skirt two red shoes in the pedals of her bike takes her to her new life challenge, The Erasmus Mundus Master Programme.

Being part of this Masters in Journalism and Media within Globalization seems to be a coherent step in his already active profession. "I joined this program because I have become very interested in political science during the last couple of years. I would like to have a global perspective of the current world." Rikke has a background in IT and communications and she has worked as a journalist writing about frontline technologies and IT-research for the last two years. She currently works for a public relations agency in Aarhus and a European Union research project.

The facets of this convinced pro-EU 25-years old Dane are many. Politics have an important place in her life. "I worked in a student counsel lobbying Danish politicians to be more concerned about students and improve their conditions." She also defined her position in Danish politics when she joined the Social Democrats (left from the center) this year. The Social Democrats is one of the two main Danish parties which recently elected, with Rikke's vote, a woman as a leader, something that definitely attracted and encouraged her to join the party. Perhaps it would seem a logical step, according to Rikke's background and interests going into active politics? Nevertheless, once again she seems to have a clear opinion. "Mmm... going into politics? Not as a politician, I would be behind the scenes, I would prefer to be the spin doctor if I can choose," concludes Rikke with a smile.

Even though she enjoys this hard work that takes most part of her time, she is aware of the importance of balancing professional life with social life. "I have close relations with my family who lives somewhere in between Aarhus and Aalborg. I try to visit them four or five times a year. And then I see my friends a lot, I am a close-friend-kind-of-person," says Rikke as she explains that getting to know many people has also been a positive consequence of her commitment in volunteer works.

Her two very diverse interests in information technology and in politics and the way to combine them seem to be Rikke's mainly challenge for the next couple of years. What is for sure is that after her specialization in Hamburg she will not be a journalist. "I am pretty sure I will go for strategic communication and work for a political party or for an interest group doing communications. One of my considerations is maybe working abroad, inside or outside Europe. If I got the possibility I would love to go to Brussels."

Rikke, do you have any favorite color? we asked curiously. "Okay, she says, I have told you I am a member of the Social Democrats so I guess that... yes, red would be my favorite color, you can write that but don't make me look too political," concludes Rikke with an honest smile.

Rikke Skovgaard Andersen from Denmark was interviewed by Christian Hudtwalcker

A Beautiful Mind: Seeing what no one sees

Stephanie Engel – the dynamic 30-year-old journalist – stumbled upon the profession while she was studying English in the UK. It was something that hit her out of the blue, when one of her professors introduced her to the life of journalists. At that time – a 21-year-old student – she discovered that even though she didn't know it, journalism was what made her happy. Losing a family member made her realise that she wanted to reach out to people. She wanted her story to be told. Steph realised that there are thousands of people who would want to be heard, just like her. Journalists are the ones who give a voice to those cannot be heard. And that is what Stephanie wanted to do.

Stephanie attended School of Journalism in Utrecht, The Netherlands. She worked for several regional newspapers during her study. Stephanie worked as a travel journalist for a few years. Being a person who loves exploring new cultures and overcoming challenges, the job was perfect for her. She has worked for RTLNieuws (on the internet dept) and Planet Internet (a leading news website); employed by press agency Neos in Amersfoort. Stephanie, however, has always wanted to be an aid worker. Stephanie is one of those journalists who don't just want to report. What drives this animal lover is making a difference through her work.

She decided to participate in the Erasmus Mundus Masters in Journalism and Media within Globalisation: The European Perspective, to get an insight into how cultures around the world are affected by globalisation. The programme, according to her, would equip her to understand various cultures and in turn, help her understand the problems faced by them. She hopes to use her knowledge gained from this programme to aid better reforms in the sphere of her specialisation, which is war and conflict.

What Stephanie's finds most interesting among trends in journalism evolving in the Netherlands, is how the circulation of newspapers and magazines have been on the decline. According to research carried out, the TV seems to be the most important source of information in Netherlands. People there are increasingly turning to the internet and web blogs of researchers in media and politics for analysis of current affairs. News no longer seems to be just news. It has turned into a whole package of news, views and analysis. Another important development she observes is the ongoing debate in the media over reference to ethnic origins of migrants in the news. For example, crimes committed by citizens with origins other than Holland, on occasions may get over-played.

Looking to the future, she intends to continue travelling and writing. If and when she returns to Holland she'd like to work at the foreign affairs department of a major newspaper or magazine. In the next years, after completing her masters, she hopes to be stationed outside the Netherlands and work as a freelancer writing for various Dutch and foreign media. By the end of this masters programme, Stephanie aims at securing a place at a leading press agency (Reuters, AP) or a newspaper. Ideally, she would like to accompany experienced reporters abroad to learn from them and to see how they go about their coverage of conflict areas, this, she says would provide her with a combination of work experience and collecting material for her thesis.

Stephanie on war and conflict: "I don't aspire for a job as a reporter at the front in a war, but I do want to report from (ex) conflict zones. It's the story of the people, of the common civilian, in area struck by war and poverty that intrigues me. If the international society wants to draw closer attention to the so called weak states, a more human perspective on war journalism is needed. And I would like to contribute to that."

Stephanie Engel from the Netherlands was interviewed by Ankeeta Munsri

To become a successful Reporter specialised in European Affairs

25-year-old Finn with international background

Ville Saikku is one of the pioneer participants in the Erasmus Mundus Masters: Journalism and Media within Globalization Programme, organized by the Aarhus University in cooperation with Danish School of Journalism. Having studied on two different continents and in five different countries, Ville is quite international. He is from Finland that is where he started his education but happened to accomplish the primary school in Zambia and Malawi. He lived in Africa for over a period of 4,5 years, as his father worked in a development project funded by the Finnish Government. He thinks it was due to those four and half years spent in Africa that attributed to his and his sisters becoming quite international, with one of his sisters living in Scotland and another doing her PhD in Southern California.

When Ville's family returned to Finland he headed abroad again, this time to Wales, the United Kingdom where he started university. While studying there he would work during the summer holidays in Edinburgh in a project for the University where meeting a lot of international students gave him the idea to take up the opportunity to study abroad on an exchange. In Edinburgh, his job as an activity leader was to organise activities as well as to introduce international students to the wonders offered by Edinburgh and the Scottish countryside. This job required a lot of teamwork and taking responsibility, thus helping him to improve himself to become a better team player and to learn how to take responsibility.

"Being the youngest and the only boy among other three siblings in the family also teaches you how to share and how to get along", says Saikku. Later these skills came into good use while studying in Aberystwyth and Genova, where he lived with a variety of different people and where the ability to share and get along with everyone helped him to make great lifelong friends. Before returning to Aberystwyth, Wales to graduate with the second highest mark and to gain his BA Degree in Film and Television Studies, he had spent one academic year in Genova, Italy.

His response to the query "Why the Erasmus Mundus programme?" was: "The experience that I have gained from having studied in the United Kingdom and Italy, I will now combine with the high standard education Erasmus Mundus Programme has to offer. This programme will provide me with sufficient knowledge to become a successful reporter specialised in European affairs. I am eagerly looking forward to be taught the practices and skills of good reporting."

According to Saikku when considering the current trends in the media in Finland some principal trends stand out. Despite of the strong competition with television print media has still preserved its prominence "until midday". In Finland newspapers are delivered to doors and people usually get their first news from papers in the morning till midday while having their breakfast and later by switching on TV. Almost every household in the country has an internet access and the obsession with new technologies and high competitiveness among the media outlets contributes into the media's becoming more diverse, especially into increasing online media. At present the language of newspapers tend to become more and more comprehensive and thus appealing to all age groups.

Ville Saikku from Finland was interviewed by Khatira Shikhiyeva

License to Speak

“Independent journalism in Zimbabwe is an occupational hazard... you never know when your licence will be cancelled or when you will be abducted, tortured, unlawfully detained and arrested...”

Zwakele Sayi, a 29 year-old native of Southern Zimbabwe, has had intriguing experiences with media, globalization, and politics. She currently holds a post-graduate Diploma in Media and Communication studies, but hopes to expand on this foundation through participation in the Erasmus Mundus program. The political turmoil in Zimbabwe has contributed to many interesting life stories for Zwakele. Working as an International Relations Coordinator for Zimbabwean’s main opposition party- Movement for Democratic Change has been like flirting with fire- dangerous but exciting and challenging. This dangerous duty requires Zwakele to promote the opposition platform to the international community, in hopes of soon removing Zimbabwe’s 25 year-old dictatorship.

Zwakele chose to participate in this Masters program for the intriguing experience of studying in three foreign countries, thereby gaining an alternative perspective on globalization, news reporting and international politics. Specializing in War and Conflict will strengthen Zwakele’s capabilities as a successful and impartial conflict reporter in Zimbabwe, a nation struggling for a democratic dispensation.

A wave of new restrictive laws in the past five years has dramatically changed the face of journalism in Zimbabwe. Journalists now have to apply for accreditation from the Ministry of Information appointed, remunerated and controlled Media and Information Council which has resulted in a number of them (including Zwakele) being denied right to practice as newsmakers. Additionally, there is a heightened fear among the country’s journalists of losing their licenses if they are critical of the government. This has naturally had repercussions in the availability of news and style of reporting in Zimbabwe.

Second, the media laws have resulted in the closure of multiple major privately-owned newspapers since 2003. This has severely limited the alternative voice in the print media industry and has also led to a movement of online newspapers. However, there is still narrow viewership of online resources in Zimbabwe because the country has a high computer illiteracy rate and limited public access to computers.

The media is highly polarized along political party lines. Increased government involvement in the media has led to more subjective and pro-government stories and the government is making frantic efforts to move in and control some of the independent papers. This Zwakele believes will soon make the government monopolise the media industry. The only hope for unbiased coverage no lies on external broadcasts by ‘pirate radio stations’ who fortunately have a wider reach than the national broadcaster.

Zwakele Sayi from Zimbabwe was interviewed by Alison Stauffer