

PR & STORYTELLING (DISNEY)

Tamara stands as Los Angeles longest running play and it can be used as a metaphor of a storytelling organization. In it dozens of characters move about a moving sometimes running audience in order to co-create meaning. I argue that Disney, metaphorically speaking, operates its PR practices pretty much the same way. In this paper Disney is used as a concept of a storytelling organization. PR practice within Disney was inspired by the character of Mr Walt and it utilizes its PR values through a complex modernist discourse and in some cases pre-modern. This paper will highlight Disney as a sociological contributor to meaning encompassed through narrative ideals portrayed within.

The pre-modernist discourse seeks to portray meaning by mixing passion and mediative ideals in order to align it its pre-industrial ideals as portrayed by the character of Walt. This shows relation to public relation practice within in which the very context of Disney stories is led through its beginning of a tribal environment. Disney portrays feudal monarchy ideals where Mr Walt was king, and it hence brings into light the practical use of the service and product that Disney provides to its publics. The modernist thought relates taming of these ideals and the rational PR practitioner plans ahead for life within the organization. This correlates to subjectivity through narratives which present faith and rise in reason. This process is reflexive, and in Disney's case can be portrayed through the methodological procedures put in place by Disney's animation department.

Post modernistic thought entails a process in which the PR practitioner questions the very privilege and status of every incumbent employee. Disney was not so much a product of post modernistic thought but it remains a concept of totalism. Totalism being a concept in which narrow privilege is granted to the few in key positions within the organization, in this case Mr Walt. Disney has hence become a commodity device and in so mentioning it remains a control device for the very same people in power within the organization. Walt himself was a character and capital of Disney. Disney can be seen a modernist organization that has evolved itself to a micromanaging story machine.

Disney's principles were to target the 'G' rated movie market, and in doing so it sought to establish values to be heeded by the young generation. This was accomplished by developing story themes that captivate global cultures through an aspect of commonality. Disney was a concept of essentialism through the character of Walt. Mr Walt had the character to accept risk and deal with it from a very early stage. This paved way towards an ability to change, react, and act young with accordance to the character traits as portrayed by Walt. Disney remained a creative organization through proliferation of these planted seeds of ideas.

PR practice within Disney maintained strict work ethics that highlighted an articulation in planning ahead of time that imbued tayloristic principles. These tayloristic foundations allowed the Disney organization to operate as a team and be part of something more than just work, a vision. This was imperative for Disney's success as it helped establish a method of control within the organization. Often referred was Walt's 'panoptic gaze' in which a multiple, automatic and continuous process of surveillance was established. This process was hierarchal in nature and remains anonymous with the concept of a vertical organization as well as a horizontal one.

PR practice within Disney was not postmodern but concepts encompassed by a strong surveillance warranted that a post modernistic notion was kept in place. The organization itself was said to be micromanaged, that is, separate small groups worked together to achieve a desired outcome. The Disney organization was post modernistic through dialogues imbued within the work environment. The Disney environment was very sociocultural in nature and presents a long historical track record that warranted its sense of identity from within. Disney operated as part of a collective and in the past any association with outside unions was deemed to be a betrayal of company trust. Disney has arranged itself to organization of its departments by developing a common voice through joining of dispersed fragments within the organization. The matter of discourse within played an important role in PR practice for the organization.

The Disney Corporation was established as one organization that thrived on the concept of developed narratives - this from within the organization in such a manner that was natural and unreflective and hence just part of the culture. Interpretation of the organization could only be done once one is completely immersed in the Disney culture and hence is said to be discursive as an analytical framework first has to be established in order to understand the company. PR practice within was said to be part of a sociological contributor and the analysis of the type of management within Disney plays a focus interest in understanding the organization. Disney utilizes great symbology in its entire works, and particular story scenarios are based on aspects pertaining to cultural folklore in different countries, in particular, Europe (ie: Pinocchio, Snow White...).

In order to grasp and understand the system it is important to understand Mr Walt as a character that initially strongly denied change. Disney's context was based upon Iwerks, and later Disney, this in direct competition with other cartoon developing organizations at time like 'Felix the Cat' which closed its doors due to bankruptcy. The Disney culture is one of inter-dependency on its team as a collective and to this day they still perform an ethnomethodological approach in everyday activities in completion of projects. The organization can hence be said to be constructionist in nature and they serve an enacted model that has propagated through the teachings of Mr Walt and discoveries by individual staff (who were given very little credit). PR practice within Disney embraces different perspectives nowadays and it is said to be reflexive process built upon from the reaping of cultural labour.

Weber, Foucault & Bourdieu argue for a mastery of the self, and I personally believe that it is by these same ideals that Mr Walt preached his Disney vision. This concept revolves around the building of routines that are scientifically based. Weber et al. also focuses on the idea of relationships established from within that give way to an inter-disciplinary approach in all its undertakings – this attribution is deemed as another form of intangible capital.

PR in Disney portrays all elements of a story telling organization. Employees within are able to twist facts and hence suspend disbeliefs in order to apply better craft. It becomes essential to interpret events the right way in order to justify the operations of the company, thus an enrichment process is of high use. This helps infuse meaning into its characters and the long history associated with Disney. This is done by omissions, exaggerations and even emphasis on key story plots and ideas. Timing is of the essence in its PR projection.

Disney operates through a discourse of constant innuendo and hence metaphors re-create the reality of Disney as one of a visionary organization – an organization that thrives on fantasy and

dreams. PR practitioners play the role of an audience and they take the publics through a journey portrayed as one of a fellow-traveller. The Disney notion attempts to share emotions within its structure in an effort to expand & enrich the seeking of pleasure. PR practice within Disney hence partakes in a role to entertain, educate, persuade, warn, reassure, justify and hence explain and console participants. There are varying approaches to achieve this goal but the most common perspective is that of a bureaucratic organization that seeks attribution through meaning. Disney constantly subjects itself to a test of character, especially when expanding its frontiers to new countries as an agent of retribution. There is a common saying that goes something like this: "Which is more popular, Jesus Christ or Mickey Mouse?" – This statement is purposive evidence to the success of PR practice within Disney.

Disney is an organization that utilizes the concept of sensemaking and hence poetic tropes add to the liveliness of nature encompassed within. There are several attributions that instil a great sense of pride within Disney, these are the attribution of motive, responsibility, and casual connections. The point of utilizing metonymies and metaphors in cartoons is to create a climate of unity. That is, one that acts as a collective and that the illusion of sameness abounds. Fixed qualities establish the organization as one functioning on the basis of emotion and the concept of the head office as an overseeing agency warrants the establishment of providential significance, that is, a concept that fate underlines all its story themes and values.

Disney was able to portray meaning through its use of a wide array of characters, and to name a few: Chip and Dale, Donald Duck, Mickey/Minie Mouse, Pluto, Goofy, Snow White and even more recent characters such as Wall-E and its movie counterparts. Disney success operates through a process of story-works which in turn shape the very reality and foundation of the organization. This transformation of storyteller to a creator of dreams is evident in every one of Disney's works as the establishment of heroes is quickly developed and bystanders are brought to participate of emotive scenes.

Public relation practice within Disney see stories as a repository of meaning – meaning that will find its way to the consumer. Public relation staffs have different approaches to the creation of meaning but in essence they are either; epic, tragic, bland, or comic. The focus of the Disney organization is on the deliverance of quality thus imbuing a sense courage and integrity. One example can be in the cartoon movie, 'Aladdin', in it the lyrics for the opening theme song were originally portraying racial discrimination against Arabs – the very symbology to the storyline had to be edited out in concern of all publics. In its next movie debut Disney learnt from its mistakes and when 'Pocahontas' was created a 3 year sensitivity study was first established with the local indigenous of America. On a final note, Disney has developed over the years in accordance with changing norms. Charity organizations affiliated with Disney as well as its launching of a vast toy range, and affiliations with human rights activists, have ensured that the corporation continues to gain public support globally.

In conclusion Disney's story is one based on culture relation where dancers, props, rides and many attractions help establish a common identity, one of a dream weaver. Public relation practice within is about storytelling, this in a case where the best one wins. There is always a beginning/middle/end to every story and this engages the public on the meaning of the story and not so much in the undertakings within the actual organization. A Disney motto is to be provider of good stories, not just any story, but one that will establish itself as being a newly adopted cultural factor for society.

The aim is to engage and not manipulate and in the end the task of media relation practitioners is to know the audience, know the story, and in the end tell it better than anyone else. The purpose of Disney is to captivate its audience and hence appeal to their feelings through portrayal of key characters. In every story a carefully narrated plot is devised that builds onto a climax and hence a happy ending. Such is Disney!

NATION BUILDING AND PR IN THE NATION OF ISRAEL

The purpose of this paper is to convey the public relation undertakings and efforts within the nation of Israel. This is done through a process of nation building that seeks to propagate the Zionist message both locally and abroad. Zionist nation building efforts have existed for many millennia and its key focus is to accomplish and establish the meaning of solidarity to Jews across the world. This paper seeks to highlight the body encompassed by the Jewish public sphere as one broad collective. The very concept of identity is important for public relation practitioners and in order to amalgamate Jews to work as a group the concept of leadership by the government of Israel becomes highly important. PR practice in Israel attempts to promote stability within the nation whilst seeking support from bodies overseas. The establishment of the Hebrew press warrants that campaigns are more easily achievable than ever before. The goal of the PR practitioner in Israel is to unify the nation and the Diaspora Jews operating abroad.

The government of Israel supports nation building and in fact it has become part of the political agenda from time immemorial. Jews abroad are motivated to migrate back to Israel and it is not uncommon for a tithe process to operate within their culture. Jewish and Israeli individuals are said to operate as part of a community whose utter imperative is at the attaining of the 'Zionist Dream'. The Jewish state has been in conflict for more than 50 years, and it has been only since 1948 that the establishment of the Israeli nation came to be. This long process has been deemed to be an ordeal of strategic communication for PR bodies within the nation and the concept of increasing of its settlements zones within the Middle East has been constantly combated against by surrounding Islamic nations. The Hebrew press, indirectly controlled by the government, remains as they key responsible body for propagation of the Jewish cause abroad.

Nation building processes in Israel attempt to unify the nation through concepts of a false democracy. The nation itself is diversely mixed with Jews, Christians, Muslims, Atheists and etc... The country does not even have a civil code of ethics and hence is said to operate under the guises of a false democracy – but yet, it remains the only democratic nation in the surrounding region. The term 'Hasbara' has simply come to define 'explanation' of the Zionist plea. It is a PR practitioner mediated process that ascribes soft propaganda tactics. This leads to foreigners interpreting the news in a biased way, for such is the control of the Jewish media. PR practitioners build new myths, new traditions, and hence act as a collective to mobilize Israelis globally.

Army subscription is compulsory in Israel with 36 months for men, and 21 months for women. Conscription remains a fundamental tool for instilling a sense of national pride amongst all nationals, however, immigration is to occur to a vast extent also and the same conscription rules apply to immigrants. Media relations in Israel is said to be amongst the most advanced in the world, rating 23rd on a global scale, and it is often supported by fundraising means. The establishment of lobby groups within Israel is common place and PR practitioners often get issued recognizable rewards for the groups that best instil the nation building values as creeded by the Zionist dream.

PR practitioners utilize the press as a tool for information dissemination and in order to this it becomes imperative to conduct constant self-perception checks. These checks warrant that no unethical conduct takes place, this is essential for were Israel to keep on receiving funds from

nations such as the United States. Army conscription develops further the leadership capabilities of PR personnel within the nation, hence they are highly disciplined. The media is well balanced and they primarily centre their concepts on terrorist activity and war conflict within the Middle East surrounding the Israeli nation. Israeli newspapers are highly favoured over competitive surrounding countries in a global scale – they are encouraged to compete.

PR practice within Israel is set to operate in constrained budgets and allocation of time and resources is meticulously planned. More money equates to more successful practitioners – PR practitioners are liable to report tactical news and when representing the media they have to do so in accordance with government mandates. PR practice within Israel is cooperative of one another and in 2006 alone there were 376 PR agencies operating within Israel – this equates to a total of ~3000 PR practitioners. The government pays great attention to the conducts of PR media and it is not uncommon for bribes to take place.

The role of nation building can only be accomplished through great publicity. Affiliations and partnerships remains a professional standard within the nation in order to attain its Nation building objectives. It becomes imperative to foster relationships (similar to Chinese ‘guanxi’) that are strategically and yet ethical.

The nation of Israel has been seen to be embryonic in the sense that it is a developing organism whose prime directive is to grow into a larger and more powerful body. The PR reality is that social services play a crucial role in the concept of nation building within the nation. An establishment of ‘the cult of the state’ has been a common term reference to nation building aspects within the nation. It portrays an ideal society that is verified by biblical testament and hence is invincible and ‘error-immune’. Citizens will commonly adopt an attitude in which sacrifice of comforts is necessary for the good of the nation. A focus of integration of immigrants by PR efforts is seen as imperative in order to succeed at nation building. On the broad sense of things, Israel has grown to be a global economy and compulsory army conscription is imperative for a sense of national pride.

Public relation practitioners in Israel are asked to challenge Palestinian views and in that sense I do not perceive Israel to be a true democracy. A true democracy would uphold the rights of the minorities, and this Israel does not do. Internet availability within Israel has further fostered the might of the nation, and hence Israel has an advanced establishment of internet access by its citizens. Unethical conduct is perceived to be a minor threat to Israeli PR practice and in actual fact the dissemination of false information by PR media (in favour to government) is commonplace.

Nation building efforts within Israel proceed with the goal to unify the nation, this without questioning. The country has had a war ravaged past in its history and hence any criticism by PR abroad is met sharply by Israeli PR practitioners through criticism. What I believe Israel necessitates is an interactive and dynamic model of communication – one that can attribute an honest interpretation of news from the viewpoint of Palestine and surrounding nations (in particular settlement zone conflict areas).

Nation building practice was developed over time in order to accomplish its goals of re-establishing the lost nation of Israel. Government resource and policies have been heavily invested into this on the long term. The government has established many institutions and organizations that force the nation to think and act together – this through concepts of shared identities and national holidays.

Radio and television has contributed greatly to this and historically Israel had only one TV station for most of its history in the past. Communication through televised sources has warranted that one way symmetrical communication take place in such a manner that it remains public centred. Israeli's have hence been able to associate themselves with their own community. In accordance to the government it is primordial sentiments that inhibit the concept of unity within the country.

There are repercussions for PR practitioners to go against the 'Zionist Dream'. The media is well integrated overseas in America and any attack at the Israeli national consciousness is seen as a personal attack to the PR practitioners operating on behalf of Israel. Relationships are of key importance for PR practice in Israel and integrationist fundamentals are at the very core foundation of the Israel nation. Support from abroad, inclusive of some UN countries, has led to a collective consciousness that is not just limited to Israeli PR but to PR abroad as well.

Technology plays a big part in the success of PR in Israel but it is not so much the technology that accounts for their success but the capability to disseminate information so eloquently abroad. Established relationships rebuild broken ties (i.e.: due to conflict) and even aides in recreating Jewish communities overseas. PR practitioners abroad have a permanent understanding of the monopoly of Israeli media I am to believe. PR practitioners operate through ideals of shared power within the nation as dictated by the government indirectly. There is a focus on image cultivation and aspects of openness lie at the very centre of PR nation building practice within the nation. It is claimed that all voices are tolerated but I argue then why is it that non government organizations play a key part in propagation of the Zionist dream as well? I argue that the 'trust' element amongst all associates to the Jewish media help accredit it as an ethical practice abroad.

I believe that co orientation theory plays a big part in Israeli Nation building. In co orientation theory it is imperative that PR practitioners are able to properly understand/view themselves; it is also imperative that PR staff are able to adequately view other associations for what they are as well as let others view them as they want to be seen. This builds the illusion of tolerance and the staging of secular events (i.e.: speeches, parade) further propagate the notion that all the government does is inspire its citizens. Dialogic theory, on the other hand, seeks to create dialogue between all incumbent parties that is deemed to be mutually beneficial. Nation building efforts in Israel is prone to a dialogic perspective in which open decisions and practices take place. Civil society theorem, on a different account, is concerned on how groups mediate with each other. PR practice in Israel is highly communicative and they seek to reach outside their restricted domain – therefore, nothing is out of reach. A civil society perspective is transitional to say the least but aligns with democratic ideals in examining communication as a medium to nation building.

On a final tone, I would like to argue that PR practice within Israel operates under the guises of communitarianism symmetrical communication. PR agencies are integrated to each other and hence the Israeli community itself. PR language is directed at the local publics and the role of a PR practitioner is to facilitate an exchange of ideas as imposed by the government. The process is said to be authentic as it has become so embedded into the Israeli way of life, and its key agents remain being the fundraisers to the Zionist plight. Co creation is obtained through articulate research and there is even the illusion of empowerment to the minorities by having constant interaction between sources/receivers.

In conclusion, this paper has covered how public relation practice within Israel acts as a tool for Nation building within the nation. Nation building in Israel is interventionist in nature and it seeks to amalgamate all Israeli PR bodies as a team and not as a set of competitors. The key to success in nation building lies on its ability in constructing a national identity and hence structuring the very fabric of society to adhere to its national values. This is accomplished through the usage of state power and the implementation of patriotic army conscription values as well as a carefully controlled televised network for the media. Nation building tackles any lack of cohesion and hence moulds the nation so that in the future Israeli's continue to think with a common sense of established national pride. The government seeks continuous transformation of its citizens and it accomplishes this through the very power imbued to its PR staff. Nation building in Israel fails to recognize the thoughts of the minority, and their values, but it does this for the greater purpose of the 'Zionist dream'. Israel is comprised of a diverse set of heritages from over 100 countries worldwide, and the main goal by the government is to amalgamate this mix of cultures into one national ideal. Public relation staff negotiates and relate Zionist experiences through adverts of the social media and it is by the tools of information dissemination that PR remains as a state induced populace watchdog.

PS: I was very nervous... I did not type more so that I could revise everything I typed, hence I tried to focus on quality.