

Over the last weeks a few interesting responses to my Blogging, the Nihilist Impulse were posted on the Net. First of all, on the Information Week blog, Stephen Wellmann wrote a small entry called [“Hate Your Local Blogger, It’s The Hip Thing To Do”](#). Wellmann asks: “Are bloggers just agents of nihilism destroying values or are we advancing a new era of citizen journalism and media equality?” My answer to this would be that the ‘new’ does emerge out of the blue, in a vacuum, but always responds to a crisis of the ‘old’, in this case the top-down model of broadcast media. And second, that only a tiny part of the blogosphere positively identifies itself with ‘citizen journalism’. In my essay I claimed that blogs are first and foremost a particular form social software and not ‘journalism’. Blogs are happening all over the globe and are not a US-American set of values. Blogs have to be interpreted as the follow-up of the WWW ‘homepage’ and have surprising little to do with ‘democracy’. Blogs are easy-to-use interfaces that empower individuals AND groups and can be used within any ideological framework.

In a response to the Information Week piece R. Lawson identifies blogs as such with the United States and the value that this nation for him/her embodies: “Bloggers represent what is great about our nation. Sure the posts range from the absurd to the profound, but it should be celebrated that we have the freedom to speak freely in this nation.” And: “Those who look to pass laws censoring bloggers don’t understand democracy and what this nation is about.” What R. Lawson doesn’t seem to know is that the vast majority of blogs are hosted outside of the United States and are not even written in English. Both Iran and China have large amounts of bloggers. Lawson concludes: “Lovink is a fool. His casting of all bloggers as nihilists is absurd. Just because we don’t espouse the neutral positions as journalists are (in theory) suppose to doesn’t mean we are without value. We are the canaries in the coal mine.” Those who neutralize and overcome centralized value systems are not without values, that’s obvious. What Lawson mixes up is the blogger as a person and the larger historical context in which blogging has emerged as a mass practice.

Another, imho much more interesting response comes from [Arne Schoenvuur](#). It is a long piece and written in Dutch. It should be translated into English. Let’s see how we can get there. The politics of languages and translation is something that, in my view, is directly related to the state of blogging (which has been an international effort from early on anyway). Before I respond to Arne I would like to first see how can deal with this important aspect of interlingual communication. We should showcase that

blogging is in no way an exclusive US-American practice, or even slightly to connected to what some claim as 'American values'.