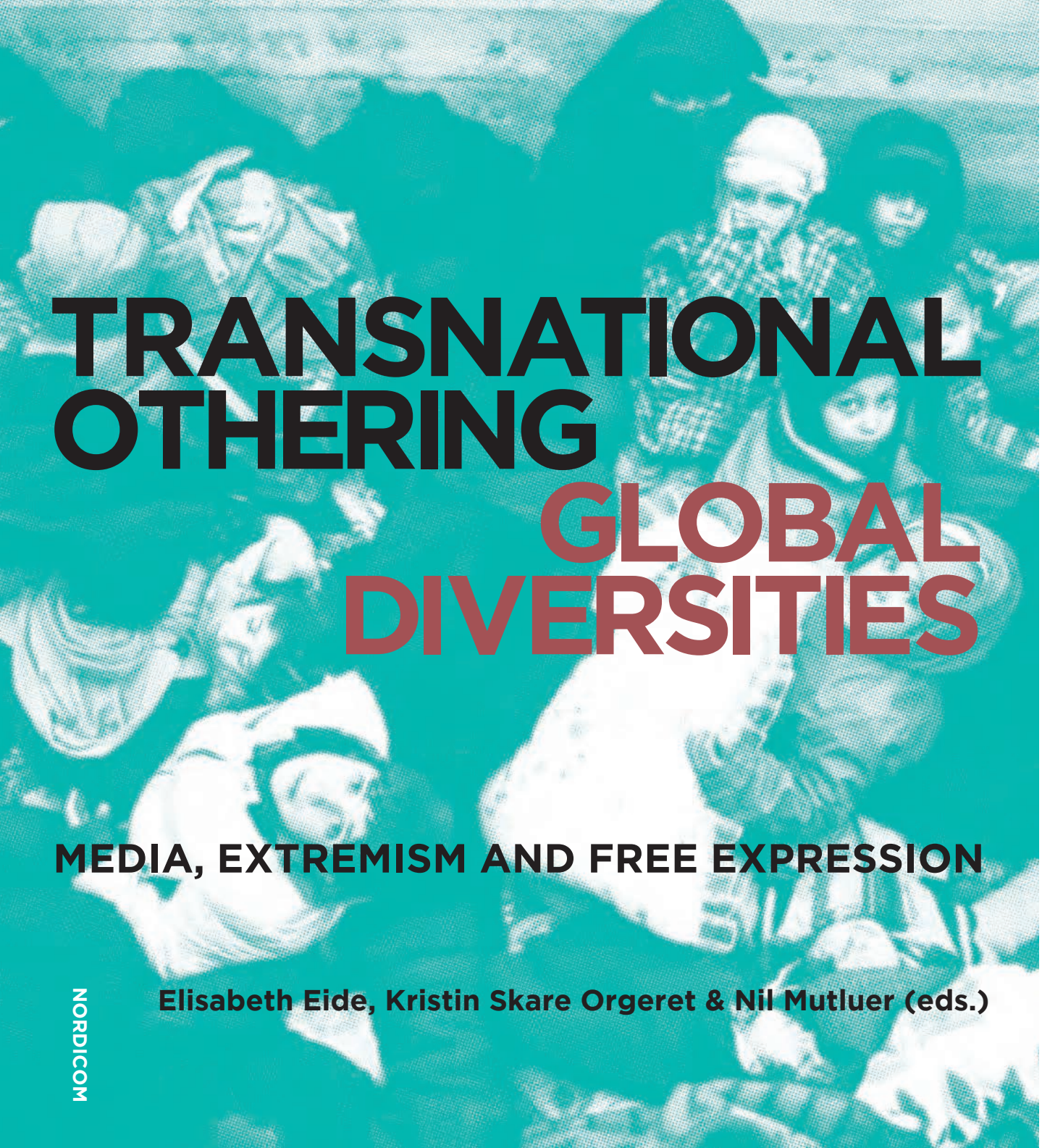

TRANSNATIONAL OTHERING GLOBAL DIVERSITIES

MEDIA, EXTREMISM AND FREE EXPRESSION

Elisabeth Eide, Kristin Skare Orgeret & Nil Mutluer (eds.)

NORDICOM

NORDICOM

Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research

Based at the University of Gothenburg, Nordicom is a Nordic non-profit knowledge centre that collects and communicates facts and research in the field of media and communication. The purpose of our work is to develop the knowledge of media's role in society. We do this through:

- Following and documenting media development in terms of media structure, media ownership, media economy and media use.
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ISBN 978-91-88855-18-3 (print)
ISBN 978-91-88855-19-0 (pdf)

The publication is also available as open access at www.nordicom.gu.se

Published by:
Nordicom
University of Gothenburg
Box 713
SE 405 30 GÖTEBORG
Sweden

Images reprinted with permission from copyrightholder

Cover photo: Afshin Ismaeli

Cover by: Per Nilsson

Printed by: Exakta Print, Malmö, Sweden, 2019

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Preface

This anthology is a result of a great teamwork. As editors we would like to express our warm gratitude to all those who have participated in the process. Thank you to all contributors for sharing your diverse and important knowledge and experiences. Thank you, Richard Daly for proofreading the academic articles, and thank you, Quatrina Hossain for proofreading the journalistic ones, and to the Faculty of Social Sciences for funding part of this work. Many thanks to Ulla Carlsson for important input and support at an early stage of the project. Thank you, Kaarina Nikunen for your valuable comments and advice. Thank you, Jonas Ohlsson and Josefine Bové at Nordicom for taking care of the details in relation to the book production process.

The anthology is supported financially by the Journalism and Media International Centre (JMIC) at Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet), helped by funds from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), section on Democracy, Human Rights and Gender Equality. We particularly want to thank Elisabeth Salvesen at the MFA for wonderful cooperation and encouragement throughout the years.

Oslo and Berlin, June 2019

Elisabeth Eide, Kristin Skare Orgeret & Nil Mutluer

1. Global connections

Elisabeth Eide, Kristin Skare Orgeret & Nil Mutluer

We live in an overheated world (Eriksen, 2016), where global processes, such as climate change, financial flows, human flight and migration influence our lives and our prospects for the future. Simultaneously, there is an increasing understanding among many people that the largest challenges of our world must be solved through transnational cooperation. The traditional divide between the "developed" and "developing" world, with the Global North allegedly representing the best conditions for media development and freedom of expression, is also challenged. According to the Reporters without Borders' World Press Freedom Index (RSF, 2018), Ghana gets a better score than France, Costa Rica better than Austria and Burkina Faso better than the USA.

Furthermore, the huge expansion of alternatives to mainstream media (MSM) in terms of both new social media platforms, fabricated news and disinformation represents an additional challenge to journalism. At the core of journalism globally is the freedom to report, which is threatened in many parts of the world (Carlsson & Pöyhtari, 2017), including countries represented in this book. Today, Turkey is at the top of the list when it comes to the number of imprisoned journalists; in fact, most independent news media have been shut down.

Anybody from the Turkish media, the academic world, or civil society who oppose the president, risks being labeled as "terrorist". Beyond this, in a country such as Afghanistan, which in 2018 was declared the state with the largest number of killed journalists (RSF, 2018), report-

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ers have had to walk a tightrope between deadly extremist attacks and threats on one hand, and sanctions and threats from the government on the other. A universal feature of today's situation is more anti-intellectualism, polarized societies where extremists thrive on social media. The very name "social media" triggers discussions about freedom of expression, since internet communications, or social media, are used, on one hand, as a means for recruiting violent extremists, and on the other, as a way of attempting the silencing of other points of view.

The various shades of extremism

A recent example is how the terrorist, who attacked two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, and killed 50 people in February 2019, filmed the attack himself and transmitted it to social media platforms. In the aftermath, some people were charged with sharing the video on social media. New Zealand has a law banning dissemination or possession of material depicting extreme violence and terrorism. A human rights law forbidding incitement of racial disharmony works in the same direction. These "parameters are more restrictive than the First Amendment guarantees in the United States." (Graham-McLay, 2019). Thus, the New Zealand terror and its aftermath may perhaps be seen as a first example of a "western" country, which has taken strict measures to curb the activities of extremists, including those who target religious minorities.

Facebook eventually took down the terrorist's page and Twitter deleted his profile, However, before that happened, the video had spread virally across social media (Marsh & Mulholland, 2019). On March 31, 2019, Mark Zuckerberg suggested more regulation and intervention in such cases: "I believe we need a more active role for governments and regulators" (Zuckerberg, 2019).

As the New Zealand terror clearly demonstrated, the right-wing extremist at the center of the incident targeted *the minority other,* in this case resident Muslims, consisting mainly of refugees who had considered the country a safe haven. The Christchurch attack has some similarities to the experiences from the 22 July 2011 attack on the Norwegian government and the Labour Party youth camp, killing 77, as well as leaving several hundreds wounded and traumatized. The Norwegian "homegrown" terrorist also left a manifesto online

before he went on his killing spree; he too admitted hating Muslims and networked with right-wing extremists. Furthermore, the terrorist in New Zealand claimed to have been inspired by the Norwegian one.

In November 2015, in a coordinated series of attacks in Paris, extremists from an Islamist background killed 130 people and wounded many more. Earlier that same year, also in Paris, terrorists killed 12 cartoonists and wounded 11 others at the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo,* and later killed four persons at a kosher grocery shop. The most salient signs of polarization in Europe – as well as in other parts of the world – seem to be the following: hostility to alleged blasphemists viewed as enemies of Islam; hostility towards Muslims and others with migrant backgrounds; hostility towards Jews and hostility towards progressives and migrant-friendly people. Both right wing and Islamist extremism seem to share negative attitudes towards women, not least feminists.

As we write this, massive terrorist attacks on churches and hotels in Sri Lanka have caused the deaths of more than 350 people, and IS has claimed responsibility. This further underlines the importance and timeliness of this volume, since it takes the role of media, extremism and terrorism seriously and discusses how to counter threats from extreme groups.

It is easy for media, though, to gravitate towards the poles and relegate the much larger middle ground, initiatives towards unity or attempts at dialogue, to the background. After the 2015 Paris attacks on *Charlie Hebdo* and the kosher center, young Muslims in Norway initiated an action where they made a human circle around the synagogue in Oslo, "meeting hatred with love". Reciprocity was shown a couple of weeks later, when a "ring of peace" encircled one of the mosques in the city.

Coverage of centrifugal, polarizing forces of society and the centripetal, solidarity-oriented forces may be associated with the dualism inherent in thinking that a glass is half-empty or half-full; i.e., editorial choices associated with building bridges or with peace efforts. Good reporters look for solutions, one of the IPCC scientists said when interviewed about the media and climate change (Eide, 2017). At the same time, there is a growing concern among the younger generation that there is no room for optimism when discussing climate change. "Adults keep saying we owe it to the young people, to give them hope.

[…] But I don't want your hope. I don't want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic" (WITW, 2019), says the young Swedish activist Greta Thunberg. She creates a sense of urgency, which resonates with young people worldwide.

The globalization era with its accelerated changes is full of conflicts, and leaves millions of people marginalized. As Eriksen writes, "The very idea that human beings everywhere are endowed with rights and dignity is a recent and comparatively unusual one" (Eriksen, 2016: 115). Connecting people, however limited the attempt may be, can at best make a small contribution to strengthen this idea.

War as a backcloth

The terrorist attacks in Europe have also contributed to a sense of urgency. However, most terrorist attacks happen outside of Europe, with IS/Daesh, Al Qaeda, Taliban and other extremist groups as the culprits. State terrorism, albeit a disputed concept, is another area of exploration (Galtung, 2002; Schmid, 2011), and has been exemplified by the merciless destructive bombing conducted by the Assad regime in Syria, helped by their Russian allies, as well as US bombing of areas in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Pakistan. A government-initiated report (Godal et al., 2016) concluded that the real achievement by Norwegian military forces after twelve years in Afghanistan was reinforcing Norway's role as a solid ally for the U.S. and NATO.

This anthology is not primarily about climate change or war coverage, which has been a feature in other recent volumes (Eide & Kunelius, 2012; Kunelius et al. 2017; Lippe & Ottosen, 2016; Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2015; Orgeret & Tayyebwa, 2016). Nevertheless, the ecological and military situations represent part of the global "overheating" and an important part of the backcloth for the polarization we have seen in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The transnational character of extremist recruitment is clear to see. IS/Daesh has received recruits from Indonesia and Norway, Tunisia and France, Pakistan and Turkey, Chechnya and Japan – and many more countries. In a prisoner camp with thousands of IS widows and their offspring, a reporter contributing to this volume registered people from more than 50 nations.[1]

The enormous outreach offered to extremists and their recruiters by social media platforms (Facebook, Telegram, etc.) demonstrates the rapid transnational processes through which hatred and dehumanization spread instantly.

The laws as well as the practices of free expression vary greatly across the world, and in some countries, oppositional, critical investigative journalists' risk being accused of extremist/terrorist activity. A special dilemma occurs in countries, with newly won democratic rights, including the right to freedom of expression, after decades of dictatorship. Here, extremists may use these newly gained freedoms to spread hate speech and incitement to violence, and recruit extremists to the "Islamic state" or other related organizations, as experienced in Indonesia and Tunisia (Chapters 4 and 7).

Controversies and "clashes"

This volume emerges from a series of conferences, through which freedom of expression, religious and other extremism, and inequalities of this planet have been raised. The origins of this volume can be traced back to three global conferences in the aftermath of the cartoon crisis, which emerged after the publication, in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* (2005), of 12 cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed. The conferences were initiated by the governments of Indonesia and Norway, but were planned by a committee of journalists/editors from the two countries. Through these, and ensuing transnational studies (Eide et al., 2008; Kunelius et al., 2007), differing interpretations of freedom of expression were articulated. To simplify, one stream would argue for unlimited freedom of expression (a "free marketplace of ideas"), while another would argue that such freedom should be combined with responsibility, including sensitivity towards religion/religious people (the "balance of harms" principle).

The anthology draws from later conferences, between academics and journalists from countries where Islam is the dominant faith as well as from Norway. These conferences questioned Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" thesis (1996), which suggested that the most dominant clash was/is the one between Western (Christian) civilization and the Muslim one. We realized that this polarized model is unable to explain the current global conflicts. Throughout

the current volume, we present chapters, which discuss the roots of conflict in more nuanced ways and from several positions, moving beyond simplified, mono-causal explanations. As readers will notice, in addition to authors residing in Norway, other contributors live in countries with Muslim majorities, demonstrating, and providing ample illustrations of the diversity across this "Muslim civilization", which according to Huntington, is the main counterpart of what he terms "Western civilization".

Discussions on free expression, journalism, minorities and diversity, as well as the extremist threat intensified through social media, have been at the core of these conferences. The themes central to this book are connected in a number of ways. Extremists exploit their media access to target minorities, to recruit and increase their own influence; minorities struggle to have their voices heard and their dignity acknowledged; and freedom-loving citizens struggle against clampdowns on press freedom and free expression. Such clampdowns enable authoritarian states to take extreme measures against those fighting for press freedom and free expression.

The efforts have been partly normative and certainly explorative. An explicit aim has been to build bridges between academics and journalists across borders and across such putative "civilizational" divides. However, our guiding principle has been to achieve progress concerning these aims by engaging in a non-biased exploration of the variety of contexts in which we work, and the different shapes our work has taken by the struggle for human values and freedoms.

The anthology includes contributions by 21 writers from nine countries. Seven are journalists, the rest are academics, while some of the latter consider themselves both. Thus, this volume is also an effort to build bridges between these two groups, who oftentimes view each other with skepticism, and this is frequently fueled by professional separation. What follows is an introduction to the various contributions.

1. Extremism and the media – shifting sands

The first part starts with a personal account from correspondent *Kristin Solberg*, who presents her experiences befriending an extremist, who later blew himself up in an action supportive of the IS, killing a group of militias in Mosul, Iraq. Her account demonstrates how a person seeking

a sense of belonging, ultimately finds it among terrorists, and adds to current discourses on the (individual) roots of extremism and terror.

Having experienced the loss of her colleagues, killed by a jihadi terrorist group, war correspondent *Abeer Saady* started research for what was to become a Ph.D. about ISIS media strategies. In her chapter, she discusses research findings from a case study of hostage campaigns and the discourse expressed by ISIS in their Youtube videos. Saady finds that propaganda is the base for all ISIS discourses, and although the discourses of ISIS are contradictory, the group is well managed in terms of its media strategies.

Indonesia hosts the world's largest Muslim population. Academic and journalist *Ade Armando* presents parts of his country's recent developments, including how the transition from dictatorship to democracy offered new precious freedoms, but also how extremists may use these freedoms to their own benefit. Whether government intervention against hateful utterances may lead back toward authoritarian oppression, is a tough dilemma deserving more analysis.

Examples of how IS, today's most threatening terrorist network, recruits and communicates, provides the content of the chapter following that of Ade Armando. War reporter *Afshin Ismaeli* has studied the deeds and the victims of the so-called "caliphate" at close range, through extensive reporting from Iraq and Syria. Despite the fact that their communication is currently on the decline, he emphasizes their relative professionalism, combining images of sensational brutality and others of an enticing good life in ISIS areas.

Jana Syeda Gulshan Ferdous describes how millions of people in Bangladesh started to use internet without knowing much about fact-checking content or sources, making them easy targets for extremist Islamists. Some of these organizations mastered the art of manipulating content and spreading it to the masses through Facebook groups and pages with hateful agendas. The chapter describes how instead of increasing freedom of expression through new media channels, the opposite is happening. The new digital communication channels allow for a rapid radicalization of people, and a quick erosion of moderate, knowledge-based, secular mentality.

After the "Arab spring" and the fall of the Ben Ali dictatorship in Tunisia in 2011, reporters faced new dilemmas as terrorist acts began

to break out. Based on his own substantial experiences, journalist *Mohamed Balti* discusses professional dilemmas he himself and his colleagues faced, not least the conundrum of how to cover such actions without playing into the hands of the extremists.

In his chapter about how to counter the present violent Islamic extremism in Bangladesh, experienced journalist *Julfikar Ali Manik* argues that a cultural struggle is unavoidable. Such a struggle has to start from every household as well as in schools, with its place in the curriculum and lectures. Sadly, the Islamic extremists are ahead of the game, as Manik states, showing the reader that they have strategized where to start, and began to do so much earlier than those few who are now thinking of countering the damages that have already been done.

2. Freedom of expression and new challenges

Since the nation was born in 1947, Pakistan has experienced shifts between military dictatorship and democracy. *Altaf Ullah Khan* takes stock of the current situation, which he calls alarming. People's right both to hold an opinion, and not least, to express it, is stifled by strict blasphemy laws and several government regulations, as well as by extremist attacks on minorities and freethinkers.

In another chapter about Bangladesh, *Mubashar Hasan* presents a typology of actors to discuss who suppresses free speech across that country. Hasan argues that alongside the government, a section of journalists, academics, businesspersons, political parties, secular and Islamist activists all act against the spirit of freedom of speech. The chapter shows how a pervasive, clientelist political process explains these actors' active engagement in suppressing free speech in Bangladesh.

As pointed out above, Turkey currently holds the global number one position when it comes to journalists and writers in prison. Most oppositional or critical media have been closed down. *Bora Ataman* and *Baris Coban* show how the earlier media situation in the country was smashed after the 2016 coup attempt. They go on to emphasize how alternative media to a large extent replace the mainstream media in the Turkish public sphere, something which represents a ray of hope for at least some free journalistic expression in that country.

In "Media in Turkey: A Reporter's Tale", reporter *Ayla Albayrak* shares her own experiences as a convicted journalist. She does so by

way of providing an example of how the Turkish government's determination to silence the media grew increasingly apparent after the coup attempt against President Erdogan in July 2016. To illustrate the current, almost impossible situation for journalists, the chapter provides examples of what news reporting in Erdogan's "New Turkey" look like.

Twenty years after the end of the Suharto regime and the start of a democratic era, journalists and writers who want to enjoy their full rights to freedom of expression still face a multitude of challenges. Writer and journalist *Andina Dwifatma* writes of how extremist groups threaten and at times silence the progressive, modern voices, labelled as *blasphemists* or *kafirs* (infidels). She places her hopes on the new young generation of writers.

Afghanistan, a country still at war, may provide a clear-cut example of how journalists and writers have to walk a tightrope between Taliban and other extremist threats, including killings; and authorities' efforts to curb their rights. *Abdul Mujeeb Khalvatgar* writes that despite Afghanistan's modern laws guaranteeing freedom of expression, the on-the-ground practice does not correspond. In 2018, more journalists were killed in Afghanistan than in any other country.

Reporter *Atta Ansari* looks back at the confusing period after the cartoons of Prophet Muhammad was published and the different reactions to them emerged. He reflects upon how he experienced being a journalist of Muslim faith in Norway at the time, and the huge pressure he and other minority journalists felt both from those who defended the cartoons, and from those who did not.

The road towards freedom of expression and freedom of the press in Tunisia has been long, but optimism spread across the country after dictator Ben Ali was forced to resign and travel into exile in early 2011. Since then, Tunisian journalists have enjoyed more freedom, as shown in *Rym Benarous*' chapter. Although the situation is still challenging, the leap forward from no 164 (2010) to 97 (2018) on World Press Freedom Index tells a story of progress.

Cultural expressions suffer much of the same oppression as media outlets under dictatorship. Writer *Andina Dwifatma* from Indonesia demonstrates how, even twenty years after the fall of the Suharto dictatorship, there are areas deemed as not suitable for cultural debates and arenas. Whether it has to do with left-wing politics or with sexual

minorities, this author recognizes resistance both from Islamist groups and government circles.

3. The changing shades of global diversities

Gender, and especially the female gender, is a very effective tool to transform sensitive messages that set the boundaries of both political and everyday life. *Nil Mutluer* shows how the government-led media have framed the gendered and ethnicized issues according to the needs of the prevailing hegemony. In her chapter, she describes how the female headscarf dilemma has been employed by both Kemalist governments and the current AKP government as a tool polarizing the Turkish society, and how Kurdish guerrilla bodies and neighborhoods are stigmatized in a sexualized way in social media.

Recent improvements in the freedom of expression situation in Indonesia have unleashed extremist groups and subsequent threats to the people whom these groups usually target, such as women and religious and sexual minorities; in short, they threaten society's diversity. *Lestari Nurajati* demonstrates how the spread of negative and discriminatory attitudes towards diversity are also reflected in mainstream media, albeit in less extreme ways.

Through a personal narrative of growing up in a Norwegian town where there were no immigrants, reporter *Olga Stokke* describes that even before the era of immigrants, the *other* was always present in her town, "in the shadows, in the dark corners of our playgrounds". She narrates the feeling of being a "passenger on a globalisation train" – transcending borders and facing the potential of important change, something implicit in meeting the *other*.

What does it take for refugees with a journalistic background to return to their profession in a new country and a new context? *Kristin Skare Orgeret* explores this topic through illustrations from Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Her chapter provides some insights into the "borderland existence", where such journalists find themselves located somewhere between a refugee and a journalist. She discusses what alternative points of view, such newcomer journalists may have to offer and enrich the so-called "receiving" countries.

The roots of threats against free expression and hatred towards diversity are manifold, but negative *othering* processes, which entail

seeing the *other* as of lesser (or no) value, are important. *Elisabeth Eide*'s chapter looks at the connections between globalization, citizenship and diversity, drawing on research as well as travel experiences, including the challenges of ongoing wars and today's refugee situation.

It is our hope that the contributions will inspire discussions and further research in institutions of higher learning, as well as among journalists, scholars and people who engage in preserving hard-won freedoms and rights, and those who have to fight hard to attain them.

Note

1. Personal communication with Afshin Ismaeli, 2019, March 28.

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PART ONE

Extremism and the media: Shifting sand

2. A man I knew became a suicide bomber for IS[1]

Kristin Solberg

Once I asked a man if he wanted to kill me.

Yes, he replied, looking directly into my eyes.

Khalid Kelly and I were standing outside a white marble mosque in Islamabad. It was 2009 and we knew each other well, having moved to Pakistan at the same time. The turbulence in the country had drawn us both there: I was there to report on it as a journalist, he, to create it as a jihadist.

That day he spoke with radiant expectation about how he longed to become a suicide bomber. It was during a period when bombs were going off in Pakistan on a daily basis. Khalid longed to carry out one of them; this was his greatest dream. "If you see a man in a hotel lobby, freshly shaven and carrying a suitcase in his hand, and you feel that there is something familiar about him, you ought to embrace Islam fairly quickly," he said.

His tone of voice was almost teasing as he referred to the suitcase bomb he hoped to carry, as he departed for the paradise in which he believed.

"Would you detonate the bomb if you saw me there?" I asked.

"Allah is my concern, not journalists"

A naïve question perhaps. However, at that time, despite our completely different interpretations of reality, we shared a sense of fellowship. I wrote a book in which Khalid was one of the characters and we spent many long days in each other's company. Beyond that, we were both

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foreigners – and to some degree lonely – in a new country. In addition, I really believed we liked each other, although for my part this waxed and waned. At one moment, Khalid might say that Osama bin Laden was a hero, and in the next moment, he could show an almost touching thoughtfulness, such as when he purchased dates before coming to an interview because he knew I liked them.

We stood closely together, closer than ever before, because we did not want anybody else to hear what we were talking about. I could feel his breath when he answered "yes".

"It's Allah I care about, not journalists."

"I kill for Allah. It is the best reason for killing."

I do not remember what I answered because those minutes standing there in the sunshine outside the mosque did not became truly poignant until now, many years later. I probably did not say anything because I did not believe him. Little did I know that it would be put to the test seven years later, in another country and another conflict.

Suicide bomber in Mosul

Khalid actually became a suicide bomber for IS in the struggle for Mosul. I was in the city at the precise moment it happened. Once again, we were at the same place at the same time: I as journalist, he as jihadist. He blew himself up only a few kilometres from where I was.

Image of Khalid posted by IS. Photographer unknown. Published by NRK 2016, November 19

IS disseminated a picture of him, probably taken right before he climbed into a car filled with explosives. In the photo, he looks directly into the camera. In his hand, he has a Kalashnikov, on his chest a walk-ie-talkie. In this photo, he looks different from when we stood together in the sunshine in Islamabad. He is thinner, his beard greyer. To me, who knew him back then, he looks miserable, almost devastated. He does not look like a man about to make his dream come true.

And when I hear what happened since, I feel a kind of sorrow. Even though I have seen up close the suffering IS stands up for, I am also a writer and I have lost one of my main characters. Indeed, I knew Khalid the way a writer knows his or her main character: well. Very well. At one point in time, I knew him as well as I knew some of my close friends.

Feared kidnapping

I must admit I was afraid the first time we met in Pakistan. I asked a friend to sound the alarm if I was not back at home some hours later. I asked my driver to wait outside and ring me every half hour to check I had not been kidnapped. But Khalid had no concrete plans to kidnap me even though he stressed that it would not have been unjust since Norway at that point had soldiers in Afghanistan. He wanted to tell his story. He had finally discovered the truth – his truth – and he wanted to share it.

He was born Terence Edward Kelly in Dublin in 1967. As a child, he wanted to become a Catholic priest, but lost his faith during his youth. He moved to London and trained to be a nurse. From the hints he gave me, I concluded it was a time marked by a lot of alcohol and women.

Lured by better wages that were also tax-free, he moved to Saudi Arabia. When the mosques called the faithful to prayer in Riyadh, he tuned up the volume on his stereo and opened the windows. He also made good money on the side, selling alcohol, which is forbidden in the conservative country. He was arrested and sentenced to nine months in prison. A fellow prisoner gave him a copy of the Koran, leading to the most significant event of his life.

"When I embraced Islam it was as though all the bricks in my life fell into place," he said one day as we sat in a hotel room and ate dates. He was dressed in a light blue *shalwar kameez*, the normal Pakistani attire.

He took the name Khalid and returned to London. There he became increasingly radical. When he married and had children, he called his first son Osama, after Osama bin Laden. "I hope they become suicide bombers" he said, referring to his three sons.

Tried to belong

He had come to Pakistan to join up with the Taliban, who, by the way, he referred to as "the beautiful Taliban brothers."

"Why aren't you already fighting in their ranks?" I asked.

For a second he seemed to feel sorry for himself.

"Try joining the Taliban with an Irish accent, and see where it gets you," he replied. I gradually realized that his whole life had been a long search for acceptance, for a sense of belonging. It was not easy to find, not even among the Taliban.

I was often stunned by the extremity of the words he used, but then, my role when we met, was that of a journalist and writer. My job was not to judge but to try to understand. Moreover, understanding is not the same as justifying or accepting.

So, over time I looked on him as a man in search of meaning. By chance, in prison, he had found it in a literal interpretation of Islam, but he could just as well have found it elsewhere: in Catholicism, alcohol, right-wing populism or extreme sports. What defined him, more than religion, was a deep-seated fundamentalism. The hole could have been filled by virtually anything, as long as it was something extreme.

Jihad

When he spoke about jihad, he talked a great deal about politics – because, above everything else, that is where today's jihad is. Within IS as well, the arguments for jihad are more political than religious.

Khalid talked about the wars of the West in Afghanistan and Iraq; he talked about the discrimination of Muslims in the West. These are arguments jihadists often use, arguments that are exaggerated but nonetheless are often linked to actual injustice – and therefore become so explosive when they are manipulated by groups like IS. "They want to bomb us back into the Stone Age. We have to fight back," Khalid said.

We met in parks, at cafes, in hotel lobbies and mosques over a period of many months. We went for walks, drank tea and ate cheesecake. We

complained about the heat and exchanged travel tips. In some ways, one could almost say we were friends – although neither of us would have said so: Khalid because he would never be friends with a *kafir*, an infidel: I because I would never become friends with one of my jihadist sources. However, sometimes language fails us; it is not always possible to describe the space shared by two human beings.

Perhaps that is why I did not believe him when he said he would have killed me. Nevertheless, I took precautions. I never told him where I lived. If we shared a taxi home, I always asked to be let off in a neighbourhood other than my own.

Feared arrest

The last time we talked together was over the telephone, after both of us had been thrown out of Pakistan. Khalid was in Romania. He was broke and his passport had been stolen. The intelligence service had asked him to leave the country, but without a passport, Ireland was the only country he could go to. He was afraid he would be arrested in his homeland. His family had been interrogated.

"It's a strange thing to say, but it's lovely to hear a friendly voice. It has been so terrible," he said.

"Remember, I'm a *kafir*," I said, and this time I was the one teasing.

"So you haven't become Muslim yet?"

"No."

"*Inshallah*."

Paths that cross

He was not arrested, but rather became even more radicalised.

It could be that our paths crossed many times in recent years. Both journalists and jihadists gradually moved from Afghanistan and Pakistan to Syria and Iraq, the two professions being closely intertwined. While I moved from being a freelancer working for *Aftenposten* covering South Asia, to become a correspondent for NRK for the Middle East, Khalid moved from being a *wannabe* member of the Taliban to a full-fledged member of IS. While we both followed our respective paths, radical jihad also morphed, moving from Al Qaida's *terror-cell* structure to today's so-called Islamic State, with a brutality from which even Al Qaida has distanced itself.

Khalid was one of the first people I thought of when IS leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi declared a caliphate in 2014. He made a supportive statement on Twitter, where we followed each other. Then his account was shut down.

Mosul

The closest we got to each other since that time was in Mosul, on Friday, November 4th 2016. I was in a field hospital in the Eastern part of the city. In front of me, nine-year old Ahmed was fighting for his life. Ten minutes earlier, he had been playing football with a cousin when he kicked the ball into an ISIS made IED. Ahmed died shortly afterwards.

I did not know Khalid was in the city too but at that moment, Khalid was driving his car bomb in the Western part of the city.

A picture released by IS supposedly shows the moment when his car exploded right outside Mosul. IS maintained that he killed a group of militiamen.

When I first heard about this, I did not quite believe it. I thought, "maybe it's not true; it is just something put out by IS, for the sake of propaganda. I began to write an email to Khalid: "Is it true? If it is, I hope you are resting in peace. If not, make contact."

Rest in peace? Can one say that to someone who has just killed other people? But what else could one say?

Bastard?

May your days in hell be long and horrible?

I could have written it all and meant it. I did not send the email because I could not find the right words. In any case, gradually I realised that it would not be read.

An answer I will never get

Since then, part of me wished that Khalid had driven to the east instead of the west in Mosul. Towards me. Why would I wish such a thing? I do not know. Maybe because, since that modest beginning in Pakistan I have seen so much violence and I long for a sign that it is possible to sit together and eat dates. Perhaps it is because I do not want to accept that he actually was a suicide bomber and that I should really have stopped him. Or perhaps only to show us both that I was right when I did not believe him seven years earlier.

And what would have happened if I had seen him? Would I have run toward him, as quickly as my heavy bullet-proof vest allowed, or would I have run in the opposite direction, which, strictly speaking, I should have done if an IS fighter came driving along? And if I had done the first, what would I have done then?

"Khalid, it's me!" I would have shouted. And I would have seen the surprise and the recognition in his grey-green eyes. Perhaps I would also have seen a smile. Maybe.

"Don't do it! DON'T DO IT!" I would have shouted, and no doubt also swung my arms back and forth, as if one could stop a vehicle loaded with explosives. "Here, look, a child has been killed. He was killed by one of you. Stop this killing, for God's sake!" I would have said.

I have no illusions that I could get him to change direction. I had already pointed out the logical and moral flaws in his worldview while we were in Pakistan, but I never got anywhere. Yet, I do not believe he would have blown himself up if it meant he would have to kill me, despite what he said in another country, in another conflict.

But perhaps I give myself too much importance. We all have our own truths. We are all at the centre of our own lives, even when they intimately cross the lives of others.

Note

1. Originally published in Norwegian language in NRK, the Norwegian Public Broadcaster, 2016, November 19. Published with permission from the NRK. Translation: Richard Daly.

3. The battle over discourses

Dancing with "ISIS wolves"

Abeer Saady Soliman

"We are invisible to the Western media. You came here just for ISIS, not for us. We are the ones who are dancing with those wolves." These were the words Adel Alamaldin told me when we met in November 2014 at the border between Turkey and Syria.

Alamaldin is one of the local Syrian journalists who worked under a very difficult situation in the war-torn country. He had to cross a border forest on foot once a week to get an internet connection in order to send photos, thereby avoiding the eyes of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). I explained to him that I was a regional journalist who also suffered directly and indirectly from the existence of the Jihadi groups, Al Qaeda in Iraq and then the self-proclaimed ISIS in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Libya. "We, war journalists, are all 'dancing with the wolves," I defended myself. However, he was right. Some local journalists, who live in ISIS areas, have no choice. Later, Alamaldin crossed the border for the very last time. His own brother joined ISIS, and his first mission was to kill the "infidel", his brother and journalist, Alamaldin.

"Don't compare the Lone Wolves who implement individual sudden attacks with the behaviour of wolves when wolves are organised as a pack," Alamaldin advised me, before jumping on a boat and heading to Europe as a refugee. Usually, wolves are social animals living in packs. However, some wolves leave the pack and become "Lone Wolves".

In fact, the number of Lone Wolf attacks around the world is less than such attacks in the ISIS areas.[1] Many of the ISIS Lone Wolves are

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self-radicalized (Clarke & Moghadam, 2018; ICSR, 2015). The Lone Wolf concept reflects ISIS's strategy to globalize its network. They share the same ideas and search the media for Jihadi material.

Countering terrorism

Many scholars have stressed the role of the media in the work of terror organizations, pointing to the evolution of Jihadi organizations' media strategy (Baines & O'Shaughnessy, 2014; Ciovacco, 2009; Harrow, 2010; Hauner, 2009; Rabasa, 2006; Rogan, 2006). In their propaganda material, the organizations spread their ideas mixed with violence. Ayman al-Zawahiri, leader of Al Qaeda, emphasized the importance of media to Jihadi groups when he said, "The media represent two-thirds of the battle".[2]

Understanding the messages and the strategy behind a media machine is essential because society cannot counter what it cannot see clearly (Nacos, 2002; Rajan, 2015). It may be argued that a major mistake in the War on Terror was the assertion that destroying camps and leadership would lead to the demise of a terror group and its ideology. Countering terrorism, however, requires more integrated approaches (Nacos, 2002; Nesser, 2006; Veilleux-Lepage, 2016; Wiktorowicz, 2002)

Silencing the voice of the enemies was a rational decision by the Jihadi group ISIS to spread its own discourse and to recruit new members, and potentially more Lone Wolves. This is probably one reason why the Youtube hostage campaign[3] graphically eliminated journalists to declare the proclaimed state (Soliman, 2015).

On a personal level, the hostage campaign also changed my life goals. Before the campaign, I was a war correspondent and safety trainer in conflict zones. The killing of my colleagues by a jihadi group claiming to use my religion in their "holy war" was a turning point. That is how I started academic field research in order to study ISIS's media strategy, with the aim of acquiring knowledge about extremist groups and their media management, which might well be useful when the next jihadi group rises.

In this chapter, I discuss the research findings from a case study of hostage campaigns and the discourse expressed by ISIS in their Youtube videos, applying the concepts of non-state propaganda and discourse. In doing so, I will apply the social movement theory. Using the social

movement theory raises an argument about whether to consider ISIS a social movement. Wiktorowicz (2002) discussed what distinguishes Islamic activism from Western activism while applying the Social Movement theory to Islamic activism. Later, Günther and Kaden (2016) argued that ISIS can be regarded as a socio-political movement and a "quasistate" with different sources of authority and means of power pertaining to each. The propaganda theory used here is mainly based on the Institute of Propaganda's (IPA) analysis.[4]

Hostage videos

The main questions of the chapter are: What is the media strategy ISIS is using in its Youtube hostage videos? What kind of discourse does ISIS express? How do the videos reflect ideology, relationships of power, identity, representation and narration of the conflict? To answer these questions, I conducted Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on five Youtube videos by ISIS as a major method, combined with analysing four semi-structured interviews, as a secondary research method. In this way, I have tried to verify and explain the identified discourses.

The videos are the following:

Video 1: "Message to America", released on August 19, 2014. Shows the beheading of American photojournalist James Foley. This video was followed by five similar videos all ending with the beheading of a kneeling journalist or aid worker.

Video 2: "Inside Kobane", released on the October 28, 2014. ISIS used British photojournalist John Cantlie to report in their propaganda videos in Iraq and Syria. The sample video from Kobane was the first in the series. It was followed by "Inside Mosul" (January 2015) and "Inside Aleppo" (February 2015). Earlier, ISIS had released seven episodes from another series by Cantlie called "Lend Me Your Ears".

Video 3: "Healing the hearts of Believers", released on the January 3, 2015. The Execution of Jordanian pilot Muath al-Kasasbeh in Raqqa. ISIS burned him alive in a cage.

Video 4: "A Message Signed with Blood to the Nations of the Cross", released February 23 2015. ISIS executed 21 Egyptian Christian (Copts) in Libya. On April 2015, ISIS released a video beheading 30 Ethiopian Christians.

Video 5: ISIS released on June 23, 2015 without a name before the first anniversary of the proclaimed Caliphate. The Video from Mosul shows three kinds of executions of hostages: drowning six of them caged in a pool, chilling four in a car, and exploding six with a cord wrapped around their necks.

Interviewees with ISIS connections

The chosen interviewees all had direct connection with the ISIS media units. Access to interviewees was made possible, as the researcher has a background of covering the war in Syria and Iraq. The interviewees are:

Interviewee 1: Medyan Dairieh, producer of "Inside the Islamic State" for the Vice News channel. He is a professional journalist who created a film inside the ISIS capital in Syria. He has dealt with the media units of Al Qaeda then ISIS.

Interviewee 2: Zaniar Ali, a local Kurdish Syrian photojournalist. He is a founder of the Aleppo media centre, which shared the same building with the ISIS media unit in 2013. He dealt with the unit and saw their media equipment.

Interviewee 3: Mohamed, a member of "Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently" (RSS), a citizen journalism group exposing human rights abuses by ISIS. The research will not use his full name for reasons of risk to his safety, as ISIS has executed two members of RSS.

Interviewee 4: Ahmed Aboud, photojournalist from Deir ez-Zour. ISIS kidnapped him. Aboud is currently a refugee in Norway.

The hostage campaign

The world heard about ISIS at the 29th of June 2014, when Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi[5] gave a speech in Mosul, Northern Iraq, declaring the Caliphate. Later on, the terrorist organization received massive exposure when international media showed the beheading video of American journalist James Foley. He was the first hostage to appear in a campaign of Youtube videos, produced and circulated on social media by ISIS. The event on the 19th of August 2014 marked what the media considered a "multi-level international message", to win the war through the social media. The campaign used a series of videos involving the hostages. (Rose, 2014). This quote is from the statement

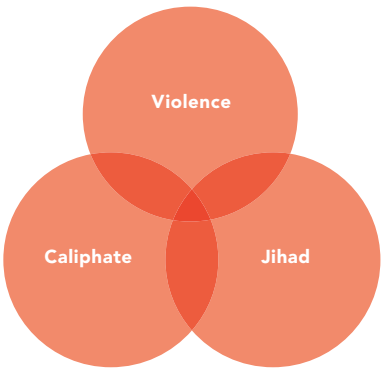
Foley gave moments before ISIS beheaded him: "I died that day, John[6]. When your colleagues dropped that bomb on those people (ISIS): They signed my death certificate."[7]

I had known Foley since we both covered the conflicts in Libya and then Syria, where he stayed for two years as a hostage before the dramatic execution. At a later stage, ISIS also beheaded my friend, the Japanese journalist Kenji Goto. The campaign was another declaration of the jihadi organization. The first causalities were journalists covering the conflict. One of the messages ISIS communicated was that they did not want journalists to cover the conflict at all. ISIS repeated the message with the executions of local Syrian journalists. Subsequently, Lopez (2016) examined the reason why some terrorist organizations, which depends on publicity, would target journalists. He concluded that there were two reasons for this; the journalists were accused of collaborating with the enemy, and the killings could be seen as a response for negative reporting of the terrorists.

Discourses of ISIS

The nature of the discourses ISIS expresses in the five Youtube videos of hostages analysed here, is contradictory, but at the same time well managed as a media strategy. There are three main discourses expressed: 1) The dominant discourse, which is violence, 2) The ideological discourse, which is Jihad, and 3) The embedded discourse, which is the idea of the State or Caliphate[8].

Figure 1. ISIS Main Discourses



Each of the discourses has contradictions within itself and intersects with the other discourses.

1. Violence, the dominant discourse

Violence is the dominant discourse. It is the tip of the iceberg, as we will see in the following. The shocking nature of violence disturbs logical-thinking and critical analysis by the audience and makes it easier to get other embedded discourses through. The multi-layer messaging of violence in the five videos clearly aims to shock; to attract supporters; to instil fear in enemies; and to encourage mainstream media to republish the message, thus putting pressure on policymakers in the home countries of the hostages.

Violence is used to demonstrate power and victory over the "others", and may be represented by executing the hostages. Beheading, burning, drowning, and bombing hostages were events documented in the videos. Interviewee 1 explained that the IS never hide their violence, because they consider it part of their legitimacy. Interviewee 4 pointed out that ISIS was worried people would gather against them if they realized their real numbers – how few they actually were in numbers.[9]

The setting and filming of the execution scenes were carried out in a professional and sophisticated manner. ISIS mixed audio, narrative and visual elements for maximum impact. They included and repeated the scene of the Foley execution from Video 1 in the other videos with the ISIS representative standing masked, wearing black clothes, and armed with a knife, while the victim is kneeling, tied, and wearing an orange jump suit, recalling the treatment of Islamist prisoners at the American Guantanamo base in the period after 2001.

The treatment of Egyptian Christians in video 4 was a humiliating message over relations of power with the West. The ISIS representative in the video called them "People of the Cross", stressing their religion. He used propaganda techniques to connect them with western forces that killed Bin Laden[10] to make the execution look like a revenge. The setting and scenes required rehearsal and interviewees confirmed that fact. ISIS admitted drugging victims after executing the Jordanian pilot.[11] However, when executing the Egyptians, they did not. One can hear the prisoners' last prayers. This was to counter allegations that ISIS was faking executions.

Violence sends multiple messages to audiences. The ISIS media strategy reflects an understanding of relations of power in the Western democratic system. The title of Video 1 "Message to America", was followed by a clip of former American president Obama, launching airstrikes. Foley mentions that his brother, John, who serves in the US Air Force, assuming he is bombing ISIS.

Once the victim's message has cleared his killers of responsibility and blamed his government, the ISIS representative then presents his threatening message. The well-prepared scripts and positions reflecting ISIS's power over the kneeling Western victim, inform the Americans that the only way to save the next hostage is to stop its airstrikes.

The contradiction in this discourse comes from the justification of shocking violence and self-victimisation. ISIS's aim toward Western audiences is to use violence to provoke a shock reaction, but toward a potentially supportive audience, ISIS portrays violence as a legitimate act of revenge. Fairclough (2003) argues that a discursive social analysis is required to understand social background. "Revenge" is an acceptable social act religiously. The title of Video 3 "Healing of the believers' chests", shows ISIS burning a Jordanian pilot alive in a cage, as a response to Jordan joining the coalition against ISIS.

Killing a Sunni Muslim is complicated for ISIS, since he cannot be labelled "an unbeliever". ISIS used the Jordanian pilot's confessions and reminded the audience that ISIS is a victim of airstrikes. The amount of violence required the use of other techniques, such as songs used during the execution. (Lemieux & Nill, 2011). The song that is used as soundtrack to the video starts with the lyrics "You wanted to fight me". The pilot is no longer seen as a Muslim, but as a representative of a "crusade" against ISIS. Because the Quran does not include anything to justify burning humans alive, ISIS used a quote from the jihadi scholar Ibn Taymiyyah to legitimise the act.[12]

By highlighting the violence of "others", ISIS justifies its own acts of violence. ISIS uses propaganda techniques as storytelling and selection of facts out of context. In the video, we see visuals from the pilot's actual confession. Later, we see him at the debris of a building looking regretful before his execution. Using selective bits of history is a traditional way of empowering a propaganda message (Lippman, 1922). Using symbols is a powerful form of propaganda (Lasswell, 1971). The makers of Video

4 justified the executing of the Egyptian hostages as revenge for the assassination of Bin Laden. The ISIS representative points to the sea with his sword, and threatens to invade "Rome", a symbolic historical reference to Christianity, even though used here without being fully grounded in context.

ISIS balances its violence with self-victimisation; victimhood is raised as the justification of its brutality. "They don't want to lose the attractiveness of being the victims," said Interviewee 3. All interviewees believe that airstrikes empower ISIS.

2. Jihad, the ideological discourse

Jihad is the ideological discourse that forms the base for ISIS's legitimacy. The holy war against non-Muslims justifies the violence and strengthens the statehood (Caliphate). ISIS presents itself as a state in war.

Propaganda works well during times of war, and perhaps especially during ideological religious conflicts. ISIS introduces its representatives in military attire because others have declared war against them. This narrative contradicts the historical chronology of the conflict and introduces selective fragments of history.[13] Another propaganda method is to confuse land ownership and time realities. In all videos, coalition attacks are described as attacks on ISIS land, ignoring that these attacks have occurred on Syrian and Iraqi territories. In Video 2, the hostage John Cantlie talks on behalf of ISIS about the war against "its" land while they (ISIS) are invading the Kurdish-Syrian city of Kobane. In Video 1, the ISIS representative used the phrase "your attacks against Muslims", presenting ISIS as a representative of Muslims. This legitimacy justifies the war by ideology (van Dijk, 1998[14]). Then the victim, Foley, addresses his brother, saying, "Your colleagues bombed those people". It is personalising the conflict by using "your", and the misleading use of the word "people" to present ISIS as wronged civilians.

Video 4 is shot in Libya and mentions Dabiq, a Syrian village with a historical ideological relevance. In Islamic eschatology, Dabiq is a possible location for an epic battle between invading Christians and the defending Muslims, which, in the future, will result in a Muslim victory and mark the end of time. Thus, this is a call for all potential supporters to join ISIS in the biggest ideological war of all time.

The ISIS representative tells the audience that ISIS is composed of the same people who are in Syria and Iraq, and now Libya. The song completes the discourse of threat; "We are coming to you by killings and death", with the camera focused on the sword, on the ISIS representative's challenging eyes, and the graphic impression of blood.

The notions of power and ideology are present in all the videos and is underwritten by the stress in the discourse on statehood. In Video 3, instead of wearing ISIS black clothes, the fighters wear military uniforms like classical secular armies. This presentation contradicts their anti-secular ideology, something they ignore in order to stress they are going to confront their enemies in the same manner as any army.

Because this video targets an Arab audience, ISIS carefully chose fighters to reflect sameness: height, bodybuilding, and dark eye colour. The media production shows management and awareness of its audience. As Interviewee 3 explains: "ISIS need to be in a state of war to achieve their slogan 'Remain and Expand'. War is part of their identity. Without war, they will have to face infrastructure and service problems".

Interviewee 1 stresses that religious ideology is mixed with the discourse of war. The output is Jihad. The legitimacy is the Sharia (Islamic holy law). ISIS presents itself as a leader in this global war to attract potential fighters. When Interviewee 1 dealt with the media unit of ISIS, they took him to the Iraqi border to show how they challenged the "Sykes- Picot" Agreement between the Western colonial powers (at the end of World War I) who divided the region – much of the former Ottoman Empire – between Britain and France.

All interviewees refer to ISIS with the Arabic initials "Daesh"[15], except for Interviewee 1. He insisted on calling it "The Islamic State". He explained that it is "a real state with borders and an army." He also used the name as the title of his documentary.[16]

As for ISIS's internal structures, Interviewee 3 believes that decentralisation facilitates ISIS's mission. Regions are divided into counties; each have a media unit, which reports to a higher level of management. This hierarchy has been confirmed by all interviewees.

3. State branding, the embedded discourse

Some scholars have argued that ISIS's media campaign is not complex, but well planned. ISIS uses social media to promote "brand awareness",

or to sell its image as a legitimate organisation (Berger, 2015a, 2015b; Prucha & Fisher, 2013). The research findings presented here support that argument. State branding is probably the strongest narrative embedded within the ISIS discourses. The ISIS state has different forms in the videos. Sometimes it is violent and capable of punishing its enemies, the "others" represented by the hostages. Sometimes the state is a victim facing attacks from "others". It is always a state living through a continuous ideological Jihad. This exceptional situation justifies its violence. This explains the congruent circles in the diagram above (Figure 1).

Our research has found that ISIS suffers a contradiction in naming itself as a state while legitimating itself as a caliphate. Benigni and colleagues (2017) and Botz-Bornstein (2017) stress that establishing a caliphate was not the main motivation for Jihad. Al Qaeda never changed its strategy to control land. The findings show how ISIS takes the vision of the state a step forward, with Baghdadi establishing the Caliphate on June 2014.

Mandaville (2014), points out that Jihadi organizations reject the idea of a modern national state. Accordingly, the fact that they have called themselves "The Islamic State" and employed modern production techniques, contradicts the ideological religious concept of "caliphate".

In the five videos, the two terms, "state" and "caliphate" are used according to the targeted audience and the objective of the message. This pragmatic approach indicates that the media strategy used in the Youtube videos is well managed. In Video 2, Cantlie mentioned the "Islamic State" 11 times before referring to ISIS fighters as "The Mujahedeen", which reflects religious ideology. Interviewee 1 believes that ISIS is applying modern state requirements with an ideological legitimacy.

Interviewee 4 reveals that before Video 3, ISIS launched a social media survey to ask "citizens" of ISIS how to punish the pilot. The crowd's contribution stresses the idea of citizenship. Later, this was mixed with ideology when basing the burning verdict on Ibn Taimiah views.

In Video 1, the ISIS representative attacks the West, addressing their representative saying, "You, Obama", pointing to the camera with his sword. Here the words, visuals and voice work together to create the relation of power. The symbolic positioning the hostages kneeling, tied, and speaking in a low voice is reflected in an audience whose

members experience fear and helplessness seeing their representative submit to ISIS. On the opposite side, the ISIS representative stands, confident and threatening. The juxtaposition is clear. Analysing icons and symbols, according to Rose (2012), in a discursive approach, the orange jumpsuit in which Foley was dressed is a reference to Muslim prisoners in Guantanamo. The visuals here complete the lexical and discursive elements to present the "other" and "our" relations of power regarding this "other".

Language is not neutral (Fairclough, 2003), and it is clear that ISIS carefully uses language to stress how different "the others" are. Naming and referring is a strategy in media discourse (Blommaert, 2005; van Dijk, 1998), which creates differences between the "us" and "them".

For ISIS, the others are the non-believers, the attackers, who cooperate with enemies. One lexical technique is stereotyping. The citizens of Western countries–the hostages–were stereotyped through generalisations that justified attacking them. In Video 4, the ISIS representative called all Christians "Crusade worshippers". The only time we hear the victims is when they are praying before execution.

Direct quotations support the discourses. Video 1 begins with Obama's declaration of war against ISIS. In Video 3, graphic illustrations accompany the confessions of the pilot. In Video 2, Cantlie used indirect quotations to verify that the video was recorded during the battle for Kobane.[17]

The titles given to the videos emphasize the message. "A Message to America", Video 1, is a direct threat. "Inside Kobane", Video 2, challenges Westerners, intimidating them from reporting "Inside" ISIS cities. "Healing the Believers' Chests", Video 3, is a message of revenge mixed with ideology.

Applying van Dijk (1997)'s socio-cognitive ideological approach to ISIS, the movement created membership characteristics based on ideology, renewing the old religious concept of a caliphate to strengthen the resolve of unit members. The idea of a caliphate gives religious ideological legitimacy to ISIS as part of its grand narrative.[18]

Jihadi movements work to recruit and attract donors (Benigni et al., 2017; Berger, 2015b; Jones & Libicki, 2008). Even though other jihadi movements in Syria and Iraq were not mentioned in the videos, ISIS stressed relations of power, presenting the legitimizing message that

ISIS itself is the sole official representative of the Caliphate.

Some messages in the videos seem to be aimed at countering stereotypes; one example is how ISIS aims to recruit women. Video 3 shows how women play an active role. The camera dwells on a masked female ISIS member beheading one of the hostages. The video itself was directed at the Egyptian regime, accusing it of forcing a woman to return to Christianity from Islam. This is a rare gender angle stressed twice in one video, and it is not done by coincidence. Interviewee 3 points out that recruiting women was stressed in Friday Prayers in Al Raqqa during the same week. Recruitment is definitely important for ISIS. In Video 4, we see the hostage Cantlie, changing sides from wearing an orange jumpsuit to wearing ISIS's black suit in a series called "Inside" from cities controlled by ISIS.

The research found that ISIS is creating a visual identity as part of the state branding discourse. Exploring the main visual features of the videos reveals common characteristics. ISIS in Libya produced Video 4, yet it followed the same style applied in Syria and Iraq. Executing more than one person was a new element, yet the following Video 5 in Iraq has followed the same format.

Supporting the idea of the state or caliphate is done visually. There are stable and changing visual icons in the videos. The most important visual icon is the black flag, a symbol of either the state or caliphate.

Choosing the topic reflects power in discursive analysis. The title of the video appears at the beginning of each video, in English and Arabic. This provides ISIS with an authority over the event. Also, the language spoken, and the translation written specifies the target audience. The objective of using stable icons can persist in the memory, remaining in the mind longer than the voiced words.

ISIS representatives are selected according to messages. In Video 3, fighters were not Westerners, because the target audience was Arabic. In all videos, ISIS representatives are military. Hostages wear Guantanamo suits, to justify the violence and the revenge.

ISIS sees its propaganda material as a weapon in this war. It controls all information disseminated in its territories. Since beheading Foley, ISIS became the only source of visuals. This monopoly forced international media to use the propaganda material with the embedded messages.

Interviewee 3, who worked at Aleppo media center, in the same building as ISIS until May 2014, talked about ISIS' monopoly on battlefield filming. Unlike Al-Nusra, ISIS trained their members to film, not allowing journalists to record their battles. "When ISIS received orders to evacuate the place one night, we found advanced media products, including drones and small high-definition cameras," he said. In Video 2, ISIS uses a drone plane to take photos from the air over Kobane. Interviewee 3 pointed out that Cantlie, one cameraperson and two fighters went to do the filming. "None of the scenes was taken on the ground. Everything was from rooftops. ISIS was losing the battle," he stressed. As these examples have shown, the ISIS videos bristle with contradictions, contradictions which ISIS has a media strategy to manage and control. Their media strategies could be conceived as an iceberg, crowned at the top with violence.

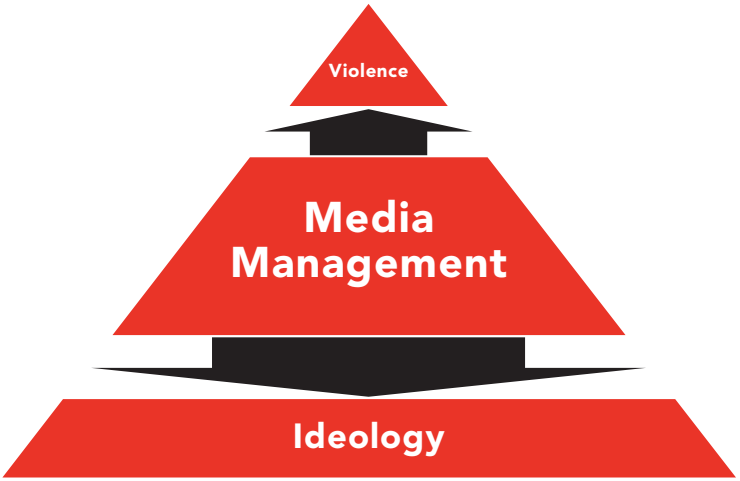
The ISIS iceberg – managing contradicting discourses

Analysis of the videos reveals that, the three main outlined propaganda discourses (violence, jihad, and state branding) imply intersection and contradiction within the discourse. Violence appears in every discourse, but the biggest intersection is the ideology that provides the base for each theme. The research reveals that management of the media strategy is the hidden critical element, which controls the propaganda discourses of ISIS.

The research presents the notion of the "ISIS Media Strategy Iceberg", as illustrated in Figure 2. The tip of the iceberg represents violence, which is the dominant, most highly visible and shocking propaganda discourse throughout the five sample videos. Violence disturbs logical thinking and critical analysis. Violence makes it easier to receive other embedded discourses. However, the base of the iceberg, hidden from sight, is the ideology. Religious ideology is powerful and thus capable of justifying violence.

No one sees the middle of the "ISIS Iceberg". The study found that the media management is the hidden element of the image ISIS wants to show. In Figure 2, the media strategy is hidden between violence and ideology. Jihadi ideology gives legitimacy not only to violence, but also to Jihad and the state. In between the violence and the ideological base, middle management is the media strategy.

Figure 2. Managing discourse of ISIS



ISIS media strategy

The findings here support both Prucha and Fisher (2013) and Galloway (2016) who describe ISIS's media campaigns as well planned, sophisticated and complex. Botz-Bornstein (2017) believes that ISIS propaganda differs from other organisations, because it accentuates the maximal exploitation and demonstration of available technology to present jihadi life as connected to modern urban culture.

While Leander (2017) and Benigni and colleagues (2017) consider ISIS' media strategy to be unique due to its decentralised nature, involving hundreds of social media users, Berger (2015b) believes that ISIS scarifies its control in exchange for spreading of its message far and wide. Interviewee 2 explains how ISIS relies on direct communication when it comes to operating in local communities. At the same time, it practices control over the use of the internet in its regions.

Teun A. van Dijk (1998) demonstrates ways through which powerful groups control the media. One is media ownership. ISIS have media establishments of their own. By producing multi-messaging high-quality videos and launching them on Youtube, ISIS reaches its lone wolves. The impact may increase when international media pick up and broadcast the propaganda material in their reports to broad

audiences. The ISIS media management reflects an understanding of newsworthiness and how traditional media operate and thus feed them accordingly. It took the global media organizations some time to realize that they actually promoted ISIS's propaganda narrative, and that this might have helped ISIS to attract new recruits and donors (Ganguly and Al-Istrabadi, 2018).

Interviewee 3, whose father was executed by ISIS for cooperating with the media, said, "Before the video of Foley, many local citizen journalists were beheaded. The hostage videos represent a message to journalists to stay away." ISIS wanted to monopolise the narrative coming from its regions.

Interviewee 1, who made his documentary in Raqqa, explained how ISIS media officials asked him to delete some scenes in an attempt to manage and control their discourse. He stressed that ISIS continuously improved its media unit, getting the best equipment and recruiting specialists who had worked at Iraqi media stations as well as media professionals trained in the West. Interviewee 2, who shared a building with ISIS media at Aleppo, told how an ISIS member tried to recruit him. This man told him of the danger there was in being a journalist who was not working for ISIS.

Two weeks after ISIS beheaded Foley, the jihadi organization media unit in Deir El Zour issued 11 rules to journalists still operating in its areas (Dearden, 2014). "They wanted to expose us. Later they published advertisements calling for media experts," said Interviewee 4, Ahmed Aboud.[19] Three of his colleagues were executed by ISIS.

ISIS established its own production entities for their Anashid (songs) and documentaries as a tool to recruit new members around the world (Galloway, 2016; Ingram, 2015).

Aboud considered the hidden intelligence networks of ISIS, which targets local journalists to be the most dangerous. ISIS continued killing local Syrian journalists in its regions and came after those who fled to Turkey. A father of a member of the group called "Al Raqqa is slathered in silence" was beheaded in a video and three other members were assassinated in Turkey. Nagi Al Garf, who directed a film challenging ISIS, was also shot by ISIS.

ISIS media tailor its messages according to the audiences, including those who appears in the message. Native English speakers, such as

so-called "Jihadi John"[20] in Video 1 or a similar one in Video 4 were used to show how multicultural ISIS is and how it penetrates other nations. However, Video 3 was totally in Arabic in keeping with its target audience.

Building identity is one activity of social movements. The analysis done here finds that ISIS through its messages tries to create a unique identity. In four of the five researched videos, one can see the ISIS flag, the uniforms of hostages, and one hears the music of ISIS in the background.

Supporting the dancers with the wolves

The major finding is that while the discourses of ISIS are contradictory, their media strategy is well managed. Propaganda is the basis for all ISIS discourses. In the hostage case study, three main intersecting propaganda discourses emerge from analysing the videos, as illustrated in Figure 1. Violence is the dominant discourse due to its shocking nature. Jihad[21] is the ideological discourse. The third discourse is the idea of caliphate, or a state conducted according to Sharia law.

Another important finding is that media management is the hidden element of the image ISIS wants to present. It manages the contradictory discourses through controlling violence and ideology. This can be conceived as an iceberg, as illustrated in Figure 2, where its tip represents the violence, while its bottom is the ideology. Between the tip and the bottom, the hidden part is the media management, which this chapter has tried to shed new light on.

Finally, I have stressed that I will continue to value and support the local journalists operating in jihadi group controlled areas. I moved from reporting the war with them, witnessing their sacrifices, into a position where I was training them on safety and conflict sensitive journalism. Later I interviewed them as a secondary method in my research on ISIS media strategy. This helped to verify the discourses of these jihadis. I came to realize that those journalists had the power and agency to challenge the structure and doxa of the ISIS, and its attempts at controlling the journalistic field. In this way, they became the core of my current research. I am studying how the relationship between ISIS and journalism operated in ISIS controlled areas, and how the journalistic field influenced the journalists' safety and ethical

decision-making. My case study encompassed in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Egypt and Afghanistan.

When we support and value those courageous journalists who "dance with the wolves", we help guarantee that conflicts are covered and that speculations become enhanced or refuted with first hand factual reporting.

Notes

1. According to the Cambridge Dictionary explanation, a lone wolf terrorist is someone who prepares and commits violent acts alone, outside of any command structure and without material assistance from any group. However, he may be influenced or motivated by the ideology and beliefs of an external group and may act in support of such a group.
2. Al Qaeda is not the first radical Islamic group that has used media; the Lebanese Shia group 'Hezbollah' uses propaganda techniques through its media arms (Jorisch, 2004). Hezbollah is currently using these propaganda techniques in its war with ISIS.
3. A Youtube based campaign ISIS launched in the 19th of August 2014 by executing American journalist James Foley.
4. The seven propaganda devices produced by The Institute of Propaganda Analysis (IPA): 1) Naming or labelling others to create boundaries, 2) using glittering generalisation to urge the receiver to accept or reject ideas, 3) transfer of meaning by embedding the message with something respectable to make it acceptable, 4) using testimonies of persons to endorse or reject ideas, 5) using plain folks, which depends on claiming the receiver that the ideas represent the people, 6) card staking, which depends on utilising selective facts, visuals and statements to present an idea and, 7) band wagon, which is convincing the receiver that their entire group has adopted an idea and therefore they have to follow them.
5. The Caliph, the leader of ISIS. Declaration of the Caliphate means that followers should give oath to the Caliph and be ready to fight (Jihad).
6. John is James Foley's brother who serves in the USA army.
7. All the videos from the hostage campaign are kept as research data. Although the videos were deleted from many internet sites, they still exist on others. For ethical reasons the links are not shared here.
8. A Caliphate is an Islamic kingdom, ruled by a single religious and political leader. The only law is the Islamic law (Sharia). Yet, the Caliphate does not recognize the idea of a secular state. Here is the contradiction. ISIS call itself both names, according to whom it directs the discourse.
9. Edward Bernays (1928) introduced propaganda as a way to form public opinion. He talked about the minority using technologies and techniques to control the majority.
10. Founder of Al-Qaeda. In 2011, the American Navy killed Bin Laden and threw the body into the ocean.
11. I had this information confirmed again from an interviewee in my PhD research, who was in prison with Foley and the rest of the hostages.
12. Ibn Taymiyyah, (1263–1328), one of Islam most forceful theologians, who sought the return of the Islamic religion to its sources: the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, revealed writing and the prophetic tradition. He is also the source of the Wahhābiyyah, a

mid-18th-century traditionalist movement of Islam. More information retrieved from https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ibn-Taymiyyah [accessed 2019, February 4].

13. Lippman (1922) stresses that in forming public opinion, propagandists use peoples' pre-established beliefs and "stereotypes" and selective history to empower the propaganda message. Moreover, they use the confusion about land ownership and time realities. He presented the concepts of generalisation, summarisation, visualisation, and use of symbols.
14. For van Dijk (1998), some basic dimensions are shown through ideology: 1) membership characteristics of a group (religion, ethnicity, gender…etc.), 2) group actions, 3) group aims, 4) group values, 5) relations and position within society, 6) how the group manages resources.
15. Most Middle Eastern media prefer using the Arabic language acronym *Daesh*, avoiding mentioning ISIS's full name in Arabic. Acronyms are not common in Arabic and the name sounds odd and humiliating. Interviewees did the same to avoid recognising that this entity as an Islamic state.
16. *Inside the Islamic State* is a documentary produced by VICE News. Interviewee 1, filmmaker Medyan Dairieh spent three weeks embedded alone in Raqqa in June 2014, gaining unprecedented access into the heart of the self-proclaimed caliphate.
17. Kobane has been a battleground between ISIS militants and Kurdish fighters since September 2014, when ISIS fighters overran the small northern Syrian town, forcing almost all of its civilians to flee into Turkey.
18. Thompson (1990) called ideology the grand narrative.
19. Aboud, Interviewee 4 had to flee after ISIS kidnapped him. He crossed the borders to Turkey, then to Europe walking foot. He lives now as a refugee in Norway. "I was shocked when I saw this video. The ISIS executors forced my colleagues to hold explosive material that has been put in their equipment; laptops and cameras," said Aboud.
20. Mohamed Musawi, the real name of Jihadi John, was revealed to be a graduate of the same university where I did my masters in the United Kingdom. He was studying computer science.
21. Jihad, (holy war), is a religious duty imposed on Muslims among others to spread Islam by waging war; Jihad has come to denote any conflict waged for belief. More information retrieved from https://www.britannica.com/topic/jihad [accessed 2019, February 4].

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4. Transnational extremist recruitment through social media

Afshin Ismaeli

As early as 2002, Taliban leader Mullah Muhammad Omar received a letter from Osama bin Laden, who wrote, "It is obvious that the media war in this century is one of the strongest methods; in fact, its ratio may reach 90 per cent of the total preparation for the battles" (Awan, 2010).

Al-Qaeda was a forerunner and a central movement in the preparations for battle; and perhaps it was the first extremist organization to pursue the use of modern media tools to promote global jihadism. Unlike traditional Salafism, whose activity was confined to an area in Middle East and South-East Asia, modern or neo-Salafism is more globally active. Due largely to the revolution in communications and the development of social media movements, the world's neo-Salafism has advanced significantly.

Since media in the age of communication has the greatest effect on public opinion, they comprise one of the most important platforms for developing political, military, social and cultural goals. Supporting this view, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden's second in command, during the first jihadist insurgency in Iraq, wrote to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq on July 9, 2005: "We are in a battle, and more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Ummah" (Gerges, 2013).

By uploading grainy videos of his atrocities to the Internet, al-Zarqawi tried to gain the hearts and minds of Muslim communities across the

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globe and create an ideological stance aimed to humiliate, intimidate and cause fear.

In the last decade, many Salafi-jihadist groups have come to power in the region; without doubt, none of them has been as active in media sphere as the Islamic State (IS), also called *Daesh*. Neo-Salafists such as the IS have taken substantial advantage of the digital era. The Islamic State is called a digital caliphate (Atwan, 2016). IS applied a complex digital network to radicalize, recruit young men and women, instigate fear, and propagate terror.

IS' "Caliphate" leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi in a voice message urged Islamists: "I appeal to the youth and men of Islam around the globe and invoke them to mobilize and join us to consolidate the pillar of the state of Islam and wage jihad against the Rafidhas (Shia), the Safawis of Shi'ites" (New Delhi Times, 2015). But how does the Islamic State recruit through social media? How have these methods helped their cause? In what follows, I present some examples of the extra efforts which IS has utilized in propaganda.

This chapter is based on my observations of the activities of Islamic state members and families on Twitter, Facebook, Whatsapp and Telegram. I have also interviewed some Yazidi survivors who have been kidnapped by IS. I used a Facebook account to identify accounts that support and do propaganda for the Islamic State and try to communicate with them. I had the chance to meet more than one hundred Islamic State members (men and women) during my fieldwork. Qualitative interviews have been conducted over a period of three years journalistic work around Mosul, Raqqa, Baghdad, Al-Hol and Deir ez-Zour.

I analyze messages of terrorist groups and individuals on online platforms (Twitter and Facebook) in order to identify the communication strategies used to recruit people.

From Al Jazeera to independent jihadi media: "We make the news"

Compared to IS, Al-Qaeda's media strategy has been more methodical as it organizes and controls its digital terror cells and is more reliant on addresses by the leadership, reflecting its efforts to embed itself in local social fabrics with the aim of radicalization (IHS Economics and Country Risk, 2015).

During the first phase[1] known as "the awakening" of the jihadist insurgency, movements such as al-Qaeda relied mostly on TV channels like Al Jazeera and Al-Arabiya to disseminate its ideology, collect intelligence on potential targets, and communicate with sympathizers around the globe. These Arabic media houses became a confined distribution platform for insurgents. Every message and videotape that has been sent to those media channels went through different gates, which would edit material before airing it. However, Adam Gadahn[2], media advisor for Al-Qaeda, in a letter to Bin-Laden and al-Zawahiri called them to reach out to international digital media, rather than rely on Al-Jazeera and the jihadist forums: '[to] rely on Al-Jazeera and jihadist forums on the internet is not useful. Al-Jazeera seems to impose conditions like other channels' (Scaife, 2017: 41).

Jihadists were producing media in several languages other than Arabic and controlling the output of the media. IS was one of the first jihadi groups to begin following newer methods in Iraq and Syria. These included uploading finished videos and messages onto various websites, such as Youtube, and then disseminating addresses of these sites among followers on Internet forums. The use of extremely violent videos, depicting brutal acts, beheadings and torture of civilians, has become an instrument to project an image of invincibility aimed at potential recruits and affiliates, as well as aiming to intimidate potential forms of opposition (Maniculli, 2017).

Islamic State as a media conglomerate

Other terrorist organizations have also increasingly used social media platforms. However, according to Dilo Brusik, agent in the counter-terror and intelligence service of the Syrian democratic forces (SDF), the IS is more expertly equipped to control communication and social media in their own interest than is the al-Nusra Front (linked to Al Qaeda) and other radical Islamist groups here in Syria. Daesh has demonstrated a high degree of expertise in using modern communication technology, exploiting the Internet and social media with unparalleled marketing skills (Maniculli, 2017). Due to the broad usage of social media and Internet by IS, some experts consider the Internet as the virtual playground for extremist views, which are reinforced and encouraged through the maintenance of thematic echo chambers (Awan, 2017).

IS launched an official radio station, called *Al Bayan*, disseminating daily news, Furthermore, it has published a monthly magazine *Dabiq*, in many languages including English, as PDF. In addition, they launched an Internet TV channel, called *Amaq*, and a variety of production companies to develop videos.

In both Iraq and Syria, IS and its affiliates have used *Al-Hayat*, *Al-Furqan*, and *Al-Ethar* media centers as their centralized Information Ministry. IS controlled media offices in each of the Wilayats[3], maintaining tight control over all publications that have the function of official outlets, fulfilling multiple functions, from recruitment, to dissemination of ideology and tactics, to sowing fear and intimidation (Callimachi, 2016).

The regional media bureaus are media entities, which exist within the administrative structure of "provinces" or *wilayat* of the Islamic State. Products have been sent from the media entities to the main bureau in each *wilayat* media center in order to be verified and published.

These different media centers have used social media outlets like Youtube, Twitter, and Facebook, in addition to certain websites and radio stations, to disseminate their ideology. Aisha Shezadi, a Norwegian radicalized woman who lived in Al-Shadadi, a town in North-Eastern Syria mentioned the media center of Al-Shadadi town as highly active. She reported that these centers used to accumulate information, produce videos and propaganda. At the end, the videos and information produced by these centers have been spread to thousands of online sympathizers across the world through unofficial accounts that appear to be under the IS umbrella.

Technology revolutions and social media helped free terrorists from depending upon mainstream media. To repeat, the Islamic State, right from the announcement of the caliphate, started its activities on social and other media in order to inspire public opinion and recruit people. They have demonstrated a high degree of expertise in using technology and communication platforms, exploiting the Internet and social media in their interest. Furthermore, Caliphate soldiers have demonstrated considerable competence in terms of communication qualities, mastering social media and the internet, especially in terms of video production, updating their followers, as well as published an enormous amount of documentation.

Additionally, some foreign fighters with the permission from the IS information ministry were actively publishing propaganda works on social media platforms. Abu Hamza Somal, an Islamic State jihadist, regularly published propaganda messages on Twitter (see below). The aim of individual jihadists was to target people who do not have access to the media outputs of the Caliphate, or reach out, for purposes of recruitment, to individuals with whom they had no concrete ties.

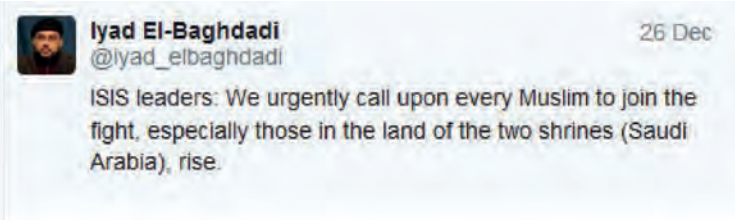
Screenshot of tweets by Abu Hamza As Somaal (IS, nickname) who urges and invites Muslims to join jihad [accessed January 3, 2017]

Videos, tweets and reports are recorded and written in different languages so that their messages reach maximum audiences throughout the world. In other words, the new jihadists no longer need a central point of command, since they operate as a "virtual Islamic network".

In a study on social media in this context, Klausen (2015) argues that social media are used for purposes of recruitment and indoctrination, as well as to build a transnational community of violent extremism. Essentially, social media provide a potential platform to extremists, and they allow them to communicate directly and briefly with their audiences.

Contradictory behaviour

The Islamic State (IS) group has actively been using social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Youtube for three reasons: (1) by publishing videos of beheading and mass killings, they have tried to inspire



Screenshot of IS Recruitment and Propaganda in Cyberspace [accessed December 29, 2016]

terror and fear. As Abu-Bakr Naji wrote in his book, *The Management of Savagery* (that would become the Islamic state's blueprint) wrote the "[e]scaping and fleeing" of infidels "happens when there is the killing of a large number of people along with good media propaganda and also good media justification" (Naji, 2006: 193). (2) Further, publishing and disseminating their advancements and conquests, has helped inform people of their major activities. (3) They actively report some of their humanitarian activities which are totally in contradiction with their two other actions. With this dual and contradictory behaviour, on one hand, they try to demonstrate their power, on the other hand, they try to obtain a relative popularity among people in the Muslim world to recruit, radicalize and raise funds.

To pursue their aim, IS has moved their online presence away from the traditional media, to an interactive social media technology, in which they approach audiences and start a linear communication. According to Weimann (2014), social networking allows terrorists to reach out to their target audiences and virtually "knock on their doors" – in contrast to older models of websites in which terrorists had to wait for visitors to come to them.

Recruiters therefore may use more interactive communication to contact audiences and militants located outside the war zone. Klausen (2015: 20) claims that sympathizers can be reached "directly and amplified by the echo chamber of lateral duplication across multiple platforms at low cost. A handful of hyper-active online activists can quickly and at low cost distribute massive amounts of material."

According to a Brookings Institute study, at the end of 2014, Daesh supporters controlled about 45,000 social media accounts (Berger &

Morgan, 2015). The success of IS's communication strategy is further demonstrated, by its high number of recruits, not only in Iraq and Syria, but also in other places in the world. A study by Efraim Benmelech and Esteban F. Klor shows that the number of Westerners fighting alongside ISIS in Syria and Iraq could number in the thousands, thanks in large part to Twitter and Facebook, and this scares the West (Benmelech & Klor, 2016).

Targeting new generations

Former President of the United States, Barack Obama, described some of IS's strategies in a speech delivered in February 2015: "The high-quality videos, the online magazines, the use of social media, terrorist Twitter accounts – it's all designed to target today's young people online, in cyberspace" (Gilsinan, 2015).

Younger segments of the population have always been more vulnerable to IS propaganda. Alienation of young Muslims in the west provides a large recruitment opportunity for extremist groups. IS has shown the ability to use the media and all propaganda tools as it aims to convince very young recruits to travel to its Caliphate and take part in combat operations. In order to radicalize and create a new generation of cyber jihadists, IS used different media tools to fight an online cyber war.

By closely observing media activities in the West, IS tried to play a big role, targeting young boys and girls of migrant backgrounds with their propaganda activities. According to the Iraqi intelligence service, the age of most recruits is from 14 to 35. A study conducted by Maura Conway and Lisa McInerney (2008) analyzed the online supporters of jihad-promoting video content on Youtube, focusing on those posting and commenting on material promoting martyrdom originating from Iraq. According to this study, most of the users are under the age of 35 and reside outside the Middle East and North Africa, many in Europe.

Recruiters target their victims, and most of the time they capture them in a very short time. In most cases, this study showed that to recruit young boys and girls, IS targeted and approached each individual and contacted them via social media. Usually, a recruiter with his own or a fake name contacted targeted persons, telling them about their "happiness" after joining IS and asks them to join the "rightness and

truthiness" front. Mancuilli (2015) claims that youngsters have been targeted through images and the streaming of those professionally edited violent online videos which since have gone viral. Portraying a glamorized and "cool" image IS fighters began to act as the new "rock stars" of global cyber jihad.

Changing hearts and minds

The dissemination of violent videos displaying executions and torture represents a type of marketing strategy that addresses the emotional needs of violence-inclined individuals, thus creating a sense of belonging to the group and ultimately making the younger recruits more likely to accept IS's appeals and ideology (Mancuilli, 2015: 10). They might even have made it seem more desirable and thrilling to be in Mosul and Raqqa than to sit comfortably, and somewhat boringly, at home: "Put down your controllers stop playing call of duty on Play station 4, go to Islamic State and headshot some real enemies of Islam. You will enjoy it more", tweeted Kashmiri Tweep, an IS foreign fighter.

Screenshot of a tweet by Kashmiri tweep. [accessed May 15, 2015]

IS also created a video game called "Salil al-Sawarem" (which means 'the clanging of the words'), hinting at the real video game Grand Theft Auto (GTA) to attract more attention and recruits. In general, the main target of such video games has been young people.

The players' key targets are American and Iraqi soldiers. The game's cover reads: "Your games are produced by you, but we have the same

Screenshot of the IS video game trailer Text in Arabic: It heals the souls of the believers. [accessed December 29, 2015]

actions in the battlefields!" In other words, IS's version of the game includes all tactics and barbaric methods that they have been using against their video-game opponents. It has a harsh and violent language, and you can hear "Allah wa Akbar" (God is Great) while the player kills and beheads opponents.

On the other hand, IS also released sympathetic and complimentary images by showing its humanitarian side, such as controlling markets, helping elderly people, assisting in social life or organizing life in those cities they controlled. Some also show fighters relaxing, swimming, eating, and playing with cats. James Farwell (2014: 50) claims that these "warmer images aim to communicate the message that, while strictly Islamic; ISIS stands for promoting the welfare of people, not murdering them".

Many of the online chats between younger extremists are infused with fun; they sound sexy and adventurist. Marc Sageman (2008) states that this form of interaction and chat rooms helps build ideological rela-

Screenshot of IS propaganda on twitter, which shows jihadists having fun. Text in Arabic: The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. [accessed May 15, 2015]

tionships and is a key tool in radicalizing young people. Young people become curious and are attracted to the prospect of a new life in the "Caliphate" territories: How is the normal daily life in the Caliphate? Does the Islamic State sell Nutella in Raqqa? Gym equipment? How do they charge their mobile phones? Those were among the questions raised in one such chat room.

Jihadists also have online live programs for mobilizing and recruiting women. "Ask a Sister" is a weekly Q&A Islamic show where the student of Islamic knowledge, Mualima Maseeha Saloojee, answers questions, which have been posted by men and women on Facebook. The show is aired directly from Syria. It tries to explain how happy women are in the territory with sharia laws and are promised a perfect life in a religious outfit.

Screenshot from twitter: "Abu Muthanna" holding a jar of Nutella pictured in a store in Syria (from @ GuyVan- Vlierden). [accessed March 28, 2017]

Many women are influenced by the social media activity of those who have already joined IS, and their online activities on social media try to attract more people by showing Caliphate life to be fun, comfortable and pleasant. They document their life and tell stories of how happy they are, post pictures of their beautiful houses, children, food, and cats. This they do on social media. In this way, they try to show Muslims

Screenshot: "Ask a Sister" Facebook page. [accessed April 17, 2018]

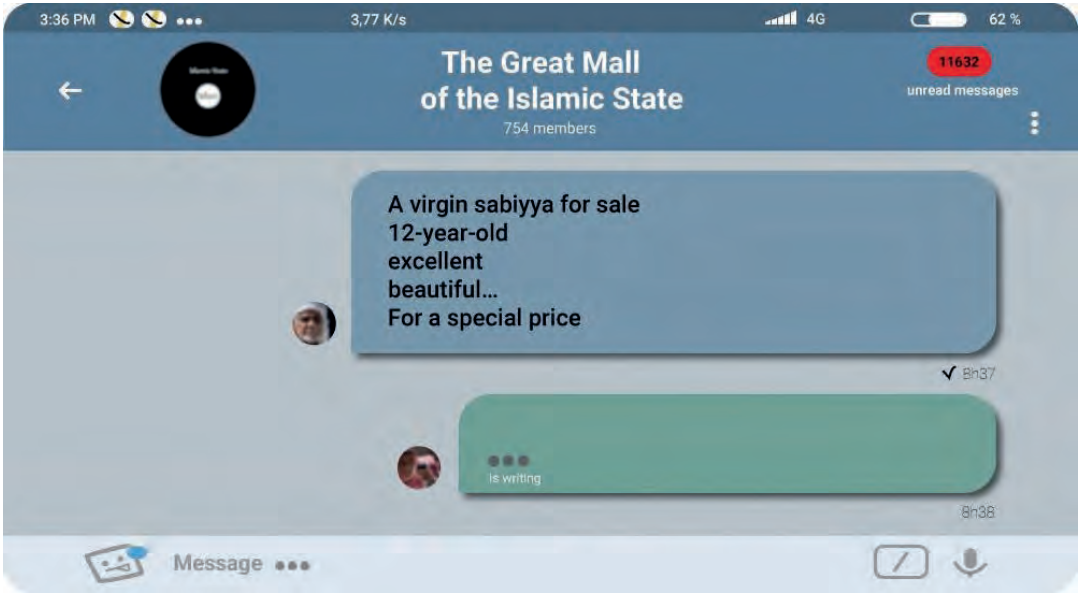
across the world a truly Islamic society built on Islamic sharia law, and persuade others to immigrate to the Islamic State. Some of the girls travel from the West to meet militants they have encountered online.

Aisha Shezadi (26), a Norwegian extremist, was radicalized as a teenager. She explains her journey to Syria, as having started with social media and having watched videos from Syria and Iraq. "I was convinced to travel to Syria by watching videos showing suffering in Syria" she said. She later started chatting directly via Facebook and Whatsapp with other Norwegians who went to Syria. "Those who already travelled to Syria told me how they live, about their houses, medical help and food. I asked the questions and they answered me." In the beginning, she did not believe what they said. "When I arrived, it was much better than what I have been told."[4] In order to immigrate to Syria, she was told by Bastian Vasquez, a Norwegian IS fighter, that she must first marry him. She decided to do so via Whatsapp to obtain the holy pass to the Islamic State. However, she found out later that it was not true and she did not need to marry a fighter to get there. Nazle, a young Kurdish woman from Iran, had been promised a better life through chatting with one of her relatives who had already joined the Islamic State. After she came to IS, she said that she had found it interesting. Thousands of young women and men in the West left their homes and their families to join IS (Benmelech & Klor, 2016) to find a new life and experience what had been promised by recruiters.[5]

Social media as a sex bazaar

Young people were attracted by the prospect of a new and better life, which has been promised by the Islamic state. Temporary marriages and having *Sabaya* (sex slaves) were a new and interesting practice and promise for young male extremists around the world. Islamic state recruiters attracted attention and enticed possible victims by publishing a series of videos of how IS jihadists were buying and selling Yazidi women as sex slaves.

IS used its propaganda media, social media and magazines to justify the possession of sex slaves. By referring to the Quran, and quotes from the Muslim prophet in their publications, jihadis have tried to expand sex slavery. Yazidi minorities were the main target in this media campaign. In an article entitled "Revival of Slavery before the Hour",

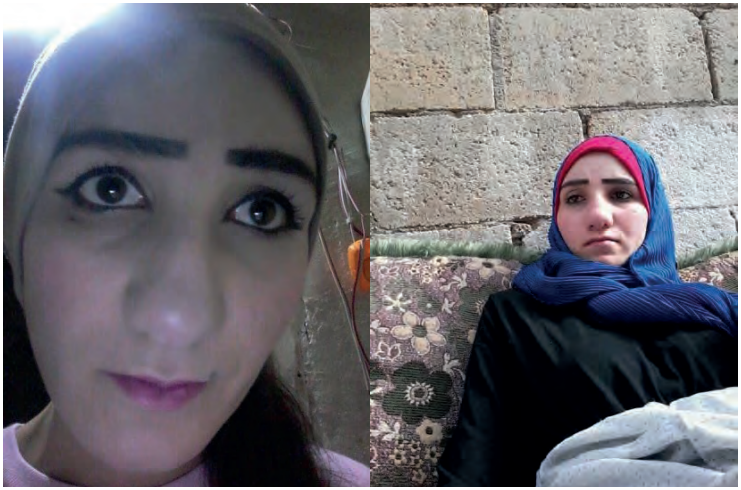


Screenshot: A document of selling Yazidi girls in "The Great Mall of the Islamic State" social media network which was published by Nobel prize laureate 2018, Nadia Murad. [accessed December 20, 2018]

published in October 2014, they claim it is done as a duty of Islam. The article targets Yazidis and considers them as offspring of the devil. They do not belong to people of the scripture (Islam, Judaism or Christianity and therefore, according to IS's interpretation of Islam, it is justifiable to kill their men and keep the women as war booty (Sabaya).

One of the videos that went viral in social media and Youtube[6] shows young men sitting and joking about women slaves. "Today is slave market day", says one. "Today is distribution day, God willing". The men tease a fighter who appears to be very young. "Can you handle one?" they ask, as he laughs. The man in the video mentions beautiful Yazidi girls for sale if the young guy can handle her. Islamic State jihadists published many such videos and pictures.

For jihadists, social media became a platform for buying and selling sex slaves, and at the same time, attracting younger radicals from all over the world to join the jihad. Sherihan (18) who was a sex slave and abused sexually by Islamic state, described how Facebook has been used by Islamic State fighters to buy and sell Yazidi women. "I had to prepare



Sherihan was adorned by the "owner" when he wanted to sell her. Here, there is an "owner" in Mosul who took a picture and posted it on Facebook. Someone who knew Sherihan saw the picture on Facebook and shared it with the family. (Permission has been granted by Sherihan herself to the author).

myself and put on make-up. Then I had to walk through a room full of IS fighters".[7] If fighters did not buy her immediately, the owner took a photo of her and put it on Facebook: She is for sale. IS fighters were taking Sheridan's photos multiple times and published them in social media. She was sold ten times in three years, before she escaped after the fall of Mosul.

Conclusion

The widespread presence of jihadists on social media is a remarkable feature. This study tries to show the vital importance, for leaders of extremist groups, of engaging in, and recruiting militants through social media. By using and moderating different social media platforms, jihadists are communicating with their followers and sympathizers, recruiting new members from across the world and providing training materials. Such platforms are the fastest, easiest, cheapest and most effective communication methods.

Islamic State and other jihadist groups have also used savagery and fear as a media strategy. Abu-Bakr Naji (2006: 50) wrote that jihadists

depend on a brutal "media strategy targeting and focusing on the masses, in order to push a large number of them to join the jihad, offer positive support, and adopt a negative attitude toward those who do not join the ranks".

The propaganda and media strategy of IS has been successfully present both in social media platforms and international news. The media techniques employed by jihadists succeeded in gaining an increasing number of foreign recruits, yet their recent military and territorial losses have clearly affected their strategy and influence.

The military defeat has damaged IS's propaganda machine. Its social media present fewer items than at any time during the past three years. A study conducted by Wired magazine, which focuses on technology and its effects on culture, politics and economics, shows how the rate of ISIS's content creation has fallen dramatically in the past two years, from almost 900 uploads in August 2015 to just over 100 in November 2017.

The Caliphate's media house concentrated mostly on producing military propaganda and giving military updates to its followers and enemies, maintaining that they were still on the ground. In August 2015, the majority of Islamic State's propaganda focused on promoting life under the Caliphate as a utopia. In 2018–2019, more than 90 per cent of ISIS media output is about war (Winter, 2017).

The loss of territories and resources, struck a blow to Islamic State's media network. In recent weeks, during the fighting's in Baghuz and after the fall of Baghuz, the last stronghold of Islamic State, IS's propaganda has been operating very weakly. That can be seen by the low level of activity on Internet sites, social media and low quality of its media products, both verbally and visually. The last video published by IS before they lost the last territory 21 March 2019, was about fighting in Baghuz (Jihadology, 2019). Most of the clips used in their propaganda in this period are taken from other international agencies. IS media network published two visual releases in March 2019 and zero in February, while at the same time in 2015 they published up to 800 visual releases (Milton, 2018). Jihadi networks in other countries have also been less active, and produce a smaller amount of propaganda.

The fall of Islamic state in March 2019 does not indicate the end of the group's ability to produce propaganda, nor is it an indicator of the final decline of their social media activities. The Islamic State has

been destroyed geographically, but according to recent reports from Iraq, their options to continue by way of their insurgent roots even after battlefield defeats are still there. IS jihadists have already started their propaganda in social media, by publishing eight visual releases in January 2019, regarding their insurgent activities in Iraq (Jihadology, 2019). Thus, it seems social media is going to play an important role for IS as it tries to reorganize and recruit new generations of jihadists in Iraq and Syria.

There are also indications that the group's leaders, after losing all territory in Iraq and Syria, are looking to shift their main efforts and the main front of their jihad to Afghanistan. There have been military operations in Afghanistan by Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISKP) jihadists and they gained control of some districts in Nangarhar Province, bordering on Pakistan. According to afghan intelligence officials, at the end of 2016, Afghans fighting for the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq started to move back to Afghanistan after requests by ISKP leaders for more support to train and recruit new people (Johnson, 2016). In order to expand their capabilities and recruit more people, ISKP appealed to IS leaders requesting Arab trainers. However, although some experts believe that ISKP strength is exaggerated, and the dominance of Taliban in Afghanistan is clear, the Islamic State propaganda effects should not be underestimated. IS has become a historical culture for their followers. IS propaganda products (anthem, video clips, songs, images) and symbols (clothing, black flag and headbands) are circulating in social media among young Afghans.

Notes

1. This was supposed to have lasted from 2000 to 2003, or more precisely from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 in New York and Washington to the fall of Baghdad in 2003.
2. Gadahn is an American convert to Islam who appears as an al-Qaeda spokesman toward the West. He was charged with treason in the United States in October 2006 for his propaganda activities with al-Qaeda.
3. Arabic word for an administrative division, usually translated as "state", "province".
4. Interviewed 2018, June 18 by the author.
5. Author's own field observations
6. ISIS militants speak about taking yazidi girls. Youtube. November 11, 2014. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJHW-xQ4XgE [accessed 2018, October 02].
7. Interviewed 2018, April 16 by the author.

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5. Indonesia: When civil society, government and islamists collide

Ade Armando

In early March 2018, the Indonesian police announced they had uncovered a clandestine fake news operation called the Muslim Cyber Army (MCA). This organization was said to have been designed to corrupt the political process and destabilize the government of Indonesia (Lamb, 2018). In a simultaneous action, the police arrested 14 members of the syndicate who lived in separate regions of Indonesia. MCA is a network of dozens of Facebook groups, which routinely produce various posts, photos and memes about Indonesia, which are then also distributed through chat apps like Whatsapp and Telegram. Those arrested claimed that they operate MCA to defend Islam in Indonesia, and there were no masterminds and donors behind them.

These active members of the MCA network were arrested for allegedly violating the Information and Electronic Transaction Act UU ITE (Undang-undang Informasi dan Transaksi Elektronik). This Act prohibits Indonesians from using the internet for spreading hate speech, blasphemy and defamation. The police revealed how MCA continuously produces contemptuous content against the President and the Government, hoaxes about the revival of communism, hate speech to inflame religious and ethnic schisms while supporting radical Islamist leaders and groups in Indonesia. Some of the content can be considered very rude according to Indonesian standards, such as equating the President and his family with animals. According to the police, the MCA team also has cyber troops – including fake accounts,

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buzzers and bot machines – which are capable of attacking Facebook accounts of any public figures they deem to be threatening Islam.

The police claimed that the aims of the MCA are political. The MCA is part of the larger movement of Islamist groups, which regard President Jokowi's government as a threat to Islam. The government's decisive action is not only aimed at MCA since, in 2017–2018, police also prosecuted a number of social media activists, based on views they had published on Facebook or Twitter. In 2017, a famous cleric, Rizieq Shihab, was even forced to flee abroad due to several police charges, including an alleged involvement in an obscene Whatsapp chat with his girlfriend.

This chapter addresses a central dilemma faced by Indonesia, a country that in the last 20 years has sought to promote democratization, part of which includes a guaranteed protection of free expression. Pro-democracy supporters now face the dilemma of reassessing the strength of their resolve when it comes to protecting the rights of citizens.

Furthermore, the focus is on the government's strong measures regarding the utilization of social media by the so-called Islamists. The main concern, according to some, is the Islamists. Woodward argues that these measures target "those parties which advocate implementation of sharia either through legislation or persuasion" (Woodward, 2008), or according to Berman (2003) those who "believe that Islam should guide social and political as well as personal life".

Islamist groups are at the center of attention for two major reasons. First, they are among the groups whose members most benefit from the liberalization of the flow of information in Indonesia, a process, which started following the beginning of the reform era (the post-New Order era).[1] Secondly, they are among the most active users of the new communication and information technology, precisely to promote the type of political campaign, which raises doubts about the importance of freedom of expression in Indonesia.

The birth of freedom of expression

The era of press freedom in Indonesia did not begin until after the fall of Suharto's government in 1998. During President Suharto's period in office (1967-1998), his regime suppressed the rights of the people and the media to voice their true aspirations. Bitterly, people learned that

without the freedom of speech, Suharto gradually developed into a corrupt authoritarian ruler. At the height of his "glory", President Suharto was named the most corrupt president in the world by Transparency International (Denny, 2004).

Against this background, and in the era of *reformasi* (Reformation) after Suharto's fall, civil society groups began to pressure the new parliament and government to open a space in society for press freedom and freedom of expression. At that time, there was a very optimistic belief that Indonesia should follow the example of advanced democracies; that is, countries which allow people to speak openly in a free marketplace of ideas. In this tradition, the belief is that the government's role in the information flow is kept to a minimum. According to this paradigm, the dominant discourse among lawmakers is that, given democratic conditions, individuals should be allowed to speak freely. This will constitute a self-correction process that protects the public interest; conversely, restricting public speaking space only brings detrimental effects to society as a whole (Hidayat, 2000).

This spirit is strongly reflected in the amendments to the Indonesian Constitution. There are a number of articles within this amendment, which explicitly guarantee freedom of expression, referring to Article 19 and Article 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948. Article 28F, The Amendment of the Constitution, states: "Every person shall have the right to communicate and obtain information to develop his/her personal and social environment, and shall have the right to seek, obtain, possess, store, process and convey information using all available channels". Article 28J (2) of the Amendment of the Constitution states:

> In exercising their rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject to the restrictions laid down by law with the sole intent of ensuring the recognition and respect for the rights and freedom of others and of satisfying just demands in accordance with moral judgment, religious values, security, and public order in a democratic society.

The amendment of the Constitution was perceived as a very significant change from the original 1945 Constitution, which provided minimal defense of civil and political rights. Furthermore, based on the Amendment to the Constitution, Indonesia then introduced a

number of laws, which guarantee freedom of the press and expression. One of the most important acts of legislation was the Press Law (1999). In that law, lawmakers remove from government the authority to close down media establishments or censor media content, as well as abolishing requirements for press licenses, eliminating governmental authority to limit the number of media firms which can operate in the Indonesian market, eliminating governmental authority to limit the number of pages and the percentage of advertisements, and eliminating the obligation that journalists become members of a single union of journalists headed by a government-sanctioned figure. This Act even contains threats against any party, which hampers the work of journalists. The birth of the Act has not only contributed greatly to print media in Indonesia, which has grown rapidly since 1999, but has simultaneously contributed to strengthening the role of the media as a watchdog throughout Indonesia over corrupt governments, parliaments and judiciary institutions (Steele, 2018).

Another important law is the Broadcasting Act (2002) which removes from existence government television and radio stations. These were subsequently transformed into public broadcasters. This law also no longer delegates power of control to the government, but to the "supposedly" independent body, named the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (Armando, 2006).

In another development, Indonesia's Constitutional Court in 2006 even declared a decision that decriminalized insults against the president and vice president. In July 2007, the same court declared unconstitutional Articles of the Penal Code, which criminalized "public expression of feelings of hostility, hatred, or contempt toward the government" (Freedom House, 2008).

Of course, it should be noted that the Indonesian press freedom was not in the path toward what was coined by Karle Nordenstreng as ultra-libertarian version of Media Freedom where there is an absence of state control (Nordenstreng, 2013). For example, in response to the flow of pornography, Indonesia passed the Pornography Act in 2008 (Sen, 2012). However, this law does not prohibit all types of pornography circulating in Indonesia. Total nudity, violent sex and child pornography were forbidden; but the media distribution of photos of women wearing bikinis or swimsuits in sexy positions, as well as non-excessive

sex scenes are still permitted in certain places. Similarly, the Film Law – although recognizing the presence of censorship agencies – no longer prohibits filmmakers from entering politically and culturally sensitive areas. Briefly, it can be said that restrictions on the flow of information have remained in place, but not to an extent, which repressed the rights of citizens to voice opinions, exercise control over the government or express their artistic aspirations.

All these developments initially made Indonesia appear as an example of a successful democratic country seen to be applying the principle of freedom of expression. Beginning in 2002, Freedom House has included a special section on Indonesian Press Freedom in its annual report. In its first report on Indonesia, Freedom House wrote: "the private press, freed from Suharto-era controls, reports aggressively on government policies, corruption and other formerly taboo subjects" (Freedom House, 2002). Other Institution, *Reporters Without Borders* (RSF) in 2002 published their first World Press Freedom Index (RSF, 2002) and gave Indonesia the highest ranking in comparison with other Southeast Asian Countries. Indonesia ranked 57th, above Thailand (66th), Philippines (89th), Malaysia (110th), and Brunei (111th).

Then an important development took place. All this new freedom of expression was utilized not only by civil society whose various bodies consistently fight for democracy, but also by religious groups whose ideology is completely contrary to democracy; that is, the Islamist groups which for decades were marginalized by the Sukarno and Suharto governments. However, in the reform era these groups suddenly had room to express their aspirations openly in society. Furthermore, not only did they gain the freedom to speak, they also had new communication and information technologies, which have allowed them to spread their Islamist ideas to a wider audience, and at an unprecedented scale. Thus, the dilemma of freedom of expression surfaced.

The Islamists

Understanding Islamists in Indonesia cannot be understood without taking into account the long history of Islam and its ties to politics in the country. Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world. About 87 per cent of the Indonesian population (appr. 260 million) are Muslim. Nevertheless, Indonesia remains a politically secular country.

Islam is an important factor, but its teachings have never been a single or major reference in Indonesian politics.

On the other hand, efforts to make Islam the basis of the state have existed since the birth of Indonesia, when Islamic groups tried to include the article "the obligation to implement Islamic law for every Muslim" in the preamble of the 1945 Constitution (Hosen, 2005). However, the initiative was thwarted because most of the founders of the country at that time believed that the choice of being a pluralist country is far more important than being a country dedicated to a particular religion.

The presence of movements, which seek to establish an Islamic state, is a repetitive feature of Indonesian history. Although the idea of Islamism failed to be included in the Indonesian Constitution, the ideals of establishing an Islamic state have never disappeared. During several periods in Indonesian history these efforts even involved armed and violent acts, although they were always be defeated by the central government. Moreover, it should be noted that it was this aspiration of the establishment of an Islamic state, which encouraged the birth of Islamic groups capable of carrying out a number of terror attacks in various cities in Indonesia throughout the first ten years of reform. Nevertheless, what has been more prominent is the effort to build the power of political Islam in a non-violent way. Throughout the history of Indonesia, various Islamic political parties have been present on stage to fight for parliamentary seats. However, except in the first elections (1955), Islamic political parties never gained a dominant vote. To some extent, this reflects the importance of Islam's position in the lives of Indonesian citizens: the people of Indonesia may be known to be devoted enough to perform ritual worship, but not enthusiastic about the discourse that religion should regulate all aspects of human life.

In the New Order (1967–1998), the Suharto government firmly denied Islamists a space to develop their political agenda, except in the last years of his rule as he sought to build new alliances (Liddle, 1996). The concept of an Islamic state, in the eyes of the Suharto government, was just as bad as the concept of a communist state. At times, wearing the hijab in schools and workplaces was prohibited. Suharto controlled Islamist groups in various ways: co-optation, infiltration, reorganization and, if necessary, armed action. In the first general election during the

New Order (1971), there were four Islamic parties. However, in 1973, the government forced them to merge into one single Islamic party: PPP (United Development Party).

The space for political Islam opened somewhat after the fall of Suharto, and Indonesia underwent democratization in the reform era. During the New Order period there were only three political parties fighting in Indonesia, however, since 1999, the number of political parties, which participated in the elections, was always more than ten. As already explained, the Islamic political parties have always suffered absolute defeat by the presence of secular parties, but this does not mean that political Islam faded away. As has been argued by Tanuwidjaja (2010), Islam has penetrated the dominant nationalist and secular based parties such that the Islamic parties were not the lone channel for Islamic aspirations. The fact that almost all parties have accommodated religious aspirations and shied away from criticizing controversial religious issues shows the strength of religious influence in Indonesian politics today.

The development of these Islamists, by some observers, is referred to as the "conservative turn" (Van Bruinessen, 2011). Indonesian Islam, which was once celebrated by the West as a tolerant society gradually had to give some space for a conservative line of interpretation, which embraces a type of exclusive Islam. This Islamism seems to be driven by disenfranchised Muslims who share the ideological roots with the Islamic State of Indonesia (NII) founded in 1949 (Rakhmani, 2016). In general, the aim of these groups is to build an Islamic state based on Islamic law. They believe they must fight for the enforcement of Islamic doctrines as commanded by Allah through the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad. In the Islamist perspective, Allah sent the Qur'an as a complete guide to how to organize life in all regions: politics, social, economic and cultural. Therefore, for them it is the obligation of every Muslim on earth to fight for the teachings of Islam as contained in the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet. This does not mean that the struggle must resort to violence, but these groups may still dream of Islamizing the whole world, including Indonesia.

In the eyes of these Islamists, while Islam is no longer seen as the enemy of the state, Indonesia continues to be under the influence of the "infidels". In their view, the world has been plunged into a modern-era

crusade, where the oppression of Muslims is not being accomplished through militaristic means but is instead by cultural, economic, political and educational means.

The growth of these Islamists was also supported by external forces. Since the 1990s, Indonesia has been the focus of a Wahhabistic campaign from Saudi Arabia (Varagus, 2017). This campaign seeks to purify Indonesians' interpretations of Islam to be in line with conservative views in Saudi Arabia. The Saudis' funding had been channeled for the development of religious schools, scholarships for students seeking to enter educational institutions in Saudi Arabia, distribution of religious books and other printed material, the building of mosques, hospitals, orphanages, and also financial aid to religious leaders (von der Mehden, 2014).

This development brought significant changes in the case of Islam in Indonesia. Since the beginning of the country's Reformation, without strict state supervision, in various parts of Indonesia, one can clearly find the presence of Islamization in cultural, social, and economic areas. The examples vary, from the growing Muslim fashion industry, hijab, halal foods, to the Islamic banks, Islamic schools, NGOs, and preachers who propagate the Islamist doctrines (Rakhmani, 2016).

However, while on the one hand, some of the developmental elements of the *Reformasi* era were very well adapted to modernization in Indonesia, this special Islamist trend undoubtedly has caused tensions in Indonesian society. Whereas the two, major traditional Muslim organizations – Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah – are well known for their non-exclusive and tolerant orientation, these new Islamist groups were actually pushing the movement towards homogenization of the Islamic Ummah to pursue Islamization of Indonesia.

Inevitably, the spirit of Islamization was sometimes manifested in forms of intolerance, which invite violent responses (Fealy, 2004). Fealy wrote, "Of all the images generated by Indonesia after the downfall of Suharto in 1998, those of radical Islam have been perhaps the most vivid and enduring" (2004: 104).

After generations of peaceful co-existence, in the past decade members of the minority Islamic groups of the Ahmadiyya and Shi'a movements in Indonesia have experienced attacks in a number of regions. The same can be said about the Christians who in various places

were prohibited from building churches. Radical Muslim groups such as the Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI) were not hesitant to use violence (or the threat of violence) to achieve their ideals. FPI gained its popularity by its thuggish-style acts, such as attacking restaurant, which continued to sell food during Ramadan, attacking those clubs selling alcohol, or attacking Islamic pluralist groups who defend the Ahmadiyah.

In the first 15 years of reform, this Islamist movement could thrive, encouraged by the government's soft stance, or its activities were even to a certain degree "facilitated" by the security forces. In 2011, WikiLeaks noted that FPI groups were actually established as an "attack dog" by the police to confront groups of thugs (Jakarta Globe, 2011). However, more importantly, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) – a Javanese Muslim – who ruled for ten years (2004–2014) seemed to let the process of Islamization run, as long as these Islamists supported and defended the SBY government (Scott, 2016). As a result, although compared to Islamic countries in the Middle East and West Asia (such as Pakistan and Bangladesh), Islam in Indonesia still appears to be moderate in style. Inevitably, the symptoms of conservatism also appear to be gaining strength.

Under SBY, Islamists increasingly gained important positions in public office, in educational institutions, and religious establishments, both locally and nationally. The conservative Muslim leaders were increasingly influential at the grassroots level. Islamists preachers also took over the position of traditional Ulama of NU and Muhammadiyah in mosques throughout Indonesia. This has all been taking place as the Muslim middle class in Indonesia also begins to feel the spirit of a rebirth of Islam.

The Jokowi factor

It can be said that the political condition during the Reformation era has caused Islamists to have high expectations about the realization of Islamization of Indonesia, a dream they have harboured since the birth of Indonesia at the end of colonial period. Proponents of this struggle do not consider their ascendancy necessarily to come through Islamic political parties but rather to arise through the internalization of Islamic values in all strategic institutions in Indonesia.

Unfortunately for them, the scenario of Islamization of Indonesia suddenly came to a halt when in 2014, a simple businessman from Solo named Jokowi rose to seize the reins of the presidency. Unlike previous presidents, Jokowi is an ordinary citizen. He has a Javanese Muslim background and was supported by a nationalist party that has always been accused of being anti-Islam, the PDIP. He was popular because of his previous success as the leader of a small town called Solo. Jokowi is also known to live a simple and people-oriented life.

The presence of Jokowi threatened the whole scenario of Islamization in Indonesia. After his inauguration, Jokowi pursued a policy agenda that sought to distance Indonesia from the Islamists. In June 2014, in an official event held by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, Jokowi said that his government would rely on an interpretation of Islam known as Islam Nusantara [Indonesian-style Islam]. In an interview with BBC, Jokowi said that Islam Nusantara would be a force to counter the spread of radical and militant Islam. "Islam Nusantara is a friendly Islam […] inclusive and tolerant", Jokowi said. Furthermore, he confirmed that Islam in Indonesia spreads "with a closeness to the local culture, not with an inflexible doctrine" (Affan, 2015).

Jokowi then appointed Lukman Hakim Saifuddin as the Minister of Religion, a man known for his pluralist positions who has taken steps to promote diversity and religious tolerance (Njoto-Feilard, 2015). For example, he authorized the recitation of *Al-Quran* in Javanese and other local languages.

Jokowi seems to be very confident in his steps due to the widespread support he enjoys. At the beginning of his administration (2014), he was plagued with problems, mostly stemming from internal and external political conflict. However, towards the end of 2017, he stood on increasingly solid ground. A survey conducted by Saiful Mujani Research and Consulting (SMRC) in September 2017, showed that Jokowi's public support was increasing. If in October 2015, only 53 percent of Indonesians were satisfied with Jokowi's performance, in September 2017, that figure has increased to 68 per cent (SMRC, 2017). In May 2018, Indo Barometer found the similar result. It showed that 65 per cent of Indonesians were satisfied with Jokowi's performance (Rachman, 2018).

Jokowi's progress is bad news for those groups, which hope to establish an Islamic State; Jokowi's strength undercuts any hopes they might have had. The Islamists – who have been slowly consolidating forces in the first 15 years of reform – see that Indonesia under Jokowi is consolidating its reputation as a country, which values diversity and pluralism and rejects sectarianism and exclusivism.

With Jokowi's proven record of accomplishment of success in leading the government, the Islamists opted for a communication strategy directed at religious and ethnic sentiments to delegitimize him (Kapoor, 2018). Islamists painted the Jokowi administration as anti-Islam, and Jokowi himself as a leader under influence from the United States, as well as from Christians, Jews, Chinese, or even Communists. Some even labeled his government as the devil.

This propaganda has caused Jokowi and his government difficulties since he came to power. Since the beginning of his leadership, attacks against him have continued mainly from opposition groups and Islamists. In this war, the Islamist camps have used all possible social media platforms allowed to them by the freedom of expression granted by the constitution.

The Islamists and media

The use of modern media as the means for spreading the Islamists' agenda is a recent phenomenon in the Reformation. In the New Order, the government severely restricted the birth of Islamist print media. If there was a newspaper or Islamic magazine, its contents were tightly controlled so as not to endanger and contradict the spirit of Indonesian pluralism. Islamists groups no longer feel such restrictions after the New Order.

Once democratization began, Islamist groups immediately took advantage of this openness. With no requirement for state licenses, various groups easily developed print media specifically targeted at Muslim readers. Its content was often very exclusive, sectarian and hostile towards non-Islamic groups. The campaign for the establishment of the Islamic state became one of the issues raised by the Islamist media (Armando, 2011).

However, Islamist media still had to face another challenge. Partisan and sectarian Islamist media met difficulties in developing as a business

due to their inability to meet the conditions necessary to develop contemporary mass media: large funds, investments, good relationships with advertisers, high-level technology, as well as modern-disciplined organizations (Armando, 2011).

As a result, although some Islamist print media were able to reach a relatively large number of readers, their impact on public opinion was relatively insignificant. Consequently, the Islamist print media has never been perceived as an influential medium. Its physical quality and journalistic standards were low.

Fortunately, for the Islamists, technological developments enabled them to reach wider mass audiences in Indonesia. The Internet started to show its explosive rate of growth in Indonesia around 2001 (Lim 2003, 276). In a short period, Islamist websites emerged and continued to follow the tradition of sectarian Islamic print media. However, this time the media no longer faced the structural constraints faced by the print media. With limited funds and a simple organization, Islamist websites easily spread their ideas to the wider public who at the same time enjoyed an easier internet access either through internet cafes or through personal PCs. The Islamists also learned various techniques and ways to develop a variety of modern mass media, such as writing and producing popular novels, music recordings or even movies that contain modest Islamist messages (Weintraub, 2011). The most decisive stage, of course, was the advent of web 2.0 technology that enabled the growth of social media across Indonesia. Various data shows Indonesia to be a haven for social media. In 2011, Indonesia was listed as the second largest nation on Facebook, exceeded only by the United States; and as the third largest producer of Tweets in the world after Brazil and the United States (Lim, 2011). The Islamists were actively involved in this new communication traffic.

Through social media, the Islamist campaign has mobilized an interactive network involving millions of citizens who exchange information (Nisa, 2018; Slama, 2018; Imadudin, 2017). Islamist groups who have an in-depth understanding of Information Technology cleverly utilize the absence of a centralized structure in social media networks to spread their ideas by utilizing a kind of digital labor, which voluntarily retweets or reposts messages that seem natural to circulate in their communities. Just as ISIS conducts their campaign of terror through

their website, Twitter, blogs and Youtube, Islamists in Indonesia adapt the same pattern. Various virtual communities scattered throughout Indonesia are gradually building a base to campaign against the Indonesian secular democratic system. The spread of Smart phones further strengthens the intensity of communication between members of these virtual communities (Tapsell, 2018).

As explained above, in order to delegitimize the government, Islamists take full advantage of the freedom of expression and modern technology to spread black campaigns (Allard et al., 2018). The Islamists developed propaganda campaigns through social media and online media containing messages typical of the black propaganda, such as hoax, fake news, smears, fake history, defamation and disgusting memes. More fundamentally, the entire campaign contains content that can be categorized as hate speech: attacking and provoking acts of violence based on racial and religious sentiments.

These online Islamist media (with names like Voice of Islam, Voice of Al-Islam, Ar-Rahmah) have extensively published what they portray as lies, heresy, and conspiracy carried out by Christians, Ahmadis, Shiites, Chinese and Jews to dominate Indonesia. They describe Islam in Indonesia as facing serious threats from these groups. In some cases, media reporting combined with provocation through social media encouraged pressure on minority groups and even resulted in violent acts claiming lives (Utami, 2011). Various negative reports about the "threat of Christianization" in the Islamist media clearly has led to a series of cancellations of the construction of churches in many places in Java. The raid, which resulted in the deaths of three Ahmadiyah followers in Cikeusik, West Java, 2011, was preceded by a series of writings describing Ahmadiyah as an enemy of Muslims. Moreover, a speech by FPI leaders called on their followers to kill Ahmadis. The burning of a number of monasteries in Medan, Sumatra (2017) was also preceded by the spread of false news claiming a Chinese ethnic person insulted the mosque.

The importance of the Islamists online and in social media was becoming increasingly prominent during the Presidential election battle in 2014. At that time, Islamist groups joined the former President Suharto's son-in-law, Prabowo, who was fighting against Jokowi (Bollier, 2014). Jokowi won the 2014 race, but it became the first important

experimental field for Islamist groups to utilize social media for their political purposes.

Jokowi has been described as a Chinese descendant with communist parents. There was also an accusation that Jokowi's mother is a fake mother. Furthermore, he is portrayed as a communist agent who will aid the Chinese government to take dominance over Indonesia by, among other ways, selling Indonesian assets to China. At one point of time, Jokowi was challenged to take a DNA test to prove that he does have a blood relationship with his parents. There was even a fake picture on Jokowi having sex with a female party leader, and a fake birth certificate that supposedly shows that Jokowi is of Chinese descent. Jokowi and his supporters have repeatedly denied all of these allegations. However, they continue to be widely distributed mainly through social media. The fake story of Jokowi being of Chinese descent can, even now be easily found in many Whatsapp Groups.

Jokowi did win the election. However, one of the lessons learned from that race is that black campaigns could become an effective tool to defeat one's contender. At the start of the presidential election campaign, the gap in support between Jokowi and Prabowo reached 30 per cent. Nevertheless, on D-day, that is Election Day, the range has narrowed to only six per cent. This increase of support toward Prabowo was clearly a result of, among others, the effectiveness of the Islamist campaign (for other similar cases of the spreading of fake news using social media in global context (see Meyer, 2018).

This pattern of black propaganda then continued and even grew intensity in the election of the Governor of Jakarta, 2016–2017 (Institute for Policy Analysis and Conflict, 2018) The Jakarta political stage at that time was very important for Indonesia. Jakarta is the trend-setting city in Indonesia, and for the first time in its history, one of the strong candidates running for the office of Governor was a Chinese-Christian – "a double minority". Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (or 'Ahok'), who had been a vice Governor of DKI for two years, before Jokowi won the Presidential election in 2014. Ahok then became a Governor and clearly showed a very impressive record in leading Jakarta (Cochrane, 2017).

The election lasted two rounds. In the first round, Ahok had to face two rivals, Anies Baswedan and Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono (or AHY, son of the former President). After AHY was eliminated,

the contestation became very tight. At the end, Ahok was defeated by a wide margin. However, it can be said that he lost in a very cruel manner (Arifianto, 2017).

The Islamists supported both Anies and AHY. From the very beginning, the Islamists launched a multiplatform campaign of hoaxes and hate speech based on religion and race. One of the main narratives was that Muslims should not commit the evil act (*haram*) of supporting an infidel (*kafir*) as a governor. The other popular campaign theme was the accusation that the Chinese and the Christians will dominate and exploit Jakarta using Ahok as their puppet. Muslim voters who openly voiced their support to Ahok had to face a potential on-line and off-line harassment and persecution. The situation deteriorated when Ahok, undeliberately, criticized people who manipulated the Al Qur'an verses for political purposes. His statement was widely distributed through social media, oftentimes with additional comment and manipulation that worsened his image. Ahok was then accused of blasphemy and reported to the police. Some of the radical groups threatened the government that if Ahok did not go to jail, they would kill him with their bare hands. Using social media and social networks, the anti-Ahok groups spread the campaign throughout Indonesia. A series of mass demonstrations took place in Jakarta and, at a smaller scale, in other cities (Institute for Policy Analysis and Conflict, 2018). The participants for the anti-Ahok demonstration in Jakarta came from many small cities. In some cases, their municipalities supported them.

As mentioned above, the end of the story was quite bitter. Ahok lost the election and furthermore was to be imprisoned for two years, up to 2019, due to the blasphemy case, in which hoaxes, smears, and hate speech were extensively used. For the Islamists, what took place in Jakarta encouraged them even more to combine social media and their religious social network to delegitimize President Jokowi. After Ahok, their next target was toppling the president or at least defeating him in the 2019 election (Arifianto, 2018). This did not happen, though.

Jokowi strikes back

What happened during the presidential election and that for the Jakarta governor then stimulated an important development regarding how the government dealt with freedom of expression. Attacks on Jokowi, the

government and the minorities (religious or ethnic) have become so excessive that at some point, the government finally took steps, which under normal conditions would be perceived as contrary to freedom of expression. One of the tools the government uses to suppress these forms of expression is the ITE Act (UU ITE), which was first launched in 2008 and revised in 2016.

The law that was originally intended to be a legal umbrella to protect consumers from a variety of harmful practices in electronic transactions actually became one of the legislative products most criticized by civil society activists. In just a few years, the law has turned into a tool that threatens the right of citizens to speak in the public sphere without fear. The law contains criminal penalties against those who are accused of spreading contempt, defamation, pornography and hate speech through online media.

The first to be affected by this Act were tens of thousands of websites containing pornography and gambling; these were blocked by the Ministry of Information. After that, the condition worsened when, due to the unclear definition of some terms such as contempt and defamation, dozens of citizens were also reported for violating the law. According to SafeNet data, if in 2008 there were only two people who were reported to the police for alleged violations of the ITE Act; by 2015, seven years later, that figure had increased to 44 people (SAFENET, 2016) The cases can be very diverse (Kwok 2015). A housewife criticized the management staff of the company where her husband once worked. A patient complained about the service she got at a private hospital. An anti-corruption activist accused of defaming a politician on BlackBerry Messenger spent 100 days in prison before he was freed by a court in South Sulawesi province. A famous stand-up comedian was also brought to court because, through his Facebook account, he questioned the promises of his apartment manager about public facilities. An out-of-town student was brought to the police because, through social media, she made sarcastic comments about the culture of a city where she studied. An author was reported to the police because he was accused of mocking religion by writing in his FB status: "God is not an Arab".

The occurrence of so many cases prompted a wave of protests against the ITE Law. The resistance from the civil society became so harsh that in 2016, the Jokowi government and the parliament agreed to revise

some of the clauses. However, it should be noted that the change in the revised Act did not really touch the substance of the issue but rather the length of imprisonment that could be imposed.

The rejection by the civil society toward this law might have continued if it were not for the issue of the Islamists. As said, the Jokowi government, which was strongly supported by the pro-democracy groups, started to use the ITE Act to limit the space of the Islamist campaign. Cyber-army networks such as the MCA were dismantled and its leaders arrested. The government asked the Facebook office of Jakarta to block several fan pages of prominent groups related to the Islamists, such as the FPI. A religious leader who accused the government of being infiltrated by Communist figures was jailed due to that statement in his Facebook account. Some citizens had to go to the police headquarters to answer accusations that they had used social media platforms to insult the President, to insult the Chinese or the Christians and spread fake news and hoaxes. Clearly, the Jokowi government sent a strong signal that they will not continue to tolerate the same type of propaganda used in the elections and aftermath.

On October 2017, the government issued an emergency decree on mass organizations that gives the Minister of Law and Human Rights the authority to disband any organization it deems opposed to the basic principles of Indonesia (also known as Pancasila) and the Indonesian republic (Institute for Policy Analysis and Conflict, 2018). By using this law, the Indonesian government closed down Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, an Islamist organization that openly declares that its mission is to establish a caliphate and implement sharia law in Indonesia.

To some, these hard measures taken by Jokowi seems to represent his weakening commitment toward the protection of freedom of expression. A report in Southeast Asia Globe carried the title: "Jokowi takes authoritarian turn as Indonesian election looms." (Tisnadibrata, September 4, 2017).

Fortunately for Jokowi, the majority of the pro-democracy networks do not share the same pessimistic view. Although they did not openly support the harsh measures taken by the government, they also did not reject them.

One of the most interesting cases was related to Rizieq Shihab, a very prominent Islamist leader of FPI who was reported to the police

for several different incidents. The cases were as follows: exchanging obscene WA chats and pictures with his girlfriend (Emont, 2017), claiming that the new series of Indonesian currency Rupiah banknotes featured symbols that are associated with communism (Chan & Soeriatmadja, 2017), religious blasphemy by stating that "if God has a Son, who is the midwife?" (Topsfield & Amalia, 2016), and even insulting the state ideology Pancasila (Arshad, 2017). In all of these events, the pro-democracy forces chose not to take any stand. The reason is clear: they believe that these Islamists groups, which are intolerant and reject democracy should not be defended in the name of democracy.

The crossroads

In the Introduction chapter of *Freedom of Expression Revisited*, Carlsson wrote:

> Advances in technology and changes in the political and social context in which the digital technologies operate give rise, however, to a number of dilemmas, and these in turn demand new approaches and strategies to ensure the full and proper application of these fundamental freedoms. A number of challenges have to be taken into account if we are to succeed in resolving complex issues of freedom of expression, not least those involving freedom of the press, in ways that prevent the erosion of these freedoms and, ultimately, the erosion of human rights. (2013: 7)

The Indonesian case fits perfectly as an illustration of the dilemma expressed by Carlsson. Since the end of the New Order (1999), Indonesia has gone through serious political changes, including introducing the free flow of information; these changes have brought Indonesia into the group of most democratic countries in Asia. Needless to say, Indonesian civil society today maintains a strong belief in the importance of freedom of expression. Constitutional protection of freedom of expression is also in place. However, the development of the last 20 years since the fall of the New Order government has also opened a series of new questions: Can we still believe that the free market of ideas will in itself produce the best final result for the society? Can the self-corrective mechanism be relied upon? How far can the state intervene in this process?

This series of questions has come to the fore because of the presence of groups that take advantage of freedom of expression for pursuing objectives that are considered to be contrary to, and intolerant of, democracy, or which can divide society that is actually still in the process of consolidating democracy. In addition, these groups actively use the latest communication technologies, which enable them to reach a very broad audience efficiently; an audience with a wide variety of educational and cultural backgrounds.

Concern about the power of communication to divide Indonesia cannot be over-emphasized. Inter-ethnic or inter-religious conflicts in Indonesia are still ongoing in recent years, sometimes with hundreds of victims. Religious sentiments, as seen in the 2014 presidential election and the 2016–2017 Jakarta governor election, can be used to mobilize the masses to take actions that sometimes threaten human rights.

The civil society is facing a dilemma of democracy and freedom of expression. At this point, the civil society seems to allow the government to take decisive action even to imprison people due to their expressions of ideas that are considered to be against democracy and threatening human rights. The question is this: if the government is authorized to intervene in what can and can not be said by the citizens through the media, does not that provide opportunities for the return of authoritarian governments? Or can we define quite specific areas that may be open or not for government intervention? And if so, what kind of intervention is possible?

Of course, there is no completely satisfactory answer to this set of questions. Hopefully, Indonesia will be able to find its best way without having to abandon the path of democracy which has been fought for and followed during the past 20 years. However, the Indonesian case provides an example of the difficulties facing a new democracy wishing to keep its commitment to freedom of expression while at the same time keeping that freedom from threatening democracy.

Note

1. In general, the periodization of Indonesian political history can be categorized as: revolution (1945–1949), Old Order under President Sukarno (1950–1966), New Order under President Suharto (1966–1998), and the Reformation or Post-1998.

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6. Tunisia: Reporting terrorism

Mohamed Balti

The 18th of May 2011 was the day that marked the first terrorist act, which happened in Rohia in North-Eastern Tunisia. Two military personnel and two terrorists were killed.

It was a shock for Tunisians, but above all, it uncovered a set of challenges that journalists should prepare themselves to face. There was a contrast between the government's statements and the media coverage, since everything related to the incident was narrated in different ways. The official story and the media reports did not agree on the number of terrorists involved, their specific targets, how they neither crossed the borders nor managed to accomplish what they had accomplished. The result was conflicting stories and a huge level of misinformation.

Since that moment, being journalists, we have paid due interest to how we can face challenges related to covering terrorist acts, including challenges that a reporter can face by being physically present after or during a terrorist operation, and challenges related to journalistic ethics. More precisely, this relates to what should and should not be reported, what could be served to the public to satisfy their needs for clear and accurate information, and what belongs to national security dossiers, or even worse: serves as a propaganda report for terrorists. However, the ultimate challenge is who can decide and on what basis.

Mohamed Balti is a Tunisian journalist with a broad-based experience in covering social issues, not least political extremism.

Terrorism and news: a complicated relationship

After the revolution, the state was looking for a new identity, typically distancing itself against the previous regime. The rulers in 2011 wanted to do anything but replicate older regime practices, especially towards Islamists. The Ennahda Party was part of the ruling Troika, and has an Islamist background and obviously Islamist oriented voters. Thus, labelling people as terrorists was complicated. However, according to some critics, Ennahda did actually take it easy with extremists and terrorists who had left ex-President Ben Ali's prisons in 2011. By 2012, they had enough time to reorganise, recruit new members and prepare for attacks.

As the Rohia incident was the first of its kind in a post-revolutionary Tunisia, I was one of only two reporters on the scene. My first and only instinct as a journalist was to fully report the event. If the Rohia terror had happened today, my reporting would be very different, I would perhaps not have taken photos of the scene, but mainly double-checked the stories provided by the witnesses.

Five years on, Tunisia has witnessed several other terrorist incidents. With every attack or clash between the army and different terrorist organisations (Ansar Achariaa Tunisia, AQIM, and some terrorists affiliated with ISIS or Al Qaeda), whether I had to report it myself or follow the news provided by other colleagues, I have become aware that all journalistic coverage has its impact in terms of security in the country, and also on how people would behave on a daily basis.

After the collapse of Ben Ali's (the second dictator, who ruled for 23 years) regime in 2011, the walls of blackout and dictatorship vanished, and a democratic transition process has started. Tunisia held elections in 2011, Ennahda won the most number of seats in the constituent assembly, a coalition government was formed out of three parties: Ennahda; the Congress for the Republic or El Mottamar, a centre-left secular political party; and the Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties, or Ettakatol, a social democratic political party. The alliance between the three parties was unofficially known as the Troika. Regardless of the winners, or the actual parties ruling the country, it was the first democratic election in Tunisia.

From January 14, 2011 onwards, journalists, bloggers, citizens, as well as everybody else, could speak and were enthusiastic to practice

freedom. In the early months following the revolution and the first elections, any attempt to regulate how the media dealt with terrorism, would be considered as a blackout or censorship. Or this is how we journalists thought.

There was a burning desire among journalists to do their job after decades of a media blackout. Stories about terrorist acts answered every possible criteria of worthy coverage for Tunisian journalists, "it bleeds so it leads". This field is complicated, as it involves movement of terrorists and weapons between Tunisia and neighbouring countries. Besides, it is vital for audiences. Since security forces and citizens were threatened, no media house in Tunisia would neglect them. Eventually everything was reported with no reflection or background, sometimes even with no fact checking. Our coverage would serve the government's public relations strategies or the terrorist propaganda. Terrorist activities in Tunisia grew from a so-called peaceful and charitable work, to engaging against the state that, according to them, did not apply Islamic rule even though the ruling party had an Islamist background.

Three players, three games

Slowly, journalists started to question their coverage. It is our mission to inform the public accurately, but new questions, our own questions, occurred. The main question was actually how to inform the public accurately without serving the terrorism agenda, without fuelling their propaganda. Should we abstain from publishing certain information or should we just inform the public, no matter how?

When it comes to news about terrorism, there are three major parties that are considered as sources: the government (the interior and the defence ministry) the terrorist organisations, and the media. Those are the main ones communicating information to the public, but they do not exclude other sources such as eyewitnesses, social media platforms, foreign countries' statements, etc.

On April 11, 2002, a natural gas truck filled with explosives was detonated in front of the ancient El Ghriba synagogue on the island of Djerba, killing 14 German tourists, three Tunisians and two French citizens. More than 30 were wounded. It was the first terrorist attack in Tunisia after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the US. It happened during the dictatorship of the president Zine el Abidine Ben Ali. At that

time, the government used to deny all kinds of terrorist threats. Little information was provided, journalists were accused of exaggeration, and terrorism was considered as an issue of political conflict between the government and the opposition. For a majority of the media houses, there was no real coverage of terrorist acts, just brief news with no details. It was true that those acts were rare compared to the post-revolutionary era, but media blackout was the norm.

Subsequently, overcoming the legacy of decades under the Ben Ali regime could not be achieved overnight. Media in Tunisia were among the most oppressed in Africa and the Arab world. Therefore, journalists were obliged to report in a certain way. They could not contradict the government, criticise policies or even avoid publishing or broadcasting news of the president's or the ministers' activities. For these reasons, in 2010, Tunisia was classified as number 164 among 180 countries across the world when it came to freedom of expression (RSF, 2010). In 2018, it was ranked 72, which must be considered a big leap forward (RSF, 2019).

In late 2010, protests had spread throughout the country, but one single event changed everything, when ex-president Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali allegedly flew to Saudi Arabia. Tunisia started its journey of transition to democracy. In fact, freedom of expression instantly became the new order and journalists became able to express themselves and report freely.

At the same time, even if the regime had changed, there was no trust in government, and politicians as official sources were not considered reliable or trustworthy. Journalists who were finally feeling liberated, witnessed national security classified issues being raised in the media in a different manner. Both critique of the government and security issues had been subject to censorship. Previously, critique was misused by the regime in order to quell freedom of expression. That may explain why the Tunisian media did not really trust officials as sources for terrorism news in the country. At the same time, they were keen to publish news of this phenomenon looking for scoops and even contradicting the government.

The era of speaking up without reflecting on the consequences had begun. Tensions between the authorities and the media were obvious after the elections in 2011. The Troika government was not trusted as a

source of information. In some cases, the relationship between the government and the media was influenced by the political conflicts between the new regime and the opposition. The situation became even more complicated, as the government was accused of being responsible for the rise of terrorism in Tunisia. The tension was underlined in political TV shows. The media was divided into two or three groups reflecting the political points of view. This explains why part of the media, then, did not consider officials as a reliable source in their coverage.

Neither enemy nor ally

With a temporary government (2014) and an elected government in place (2015), relationships between official sources and the Tunisian media have somehow reached an undeclared consensus: The government is neither the enemy nor the ally. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that there was another problem related to the government as a source for journalists: Official statements and conferences usually come late. Official statements provided by the Ministries of Defence or Interior are important, but the problem is that they always need time to deliver further information. Haunted by the instinct of publishing instantly what they have as information, can be more tempting for journalists than waiting for officials to deliver statements or organize a press conference.

Being obliged to report as soon as possible and being already in the field, journalists might find themselves pushed to deliver the information that they have obtained, without fact checking and without further details. Until now, no government has been able to provide information instantly, and this has compelled journalists to rely on other sources.

One example is the mass shooting that occurred at the tourist resort at Port El Kantaoui, about ten kilometres north of the city of Sousse, known as "the Sousse attack" on June 26, 2015, where the name of the gunman was declared by the terrorist organisation and not by the Ministry of Interior.

It is always important for professionals to question official sources, but the government is indeed a source of information related to the operation it conducts against terrorists, who use violence and intimidation against innocent people to achieve political aims by creating fear among the population. The role of a journalist remains crucial in fact checking and rendering the government accountable for its promises.

The terrorist organisations

Ansar al-Sharia Tunisia was a famous terrorist organisation in Tunisia, a Salafi Jihadist group founded by Seifallah Ben Hassine known as Abou Ayyad, who was released from jail in a general amnesty after the collapse of the Ben Ali regime. However, some people in Tunisia claim that the regime did not collapse, as many regime figures are still active in political and public life until now.

The terrorist group quickly established a media branch, *al Quairawan* Media Foundation, and developed different media outlets, including a blog, a Facebook page and a website. Members of the organisation have been suspected of involvement in a number of violent incidents. The government accused the group of masterminding the 2013 wave of political assassinations, for example of Chokri bel Aid and Mohamed Brahmi who were the two leaders of the opposition political party Front National.[1] The group was classified as a terrorist organisation by the Tunisian government in August 2013.

At that time, journalists in Tunisia had little experience in dealing with terrorism news. That is why statements from terrorist organisations plus video statements and social media updates were considered news. However, that was a dangerous road to take, as publishing these organisations' statements, put the Tunisian media in the position of contributing to terrorist propaganda.

In their coverage, journalists in many cases refer to terrorists' photos and videos and even to their songs when they are repeating some of their specific mottos. Most likely, the intention is to demonstrate the brutality of their crimes, especially when a terrorist act has taken place. Even though the intentions are positive, the outcome is not. During the last five years, Tunisian media outlets were competing for coverage of terrorist activities, stories and backgrounds. In this regard, they would post and publish stories based on terrorists' social media accounts. However, that accomplished nothing except providing terrorists with notoriety and enabled them to be perceived as strong in the eyes of the public. People started to know terrorists by name and learned more on how they operated and how strong and organised they were.

Meanwhile, terrorist organisations can benefit from what the media broadcast in order to have an idea about the army movements and operations in mountainous areas or elsewhere in the country. This

is another problematic issue related to the freedom of press and the citizens' right to know, while simultaneously protecting the country's security. Thus, media faces a huge dilemma: balancing between freedom of expression and the trap of serving terrorist organisations or endangering national security.

These dilemmas have made the journalist's professional work hard in so many ways. This was felt especially during the time they had to cover the operations in the mountains of *El Kef* carried out by the Tunisian army against terrorists hiding in the area. It was a hard job for us as journalists to gather information, which was not always readily available. Again, professionals were left with a narrow space for broadcasting or filing information and news without fact checking or without being sure of what happened. This is the second dilemma: Not having enough information, not knowing all aspects of a story can result in misinformation and rumours. Furthermore, it can leave the journalist in a complicated situation having sometimes to explain and justify in his own terms, publishing a multitude of half-true stories without being completely concrete or precise.

Journalism: Mission impossible?

Producing accurate and convincing stories while avoiding becoming a communicator of terrorist propaganda or the official state version that always comes late, is what the journalist is supposed to accomplish. It is a delicate mission indeed, sometimes hard and other times dangerous.

Between December 1, 2015 and January 31, 2016, the Ethics Observatory in the Syndicate of Tunisian journalists (SNJT) counted 1,740 mistakes in coverage of terrorism issues by the print media, 119 by electronic newspapers and 66 by radio and TV websites (SNJT 2016). Shortcomings included republishing terrorist statements, without analysis or a journalist editing, showing pictures of terrorists where they look strong even while those pictures do not have any news value.

For many observers, not least the ones responsible for the Ethics Observatory, this might be explained by the lack of training of journalists, especially young ones, who have no experience in covering similar issues. Thus, training and educating journalists is very essential. In addition, it remains critical to establish professional charters for dealing with terrorist events. If journalists continue to make mistakes

when covering terrorist events, this could affect journalism in Tunisia in two different ways:

First, the journalist's credibility is on the line. The public may not blame terrorists or any other source, they would blame the journalist who did not perform the job in a professional way, and blame him/her for not double-checking the news or the classified information. As such, journalists might be accused of manipulation.

Second, dilemmas covering violent events are organically related to freedom of expression and to the public perception of freedom of expression. That is to say, when journalists commit several professional errors, they risk being brought to court and thus become victims of the authorities' harassment; as authorities always intend to benefit from journalists for propaganda purposes.

Tunisian journalists have worked on producing a code of conduct and editing, elaborating norms for covering terrorist events. One of the recommendations, for instance, is that instead of reporting the whole statement of a terrorist organisation, reporters should rather deliver information that is newsworthy without replicating threats and incitement to violence. It is recommended also to avoid reporting witnesses that are under shock and victims' families or relatives.

Tunisian journalists' perceptions of how terrorist events should be covered have varied through time and have benefitted from the growing experiences. The questions raised in this article could be considered universal. Many journalists across the world have during their coverage of terrorism-related issues, struggled with similar challenges. After all, dealing with those issues is a daily challenge in many parts of the world. The questions that a journalist is able to ask are endless. Many are closely related to drawing the line between freedom of expression and the public's right to know on one hand, and on the other avoiding falling into the trap of propaganda or serving the agenda of official sources concerning their performance in the fight against terrorism. However, finding a common ground by agreeing on stronger ethical guidelines, would help journalists in their daily work and ultimately provide the public with manipulation-free, or misinformation-free news.

Note

1. Mohamed Brahmi, the leader of the opposition Popular Movement party, was gunned down outside his home in July 25, 2013. Chokri bel Aid, an opposition leader, was killed on February 6, 2013. Both were considered opponents of Ennahda Party. Many political leaders are still accusing the Ennahda Party for both assassinations.

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7. Bangladesh: Social media, extremism and freedom of expression

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When debating the rapid transformation of journalism in Bangladesh, from local media consumption to the growing influence of transnational media – as well as the challenges faced by Bangladesh – it is important to know the country's cultural makeup, recent trends and demography. Bangladesh is a secular, Muslim-dominated country which has experienced solid economic growth over the last two decades and transformed itself into a middle-income country. The population of some 165 million people is very homogenous with 98 per cent of the population ethnic Bengalis with Bangla as their mother tongue and an adult literacy rate of 73 per cent (UIS, 2018). It is a model country for successful social progress that quickly achieved most of its millennium development goals (BPC, 2015). Bangladesh is one of the very few countries in the world which observes public holidays respecting the festivals of all the four main religions, including Eids, Pujas, Buddha Purnima and Christmas (Elliott, 2015: 48). It is a secular country with peaceful coexistence between religions, although polarization is growing. Parts of the society are becoming more radicalized and other parts are becoming more liberal, with the extremes on each side moving away from local culture and traditions. Atheism is rare and while it is not a punishable offense, it is socially despised, and online expressions that may hurt religious sentiments are punishable under the ICT Act with sentences of a minimum of seven years in jail (Freedom House, 2017). With more of the public dialogue shifting online, and a number of new, tight laws

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to regulate the online media being approved, the question is whether the freedom of expression as well as tolerance in the country really is being strengthened, or rather, limited, in this new media scenario?

Domination of Indian cable TV channels

Apart from a handful of foreign magazines available in a few selected kiosks, it was cable TV that brought foreign media into Bangladesh. English channels remain less popular, presumably because the cultural settings are less familiar and the English language is still a barrier for many. Indian TV shows, however, are vastly popular with the population and the most popular channels have higher viewership in Bangladesh than the most popular local channels. Some of the Indian channels have Bangla programs, while others are in Hindi, and the popular shows are drama serials, song contests, movies and sports. One problem often associated with foreign TV channels is the dilution of local values, a growing attraction for glamor and luxury, and a sneaking pollution of the language as it becomes studded with foreign words (Islam, 2013). It should be remembered that Bangladesh was a part of "greater India" until religiously divided by the British in 1947, then brutalized by the state of Pakistan through the independence war in 1971 where three million people were killed. This is the real root of the polarization: For 40 years, no war crimes tribunals were held and the traitors and collaborators could roam freely; among these were those who formed an Islamist political party with imported ideology sponsored by Saudi money and even got ministerial posts in a coalition government. The freedom fighters and pro-Bangladeshi masses struggled to rebuild their lives and felt forgotten and betrayed, while still maintaining a hope that justice would prevail.

Uptake of internet and early audience

In the early 1990s, dial-up connections to email servers were the only cyber connections available for people in Bangladesh. In 1996, internet became available through VSAT connections and only in 2006 did the country get its first direct fibre connection into the global internet (Hasnayen & Sultana, 2013). The country's internet population grew from a few hundred thousand in 2006 to more than 70 million in mid-2017 (BTRC, 2018), an astonishing 60 per cent annual growth. The

countryis internet population is so immature that roughly one third of the internet users in any given year did not use internet the year before. Since 2012, the growth of smartphones has been significant and considering that the desktop and broadband penetration in the country was low, it is obvious that it is the wide availability of smart phones, mobile Internet and affordable connection rates that now cause the rapid growth. How does the growth of Internet users look like in a country, which came online much later than the rest of the world, while the uptake is growing much faster than in other nations? Is this rapid growth a pure blessing for the nation or could it also be a curse in some ways?

Facebook = Internet

Imagine the millions of simple rural people in this country who until very recently consumed media content in terms of not-too-free news through radio and TV waves, joining crowds to watch sports or entertainment through satellite TV as well as reading a few stories in the local newspaper. Global media had no impact on their lives. Then one day they suddenly had access to Internet through their mobile, and their digital life began, more often than not, on Facebook (Karim, 2017). Basically, people in rural areas may still send you a confused look if you ask whether they are internet users, but when you ask them about Facebook they indeed use it. For them, Facebook is internet (Kader, 2017). This is very reasonable when considering their relevant physical world, which mostly is limited to the distance covered by their local bus service. Global media available through the internet will not bring much relevance for them, as there is hardly any content covering their own geographical area, nor does content from national news sites bring sufficient geographical relevance. Facebook, however, offers content created and shared by people they know, whereof many are from their local community, and as such these absolute beginners of Internet browsing somehow gain faith and interest in the content their connections now interact with. Considering their limited understanding of Facebook and the way the newsfeed works, few are able to separate between real news, spun stories or totally false content when they are being fed text, images and videos which their friends have shared, liked or even just been tagged into (Minar & Naher, 2018).

Communal riots fuelled by propaganda spread through social media

The lack of awareness as to how social media platforms work, and the utter lack of source control amongst the less mature internet users, has caused several cases of hate spin and mass manipulation to develop, and has given rise to tragic consequences in Bangladesh, of which a few examples are given below:

In September 2012 in the village of Ramu, a communal mob of up to 25,000 enraged Muslims, burned some 12 Buddhist temples, two of which were 300 years old, and destroyed at least 50 homes of the local minority Buddhist community (Moshiri, 2012). They were agitated by rumours that a Buddhist boy had posted an image on his Facebook page insulting the holy Quran. It was later found that someone had set up a fake account, posted an insulting image and tagged the Buddhist boy so that the image showed up on his wall. The perpetrator had then taken screenshots of the boy's Facebook wall and further manipulated this. When two Islamic radicals distributed the doctored images to local people who came to see, it triggered a chain reaction of hate of massive proportions in the local community (Manik, 2012). Of course, the agitated people – recipients of this misinformation –could not understand these technicalities of Facebook, especially when religious leaders called on the local people to act and told them that the Buddhists had insulted their religion. In this way these leaders created an angry, unruly mob. Though the content was local, Facebook as a transnational medium, had exposed the local audience to features they could not understand, and which could easily be manipulated to create hatred against the weak minorities in society. Hunt (2012) has challenged Facebook, raising its airing of fake accounts, the way it facilitates impersonation, tagging and the extensive reach of its network in the local communities, as well as the ease with which it is capable of spreading fake content designed to create hatred and polarization.

Just weeks earlier, there had been violent protests in the streets of Bangladesh, and many other Muslim countries, against the blasphemous amateurish film "Innocence of Muslims". Though this film could easily have been ignored and forgotten, news about the initial protests it inspired caused a viral spread among Muslim groups and sparked international street riots (Venkiteswaran, 2017). The street protests were

growing. In mid-September 2012, the government gave in to demands and blocked Youtube in Bangladesh for a period of eight months (Paul, 2013). Youtube being a transnational medium is an open platform where any content that has passed the platform's internal rules immediately becomes publicly available to everyone. Both Facebook and Youtube are services designed in the US, with the US audience and their values assumed to be the standard consumer; they give less consideration to what implication such content could have on people in different cultures with different values and moral codes.

This perceived weakness on the part of the Bangladeshi government caused a domino effect of violent attacks (Rajpal & Baig, 2016), starting with the Ramu attack on Buddhists and building up to a terrifying killing spree during which militants armed with machetes hacked to death around 50 bloggers, atheists, gay activists, secular free-thinkers and liberal teachers. In brief, they attacked those sorts of people who raised their voices against radical Islam, especially through social media, and finally also innocent priests of other religions and random foreigners (Associated Press, 2016). It is widely believed that these gruelling attacks were executed in such way as to obtain wide press coverage, and enjoy a viral spread of manipulated content through social media, which in turn gave them access to the large international media. These attacks might thus portray the Government as weak and put it in a squeeze where, politically, it could not side with the non-believers. Ultimately the aim was to destabilize the country and cause the secular government to fall, in a strange play by religious groups and other actors playing with religious sensitivity (Rana, 2018). Most of the religious and political turmoil that marked this period, lasting from 2012 to 2016, was interconnected with activities on the rapidly growing social media in the same period.

By April 2016, an estimated 20 million persons in Bangladesh had started to use Facebook (Nafee, 2016), and as smartphones and internet access became increasingly available and affordable, they also came to use other social media (The Daily Star, 2018), but had very little idea, if any, about how to fact-check content or its sources (Minar & Naher, 2018). Younger leaders of some radical Islamic organizations had, however, understood this and mastered the art of manipulating content and spewing it out to the masses through groups and pages with

radical and hateful agendas (Abdullah, 2013). A popular strategy was to create online wildfires on sensitive issues by exploiting superstition and religious belief. Two examples out of thousands were (1) the use of an older photo of a collapsed building, and adding the text that Allah destroyed this cinema because it showed the blasphemous film "Innocence of Muslims" (Khan, 2012), and (2) using pictures of groups of dead people killed in a war somewhere in Africa, but adding the text that Government was secretly killing religious activists (Facebook, 2018). Both images were shared more than 10,000 times and fuelled hatred. Herein comes a big problem with Facebook, that there were absolutely no mechanisms for approving or removing such propaganda, and rarely would there be any response to requests to delete the content, as the moderators of Facebook had less idea about the Bangla language and the danger of circulating such false stories (Islam, 2015).

One bizarre example of manipulation of the masses is when a radical Islamic Facebook group, with more than a million followers, posted a photo-shopped image which showed the face of one of the most popular Islamic preachers, as the face of the moon (The Daily Star, 2018). This preacher had then recently been sentenced to death for participation in genocide, rape and murder during the liberation war in 1971, and the image was posted as a "real sighting" and an "omen" intended to prove the preacher's innocence, and calling people to step forward and fight Government at any cost in order to protect Islam. The image achieved an extreme viral spread, and people believed they also had seen it with their own eyes (Itsmasud, 2013). The street riots which followed claimed nearly 70 lives (The Economist, 2013), a result of clever manipulation and blind believers. There is very little chance that this tragedy could have happened without being facilitated by a social media platform like Facebook.

Other issues related to how transnational social media have caused big social problems in Bangladesh include harassment of girls by creating fake profiles portraying them as prostitutes, or the filming of rape or sexual encounters – followed by pressuring the girl for more sex or money, failure to acquiesce would result in the videos being circulated on social media (Preetha, 2015). Until the end of 2017, 17,000 complaints regarding cybercrimes were reported to the ICT Division's Cyber Help Desk in Bangladesh; 70 per cent of these were from women, even

though the vast majority of Internet users in Bangladesh are men. The effects of cyber-crimes against women are not limited to the victims in Bangladesh. They have a trickle-down effect on their families, the family's social status and eventually may even erode the social and moral fabric of the society (Zaman et al., 2017).

Furthermore, there were massive uses of fake profiles to manipulate public discussions from many sides, as well as serious attempts at character assassinations aimed at strong women and those with minority voices. Beyond this there was an almost infinite number of pages and groups spreading extremist content, hatred and fake propaganda, all aimed to spin an alternative reality for the general public. Facebook had neither any understanding of local sensitive issues and the gruelling violence in our history, nor any interest in understanding it; in fact, they had hardly any reliable routines for taking quick action against socially damaging content in countries they did not prioritize, like Bangladesh. As a female entrepreneur, I myself was several times threatened with death openly on Facebook as well as at public rallies and in phone calls. The threats on Facebook were accompanied by my picture, address and mobile number – all these were posted for everyone to see, and with commentaries confirming that an anonymous "they" would do it. Facebook almost never acts on reports or complaints, even not when approached by a government. When I managed to report the death threats to a Facebook country manager, through an Ambassador, the written answer stated that they could at best make the content hidden from Bangladesh but not delete it, as the threat lacked a place and time for my planned execution. In a word, there was no clear and imminent concrete danger. It is obvious from such cases that people who lacked international influence and high-level connections have no recourse when they want dangerous and unsavoury content removed.

The beginning of local social media – Bangla blogging

So how could social media be more adapted to and better fit into the local culture and society? I want to share my story of pioneering social media in Bangladesh, with the pros and cons of what we experienced along the way. In December, 2005, my team and I launched the first ever blog platform developed for Bangladesh, making it possible for Bangla-speaking Internet users to express themselves in their own

mother tongue. When we launched www.somewhereinblog.net, there were less than 50 bloggers in Bangladesh, most of them blogging in English. However, news spread rapidly by word of mouth and blogging became a big hit in the Bangla community. Within two months, we reached 1,000 registered bloggers, within two years, 10,000 and within six years we exceeded blogger number 100,000 in the country, and on our platform alone. Several new platforms have been launched since, most of these as copies of the concept and format used by our platform, but with a different approach to content, target groups and moderation policies. We had started a blogging revolution giving people a sense of belonging, and at the peak time for blog communities, in early 2013, there were several dozen blog communities in operation. Most active bloggers in the country, were then estimated to be between 200,000 and 300,000 (Freedom House, 2013), and they now belonged to a blog community, a very unique situation in the global blogosphere. Blogs were not posted to highlight one's own quality or style, but to create engagement and improve the society.

Toward the end of 2011, bloggers had become so influential in the local online community that they took pride in introducing themselves as bloggers, and their strength lay in the language used and the sense of belonging to a community. Blogging offered a new two-way communication and it was the perfect medium for massive content creation with high relevance in terms of language, topics and local community.

We, as the leading platform, crowd-sourced the development of a set of moderation practices to the bloggers and developed a set of rules, which was debated, adjusted and finally implemented. Blog posts, which were clearly against the freedom and sovereignty of the nation, against the constitution or against the law of the land were to be removed, as such content is illegal by law in Bangladesh (ATN News, 2012). Also, posts that included personal attacks, hate speech, libel, defamation, obscene or offensive content, illegally reproduced content, and so on, would be removed under these rules. We moderated language but not opinions; as such, we managed to get lively debates between believers and non-believers, between left and right, with a high ceiling of tolerance.

Bloggers became brave writers raising important issues, which had hardly been debated before under Bangladesh's strict social control.

They became an active force to push through a demand for holding the long-overdue war crimes tribunal. This had been pending since the country´s independence in 1971, and now people who opposed this tribunal became wary of bloggers.

While the Arab Spring swept through many Muslim countries as the current decade began, the Shahbagh Movement – a movement to seek strict punishment for the war criminals and to rid politics of religious influence – was spontaneously initiated by bloggers and activists. This occurred in February 2013 (Bdnews24, 2013) and many of the outspoken bloggers were on the blog platform I operate. Thanks to social media, this movement grew quickly and, within days, had attracted tens of thousands of people, who demonstrated by occupying a busy road crossing, though the ruling party men soon infiltrated the organizers and manipulated the direction of the movement (Hossain, 2013).

Killings fuelled by hate speech on Facebook

During the early days, a blogger related to the Shahbag Movement was brutally killed outside his home by extremists. The killers wanted to garner attention from the murder and to portray the victim as an enemy of Islam. To this end they had secretly created a fake blog in his name on WordPress before killing him for his alleged blasphemous content, which they labelled a belittling of the Holy Prophet (Prithi, 2013). Here again, they were able to use one of the transnational social media, which lacked control or moderation of content, as a means to carry out their evil plot.

The opposition parties wasted no time and stirred up religious sentiments by labelling the whole movement and all bloggers as sinful atheists pursuing an anti-Islam agenda. After a couple of months with growing hatred against "atheist bloggers", a new movement (Hefazat Movement) of up to half a million radical Islamic students and clerics emerged on the streets of Dhaka (McGievering, 2013), demanding death to bloggers and closure of all social media to save Islam. In an attempt to change the direction of the political wind prior to the national elections, the leaders of the opposition parties were most indulgent toward this religious movement. The Movement, including other radical Islamic groups, to a large extent succeeded in branding bloggers as atheists and scapegoats for all moral declines

in the country, thereby turning them into the most despised kind people in the society.

Their constant attacking of the "atheists" became acceptable to large parts of the population as a result of the Movement's rampant propaganda to an audience that hardly knew what a blogger was, a campaign waged through their own pro-Islamic digital media channels, using many Facebook groups and a vast numbers of fake online profiles (Bdnews24, 2015). The tragedy was that even after several brutal killings which had shocked the nation, the radical Islamists behind the Hefazat Movement now managed to establish the concepts of "blog" and "blogging" as the enemy of Islam. The Hefazat Movement also submitted a list of thirteen demands to the government, including the death sentence for blasphemy, strict punishment for bloggers and atheists who commented on the Prophet and the total prohibition of free mixing of the genders, men and women, in public places (Mustafa, 2013).

Furthermore, the radical Islamists submitted a list of 84 named "atheist" bloggers to the government demanding the strictest actions against them (Subramanian, 2015). It was a chilling experience to find what appeared to be an almost infinite number of Facebook commenters supporting the killing of atheists and bloggers, asking for more bloodshed.

Many bloggers reported that public opinion about them had turned critical and violent. They now lived in fear of sudden attacks. Non-bloggers were even killed for protesting against the killing of bloggers and radical groups succeeded in terrifying the online users, threatening that anyone could be the next victim (Hammer, 2015). While there were almost no visible attempts to investigate the killings and nab the killers, the government chose to jail four bloggers in an attempt to please the radicals, a clear signal that killing atheists and non-believers was not a criminal act. This emboldened the radicals and for the next couple of years, targeted killings became a monthly exercise. At the same time, Facebook became a favourite platform for the killer teams to survey the scene, select a target, and prepare for the next killing. It was mainly ISIS, but also Al Qaeda, which were quick to claim responsibility, immediately following these killings. This they did through their websites and Twitter.

There was an outcry in the more educated parts of the civil society, a demand to arrest the killers and stop the manslaughter, but the police did not appear to have any success, top ministers kept denying the existence of ISIS or Al Qaeda in Bangladesh; in effect, resolving these killings seems not to have been a prioritized issue for Government. The most extreme example of killings by radical Islam in recent times was the Holey Bakery Attack, July 1, 2016, where 18 foreigners were amongst the total of 29 people killed in a terrifying hostage situation carried out by six or seven local ISIS recruits (The Daily Star, 2016), an attack that instantly shattered the emerging international image of a progressive Bangladesh. Facebook and transnational media were found to have played a crucial role in rapid radicalization of many of militant young boys (Counter Extremism Project, 2019), some of whom had been joyful, fun-loving, football crazy, popular young men from well-off families (India Today, 2019). Their friends had noted that they suddenly changed behaviour in matter of weeks, shifting towards extreme religious views, after which they had left the country without notice, usually a few months prior to the terror attack. After the attack, the police started mapping people who had suddenly disappeared from their families without a trace. They found trails of numerous people travelling towards Syria and ISIS territory. There is no doubt that religious extremists actively used Facebook and other transnational social media to spread propaganda, to stir up hatred and to reach out to vulnerable souls whom they attempted to recruit into militant groups (Patrikarakos, 2017). This could not easily happen through local social media, which has a superior understanding and knowledge of the society, and would not let such destructive activities happen.

Freedom of expression

Promoting freedom of expression is not particularly easy, especially not in a polarized country. The rapid growth of the Internet population makes Bangladesh an interesting case study for trends and issues that relates to freedom of expression.

The government has on several instances blocked access to popular websites and services. In January 2007, the mobile and internet networks were temporarily shut down during a government takeover backed by the armed forces, which led to the imposition of state of

emergency laws lasting two years. These laws prohibited the media from publishing any content criticizing the government. In 2010 and 2015, Facebook was banned for a period of up to three weeks for "content deemed inappropriate", Youtube was, as mentioned earlier, banned once for a period of eight months in fear of upsetting religious sentiments, and several chat apps like Messenger, Whatsapp, Viber, Tango, etc. were banned for three weeks to prevent religious extremists from communicating and possibly planning terror attacks in relation to a sensitive judgement. In addition to these restrictions, the whole Internet has been shut down a few times for shorter periods, once termed a "drill" and other times termed a "mistake" (Colhoun, 2015).

Bangladesh is a country with lots of expectations on young students' shoulders. There are few opportunities for kids to roam freely in the large cities; many who are studying thus live isolated lives with long study hours. Social media outlets open a new world to them and connect them to a world they would otherwise not discover. However, in their situation, this easily creates an addiction, which exceeds the limits acceptable to many families. Consequently, there has been a heated debate with the civil society, where many worrying about how this affects the upcoming generation. In 2016, the government proposed to shut down Facebook for six hours after midnight every night under the pretext of protecting children against online addiction, but after massive protests from media and groups working for freedom of expression, the idea was withdrawn and dropped.

Today, Bangladesh is a country where the Prime Minister repeatedly stresses that the press enjoys "full freedom". However, the reality is that all media as well as social media users, apply a high level of self-censorship and mostly avoid controversial topics. There are several chilling factors, all of which have instilled great fear and reduced the lively online debate seen only 3-4 years ago. These include verbal attacks and harassment of media and journalists by leading political figures, scaring away advertisers, frequent intimidation by intelligence agencies, enforced disappearances (Mahmud, 2018), religious extremists ready to kill online opponents and new ICT laws stipulating a minimum of seven years in jail for hurting anyone's religious sentiments.

In an attempt to build a legal framework to control the new media, the parliament has passed several controversial laws and programs,

which undermine press freedom and freedom of expression in the country. The original intention might have been to create a legal framework which effectively could stop the socially demeaning and tragic harassment of girls, but the final result is a law which very easily can be abused in order to jail activists, bloggers, journalists and even the intermediaries (the platform owners), for participating in the act of publishing content that someone may find offensive. The ICT Act of 2006, Section 57, has been translated as follows:

> If any person deliberately publishes or transmits or causes to be published or transmitted in the website or in electronic form any material which is fake and obscene or its effect is such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it, or causes to deteriorate or creates possibility to deteriorate law and order, prejudice the image of the State or person or causes to hurt or may hurt religious belief or instigate against any person or organization, then this activity of his will be regarded as an offence. (ICT Act, 2016)

Under the amended act of 2013, the minimum punishment without the possibility of bail is seven years in jail, to a maximum of 14 years plus a fine in excess of $120,000 US (Freedom House, 2016). This paragraph has been used to jail several Facebook users for status updates on sensitive issues, and at least 21 journalists were sued under this paragraph ion the course of only four months during the spring of 2017 (Adhikary, 2017). As mentioned, one visible result is a strict self-censorship among bloggers, Facebook users and many other media where people who previously were outspoken activists. They now keep silent and avoid sharing their reactions and opinions with the public. The high level of strict self-censorship is now also noticeable in the leading national newspapers and TV channel. The present ICT Act is a big threat to the freedom of expression in Bangladesh and many organizations and diplomats have requested that the government remove Section 57 from the ICT Act, describing it as a medieval law, which is being used to harass and silence activists and journalists.

In their eagerness to control the online media, the government is now mulling over a new "National online mass media policy", under

which all online media have to be registered with the broadcast commission, assumingly local media only. According to news reports, "Any individual or organization uploading written or multimedia contents in Bangla, English or any other language via the internet from Bangladesh will be defined as an online media outlet" (Bdnews24, 2018), an impossible definition as it would declare every user of electronic media as an "online media outlet". A justified fear is that the government's grip on media and freedom of expression is likely to tighten and that the new laws could be abused to silence critical voices.

Local versus transnational media

In Bangladesh, public opinion on freedom of expression ranges from religious groups demanding a complete ban and the death penalty for the operators of many popular social media platforms, to liberal groups demanding absolute freedom of expression, with a general perception amongst the middle class that any content insulting religion, the country or women should somehow be controlled or blocked. Many blame Facebook in particular for the increased acceptance of radical Islamic ideas among many strata of the population. Facebook is blamed since the rather immature internet population of Bangladesh eagerly consumes a flood of political propaganda, odd religious beliefs and fake news – all without any idea that one ought to check the source or origin of these pieces of "information." At the same time, there are a few individuals, perhaps hard-core atheists, who also actively use social media to ridicule and insult religious beliefs. Their forms of expression tend to cause millions to feel hurt and upset. For these varied reasons, many feel that the level of hatred and intolerance is accelerating in Bangladesh due to the presence of social media.

The government has several times had meetings with regional Facebook executives, even at the ministerial level, to demand faster and more efficient responses to its call for content moderation or to provide user details; these meetings have met with moderate success (Husain, 2017). There is an obvious need to control the spread of militancy and degradation of social and moral values since the abuse is severe and it inflames instability in the nation, but so far there are no clear signs of the Facebook authorities heeding such demands. Without some

meaningful collaboration, an unpopular national ban of Facebook may be the last resort.

Local presence versus remote administration

We have seen that Facebook is a social media platform lacking a local presence, lacking an understanding of the local culture and mind-set, and largely lacking interest when asked to moderate anything of danger to people or communities in Bangladesh. This lack of local knowledge and lack of response in times of emergency, when lives are at risk and villages are burning, in response to a Facebook photo (RT, 2012), is, in a way, tragic for countries like Bangladesh. Had Facebook been as responsible as the local Bangladeshi blog platforms, in terms of realizing the potential danger and acting quickly on highly offensive content, I believe that religious extremism and communal hatred would not have become endemic has it has today.

Tightening the freedom of expression is partially a belated response to prevent new attacks on minorities, spread of extremism and abuse of women online. Hate speech is not new and indeed was also been a problem before the age of the internet. For more than a decade, we have been calling for responsible blogging and properly observed social media etiquette. What is now worrying is whether we are at a point where social media will be the cause of social unrest and even conflicts spreading across nations? If so, is that a result of our abuse of the freedom of expression and failure to act responsible on social media? And if so, do we then deserve this unlimited freedom?

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8. Countering violent extremism in Bangladesh

Julfikar Ali Manik

Bangladesh's emergence in 1971 rose from a burning spirit for a progressive, secular and democratic society. The Independence of Bangladesh followed a decades-long struggle between secular democratic ideologies of an aspiring People's Republic of Bangladesh and Islamisation espoused by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Severe economic deprivation and social discrimination aside, the people of Bangladesh suffered from Pakistan's aggression to undermine the Bangla language and culture, shared by both Hindu and Muslim Bengali population living across the borders in West Bengal, India and erstwhile East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. Thus the Bangla language was deemed by the Pakistani rulers as not Islamic enough, and the aggression was their way of "Islamisation" of the Bangla language and culture, by replacing with it Arabic culture and Urdu language in Bangladesh, which was the eastern part of Pakistan between 1947 and 1971.

Attacks on the works of the legendary lights of Bangla literature and poetry Rabindranath Thakur [Tagore] and Kazi Nazrul Islam and instructions by the Pakistani rulers to replace Bangla letters with the Arabic alphabet, met with steep resistance in the 1940s and early 1950s from the Bengali, that culminated in the historic language movement in 1952.

Rabindranath Thakur [Tagore], who belonged to the Brahma faith, was mislabelled as a "Hindu" poet spreading Hindu culture and beliefs while Kazi Nazrul Islam, in spite of being born a Muslim, was

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denounced as an atheist. In essence, the fight served to undermine the secular spirits promoted by both the leading poets that inspired harmonious cohabitation across faiths, namely Muslims and Hindus, to chart a path of hatred and conflict.

Ideological divide

Islamic extremists considered the secular nature of Bangla language, literature, cultural practices and expressions as a threat to Islamic values, culture and teaching, rooted in Arabic language and culture. To both Pakistani rulers and politicians, Bengali Muslims, in spite of their religious faith and practices, were somehow not "Islamic enough" since they shared language and culture with Hindus – and therefore easy targets for hatred.

Bangladesh gained independence in 1971 through a bloodstained War of Liberation against Pakistan. In the war, a section of Bengali Muslims not only politically sided with Pakistan's occupational army, but also took active part in the genocide, mass killing, violence and abuse of women in the name of Islam. Clearly opposed to the birth of Bangladesh, these groups then and until now have remained loyal to Pakistan.

Aided by these local collaborators, the Pakistani forces systematically targeted eminent intellectuals, educators, writers, professors, doctors, artists, and journalists throughout the 1971 war. In a last ditch attempt to bereft the new nation of its best brains and invaluable intellectual resources critical for nation building, a large number of intellectuals were rounded up, massacred and buried together in a mass grave on December 14, 1971, barely two nights before the Pakistanis surrendered to the valiant Bengali freedom fighters and Bangladesh became independent on December 16, 1971.

The persistent ideological divide had cost our new nation the much-needed unity. Unfortunately, the divide has widened over the past 47 years – deeply impacting Bangladesh's socio-political dynamics until now. A nation born to realise secular humanity, by breaking away from Pakistan and rejecting a religion-based two-nation theory, has lost its original ideology and identity through the incurable political divide.

Post liberation Bangladesh

Learning from the strife between religions imposed by the Islamic extremists for their political gain and from the enormous loss and suffering in the war-torn nation, one of the first decisions of the first government of independent Bangladesh was to ban religious-based communal politics. Jamaat-e-Islami and other communal parties, which played an active role in assisting Pakistani occupational forces and in committing genocide and all kinds of war crimes, were banned.

The first Constitution of sovereign Bangladesh in 1972, enshrined secularism as one of the four fundamental principles and pillars on which to build the new country. The defeated communal political groups and their abettors in the different corners of society refused to accept the idea of an independent and secular Bangladesh. Aided by conspirators at home and abroad, they went on plotting, and in 1975 assassinated Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the father of the nation and the architect of Independent Bangladesh, and his family. The gruesome killings and subsequent political turns derailed the secular and progressive path Bangladesh aspired for and instead paved the way for the resurgence of fundamentalism in a war that started ravaging Bangladesh barely within three and a half years into its journey.

Communal forces that were defeated in 1971, became active again to govern the country according to the communal ideology through the subsequent regimes that assumed the seat of power. Bangladesh's first military ruler, Major General Ziaur Rahman [ruled from 1977 to 1981], who founded the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in the name of introducing "multi-party democracy", allowed religion-based communal politics and paved the way for the communal parties to return to the political arena. Secularism was removed from the four fundamental principles enshrined in the Constitution of Bangladesh. Moreover, "Bismillah-Ar-Rahman-Ar-Rahim" [In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful] has been inserted/written at the top of the preamble of the Constitution of Bangladesh.

These major political ideological shifts threw away secular democratic values. The trend continued throughout the 1980s during the regime of the second military ruler Lt. General H.M. Ershad. He also widely patronised Islamist radicalism, communal and fundamentalist politics and instigated these sections through the introduction of a

controversial provision of a "state religion" in the Constitution. Through these machinations, Ershad managed to declare Islam as a state religion by amending the Constitution, defeating the very secular spirit that was at the core of the inception of Bangladesh as a nation.

Military regimes that assumed the state power by undemocratic means and without popular support, instead exploited the innocent sentiments of a majority Muslim population by using the name of Islam. The idea of Islamisation became a deep-rooted, long-lasting political tactic and helped change not only the political but also the secular psyche of society.

Secularism up against hurdles

In the 1980s, during the regime of the second military dictator H.M. Ershad, a large number of madrasa-educated Bangladeshi Muslims left for Afghanistan to fight with the Afghan Mujahedeen against the occupying Soviet forces. Later, other similar groups went to Myanmar to fight with armed Rohingya insurgent groups. On return, these groups started aligning within the country both openly and underground with the agenda to establish *Shariah* Law through *Jihad, Shariah* being the ultimate goal of other Islamic political parties.

Even the fall of General Ershad's autocratic regime, through a mass uprising and return of democracy in Bangladesh in 1991, did not halt the rise of Islamic extremism. Rather, when the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), led by Begum Khaleda Zia was in state power from 1991 to 1996, Bangladesh's first Islamist militant outfit Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami Bangladesh (Huji-B) emerged through an open declaration of its jihadist agenda at a press conference at the National Press Club in April 1992, followed by a procession in the city. Many of those Huji-Bangladesh leaders are now at the helm of Hefazat-e-Islam, an organisation that made a list of secular bloggers writers and free thinkers labelling them atheist and demanding their execution. The Hefazat-e-Islam has taken a position against Bangladesh's secular education policy as part of its long-term strategy to influence young minds from early on by impinging on their education. The Islamic extremist outfit issues threats against secular textbook curriculum for school students from level one to ten. Hefazat's top organisers dream of implementing a Taliban like rule in Bangladesh (Manik, 2013).

Since 1992, Huji-Bangladesh flourished and continued propagating their militant, extreme and communal ideologies unchallenged for years until the Awami League Government, led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina began chasing them in January 1998, as the militant organisation became increasingly aggressive and began to carry out terrorist attacks across the country. The situation posed difficult challenges that the government was struggling to contain. Pro-Islamic political groups exploited general people's religious sentiment against the Awami League government by accusing them of going after Islam, the Islamic faith, and scholars.

Islamic political parties never hesitated to spread rumours and speculations using religious sentiments to win over secular political parties, including the Awami League. In fact, misrepresenting and distorting facts, spreading rumours, speculations and propaganda are some key tactics they used to influence popular beliefs. The propaganda thrived on some baseless and unrealistic yet inflammatory claims such as "Bangladesh would be part of India...," (Dhaka, 2001), "*Azan* (call for Muslim prayer) would be replaced in Bangladesh by blowing of conch-shells...." (Qadir, 2018).

Similarly, claims occurred about mosques that would be turned into Hindu temples, Hindu *Ulu dhwani* would be heard from mosques instead of the Holy *Azan*[1]; that Bangladesh would be converted to a Hindu State; Bangladesh would become a province of India; Muslims of the country would not be able to practice their religion in the country. Such political rhetoric has been used in the past decades to motivate people's sentiments against the secular spirit even before Bangladesh's national election in 2008. Begum Khaleda Zia, chief of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and widow of the first military ruler, urged voters to vote for her party to save Islam and the country (bdnews, 2008).

Interestingly, these false claims and propaganda tactics were very similar to those used by Jamaat-e-Islami and other Islamic parties, in 1971, against the liberation forces, to foil the birth of secular Bangladesh.

And this propaganda helped to confuse large sections of the new generations, who grew up in the post-liberation dark era when martial law dictators had allowed the systematic infiltration of religion-based communal ideology in the society, by distorting historical facts in text

books, allowing the mushrooming of Madrasas (Islamic schools) and controlling the mainstream media. All these helped create a safe haven for those who have been engaged in spreading the dangerous disease of Islamic extremism, hatred for other religious communities, communalism, radicalisation, Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh, in decades since the killing of Sheikh Mujib in 1975.

Rise of terrorism and extremism in Bangladesh

Bangladesh witnessed the first phase of terror attacks from the 1990s, continuing up to 2004-5, while the terror outfits began getting organised from the late 1980s. Progressive, secular cultural organisations, political parties and the judiciary, including judges and lawyers, were targets of terrorist rather than secular individuals. What emerged were systematic efforts to silence organised secular political, cultural and social forces that supported the democratic structure of the state. In this phase, individuals did not appear so much as targets even though some intellectuals such as Professor Humayun Azad were attacked.[2]

But the second phase of terror attacks from 2013 was more focused on silencing voices of progressive, secular individuals as well as intimidating not only Hindu, Buddhist and Christian minority communities, but also Muslims belonging to sects other than the majority Sunnis. In 2015, Shia Muslims came under attack for the first time. The Ahmadiyya Muslim community, traditional targets of fundamentalists, encountered fresh attacks. Some other little known religious communities and a few university professors were also been targeted. And then, for the first time ever in Bangladesh, foreign nationals were killed. This came as a surprise as Bangladeshis; even impoverished rural communities are-well known for their hospitable, friendly and accommodative attitude towards foreign nationals (Manik & Barry, 2015; Manik & Barstow, 2015).

The ideological scuffle between Islamic extremists and secular bloggers/writers that had been going on for years, escalated to physical attacks and killing from 2013 onwards.

It is now evident that Islamic extremists have systematically targeted, followed and enlisted young bloggers and writers in premeditated hit lists. They went to the extent of announcing on social media their hit lists and murder plans of certain individuals. These appeared on Facebook and blogs, way before the actual attacks took place.

The serial killing of bloggers and writers sent chilling messages to the community of secular writers and freethinkers. Panic-stricken, many of them stopped writing and expressing their thoughts. Some even abandoned their professional, social and family commitments and went into hiding. Publishers known for publishing creative, secular literature were not spared from threats that made them wary of publishing any book that could subject them to aggressive fanatic attacks.

A culture of fear and self-censorship pervaded the intellectual arena. Terribly frightened by the traumatising reality, secular youths, writers, bloggers, and freethinkers and even journalists began to leave Bangladesh to save their lives. The circle of targets has gradually expanded to include as many minorities as you can think of – religious, sectarian, social, by sexual preference and of course intellectuals – thinkers, writers, journalists, bloggers, activists, publishers, and most recently, foreign nationals have also become new targets.

The word "hacked" has taken on a new painful meaning in Bangladesh through the traumatic development of physical violence and murder. This is the result of a long scheme of curbing freedom of thoughts and diversity of opinion and existence.

The Islamic fanatic and extremist forces are tirelessly at work to uproot the pluralist, progressive, secular ideology that created Bangladesh. It is a political goal of Islamic extremists to ensure supremacy of their single voice by silencing the rest.

Political patronage and a culture of denial

Extremism and terrorism have flourished in Bangladesh with unique opportunities and patronage from democratic parties and leaders, even the ruling government. Patronage from influential or powerful offices and individuals in civil and military administration, security forces and also in the private sector, business arena or educational sector have assumed alarming proportions resulting in an expanding network and circle of influence for the Islamic extremist politics making the forces all the more difficult to contain. Exposing the patrons of terrorism and extremism faced with denial is one of the biggest challenges. I myself have reported extensively on the subject and presented evidence regarding how the Bangladesh Nationalist (BNP) party led a government-patronised rise of Islamic extremism,

terrorism and violence during their rule between 2001 and 2006 (Manik, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d).

A common practice by the Bangladesh-based terrorist and extremist outfits usually is that they do not disclose their existence and do not claim responsibility for terror attacks carried out by them. Only two terrorist outfits Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami Bangladesh (Huji-B) and Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) officially announced their existence. Of the two outfits, Huji-B never claimed responsibility for any attack officially since it started out in the late 1990s. Rather, its top leader officially denied their role behind the attacks. JMB is the only terrorist outfit in Bangladesh that officially claimed responsibility for several hundred terror attacks in 2004 and 2005.

No credible claims were made for the approximately 100 terror attacks witnessed by Bangladesh during the last seven years. Some vague and anonymous claims of questionable credibility came through on social media that did not give any lead. There is also a lack of transparency in sharing unclassified information that can and should be made available to the public. Authorities tend to deny and hide many facts and realities regarding extremism and terrorism, which need to be revealed, based on documents, pictures, witnesses and other evidence.

Affiliations with foreign militant and terrorist outfits

A new style of extremism and terrorism was introduced in Bangladesh when the Bangladeshi-Afghan war veterans started to return from Afghanistan and Pakistan in the late 1980s after years of fighting for the Afghan Mujahedeen against the Soviet forces. A section of Bangladeshi-Afghan war veterans stayed on after the war in Afghanistan in the 1990s. Some of them formed close links to the top leadership of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, including Osama bin Laden. Inspired and empowered by those ties, they continued to maintain the hidden connections. Similarly, some Bangladeshis left for Syria to fight for the IS. Many extremists living in Bangladesh are also inspired by the IS, glorifying them through writing books, producing and releasing on the web, video clips from Afghanistan or Syria, showing their participation and support to the IS or Al Qaeda's jihad.

Dilemmas and compromises

The series of killings of bloggers and writers practically passed without notable protests by the general public, except for in the media, social media, and academic and civil society. The lack of protests and concern came as a surprise considering the gruesome nature of the killings. Or maybe not; given the years of propaganda that had already caused divides and biases against bloggers, as atheists and anti-Islam.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was attacked and criticised for a visit of sympathy to the grieving family of Rajib Haider, the first blogger hacked to death in public in February 2013. The prime minister and the ruling Awami League were accused of patronising atheists and anti-Islamic writers. Since then, there have not been any high level visits to families of bloggers/writers murdered subsequently. Afraid of losing the Islamic vote bank and ruffling the extremists, the prime minister and senior leaders instead resorted to statements placating the extremists and warning writers/bloggers to refrain from writing things that can be potentially hurtful to religious sentiments. These statements were seen as validation of the killers and making the victims' families, progressive writers and potential terrorists' targets even more vulnerable.

The killing of two LGBT rights activists at their home in 2016 sent shockwaves through the vulnerable community. After the killing, the victims' families, friends and sympathisers could not raise their voice and demand justice, faced with statements issued immediately from a minister that homosexuality is prohibited by the law of the country (Mamun, 2016).[3]

Such statements and remarks further weakened the vulnerable community, causing more trouble for them, and no one came forward to speak for them. Rather, the victim blaming stigmatised the families of victims.

Then there is the other side of the coin: stigma for the families of Islamic extremists and terrorists. Five terrorists were killed by an army operation after a terror attack at a bakery in Gulshan district, Dhaka city on July 1, 2016. When I met some of the families of those terrorists, I felt they were overwhelmed by fear and trauma as much as by grief. On one hand they lost their sons, on the other hand as those young men were involved in the terrorist attacks where unsuspecting diners were killed, they were faced with a legal and social backlash. The

families were stigmatised in spite of them not having any role in their sons joining terrorist groups. Some of them went into hiding fearing a backlash and attacks as parents and families of terrorists. They had no access to protection of psychosocial support (Manik, 2016).

In Bangladesh, Islamic extremists have used bigotry, religious intolerance, extremism and terrorism as tools to push back Sufism, against moderate and liberal Muslims and secular political, social and cultural entities. However, this is the first time in Bangladesh that the extremists' demands have impinged upon school curricula to dictate what should or should not be included. There is a clear attempt to eliminate the works of progressive, secular and Hindu writers from school textbooks. Some literary write-ups have already been removed from children's Bangla textbooks as Islamic extremists found those objectionable on the ground that they depicted Gods, characters and holy places from Hindu mythology.

In the cultural history of Bangladesh, these stories were not always judged according to religious values, but rather as part of the ancient culture of Bengal representing a pluralist Bengali nation that blended across religious sects, e.g., Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Christians. The Islamic extremists are increasingly belligerent against the so-called anti-Islamic literature in Bangla textbooks for school students, demanding they be replaced by pro-Islamic content (Barry & Manik, 2017).

The demands for changes in Bangla textbooks that began in 2013, coincided with the time Islamic extremists labelled secular bloggers and writers as "atheists" demanding their punishment, execution and elimination. About a hundred such killings have occurred between 2013 and 2016. Secular bloggers, writers, publishers, intelligentsia and foreign nationals were murdered across Bangladesh by the extremists' self-styled "hacking by machete" method (Anand & Manik, 2016).

The scheme of influencing young minds toward certain religious and ideological leanings was alarmingly manifested through the way in which middle-class educated youth were willing participants in the July 2016 Dhaka café terror attack and killings. Secular forces consider the secular government's move, to make changes in the textbooks faced with demands from Islamist extremists, a big compromise with the bigots to get the majority Muslim vote in the elections.

Countering extremism and terrorism: overcoming challenges

Increasingly, terrorism and extremism pose major challenges not only for the government, it is also a huge political and social challenge to de-radicalise those who have already been radicalised. It will take a tremendous amount of strategic course of action to stop or prevent ways and mechanisms that have already taken root, of radicalising and recruiting young boys and girls for extremist outfits.

In combating religious extremism and terrorism, Bangladesh is largely dependent on security forces, law enforcing agencies and the judiciary. There are limitations in these sectors that are not helpful in successfully combating and containing the rise of terrorism. Arrests are not enough, prisons should have de-radicalisation programmes with proper training and monitoring for reform opportunities for those arrested and also see to it that they are not able to radicalise other prisoners.

Legal and security measures aside, the authorities and other actors must put in place effective socio-political and cultural programmes and movements, to create awareness among all sections of people against the allure of extremists. Let me share a recent personal experience; my 14-year old nephew trains for cricket in a local school. He also loves to draw. On learning about his aspiration to become an artist, one of his friends in the cricket school asked him to stop drawing, as this is prohibited in Islam. Scared and confused, he stopped drawing pictures. His mother told me about it. It took me a while to allay his fears and motivate him to start drawing again. Radicalisation of the youth has spread at an alarming extent, not only in an organised manner, but also informally behind the scenes, socially and at an intimate individual level. Social media has opened up new avenues for exclusive interactions on the Internet, which is an instrumental way of reaching out to, persuading and enrolling young people silently and invisibly. The modern day busy life and smaller families with fewer children have a lot less interaction and sharing between parents and adolescent children, compared to what my generation experienced growing up. In many families, parents and family members mostly remain in the dark about the activities and affiliations of a growing adolescent and youth.

With easy access to the internet, young adults explore the deep web and the dark web in their isolation looking for a spark, falling into the lure of the unknown "friends" they "meet" on the web. These "friends" talk and spend time in engaging conversations. They understand the frustrations and aspirations of a tender age; they open doors to a new and exciting underworld; they motivate and help the youth to have a dream, a compelling purpose to live for! A sense of purpose that our society has failed to offer the youth.

The adventure, the heroism they watch only in movies, becomes real when the youth are misled into believing that killing is holy, bombing is sacred, hacking to death is the way to liberate the world of enemies of Islam. What better way than using the religion they have always known to represent the good and the right?

With a deteriorating political culture marked by dishonesty and corruption, politics no longer attracts the educated, decent people. It is seen as the necessary evil, the monster that feeds itself and cares for none. Social, cultural and sports activities are not as vibrant as they used to be. There is, in fact, very little educational and healthy entertainment available for the youth to engage meaningfully.

Growing up in nuclear families in isolation, our youth remains hungry for a cause, a purpose, an inspiration that can capture their adventurous imagination. In the absence of positive stimuli, negative motivation stealthily takes its place and influences them.

We are still at a loss as to what kind of motivational and brainwashing tactics are being used to recruit the youth from educated, liberal families and make them believe and do things they had never been taught during their upbringing or had as a frame of reference. It is a wonder and needs to be thoroughly investigated and understood. Only then can we hope to address it properly.

Islamic extremists are not only using grenades, bombs, firearms or machetes in their acts of terrorism, to transform the secular democratic Bangladesh into a fundamentalist and extremist haven, they have also strategically and systematically initiated social and cultural change. They are actively trying to change education by implanting the seeds of fundamentalism in early learning. This eventually brings change to secular values and practices. Cleverly, they have targeted the youth as the most important group to effect those changes.

It seems a long cultural struggle is unavoidable and imminent for countering and preventing the present rise of Islamic extremism in Bangladesh. This has to start from the family, in every household. It has to start with the school, the curriculum, as well as books and lectures. Sadly, the Islamic extremists are ahead of the game. They strategised where to start and much earlier than those few who are now thinking of countering the damages that have already been done.

Extensive investment in research and policy level work is needed to understand the reasons behind the radicalisation of the Bangladeshi youth. We need to bring the best brains and resources together to find a solution. Law enforcement and security agencies as well as the judiciary, are all absolutely important, as they already have the most information about the radicals.

The government will need to focus on policies and resource allocations for building a positive programme for the youth. Finally, what we need is a massive and unifying social and cultural movement that brings together, all those who have a stake in countering terrorism and extremism in Bangladesh, and are willing to do the hard work.

We have lost too much time. We have allowed major damage to be done that will be extremely difficult to reverse. We cannot afford to lose any more time. The time to act is *now*!

Notes

1. *Ulu dhwani* is a custom mostly practiced by Bengali Hindu women at special occasions such as Durga *puja* (worship) and weddings. It is a vocal sound made by a group of women, believed to bring auspiciousness and drive out evil spells.
2. A group of terrorists brutally hacked Azad, as he made his way out through the crowded streets of the celebrated annual book fair held in the Bangladesh capital in February 2004.The book fair draws the country's largest annual literary and cultural congregation in the vicinity of Dhaka University campus, the cultural heartland of Bangladesh. In spite of getting treatment at home and abroad, a critically wounded Professor Azad died of his fatal injuries a few months later. He was a powerful, progressive and popular writer of Bangla literature representing secular thinkers. The attack nonetheless was on the progressive ideology he upheld.
3. http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/sections_detail.php?id=11&sections_id=3233;

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PART TWO

Freedom of expression and new challenges

9. Pakistan's war on free speech

Challenges and probable solutions

Altaf Ullah Khan

The record of freedom of expression and journalism, viewed through the history of Pakistani governments is rather shabby. However, what has happened lately, and is still going on, is highly alarming. It appears to be a fight between, on one hand, the status quo, the negative morality espoused by the state as a force of unification rooted in tradition, and on the other, the positive alternative, which is inherently present in the status quo (Drolet, 2007). What we mean by negative morality is one that focuses on discipline and order. It is rooted in tradition and resists change. In the very best of its forms, it maintains order and ensures steady social processes, avoiding social disorder by checking and constraining the forces of innovation. The Pakistani state and other organizations responsible for group cohesion use negative morality to maintain order. However, in a democratic dispensation, such a point of view is not against innovation. Innovation, the liberal thought, and its accompanying boons are inherent in the negative morality, thus, the very antithesis that justifies the thesis. The liberal strands in a human society represent what can be called the positive morality. A good state and government, or ruling system for that matter, would ensure the balance between the negative and positive. While not espousing the positive one, the balanced state gives it enough room to thrive. In autocracies, dictatorships, anarchies, and all societies ruled by closed and obscurantist ideologies this balance is lost. The state and the power centers deny the people their right to dissent, thus stifling positive

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morality. They lean upon tradition for the very purpose of acquiring legitimacy for the nefarious designs of a small group of power brokers.

Pakistan, at this moment, is going through this stifling phase of denying the people their right to hold an opinion. It was never easy to speak one's mind in a country whose democratic course was diverted towards ideological meanderings. Government-media relations and that of liberal intelligentsia and the people in power never remained good throughout Pakistani history. However, the present represents one of the worst nightmares for the people of this nation.

This chapter looks at the question of freedom of speech and expression from the perspective of the need for balance between negative and positive morality. The analysis of different segments of society in terms of freedom to express in relation to the government's control over the narrative can be viewed as a measure of freedom of expression and thought. The author's view is based on the premise that the government and the power centers in Pakistan do not serve the interests of most people in the society. Instead, they impose restrictions on the media and other groups and individuals. In a word, they have vested interests to serve. The curbs on freedom are not regulatory, but rather repressive. These are not being practiced to ensure a steady transition from one stage of innovative change to another level, while keeping the traditional fabric of the society intact. Indeed, the preservative continuity of the society is not the purpose of these curbs. Unfortunately, their aim is to keep a tight grip on the society, its institutions and individuals, thereby gagging free thought for the very purpose of controlling the narrative and the discourse in favor of a small ruling elite in the country. The following discussion provides examples and discussion of this situation and seeks to explore the veracity of this statement through in-depth debate.

A strange "hero"

"Proletarians, in practice, are not allowed to graduate into the Party," says George Orwell (1983: 178). The most gifted among them, who might possibly become nuclei of discontent, are simply marked down by the Thought Police and eliminated.

A retrospective view of the past decade gives us an impression of the Orwellian prophecy. From this perspective one gains an im-

pression of a dreadful trend of suppression, trampling on individual freedoms in the worst possible way, by making a precedent out of individuals who dare to speak their minds for the very purpose of keeping a large majority of the population fearful to speak, or intimidating them even from thinking freely. The reason for abhorrence of the very idea of a free media and a thinking social mind might lie in post-colonial structure of Pakistan. "… the triumphant natives soon enough found out that they needed the West and that the idea of *total* Independence was a nationalist fiction designed mainly for what Fanon calls 'nationalist bourgeois', who in turn run the new countries with a callous, exploitative tyranny reminiscent of their masters" (Said, 1993: 20). Moving from this premise, one can understand "why the very idea of freedom of thought, let alone freedom of expression or journalism, has become anathema to the governing structures in Pakistan" (Khan, 2017).

The murder of the former governor of Punjab, Salman Taseer, in broad daylight by his official police guard, Mumtaz Qadri, unfolded an unending show of aggression in the name of religion, and nationalism. Taseer was killed on January 4, 2011. The extremist clerics' claim that he deserved death because he was guilty of "blasphemy and apostasy"; because he termed the blasphemy laws in the country "inhuman" (Boon, 2017). This was the first ever high-profile murder in Pakistan in the name of religion. The fatwa (religious verdict) was issued by the Sunni Tehreek (movement), a Barelvi sect in Islam, whose stance on issues other than blasphemy remained pretty mild (ibid). Mumtaz Qadri, the murderer, became a religious-national hero. It was not easy for the court to issue a death sentence, and when it happened, more than 10,000 people participated in the funeral (ibid). In Norway, a demonstration supporting Mumtaz Qadri was held outside Pakistan's embassy, on 9 March 2016. One of the slogans carried by approximately one hundred participants, was, "In service of the Prophet, even death is acceptable".[1] This act could signal the beginning of the end of liberal freedom in Pakistan. True, Pakistan never ranked amongst the societies that were based on the ideals of freedom of speech and thought. Nevertheless, there was a continuous struggle between the liberal intelligentsia and the power structure in Pakistan, a power structure, which also had a soft spot for right wing politics. The recent brutal killings, kidnappings,

and brazen acts of physical violence against those espousing different opinions has closed the doors of dialogue. There is no place to debate. The right-wing intelligentsia is sitting cozily because no liberal mind could afford to invoke the wrath of the fanatics who literally quash dissent by killing the dissenting person.

This fear was instilled through repeated and brazen acts of savagery against minorities of faith as well as minorities of thought. Some weeks after the assassination of Salman Taseer, the only Christian minister in the then national cabinet was shot dead by extremists (2011, March 2). His only sin had been to challenge the blasphemy law saying that punishing any person under this law was tantamount to "judicial murder" (Walsch, 2011). President Asif Ali Zardari's decision to put an "infidel Christian" in charge of the committee to review the blasphemy law was furiously criticized (ibid). This criticism was stoked by the right-wing members of the parliament, but its roots were deep enough such that extremists decided to take control of the whole narrative.

Blasphemy became the bogeyman invading and haunting each thinking mind. The government's "inability" to control extremist mobs sent fear signals into every circle in society. Self-censorship became the norm and everyone started talking with a metaphoric pair of scissors in the head. One knew that if the governor of the biggest province in the country could not survive the extremist onslaught, a commoner could never fight religious bigotry! This form of self-censorship "is the result of the fear that individuals have of upsetting the mobs and virtue-signaling hordes of self-righteous personalities. It is the fear that anything you say can and will be used against you in the court of public opinion and political correctness" (Charles, 2018). This fear has been used to regiment the Pakistani liberal opinion into the negative morality where questioning the status quo became synonymous with meddling in the dangerous zone of a shameful death, an action which would come to haunt whole generations. Concomitantly, the very conscience of Pakistani society adjusts to the worst aspects of negative morality. Self-censorship, unlike direct media censorship, is more detrimental to the wellbeing of the people. "Media censorship is a shift in the flow of information, while self-censorship is a shift in consciousness. It is the dangerous cornerstone of group-think" (ibid).

The killing of an outspoken student

This shift in the conscience of the populace exhibited itself in the brutal murder of Mashaal Khan on April 13, 2017. The young man's murder was "just another disturbing consequence of the harsh anti-free speech measures taken by Pakistan's government" that have been in force for the last decade (Khan, 2017). The 23-year-old journalism student at Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was lynched on university campus by none other than his own fellow students. The reasons for this merciless killing are many, from his "outspoken" attitude (Khan, 2017) to his criticism on a local TV channel, Khyber News, of the corrupt practices within the university administration. The bottom line is simple to understand. Whatever happened on that day and went on afterwards "has exposed the ugly side of our radicalized society where people have fallen to a new low of settling their scores and personal grudges in the name of divine and holy beings" (Khan, 2017).

Many have repeatedly questioned the idea of the "helplessness of the state". The state too has colluded in the murder by creating an atmosphere of fear and terror by actively adding to the legal arsenal, which on one hand, curbs freedom of expression, while on the other, it has acquiesced to the growing strength of the extremist mobs. The irony only brought home brutal, stark truths about Pakistani society. In the name of blasphemy mullahs are invoked and rampaging mobs are called upon, much like Frankenstein's monster patched together from lies, distortions, and hate (Khan A., 2018). As Khadija Khan aptly puts in her article in *The Nation*,

The state here is inaccurately being portrayed as victim by those who believe it's the non-state actors challenging the writ of the 'poor' state, completely ignoring the fact that radicalization and pro-extremism policies of the deep state of Pakistan might have led to this degeneration, making them accomplices, or rather the handlers, of this crime (Khan K., 2017).

Deep state is a term referring to clandestine power networks, which influence the working of the state (Barnes, 2018). The deep state is the shadowy existence of intelligence networks, both civil and military, and the powerful persons and organizations working behind the scenes, using the governments in office as instruments for the fulfilment of their ulterior motives.

State as an active oppressor

Warning shots were already fired by the state a few years before the brutal assassination in Mardan, when it called upon people to use the social media "responsibly". As much as ten relevant laws were cited and these were all advertised in newspapers and televised on TV channels, to stress the gravity of any acts of transgression by any social media user (Khan, 2017). It was during the same period (January 2017) that five bloggers were abducted, their websites closed, or taken over by the state-controlled apparatus. The bloggers were abducted after the passage of the "Cyber Crimes Law" by the Pakistani parliament in August 2016 (Khan R., 2016). The Prevention of Cyber Crimes Bill (PECB), according to I. A. Rehman, was designed to punish the common internet user. It has, indeed,

> […] revealed fault lines that should cause a great deal of anxiety to the people. Pakistan's lack of expertise in preparing and assessing legislative proposals, which would maintain a balance between the state's thirst for absolute power and the citizens' inviolable rights, is bound to undermine progress towards an equitable rule of law. (Rehman I. , 2016)

It is such a context and an environment created by the laws and other measures that support and strengthen the negative morality. This paved the way for the regimentation of free expression, which could be seen as an encouragement for the abduction of the bloggers with impunity. Reza Rumi, in his *New York Times* article connects the dots and tries to develop a picture of the otherwise evidence-less crime.

After the enactment of the cybercrime law, Pakistan's intelligence agencies reportedly asked for legal cover to take pre-emptive 'action' against people they believed were breaching national security. This demand was accepted. It is unclear whether the five bloggers and social media activists have disappeared under this arrangement (Rumi, 2017).

Irrespective of the veracity or otherwise of the above statement, the fear among the journalism and media experts indicates that there is increasing pressure on the media, while those who are trying to limit the freedom of press and expression are getting a free run. The journalists are well aware of the fact that if and when they are harassed or physically harmed the state will not come to their rescue. When we look

at the causal connection between all the events it seems like a steady process of muzzling the media, both print and electronic, along with social media and the Internet. The role of the government seems to be progressing from passive and unhelpful bystander to that of an active oppressor. The range of muzzling covers not only media to groups but also individual freedom of expression and thought.

The recent validation to individual vigilantism on social media might be one of the many final nails in the coffin of freedom of thought and positive morality in the country. Cases were registered by individuals against other individuals claiming that their "patriotic feelings were hurt" by the Facebook status of the person accused of bringing a bad name to the country's military and other august institutions. The first ever case was registered in Bahawalpur where the complainant was "checking news feed along with his friend" when he saw another person's post, where he found messages and photos that he thought were "obnoxious" (Report, 2018). The First Information Report (FIR) was launched under section 124-A of the Pakistan Penal Code and section 29-D of the Telegraph Act. Later, another First Information Report (FIR) was launched by a "concerned citizen" in Lahore against Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman, pleading that he was guilty of treason, saying that "Mutahida Majlis E Amal (MMA)[2] chief was guilty of disrespecting the ideology of Pakistan as he announced not to celebrate Independence Day" (Desk, 2018). The religious leader and his party had to explain the position of the party and the personality of the politician through a statement of its Secretary General "that the statement of JUI-F chief was misconstrued as he had never said anything against celebrations of the 72nd Independence Day and made it clear that his party would be marking the day with national zeal and fervor" (Desk, 2018). Article 6 of the Constitution was cited in the FIR, while the complainant also criticized the police for "absconding legal action" warning them if action was not taken, the plaintiff would move to the court (Desk, 2018).

The invocation of Article 6 of the Constitution did not end here. The Chief Justice (CJP) of the Supreme Court of Pakistan in one of his speeches on September 15th, 2018 "warned that any person who attempts to hinder the construction of new dams in the country will be tried under Article 6 of the constitution" (Iqbal, 2018). He said this in the context of his initiative to raise funds to build Diamir-Bhasha Dam

to cope with the water and electricity shortage. The CJP's observation came in the backdrop of criticism by Pakistan Peoples' Party's stalwart Syed Khursheed Shah who was quoted as saying that "the issue of dam construction had been politicized so much that those who wanted to develop reservoirs should form their own political party" (Iqbal, 2018).

The laws and restrictions

The incidents are not important in themselves; however, the overall context of this discourse pattern is worth understanding. The government, of which the judiciary is the stabilizing component, is infringing upon the rights of individuals in the name of abstract notions like opinion or thought. Looking at all the cited laws, one sees a threatening emergent trend, that of silencing individual and group opinions through the use of punitive actions arising from laws and regulations. Article 6 of the Constitution, for example, deals with high treason:

> Any person who abrogates or subverts or suspends or holds in abeyance, or attempts or conspires to abrogate or subvert or suspend or hold in abeyance, the Constitution by use of force or show of force or by any other unconstitutional means shall be guilty of high treason. (Pakistan N. A., The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 2012)

Section 124 of the Pakistan Penal Code is concerned with "Assaulting President, Governor, etc., with intention to compel or restrain the exercise of any lawful power" (Law, 2010). The punishment for any crime under this section may extend to seven years and is also liable to fines (Law, 2010). Paragraph 124 A is the sedition clause,

> Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the Federal or Provincial Government established by law shall be punished with imprisonment for life to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine. (Law, 2010)

The Act of 1885 deals with "sending fabricated or obscene messages" (Pakistan G. o., n.d). This was later modified in 2014 by the Parliament

and known as Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2014. According to this amendment "causing annoyance, intimidation, and harassment" is liable to a "prison sentence for up to three years or fine in excess of rupees 20,000 or both" (Pakistan N. A., Amendment of the Telgraph Act, 1885, n.d.).

Can a government employee speak?

The government employees in Pakistan are duty-bound not to divulge sensitive, workplace information to the media. Academia, though, is not a typical government institution. A public sector university is an autonomous body. Unlike the official bureaucratic public service structure, Academia represents society in the public sphere. Gagging university professionals or academics, in the name of existing rules of public service is a mockery of justice. In addition, even if the government decides to exert some influence over Academia, normal recourse to the legal system is the best way to do it. This, unfortunately, is not the case in some parts of the country.

Although, in earlier periods the legal restraints on freedom of expression are not simply limited to the media or the larger society, no special measures were taken to target specific institutions. However, this has been changed recently. Now specific institutions are being targeted. Fear of free speech is creeping into all organizational hierarchies. In a society where "pleasing the bosses" and remaining in the good books of the higher-ups through showing off, employees want to be seen as "in control" such that highhanded approaches to gag dissenting voices have become routine. As the above examples indicate, a systematic harassment of the media and the society, as well as of individuals in general is well underway. However, there was yet one sphere of activity left unchecked. This is the institutional voice, where groups consisting of "individuals" (some of them intellectuals) in influential white-collar organizations could challenge the government's mistakes. In a move to thwart any such happening, the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P)[3] decided to wake sleeping dogs from the past to invoke newer daemons. On July 24, 2018 "the K-P Establishment Department had issued a notice to all government institutions about 'interaction with media by government servants'. The notice said that government servants 'were interacting with the media and were airing their opinion,

which was highly objectionable and places the government in embarrassing positions" (Correspondent, 2018). This was a general notice citing the Government Servants (Conduct) Rules 1987 and the K-P Government Servants (efficiency and discipline) Rules 2011 (ibid). The University of Peshawar issued its own letter on August 8, 2018, circulating it throughout the university offices, warning its employees of strict action in case of violation of the rules. The university letter further elaborated upon the issue, mentioning that

> […] the rules prohibit interaction of government employees with the media, either of the print or the electronic variety through participation in a radio or television programme or contribute in any article or write any letter to any newspaper or periodical expressing views on government policy and political issues (ibid).

The question whether these laws are ever harshly applied or not is not relevant. It is the fear that these measures instill in the minds of people throughout the society that matters most. One cannot escape the fear of being found guilty of an unknown crime, while performing any of the given social roles in everyday life. This places people under constant pressure where they feel the need to always be looking back over their shoulder; it creates an environment where truth is the ultimate casualty. It deforms the very normative features of a human denomination, limiting truth and responsible citizenry to such an extent that they become alien concepts.

It is not simply the absence of freedom that hurts, but rather the presence of human populations very oblivious of any sense of freedom. Compromise and hypocrisy become virtues, while steadfastness and responsible expression of free opinion are now unpardonable vices. "Governments that spy on their people want to gain information and thus control not only over their enemies but over everyone, keeping them perpetually suspicious" (Brikley, 2015). The intentions of such states are never noble. In the words of George Orwell, "the real power, the power we have to fight for night and day, is not power over things, but power over men" (Orwell, 1983: 226). States, irrespective of their nomenclatures and systems of governance are in the habit of imposing negative morality such that it suppresses freedom of human liberties. States, through all possible means, try to convince their citizens that

whatever they are doing is right. In an Orwellian world, the individual is forced to believe that the state is right. The individual is suppressed to a point where he or she sees the absurdity of their very ideas of free speech and thought. The tyranny of the majority, and that of authority, is instilled into the human mind, no matter how skeptical it might be. "… how could the immortal, collective brain be mistaken? By what external standard could you check its judgements?" (Orwell, 1983: 235). The whole function of enforcement of negative morality to inappropriate measures is to ensure the feeling of absurdity among the thinking minds of a society.

The battle for ideas in Pakistan is in fact the battle for the control of the discourse, of the narrative. Media, journalism, and critical intelligentsia are all potentially instruments and vehicles of free expression. Hence, the fear and dislike of these institutions by those in power. It is within this context that government-media relations have never remained in good standing, throughout Pakistani history. At the time of independence, Pakistani media espoused to an adversary model, a maintenance of a free press. They believed in the critical role of the journalists as custodians of truth and guides and educators of people. They believed that through critical evaluation of governments they were performing a democratic duty to the people. Successive governments, civil or military, never liked this approach. They always wanted to rule an ignorant mass of people rather than serve an empowered, aware population.

It is also true that the unbridled and chaotic abuse of social media, in a strife-torn society like Pakistan, has added to the problems of governance. It has also affected the public mind. However, there are limits to the measures a government could take. The balance between governing stability and freedom of opinion and expression should be sought. This, unfortunately, has not happened in Pakistan. This is not an unaddressed issue. The Commonwealth Journalists Association's (CJA) recently drafted 12 principles most relevant to Pakistan, because this code will 'help both state and society overcome the challenges confronting them with as little pain as possible' (Rehman I. A., 2018). The Principles, as the CJA names them,

> […] are intended to serve as a set of guidelines to assist member states and their agencies, as well as Commonwealth legislatures and judi-

> ciaries, civil society and media, to make appropriate contributions to promoting and developing democratic, accountable and open societies, in accordance with Commonwealth values, international norms and standards, and the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. (Lumb, 2018)

The first two principles are most appropriate to our present debate. The government has to follow these before framing any law or initiative to deal with the problems of mainstream or social media. The first of these, titled "freedom of expression", clearly elucidates that governments are responsible to "respect the right to freedom of expression and promote the free flow of information and ideas" (Lumb, 2018). The second one, "restrictions on freedom of expression" deals with our present dilemma of balance between the positive and negative morality. It defines the very boundaries of regulation and control, and that of regulatory and punitive action. "Any restrictions on freedom of expression should be in accordance with standards established in international human rights law, such as those set out in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" (Ibid). Further, if any restrictions are posed to avoid incitement to offences or any unpleasant social developments, "should be prescribed by law, and necessary and proportionate in pursuit of a legitimate aim" (ibid). The states are also advised to amend all such laws, which are contrary to the spirit of these guidelines. Freedom of speech should be guaranteed within the frame of governmental responsibility towards the people. To ensure the sanctity of these freedoms the government should not "unduly restrict the right to freedom of expression, such as laws on sedition which criminalize speech" (Ibid).

Concluding remarks

The current government's attitude towards the free expression of opinion in all forms does not fall into the above-mentioned guidelines. This is nothing new. The Pakistani governing elite has never had a positive relationship with the media. The present curbs on freedom of expression of thought are not novel. The only issue is that the people expected things to get better. When this does not happen, it naturally gives rise to frustrations. It is important that the spirit of democracy be strengthened. Empowerment of the people by finding ways to include

them as part of the knowledge production system is one of the most important functions of everyday governance. If this process is not properly nurtured, a government is not fulfilling its democratic responsibilities. It is criminal to hinder the process or control the socio-political and cultural discourse by forcing the population into intellectual servitude. Excuses are neither pardonable nor acceptable. Governments have always robbed people and institutions of the inviolable right to free expression in the name of national security or stability, in the name of unity and conformity. The fallacy of this train of argument has been proven repeatedly by history. A responsible government is one that not only respects the right to free expression, but also guarantees it.

The Pakistani media have all the weaknesses media systems are supposed to have. They also have the strengths in which any media could take pride. It is but true that the recent infighting between rival media groups and the rise of fear amongst the media professionals, along with an extremely money-oriented, materialistic approach to news and views has marred the credibility of mainstream media, resulting in a loss of trust among the audience. However, this should not result in a clampdown on freedom of speech and thought. The "breakdown of media ethics", the "sentimental nihilism" (West, 2005: 36) has been globally criticized. Populist leadership within governments and societies are crying themselves hoarse to bridle freedom to express and report. US President Donald Trump is one of the leading enemies of free media. He is the role model for all those who hate transparency and accountability in politics and society. Terms like "Fake News" and "Alternative Truth" in his world become shameless pretexts to avoid responsibility to the people, especially by means of delegitimizing the media. At the same time the inherent deterioration of the Internet, which was supposed to offer an alternative perspective in a wide range of issues, is mis- or unrepresented in the mainstream. It has disappointed the thinking public by its "going too far into crude advocacy the other way – not a good way to evoke sympathy for those opposing the oppressors of freedom" (West, 2005: 37). This is not a case for capitalist enterprise but, in fact, "democracy depends, in large part, on a free and frank press willing to speak painful truths to the public about our society, including the fact of their own complicity in superficiality and simplistic reportage" (West, 2005: 39). The reason for this, West elaborates, is "there can be no dem-

ocratic *paideia*—without democratic *parrhesia*—a bold and courageous press willing to speak the misinformation and mendacities of elites" (West, 2005: 39).[4] Following Foucault's understanding of a democratic process, no democratic education is possible without a democratic freedom of speech. This means all education is useless unless there is a corresponding social structure based on freedom of expression. A society needs to ensure free expression and critical thought for all its citizens, if it plans to develop a democratic education system that could enable it to produce responsible citizenry. If this process is not ensured the result will be an oligarchic dispensation where the interests of the rich and the corrupt will be served.

The Pakistani ruling elite always had a distaste for free speech and public opinion. They have always used the power they derive from their post-colonial structure of bureaucracy and legal system to stifle freedom and innovation, which could challenge their authority. In other words, they have abused their authority to instill a negative morality for the very purpose of keeping a tight grip on power. The recent developments of religious extremism have a few commonalities with the ruling elite. This is the distaste of popular opinion along with the tradition rootedness to the level of rejection of all change. These interests united them against the liberal intelligentsia, minorities, in both thought and ideology. The obvious result of this like-mindedness is a collusion against free speech and sponsoring its very opposite, namely hate speech. The nefarious collusion that facilitates the creation of anti-free speech narrative is at the roots of punitive regimentation of free speech with impunity. Intellectually garbed religious extremism became mainstream through its populist attraction quite early in Pakistani history. The political parties founded on the model of the Muslim Brotherhood are "populist parties" and are now "more mainstream" (Cockburn, 2004: 108). The present brand of populism in Pakistan is a mix of religious fervor and anti-Western sentiments. No political party dares alienate the rightwing vote or voice. If it does so, it would be at the cost of cultural identity and support. The party would lose its credibility as a national entity. This is for the very reason that, over the years, religion itself has become politically mainstream. The entrenched governmental institutions like the civil and military bureaucracy use the lack of "popular legitimacy" of the governments due to an acceptance

of the "hegemony of the Americans in the region" (Cockburn, 2004) and nurture the more stringent religious-political narrative to develop a socio-cultural discourse pattern. This pattern is not a libertarian one. It is rather a disciplinarian one that asks for total allegiance of the people and institutions to traditional morality. Traditional morality, the negative ethics that forbid positive morality, espousing innovation and dissent, is a twisted version of vested interests of the ruling elite. The façade of the traditions rooted in religious-cultural matrix is sold to a people kept in darkness through misinformation in the news and education systems.

The point to keep in mind is that the war on free speech in the country will not benefit anyone. A government cannot remain in an eternal war with its people. No matter how lofty might be the reasons for taking away the people's right to free speech and thought, these are incorrect. Only a freethinking and empowered people could ensure a prosperous society and a nation capable of survival in our present age. The sooner this truth is understood, the better.

Notes

1. *Dagsavisen,* Norway, 2016, March 11 (translation by editor E. Eide).
2. MMA is the coalition of religious parties that includes the Jamat E Islami and Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman's Jamiat Ulema E Islam, Fazl Ur Rehman (JUI-F).
3. Previously called the North-Western Province. Bordering on Afghanistan in the North.
4. Paideia: A system of broad, cultural education. Parrhesia: means "to say everything – from "pan" (everything) and "rhema" (that which is said). The one who uses parrhesia, says everything he has in mind: he does not hide anything, but opens his heart and mind completely to other people through his discourse. More simply, *Parrhesia* may be seen as "free speech". (From a Foucault lecture: https://foucault.info/parrhesia/foucault.DT1.wordParrhesia.en/ accessed 2019, March 13)

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10. Who suppresses free speech in Bangladesh?

A typology of actors

Mubashar Hasan

The aspiration of Bengalis for freedom and democracy arose from the birth of Bangladesh, in a bloody war of independence in 1971 against Pakistan. Bangladesh made its mark on history on December 16, 1971, standing for the first time on the world map as an independent nation state. What followed since 1971 is the history of its struggle to establish democracy and freedom, where attaining freedom of speech and establishing rights remains – like the griffin or the unicorn – an unverified chimera. A report from 2014 observes that Bangladesh "remains stubbornly beset by democratic deficiencies" (Riaz, 2014: 120).[1] The situation has worsened since then.

This chapter offers a typology of actors suppressing freedom of expression/speech in Bangladesh. I argue that in Bangladesh alongside the government, a section of journalists, academics, businessmen, political parties, secular and Islamist activists all act against the spirit of freedom of speech. It should be noted that, while this essay aims to depict a pattern or typology in identifying actors playing a role in limiting free speech in Bangladesh, many of these actors also play a role in upholding free speech in the country. However, the focus of this chapter is limited in demonstrating how these actors play a vital role in limiting free speech. I argue that the reason behind engagement of these actors in suppressing free speech is the result of clientelist political settlement in Bangladesh.

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Free speech and Bangladesh

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights underpins free speech in following manner: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

From this declaration it is not difficult to conclude that free speech is a human right and it is therefore of "particular value in a democratic society" (Warburton, 2009: 3). Bangladesh's constitution underpins importance of various freedoms (including free speech). For example, in its preamble, it states that, "it shall be a fundamental aim of the state to realise through the democratic process a socialist society, free from exploitation a society in which the rule of law, fundamental human rights and freedom equality and justice, political, economic and social, will be secured for all citizens"; the article 39 (1) underpins that "freedom of thought and conciseness is guaranteed", 31 1(A) and (B) underpins that the right of every citizen to freedom of speech and expression; and freedom of the press, are guaranteed. The constitution further guarantees freedom of religion and political association-two key components also related to freedom of speech through article 41.1 (A) which states, "every citizen has the right to profess, practise or propagate any religion". However, the reality is different as mentioned at the outset of this essay.

The history of Bangladesh thrives on political oppression and gagging free speech. In order to understand this peculiar political context it is important to understand Bangladesh's clientelist political structure. In the following section I initiate a discussion on Bangladesh's clientelist political climate before offering a justification for limiting free speech may seem to be a lucrative proposition to some influential social actors. Before that, I must stress that here I have followed Warburton (2009), who defines free speech "in a broad way to cover just not spoken words but a wide range of expression, including the written word, plays, films, videos, photographs, cartoons, paintings and so on" (Warburton, 2009: 4–5).

Clientelist politics, Bangladesh and its socio-economic condition

Stokes (2011) defines clientelist politics as "the proffering of material goods in return for electoral support, where the criterion of distribution that the patron uses is simple: Did you (will you) support me?" This definition is useful in a context where elections are regular, free and fair. Thus, the significance of support from voters matters. The Bangladeshi context however is slightly different. Here elections have only become regular, free and fair since 1991, up to 2008. The 1972 election was also fair, but thereafter, all elections until 1991, under military rulers Ershad and Zia, were neither free nor fair (Baxter, 1991). The 2008 election when the current Awami League (AL) had won, was contested fairly and freely, but then the 2014 election was uncontested as the opposition parties – the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its Islamist ally the Bangladesh Jamaat Islam (BJI) – boycotted the election. The national election in 2018 seems to be heading towards attaining further, post-election criticism where the AL government denied repeated requests/appeals for installing a non-partisan electoral government to oversee a free and fair election. Within this context, the clientelist approach of and to politics in Bangladesh is slightly distinct than what is mentioned earlier. In my view, the following definition of patron-client relationship is more appropriate to Bangladesh:

> The patron-client relationship – an exchange relationship between roles – may be defined as a special case of dyadic (two-person) ties involving a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socioeconomic status (patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, for a person of lower status (client) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patron. (Scott, 1972: 92)

In the Bangladesh context, I refer to clientelism as an individual's or an organisation's formal and informal campaigning and protecting its interests in favour of one party or government so as hopefully to receive some sort of material benefits in return. Since free and fair elections are uncertain here, the role of clients who want to ensure their interests are served, is to work to establish the hegemony of one party (the

patrons) over important segments of the society; for this they expect to receive material benefits. These material benefits could involve getting contractual post in public offices in important positions, posts such as membership in, or chairmanship of, constitutional commissions, contractual posting as Press Minister or High Commissioner in Bangladeshi embassies abroad, inclusion as a member of government bodies visiting abroad on official delegations, ownership of flats or plots of useful land with cheap price to build houses in the capital city where property prices are currently skyrocketing,[2] or being sponsored for foreign and domestic trips, awarded undue promotion in public offices, or license to run new media businesses, and so forth.

I have observed that whenever a regime changes, members of the patron and client groups change, but the patron-client structure remains more or less the same. Sarker (2008) observes that due to the fact that patron-client procedures are entrenched in Bangladesh, good governance fails to be transferred from the ideal to actual governmental practice. I extend this argument further to underline that due to the clientelist politics in Bangladesh, the human rights situation in the country, including free speech, remains in shamble against the backdrop of uneven economic growth. When this existing network of clients, who hail from not so well-to-do economic backgrounds (compared to the wealth of their patrons) work together to establish party hegemony, for their patrons, in the public spheres of Bangladeshi society, the space for freedom of speech shrinks.

Bangladesh is a small country when someone considers its geographic size; in fact it is smaller than California, yet its population of 170 million is more than the combined population of Iran and Saudi Arabia. Recently politicians and some neo-liberal economists were boasting about Bangladesh's growth story (Basu, 2018). However, according to the World Bank (WB), one in four Bangladeshis live in poverty and 12.9 per cent of the Bangladeshi population live in extreme property (The World Bank, 2017). One should note that the WB defines poverty line at US$1.90 per person per day. If one starts look beneath this set of economic models and graphs, one realises that the real scenario is more dire as "income inequality in the country has worsened" in recent years, with the rich becoming richer and the poor remaining as poor as ever (Kibria, 2018). Within this socio-economic scenario, many politicians

of Bangladesh are also businesspersons. These businessmen politicians belong to the elite classes whereas academics, journalists, activists (both secular and Islamist) and so forth generally (there are exceptions) are lower down the social scale, belonging to the middle class or lower middle class. It is therefore not hard to understand that in a country suffering from an extremely unequal distribution of wealth and power, the members of middle class, who historically contribute in shaping a national imagination, are a class whose members end up suppressing free speech and reinforcing political inequality in Bangladesh to in conjunction with their patrons. The result is a struggling Bangladesh with a widespread record of human rights violations, including suppression of free speech. This is what one finds when one looks critically at this carefully constructed image of an "amazing Bangladesh growth story". Next, I present a typology of actors suppressing free speech in Bangladesh. This typology is neither complete, nor exhaustive, but it shows a pattern and is therefore, in my view, a significant contribution.[3]

Government

The government of Bangladesh has a long history of suppressing freedom of speech through multiple mediums. The three branches of the government the legislative, the executive and the judiciary seem to work in tandem to control and set a limit to the free speech.

Repressive laws

Bangladesh has a history of framing repressive laws to curb free speech even though the constitution of the country offers a full guarantee to the freedom of speech. According to Ahmad (2009) some of the provisions of various Acts related to media freedom violate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and arguably also violate the Constitution of Bangladesh (Ahmad, 2009). In an estimate by Ahmad (2009: 53), from 1972–2003, the country has framed or endorsed thirteen press laws and regulations.[4] Many of these were used to suppress free speech.

After 2003, a new set of laws including the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act and the draft Digital Security Act attracted widespread criticism from rights activists. According to a 2018 report by the US-based Human Rights Watch (HRW), scores of Bangladeshis have been arrested for criticizing the government, political

leaders, and others on Facebook, as well as in blogs, online newspapers, or on other social media platforms. These arrests were made under Section 57 of the ICT Law which allows law enforcers to arrest anyone without warrant. The report recounts how people were arrested for posting criticism and caricatures of the Prime Minister, her son and family members (HRW, 2018). The compelling HRW report, entitled "No Place for Criticism: Bangladesh Crackdown on Social Media Commentary" stresses that as of April 2018, the police had submitted 1,271 charge sheets to the Cyber Tribunal in Dhaka, claiming sufficient evidence to prosecute under Section 57 of the ICT Act. A number of journalists were also arrested under this act (HRW, 2018).

Against the backdrop of widespread criticism, the government had promised to repeal Section 57 of the ICT Act and it is now in the process of framing a new act entitled the Digital Security Act. Under this act which is still in draft format, Section 14[5], 25 (a),[6], 28[7], 29[8] and 31[9] are of draconian nature in relation to upholding the principles of free speech (HRW, 2018).

Security forces and intelligence agencies

The role of security apparatus in curbing free speech in Bangladesh is under-reported though not unknown. My personal conversations with prominent TV and print journalists have confirmed that security personnel from various organizations intimidate journalists, bloggers, and those companies which place advertisements in media with an aim to curb free speech in multiple ways. These methods include curbing revenue to print media by imposing an unofficial ban on advertisement from multinational corporations, intimidation by telephone to journalists for allowing "problematic discussions" on TV talk shows or showing political events in news and facilitating enforced disappearances after the kidnapping of dissents. One prominent TV journalists told me that he was receiving repeated phone calls from one of the elite security agencies, being urged not to air the last press conference of the opposition leader Khaleda Zia before she landed in prison on charges of corruption in 2018. Furthermore, journalists are profiled on the basis of the contents of their published reports and social media commentaries. Many of them are summoned to appear at the intelligence office; here, a few were actually subjected to torture

and allegedly some suffered an enforced disappearance. Two cases in this regard are noteworthy to mention. Journalist Tasneem Khalil who now lives in Sweden in exile and Utpal Das, a journalist working for a national daily stress the gravity of the problem surrounding interference by the security apparatus in relation to free speech in Bangladesh. Khalil used to work for *The Daily Star* – Bangladesh's largest English newspaper and for CNN. Khalil was subject to torture by intelligence officers for writing about abuse of human rights by security personnel in 2007 (HRW, 2008). Journalist Utpal Das was allegedly kidnapped for writing issues deemed as sensitive to national security. He fell victim to an enforced disappearance which lasted for over 70 days in 2017. At that point he was allowed to return home (US State Department, 2018). There are other methods of putting pressure on free speech. A news report published in Al Jazeera in 2015 alleges that Bangladeshi spies blocked adverts to two of the Bangladesh's leading newspapers, the *Daily Star* and the *Daily Prothom Alo* from multinational phone corporations including the Norwegian Telenor's local concern *Grameen Phone* –a company deemed as among the biggest advertisement revenue generators for Bangladeshi media (Bergman, 2015). According to Bergman (2015), both newspapers published reports of army men killing five indigenous people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) (Bergman, 2015). The military establishment is said to have criticised these media reports for not referring to the five persons killed as "terrorists" and hence their deaths should have been covered as "punishment".

Finally, as Bangladesh has seen a boom in its internet use, the government through its regulatory arm, BTRC, had widened its crackdown on free speech and investigative journalism. It has closed online access to secular blogs such as *Ishtishan*, *Muktomona*. It has stopped allowing access to Islamist blogs including *Sonar Bangla,* while it has blocked access to the news sites including the Indian website *The Wire* and recently the website of *The Daily Star* and an online news portal *bdnews24.com* (*The Daily Star*, 2018a; *The Daily Star*, 2018b; *The Quint*, 2017). Though these blockings of access to *The Daily Star* and *BDNews24.com* were temporary, in all three cases these shutdowns came into effect after reports were published about rights violations or criminal links to the security apparatus.

Academics and journalists

The toxic nature of teachers' politics of Bangladesh's public universities is well known. So is the politics of journalists. The implication of these politics for the state of freedom of speech and academic freedom in Bangladesh is negative. For example, without party affiliation and party endorsement it has become very difficult to get a job in public universities purely on the basis of competence and merit. When a party loses power to its rival in national elections, activist academics belonging to defeated parties are likely to face discrimination in their promotion and other job related benefits. Besides, physical scuffles between teachers is not unusual. Tithi (2017), in this regard observed that "it seems as if these teachers are playing the role of party thugs – often engaging in scuffles with students and even with their fellow colleagues over petty issues" (Tithi, 2017). In recent times, the Dhaka University (DU) administration managed by AL-inspired academics suspended a professor in the Marketing Department for writing an op-ed in a national daily following a demand of punishment of that marketing teacher raised by the Al dominated Dhaka University.

According to the DU administration, that newspaper article carries "derogatory comments on the Liberation War and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman". In a separate case, the same DU administration has fired an ex registrar – who was also a DU faculty member, on the basis of an allegation of "distorting history" in an article "on the residential halls of the university in its 95th anniversary souvenir published on July 1, 2016" (BDNEWS 24.com, 2018b). In that article Zia (the founder of BNP- archrival of AL) was described as "first president, a former military chief and valiant freedom fighter" (ibid). Any reasonable and informed person would agree that such harsh punishments of sacking someone for offering different point of views through articles is not reflective of an academic environment which supports academic freedom. In addition to these, many academics are coopted in various important government positions while Government bodies award and administer scholarships such as the Commonwealth scholarships for higher studies. As a result, some academics with their limited income (given the unequal income and earnings at university where wealth tends to be partisan) find that their critical expression of views can jeopardize academic freedom if they find they must pull their punches

and not criticize wrongdoing, in order to maintain their own person financial wellbeing.

Journalists on the other hand are sharply divided along party lines. There are many associations of journalists but the trend of Bangladesh in the global press freedom is not impressive as the country remains at the lower tier of the press freedom index.[10] Asked why this is the case, one veteran journalist with over 20 years of working experience at a leading national daily told to me "these associations are formed mainly to attain small interests such as one's own a plot or flat at cheap price, some financial reward, receiving a posting as a press minister in foreign missions, and so forth".

This personal observation by an experienced journalist is backed by the empirical findings of Elahi (2013) who based on a survey of 333 Dhaka-based journalists, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions, found that journalists' ethical standards are poor and that many indulge in corrupt practices. Elahi also found that "some journalists and certain sectors of the media imposed self-censorship because of journalists' and editors' personal political bias or the media owner's political position" (Elahi, 2013: 197). The US based freedom house echoes Elahi's observation in its 2016 reports where it stresses "because salaries are often low, some journalists are open to bribes or other incentives to slant their coverage or suppress embarrassing or sensitive information" (Freedom House, 2016).

Secularists and Islamists

It was observed that both secular and Islamist activists undermined the value of co-existence. It is worth mentioning here the case of the Shahbagh Movement – a sit-in program organised by a group of bloggers at a busy intersection named Shahbagh in the capital city and later supported by progressive social forces, leftists and the ruling AL for some period in 2013. The Shahbagh movement demanded the death penalty for a few Islamist leaders who were facing trial for committing war crimes in a court set up by the AL (Bouissou, 2013). Many commentators prematurely termed this movement (backed by the AL-led government for a while) as a secular-progressive and liberal movement (Ganguly, 2013). However, one of their six-point demands that media and blogs sympathetic to Islamists be shut down (Bdnews24,

2013). Similarly, inspired by Shahbagh, alongside with some bloggers, a section of progressive cultural activists also demanded a complete closure of media sympathetic to Islamists. These included members of the producers' association of Bangladesh, of the directors' guild and a forum of artists who act in drama and motion pictures. Such demand does not fit with a liberal worldview that thrives on respecting different point of views.

By contrast, jihadists' wrath about writings authored by atheists is well known. A hit list containing names of secular and atheist writers, bloggers and publishers were circulated (Burke, 2015). Scores of bloggers on that list were killed and many others had to flee the country for their own security, and landed in Western countries including Norway (Rahman, 2015). Islamists are not homogenous in terms of their approach to opposing write-ups deemed "offensive to Islam"; some prefer criminal activities including killing and physical attack, whereas others prefer to use the law to muzzle voices. For example, in an interview with the DW, a well-known Islamist leader said, "Muslims, Allah and the Holy Prophet are the most important. If you abuse them, we feel attacked… [but we do not] support vigilantism." He demanded the execution of atheist bloggers through judicial process (DW: 2018). The nature of his demand is no different than the Shahbagh Movement which demanded the execution of war criminals. This Islamist leader represents a movement named Hefazat e Islam (HI) – primarily based out of a vast network of madrassah students and teachers. Both BNP and AL reportedly supported HI.

Businesses and political parties

Lastly, businessmen and party men actively suppress free speech in Bangladesh, advocating both innovative and creative means, including misuse of Article 57 of the ICT Act. It is not an unknown fact that in Bangladesh, businessmen influence politics and many businessmen own media houses to protect the interests of one party or another and to promote that party's agenda. According to an estimate, business persons constituted 13 per cent of the parliament in 1973 which increased to 63 per cent in 2008 (Liton, 2015). Zayedul Ahsan, a senior journalist explains ownership of media in a following manner:

> Ownership of the TV channels matters hugely when it comes to investigative reporting, exposing corruption, social injustice, and violations of human rights. You have to have the moral courage and professional standard to do so. Most owners can't do this as it may anger the government. They are not in a position to challenge the ever-powerful regime because they don't want to lose their business interests. (Ahsan quoted in Azad, 2018)

There are other ways to suppress free speech. Two cases relevant to media are worth mentioning here. First is the case of an Abdus Salam who used to be the chairman of the private television channel Ekushey TV (ETV). Under his chairmanship, in 2015, ETV aired a speech of Tarique Rahman, current Chairman of BNP, the opposition party, and who is now living in exile London. The consequence is fierce, the government of the AL had employed the courts to ban airing of a speech by Tarique Rahman, while sending the television chairman Salam to prison in a strange case related to pornography (Zayeef, 2015; Khan, 2015). Later in 2017, a sedition case was filed against Rahman whereas the government's anti-corruption agency filed a money laundering case against Salam (Tipu, 2017; *The Daily Star*, 2016). More interestingly ETV's management was taken over in 2015 by another business conglomerate led by a man called S. Alam, who is known to be close to the regime (*Daily Independent*, 2015). Inside information says the pro-government company, after taking over, had fired a few journalists who were known to be critical of the government, and hence installing a few new journalists in management positions at that TV station-journalists who are well known for their support for the AL. Without shutting the media, this was a new way to manage the media and gag free speech in Bangladesh – by bringing change into management and the media workforce in a way that would not pose any threat to the government by airing voices of dissent or critical news stories.

The second case was of a young and famous TV journalist who was made inactive, which means he was banned from appearing on TV screens as a news reporter for a year. At that point, in 2015, he decided to leave the country permanently for the United States. This is a classic case which underlines how businessmen and politicians collide in Bangladesh to suppress free speech. The journalist – whom I shall refer to as X–came under the lens of the AL regime for his live

TV reporting on the following topics: (a) vote rigging in the mayoral election in Narayanganj (for which he was threatened on Facebook by the only son of a member of parliament in Narayanganj), and (b) Policemen and party thugs were stuffing ballot in 2014 national election in five polling centers situated in the capital city.

The owner of the TV channel in question, in several reporting meetings held in that TV's newsroom, stated that due to the views of that journalist, he, as owner, was facing problems from the government. The owner is a well-known businessman who funds the AL. It should be mentioned that alongside these tactics, functionaries from the ruling party use the ICT Act to suppress free speech by journalists (Rezwan, 2017).

Silencing of critical voices

This chapter has shown a pattern of silencing used to stop the flow of free speech in Bangladesh. In that regard it has identified how the various arms of government, including legal, executive and legislative branches, formulate repressive laws, intimidate and silence critical voices. This chapter also has shown how other actors also suppress free speech, including academics, journalists, secularists, Islamists, businessmen and politicians. At the outset, I stressed that some of these private actors actively contribute in upholding free speech in the country while also undermining it. The objective here has been limited to showing how some of these actors have actually suppressed free speech. Anecdotal examples and evidence presented here have been collected from the current AL regime (2010–2018). Therefore, one could criticize that this point of view is biased. I argue however that the selection of this timeframe is useful for two reasons; first, this chapter articulates the contemporary scenario of free speech in the country and second, choosing a decade of practices of free speech suppression is not a particularly biased choice of timeframe. It establishes a pattern in a country that is not even 50 years old. The time frame featured here covers more than one-fifth of country's total existence. The premise of this pattern of suppressing free speech, which absorbs these multiple actors, is tied into clientelist politics.

Notes

1. In order to reach this conclusion Riaz (2014) measures Bangladesh with several indicators, including the Polity IV database, the index of democracy of the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), World Value Survey (WVS), the press freedom index of Reporters Without Borders, Freedom House survey and U.S. State Department reports (Riaz, 2014: 120–121). His time frame for measuring various aspects of liberal-democracy spans 1990 to 2013 and he explains Bangladeshi democracy's fragility 'against a background of serious governance shortcomings'.
2. According to a report by the London based *Financial Times*, a new three-bedroom apartment in the most desirable areas of Dhaka costs US$1.5m (Allchin, 2014).
3. In this regard, it is noteworthy to cite Waltz (1979) who argues, in his influential book *Theory of International Politics* that a theory can be best explained as 'a picture, mentally formed, of a burdened realm or domain of activity' (Waltz, 1979: 6–7). In the view of Waltz, theory arranges phenomena that are seen as mutually dependent, connects otherwise disparate facts and shows how changes in some of the phenomena necessarily entail changes in others. To construct a theory, one must identify a pattern then isolate one realm of the world from all others in order to deal with it intellectually.
4. Official Secrets Act 1923 II, Printing Presses and Publications Act 1973, Special Powers Act 1974, The Newspapers (Annulment of Declaration) Ordinance 1975, The Code of Criminal Procedure 1898, The Penal Code 1860, Press Council Act 1974, Bangladesh Government Servants (Conduct) Rules 1979, Oath of Secrecy & Article 39 in Bangladesh Constitution, Emergency Powers Ordinance 1974, Law of Defamation, Advertisement Distribution Policy 1976 & 1987, Martial Law Ordinance, Orders and Regulations, September 26, 1975–1990 (Ahmad, 2009, 53).
5. Section 14 of the draft would authorize sentences of up to 14 years in prison for spreading "propaganda and campaign against the liberation war of Bangladesh or the spirit of the liberation war or Father of the Nation." (HRW: 2018).
6. Section 25(a) would permit sentences of up to three years in prison for publishing information which is "aggressive or frightening" – broad terms that are not defined in the proposed statute (HRW: 2018).
7. Section 28 would impose up to five years in prison for speech that "injures religious feelings." (HRW: 2018).
8. Section 29, like section 57 of the ICT Act, criminalizes online defamation (HRW: 2018).
9. Section 31, which would impose sentences of up to ten years in prison for posting information which "ruins communal harmony or creates instability or disorder or disturbs or is about to disturb the law and order situation" (HRW: 2018).
10. Bangladesh ranks 146th in 2018 and 2017 World Press Freedom Index whereas in 2016 it ranked 144th.

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11. Turkey: How to deal with threats to journalism?

Bora Ataman & Barış Çoban

Journalism has always been an unsafe practice in modern Turkey. However, ties between the political system and democracy have been severed by the recent witch-hunt following the most recent failed coup, in 2016, and the subsequent societal collapse triggered by the administration of the state of emergency. In fact, mass and commercial journalism culture, whose foundations were built upon the post- World War II efforts to create a democratization trend and the transition to the multi-party system, were never strong enough to generate a sustainable liberal-pluralist set of media norms as in the West. Instead, a media system that serves the needs of political and economic power elites was both established and entrenched (Adaklı, 2006; Kaya, 2009).

Particularly, in the aftermath of 1990s politics and business have started to overlap in league with international neoliberal regulations, which manifested themselves as privatization and de-regularization in Turkey's media sphere. Moreover, journalism was weakened under the auspices of an army of columnists who fought and continue to fight for the business interests of a few media moguls (Adaklı, 2010; Kaya, 2009). Despite such unpleasant conditions, it is possible to mention a handful of journalists in the mainstream Turkish media who remain committed to upholding professional norms. However, the main bearers of a journalism culture that prioritizes truth and transparency over ambiguous norms of objectivity and impartiality are found elsewhere, in alternative media (Çoban & Ataman, 2015).

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The relationship between media and democracy in Turkey may be studied in light of a situation where alternative media and journalistic practices take centre stage. A recent evidence is the widespread loss of trust in commercial mainstream media strengthened by its continuous avoidance and inappropriate coverage during the 2013 Gezi Resistance, in Istanbul, in which Turkey's most important political square was occupied by hundreds of thousands of citizens. The resistance was covered only by independent, alternative media and activist citizen journalists.

Under the dominance of a news media that has completely renounced the requirements of a professional journalism ideology, citizens have started to choose alternative outlets for their informational needs (Banko & Babaoğlan, 2013; Özkırımlı, 2014). Although, these outlets might seem far from professional at first sight, insignificant in terms of access, and unsuccessful from a business perspective, they have sided with citizen rights and democracy in pursuit of truth.

In short, the liquidation of commercial big media through suppression and acquisition, the emergence of the pro-government ultra-partisan and propagandist news media as the only remaining mass media, brought an end to professional journalism. Very few options were left for the small number of columnists and experienced correspondents who remain committed to professionalism. Today, in order to continue to make news, they either set up their own web-based, micro, personal media initiatives or join forces with activists of resilient alternative media.

Within the few years following the Gezi Resistance, the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) government has rapidly instrumentalised all state institutions by taking advantage of its parliamentary majority. Taking full control of the judiciary system, government has enacted anti-democratic and repressive laws as well as instigating conflict and violence; it a word, it has transformed Turkey into a police state. After completing the large-scale occupation of the last relatively autonomous areas left by pro-government commercial big media, AKP has shifted the weight of its attack, now targeting independent and alternative media by using the pretext of the failed coup d'état. For instance, recently, the best-selling Kemalist, nationalist opposition daily newspaper *Sözcü* and the Fox TV, Disney-owned nationalist popular TV channel, which did not sympathise with the government, has been under heavy attack. In addition to TV channels, magazines

and newspapers and the news agency associated with the alleged Islamic network of the coup, many progressive-socialist media outlets and the ones representing the Kurdish political movement have also been closed by state decrees. In fact, soon after the government came into power in 2002, many media outlets were sold to pro-government business people by active involvement of a public institution (Savings Deposit and Insurance Fund of Turkey/TMSF) in the media sector. Therefore, these were the first steps in what are today's ultra-partisan pro-government media roots.

Despite the current journalistic darkness, the aim of our study is to critically evaluate and present relatively successful tactics and strategies used by resilient and persistent journalists against threats and attacks to our profession in Turkey by drawing on concepts and theories of alternative journalism. The data we harnessed here are in-depth interviews and participant observations taken from our previous research on alternative media and citizen journalism, our years of experience in the alternative and activist media field and through relevant news and national and international media and democracy reports. Also, we would like to address and invite fellow researchers and practitioners to abandon orthodox perspectives and to think critically, reflecting on the extent to which these strategies and tactics can be considered sustainable and improvable at the intersection of normative and critical journalistic theories.

Constructing a democratic front in journalism

The current journalistic norms dominating the Western World are renewed expressions of classical liberal principles. These have changed over time for many reasons, including the failure to produce an objective, impartial and pluralistic public information and discussion environment (Kovach & Rosantiel, 2001; Siebert et al., 1956). In contrast, in the decisiveness of commercial concerns, it is possible to claim that a journalism practice, which comes to operate under an elitist right-wing media industry, has burgeoned. This is an industry in which there is a lack of in-depth discussion of serious issues of public concern, and where the voices of marginalized and oppressed people are hardly heard. The idea of a free market of ideas loses its validity and is replaced by a journalism driven by sensation, conflict and entertainment.

On the other hand, the concept of "alternative journalism", which extends to the periods of radical enlightenment and revolutionary bourgeois presses of the 18th century, "may be understood as a radical challenge to the professionalized and institutionalized practices of the mainstream media" (Atton & Hamilton, 2008: 135). Although it is a relatively recent term used in tandem with the political and social movements of the 1960s, it points at a modern extension of a comprehensive critique of global capitalism and the hierarchical, commercial, professional bourgeois journalism it has created since the second half of the 19th century (2008: 9–21). Today, alternative media is a sort of rights-based advocacy and activist practice replacing the so-called professional ideology of journalism.

Forde (2011) sees alternative journalism as a form of political act. For Downing, radical media, and hence radical journalism, is a tool of political and social change for political activists and movements (2001). In fact, one can speak of a number of non-mainstream media and journalism theories and practices which share certain characteristics yet differ in terms of the names, such as "alternative, radical, grassroots, citizen" which have been attributed to them. Despite these differences, Bailey and colleagues (2008) use "alternative" as an umbrella term and gather varied initiatives in a wide spectrum dedicated to democratization of communications under this concept (Op. cit., 2008).

Harcup (2013) tries to describe the qualities and operations of alternative journalism by linking it with its radical political past. Alternative journalism is a counter-hegemonic journalism practice that aims to turn the dominant discourse upside down. It takes those who have no voice, ordinary people, as legitimate sources of news and highlight their stories. It transforms some traditional codes and forms, primarily objectivity and impartiality. The language used speaks to its audience without a patronizing tone and does not alienate them. It tries to integrate readers into news production processes by enabling them with the opportunity to become content producers and even journalists. Furthermore, alternative journalism tries to eradicate the boundaries and hierarchies between the audience and the journalist. It is a progressive, participatory, anti-capitalist practice that is committed to actively changing the world rather than describing it (Harcup, 2013: 162–164).

The crisis of democracy in the world today has rendered this function of alternative journalism even more vital, particularly in countries where professional journalism has been destroyed along with both democracy and mainstream media. It is valid not only for countries like Turkey (Sözeri, 2015), but also for the West (Gillmor, 2015). In this study, we critically analyze some of the responses generated against the major threats experienced in the current climate. The theoretical lens used is provided by an alternative and networked journalism approach; one that emphasizes the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms; one that is open for active participation and values negotiation and compromise; one that is free of national boundaries and based on networked societal relationships (Atton & Hamilton, 2008; Forde, 2011; Harcup, 2013; Lievrouw, 2011; Russell, 2011). Our main aim is to contribute to the struggle for democratic media and related literature under threatening conditions and generate a critical position in journalistic studies.

Coping with the threats

For all member countries in the United Nations, media freedom is binding according to the doctrine of freedom of expression (Freedom House, 2017). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) accentuated this principle. The two major institutions, which perform measurements on a global scale are the French-based Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and the USA-based Freedom House (FH). Despite their ideological differences concerning the role of governments, both institutions design their reports on the basis of Western liberal values and the ideology of a hundred years of professional journalism, which in turn has emerged from the same philosophical, political and cultural roots (Burgess, 2010). Nevertheless, studies reveal that these two major bodies are the most reliable and consistent tools for providing a comparative understanding of the relationship between the media and democracy in a given country (Price et al., 2011). Several recent developments in the field also point at the updating of the reports in view of new threats and requirements (Karlekar & Radsch, 2012). In the context of Turkey, for instance, RSF reports attacks against Turkish journalists in recent years and FH has begun to evaluate media ownership within the framework of political interest relations and draws the attention to the media concentration.

"Who threatens the Press" figure demonstrates the most significant threats to press freedom in the summary of FH's 2017 report (Dunham, 2017). Media owners, judges, violent groups, heads of state, trolls and security forces feature as threats. Table 1 is based on these threats, which are extremely consistent in the context of Turkey. It also demonstrates our findings of how journalists have tried to deal with each of these threats.

We work with the threat categories of Freedom House, as well as defence strategies and tactics (Table 1) and develop them in our analysis of the current situation in Turkey. The first column, which holds the title of solidarity networks, includes the defence line, which is established with reference to fundamental rights and freedoms against all threats. The second column comprises different types of both defensive and offensive activist moves designed in response to the type of threat.

Table 1.

Threats	Strategies & Tactics	
heads of state: launching verbal attacks and lawsuits	SOLIDARITY NETWORKS	Lobbying & campaigning against authoritarian leaders Borderless & cross-border journalism Anonymity
trolls: abusing and threatening online		Digital security and safety precautions
security forces: harassing, arresting and beating		Hostile environment training Counter-surveillance tactics Psychological support Legal help
violent groups: threatening attacks and death		Hostile environment training Self-defence training Health & Life Insurance Psychological support Legal help
judges: delivering draconian sentences		Media freedom campaigns Legal help
media owners: controlling the editorial line and job security		Establishing alternative & activist (new) media outlets Activist citizen journalism Borderless journalism

Solidarity networks

International and national journalism organizations, non-governmental organizations, trade unions, political parties and grassroots movements advocating fundamental rights and freedoms are de facto components of online and offline solidarity networks. They play integral roles in creating public pressure by organizing national and international campaigns for the defence of journalists attacked, threatened, tortured, detained, and convicted as a result of their journalistic activity. They also have a role in the follow-up of legal processes and legal support as well as in providing financial and psychological support in case of need. There are, of course, cases where solidarity is considered a crime and even attempts are made to prevent it.

One recent example is the solidarity campaign initiated on May 3, 2016 – World Press Freedom Day – in support of the Kurdish political movement's daily newspaper *Özgür Gündem* facing lawsuits against almost every issue. Dozens of intellectuals supported the "On-duty Chief Editor Campaign", which continued for three months and brought national and international acclaim (Yeşil Gazete, 2016). However, some of these intellectuals were sentenced to prison on the grounds of making propaganda for a "terrorist organization", by virtue of publishing their statements. Nevertheless, solidarity has been rebuilt, and new campaigns have emerged, including supporters who are accused of using their fundamental rights and freedoms (BİA, 2016). Furthermore, solidarity networks serve as a shield to preserve the mental health of journalists, to develop methods for coping with violence and for eliminating economic problems.

Surviving autocracy

After the state of emergency measures were launched following the coup attempt in 2016, the president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and numerous government officials targeted media organizations, particularly the journalists who maintain independent and critical positions, charging them with treachery and terrorism. It appears that the discursive violence used against independent and opposing journalists as a strategic tool has a dual purpose. On the one hand, the government sharpens its ideological base and mobilizes militant sections of its supporters against groups that are coded as enemies. On the other hand, it constantly

pressures and threatens those media organizations and journalists, which the state considers oppositional, and does so by means of its security forces and courts.

Despite these attacks, journalists and media organizations struggle and continue to pursue journalism practices. Against the attacks of autocrats, journalists use several methods to protect themselves: doing advocacy activities, carrying out counter-campaigns that target people who are the sources of the threat. Many international journalism organizations are actively involved in such campaigns both broadcast the pressures and threats, and to prevent them from developing.

However, in cases requiring urgent intervention, the volume of campaign and lobby activities in Turkey have increased. The news about Turkish intelligence's weapon shipment to jihadist Syrian groups in 2015 was published by Can Dündar, editor-in-chief of *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, then occupying centre-left opposition, and by his colleague Erdem Gül. This caused the President of Turkey to target the journalists as terrorists and spies. His verbal outburst ("They will pay for this") was followed by investigations of accusations for obtaining state secrets for espionage purposes, seeking to violently overthrow the Turkish government, and aiding an armed terrorist organization. This led to the arrest of the two journalists, whereupon the world's leading freedom of expression organizations conducted a well-coordinated and effective campaign calling on the Turkish government to release the journalists and respect press freedom. The pressure resulted in the release of the journalists by the ruling of Supreme Court after a period of three months. Shortly thereafter, Dündar survived an apparent attempt on his life outside of the courthouse in which he was convicted of revealing state secrets and sentenced to nearly six years in prison. Worrying about his safety and the threat of this prison sentence, he fled the country. Today, Can Dündar lives in Germany and continues his journalistic practices through the Internet platform *#Özgürüz* (Wearefree). The Turkish government has issued an Interpol "red notice" demanding his apprehension.

In addition to international support campaigns, another way to fend off the attacks of the autocrats is "borderless journalism", a counter-hegemonic, transnational and horizontally interactive and collaborative rights-based news activism (Çoban & Ataman, 2018). Borderless jour-

nalism includes the transporting of media outlets such as #Özgürüz to safe zones and covers participatory news production practices with the support of international solidarity networks. It is an attempt to create and produce media capable of protecting journalists in risky areas and creating and producing news, which makes production and sharing possible with an unrestricted approach. *#Özgürüz*, and the organization called *Correctiv,* which defines itself as a non-profit, independent, investigative newsroom for German-speaking areas, both define their role as the joint will (at the tip of a pen) "to defend democracy, press freedom and the right of the public to know, with colleagues who come from other parts of Europe" (#Özgürüz, 2018). Also, Artı Gerçek TV, which continues the same pro-Kurdish news agenda of IMC TV (the TV channel which was closed by decree) has established itself in Germany to reduce the effects of a possible attack, although it carries on its news production activities in Turkey. The number of such news organizations is likely to increase in the near future.

Another means of self-protection from the attacks of the autocrats is to remain anonymous. In countries such as Turkey where threats and attacks have become the norm, some international agencies have decided not to reveal the identities of their correspondents.[1] Many freelance journalists in Turkey conduct their news broadcast with pseudonyms as they find the environment risky (Luxon, 2018). In a similar way, some alternative media and citizen journalism platforms keep the names of their citizen journalists confidential and try to prevent them from being targeted. Data obtained from the interviews with some alternative media (for example *Dokuz8Haber*, a rights-based citizen news agency; *Ötekilerin Postası*, a pro-Kurdish citizen news network; and *Sendika.org,* a socialist news portal) show that facing the risk of threat or attack, they also opt for confidentiality and that any trace of information that could expose their correspondents' identities is excised from the news.

How to tackle state-sponsored trolling?

State-sponsored trolling is claimed to be used by governments as "targeted online hate and harassment campaigns to intimidate and silence individuals critical of the state" (Nyst & Monaco 2018: 1). Trolling has been a particularly threatening and intimidating activity that autocratic countries often apply to target journalists, especially highly visible

voices of dissent who criticize the government and its anti-democratic actions. However, in more sophisticated trolling cases, the government disguises its work through pro-government journalists' targeted attacks in their newspaper columns or through their social media accounts as well as coordinated attacks by militant social media celebrities. In order to increase the effect, bots and automated agents are deployed. Threats of killing, rape, accusations of treason and espionage are major methods in this war of words. Methods such as producing false information about the targets, deliberately extracting phrases from their original context and using them in different contexts, and hence different meanings, creating fake photos, hacking the target's accounts with spy software, exposing private messages are also used. The main aims are to suppress and silence the targeted individuals.

In a similar vein, a social media army of trolls has been established by the ruling party as it acts with the support and management of the government (Sözeri, 2015). This army aims at creating resistance against the success of the opponents' success on social media in the aftermath of 2013 Occupy Gezi movement (Saka, 2018). In recent years, numerous journalists, academics and activists have been targeted by t and subjected to the threats and forms of intimidation as mentioned above (Bulut & Yörük, 2017; Hyong & Es, 2017; Nyst & Manoco, 2018: 35–37).

Troll attacks on journalists using their fundamental rights and freedoms are rebuffed by way of networked solidarity, which includes journalists, journalism organizations and rights-based activist citizen networks. Against fake photos and news, disclosing the identity and lies of the attackers is deployed in order to be able to make a criminal complaint and also to reverse the effect of social media lynch that start after troll attacks. According to our observations, Turkish journalists use certain means in the "Verification Handbook" published by European Journalism Centre in 2013 (Silverman, 2013), although the ability of journalists to use validation tools is limited. Against the spy software used by the trolls to seize the social media accounts of journalists, the best protection is to take digital security precautions. In certain cases, where the necessary precautions are not taken and the account is seized, it is possible to close the account through spamming by solidarity networks or to return the account to its owner by reporting the situation to social media platform managers.[2]

Exposing (in)security forces

The police-inflicted verbal and physical violence (along with that perpetrated by other security forces of governments) is one of the biggest threats faced by journalists in many countries as well as in Turkey (Carlsson & Pöythäri, 2016). Recent research by Sarikakis and colleagues (2017) indicates a steady increase in the attacks between 2000 and 2016. 2016 was the worst year and the majority of attacks were police-inflicted. In the same report, Turkey and Russia ranked highest concerning such attacks.

A range of reports[3] give information pertaining to attacks by the state security forces as the main perpetrator. According to these sources, police-based violence has been on the rise since 2016. Due to impunity and failure of legal efforts against the attacks of the state forces, it can be said that police violence is one of the most efficient forms of suppression of journalists. Journalists' defence against legally imposed attacks include immediate news exposure of the attack in social media through professional solidarity, followed by denunciation of crimes accompanied by reports of assault from medical institutions. Generally, denunciations of governorships, provincial police directorates, riot police chiefs and individual police officers are publicized by syndicates, journalist organizations by way of press briefings with the aim of keeping police violence on the agenda (BİA, 2018a; ÇGD, 2018; TGS, 2014; TGC, 2018).

Journalists try to avoid the aggressiveness of security forces in two different ways. First, a professional defence that indirectly refers to constitutional freedom by rendering journalistic identity visible in public, through helmets, masks and bullet-proof vests. Second is, in a sense, the opposite: trying to avoid police violence by means of counter-surveillance tactics (Ataman & Çoban, 2018). Among these, we can cite wearing dark-coloured clothing, not carrying any professional equipment, picking the most appropriate locations for personal security in the news field, mingling with the common bystanders, standing among the activists, choosing the back-angle of the police for taking pictures, or moving together with the other journalists. If exposed to violence, journalist may apply self-defence strategies to maintain body integrity.

Measures taken against digital surveillance also reduce the risk of attack. Yet, the state unit named Cybercrimes Unit follows the social

media constantly and keeps strict control of opposition accounts in Turkey. Moreover, social media posts of independent and dissident journalists are often reported to the police by hyper-partisan pro-government media and the militant staff of the government itself (Başaran, 2017). Not only do the police know the blacklisted journalists by name, they also harass and threaten them (Clark & Grech, 2017). One response to this, is to separate personal accounts from the accounts where they share news, and even to anonymize these news-oriented accounts, though this method is used by only a few journalists. It includes not sharing photos and information that will indicate their exact location in areas of armed conflict and sometimes in very sensitive situations. Since the police may confiscate devices such as smartphones, tablets and digital memories, encrypting these devices is a way to make them safer. In recent years, non-governmental organizations and alternative media initiatives have organized digital security trainings to increase the awareness of journalists about risks and to improve their security skills (Ataman & Çoban, 2018).

Trauma caused by threats, pressures and attacks of security forces are also a serious threat to journalism in Turkey (Clark & Grech, 2017: 13). Although journalists are generally reported to be resistant to traumatic events, independent and alternative media employees who are more exposed to frequent and intense violence by the police are likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and alcohol and substance abuse (Smith et al., 2015). A report prepared by Council of Europe lists these risks in detail (Clark & Grech, 2017). Specific studies in Turkey indicate signs of psychological problems (Ataman & Çoban, 2017; TGS, 2016). In order to prevent journalists from experiencing such problems and to find solutions to them, non-governmental organizations such as Human Rights Foundation of Turkey and Turkish Psychologists Association have prepared free support programs.

To ensure continued journalistic activity, it is vital that journalists receive compensation for health expenses in case of injury resulting from attacks and compensation for damages to health in periods of unemployment as a result of the injuries – that is, compensation in addition to life insurance. However, there is no social insurance coverage for freelance or citizen journalists. In case of health problems or deaths of journalists working under precarious conditions, campaigns

are organized by solidarity networks for these individuals and their families. This results in modest amounts of support for a limited period.

Self-defence against government-organized mobs

Aggressive gangs in Turkey usually feed on the threatening rhetoric of the government, inspired by the disproportionate violence of its armed forces. In fact, most of these groups are affiliated with the government either openly or discreetly. Dissident journalists and academics who are threatened and intimidated online by AK-Trolls are also exposed to the verbal and physical violence of paramilitary groups intertwined with mafia-like organizations (BİA, 2018a; Meriç, 2017). The fact that the attackers are never caught and that the people who are captured are rather "rewarded" with low punishments encourage criminals and creates an atmosphere of impunity.

International solidarity networks try to meet these attacks and expose such impunity. The person who was involved in an armed attack against Dündar in front of the courthouse as he was awaiting the court's decision, was released after six months of imprisonment and was awarded with a "10-month" sentence (BİA, 2018b). Although Dündar was supported through national and international campaigns, he emigrated to Germany for reasons of safety.

In addition to rights-based campaigns, journalists also need to acquire basic knowledge and skills about professional and private protection. An international example is CPJ offering self-defense training to Ghanaian journalists threatened by gangs claiming to act in the name of the government of Ghana (YesiYesi Ghana, 2015). Self-defence trainings for women journalists who report in conflict areas have become integrated into the Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma's safety training (Davidson, 2017). Similar demands are raised in Turkey by dissident journalists, though there is no self-defence training institution for journalists yet (İnceoglu, 2015).

"Prison break"

In Turkey, the judiciary has become a part of the political process more than ever before. The courts are used by the government as a tool to scare and discipline. Human Rights Watch (HRW) claimed that explicit government pressure on courts and prosecution offices associate

journalists with terrorism by showing articles and news as evidence, even when such news items fail to include any call for violence (HRW, 2018). Journalists usually spend the trial period in jail. In recent "Media Monitoring Reports" of BİA, it can be seen that the current sum of the length of prison sentences for journalists totals almost hundred years; today Turkey is the biggest prison for journalists in the world with over hundred journalists behind bars (BİA, 2018a). In addition, Turkey, according to World Justice Project's "2017–2018 Rule of Law" index, ranked 101st among 113 countries, having lost two points compared to the year before. As stated in the report, the judicial control mechanisms over the government start to disappear.

Journalists targeted by the government-led judiciary rely primarily on national and international professional solidarity campaigns. Some campaigns such as #JournalismIsNotACrime and #FreeTurkeyJournalists– can become part of a broader network of rights-based global solidarity. Similar campaigns are carried out for individual journalists, too (See #FreeDeniz, #FreeCanDundar, #FreeAhmetŞık). As well, major bar associations offer free legal support. Furthermore, MLSA (Media and Law Studies Association) seeks to take cases to the European Court of Human Rights in cooperation with other international institutions such as London-based Media Legal Defense Initiative (MLDI).

A networked, alternative and virtual oasis

In Turkey, the large-scale changes in media ownership that took place between 2002–2017 indicate that mainstream media have gradually changed hands, being sold to the conglomerates following the dictates of the government (Adaklı, 2010; Ataman & Çoban, 2018; Kurban & Sözeri, 2012; Sarikakis et al., 2017; Yeşil, 2018). Ideological sovereignty has created a solid uniform structure in the Turkish media. Although one can historically hardly speak of a Turkish mainstream journalism totally independent from the government, the present situation imposes unconditional allegiance to government interests. All kinds of political, economic and legal pressures are utilized with the aim of bringing dissident journalists to their knees. One recent example of this can be seen in the acquisition of Doğan Media – the biggest media holding company – by a pro-government company Demirören Holding, after years of intimidation. This process has also culminated

in the unemployment of hundreds of journalists. Furthermore, the attack on independent and alternative media organizations escalated with the 2013 Gezi Resistance and reached a peak in the aftermath of the 2016 coup attempt. Most of them were closed as their possessions were confiscated (Freedom of the Press 2017; RSF-2018 World Press Freedom Index).

As traditional media become significantly dysfunctional, the virtual world has become a journalistic oasis. Experienced and professional journalists have been building small news media initiatives as individuals or collectives through websites and social media platforms. Several of these have opted for crowd-funding. The most well-known collective examples such as Ruşen *Çakır's* Medyascope and Can Dündar's *#Özgürüz*, are benefiting from both international funds and crowd-funding facilities (Erduran et al., 2018: 23–26). Today, different forms of solutions are being sought for unemployment and precarity, which is a result of the invasion of the news media environment by the government media. Unions, foundations and associations provide various scholarships and funds to unemployed journalists, using international funding. Globally broadcasting organizations such as BBC-Turkish and Deutsche Welle-Turkish have shown solidarity by giving unemployed journalists full-time and part-time jobs.

Those alternative media platforms which have shifted their activities into new media as a result of suppression continue to serve as networked and polyphonic lines of resistance in the face of uniformity and government media monopoly. There are many examples to cite here: www.sendika63.org, which persists in journalistic activities after having been denied access for 62 times by The Information and Communication Technologies Unit of the Ministry of Communication; Germany-based Artı Tv/Artı Gerçek which has been founded abroad after being closed on the grounds of emergency state decree; Birgün and Evrensel, which try to use the power of social media and the internet despite their low circulation; and Jinnews, which continues to broadcast following the closing of Jinha, composed of Kurdish women journalists.

Conclusion

Zizek (2013) has contended that the marriage between democracy and capitalism is over. States that can implement the smoothest neoliberal

policies required by corporate globalization are those, as in Turkey, which are governed by the autocrats, where executive power puts pressure on the jurisdiction and legislation, where the fundamental rights and freedoms, in particular freedom of expression, are restricted. It is impossible to claim that journalism can continue to be the "fourth estate" or a "watchdog" in such countries, even though in these countries the constitution and the laws of the media and communication guarantee freedom, on paper. To carry out a disturbing journalistic activity that exposes the dirty laundry of the ruling elites who are accustomed to seeing their jobs conducted behind closed doors is a sufficient reason to be targeted by such powers. Just recently, Pelin *Ünker*, who as a member of The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists worked on Paradise Papers which reveals offshore activities of some of the world's leading leaders. She has been sentenced to prison for her investigative piece on the companies of then Turkey's Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım and his sons. Even though the Prime Minister accepted the existence of offshore activities of the companies in question, the fact that *Ünker* has been sentenced for the crime of defamation and insult remains a uniquely unjust and unseemly action (Brennan, 2019).

In the face of power instilled through autocrat-ridden polarization, fear, violence and hatred, pursuing a rights-based and socially responsible journalism activity remains a courageous path. Indeed, even though *Ünker* claims that "doing journalism is not a matter of courage but of public duty, relatively shorter jail time sentences and cash fines are not the sole threats that the journalist is exposed to" (Ünker, 2019). We have started by citing examples of how journalists can continue their activity faced with threats from the government elites and others attached to them by visible and invisible strings. On the other hand, we have also witnessed that in countries such as Turkey, where democracy has completely collapsed, journalism is not an activity that can be sustained in the commercial big media. In such an environment, where an activist journalism emerges only from the strengths of liberal norms and where the resisting force of alternative journalism is the only apparent viable option, the question which remains is this: is such journalism sustainable?

We have seen that the global solidarity networks, with their struggle for rights and liberty, constitute a primary source of nutrition. Also,

we can claim that journalists are relatively successful in producing responses to close threats by combining some of the traditional defense strategies and tactics with the power of new media technologies. However, an analysis pertaining to what extent this struggle is successful and sustainable requires careful scrutiny of the transnational connections of alternative initiatives, of financial structuring, staff characteristics, organizational communication as well as analyses of the news they produce and the relationship between the audience and the reader. Then we would be able to confidently detect whether or not such alternative ways of gathering and writing news in dangerous zones like Turkey are sustainable.

Notes

1. For instance, The New York Times has decided to hide the correspondent's name after its reporter, Don Nissenbaum was taken into custody for a few days in Turkey (TurkeyPurge, 2017).
2. Journalists Union of Turkey (TGS), Independent Communication Network (BİA), Dokuz8Haber and other institutions provide digital security trainings to journalists to raise awareness and to help them acquire the necessary skills. "Journalist Security Guide" by CPJ and the online education materials provided by "dijitalguvenlik.org "are used in these trainings.
3. Periodical reports of BİA, Contemporary Journalists Association (*ÇGD*) and Turkish Journalists Association (TGC), Freedom House (FH, 2018), Reporters Without Borders (RSF, 2018) and CPJ's "Turkey Crackdown Chronicle" (2018).

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12. Media in Turkey

A reporter's tale

Ayla Albayrak

One evening in November 2015, a note from the police was waiting at our apartment building's entrance in Istanbul. It was there for the neighbourhood to see: an order for me to visit the local police station soonest, or be forcibly taken in. At the time, I was a staff reporter for *The Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) in Turkey, having just covered the state operations against Kurdish militants in Turkey's Kurdish southeast.

It turned out that a prosecutor in the South-Eastern Kurdish city of Silopi had launched an investigation into my story and an accompanying video published in The WSJ earlier that year. The prosecutor argued that it was "terrorism propaganda", constituting a crime. It was a news feature, datelined Silopi, about the renewed armed conflict between the state and the Kurdish militants of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or the PKK. The peace process between the parties, launched two years earlier, had collapsed, leading to unprecedented urban clashes in Kurdish cities.

Clearly, the tide had turned for the press covering the topic. During the early days of the peace talks in spring 2013, the government had practically enabled a press visit for a large group of journalists in Turkey to meet the top commanders of the PKK based in northern Iraq.

My case: almost over

Continuing to cover the conflict and other news since the police interrogation, my life went on as usual for nine months. However, times were dramatically changing. The government's determination

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to silence the media grew more and more apparent after the coup attempt against Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in July 2016. The government launched a relentless purge against the bureaucracy, academia, and the press.

In October 2017, as purges continued, I was convicted and sentenced to two years and one month in prison. By that time, I had already left the country and the WSJ had made it clear that I could not continue covering Turkey for the newspaper, but that I was welcome to work abroad. After different stints in the WSJ's European offices, I finally quit my job in July 2018. Having covered Turkey for more than 15 years, watching the country's slide into chaos from exile felt meaningless.

As of writing this, the regional court of appeals has decided to drop my case, citing technicalities in trial procedures. The prosecutor appealed almost immediately, demanding the court review its decision. In short, the case is not yet fully over. Needless to say, this trial led to huge losses in my life in many ways, professionally and personally.

Given the high number of journalists in prison, of course, I have been "very lucky" all along. I was lucky not to have been detained when I testified in Istanbul court in January 2017, lucky to have a second citizenship in Finland, that allowed me to leave after foreseeing the verdict from the political mood, and lucky to have a strong international publication behind me. I believe the support of Finland and the WSJ were key factors leading to the dropping of my case, as well the government's desire to polish their image in the West ahead of predicted economic crises. However, I can never be quite sure.

Glimpses of hope to suit policy

For several years in a row, Turkey has been cited for having the largest number of imprisoned journalists in the world by Reporters Without Borders (RSF). In 2018, the RSF placed Turkey at the 157th among in its annual press freedom ranking among 180 countries. Even countries such as Ethiopia, Rwanda and Congo ranked higher.

According to the International Press Institute (IPI), more than 150 journalists were in prison in Turkey in mid-February 2019. President Erdogan also continues to target journalists in televised speeches, most recently telling Fox TV anchor Fatih Portakal, that he should "know his place", or the nation will "hit you in the back of the neck".

Thus far, any small glimpses of hope along the way – such as when the appeals court dropped my case – have eventually turned out to be political moves. Before the key elections in June 2018, when Erdogan prepared to complete the shift from the parliamentary system into a super-presidential leadership, some leading opposition journalists were released from the prison. Among them were Ahmet Şık, Turkey's top investigative journalist then working for *Cumhuriye*t daily, whose case was closely followed internationally, and Murat Sabuncu, the editor-in-chief of *Cumhuriyet*. Eight months later, a Turkish appeals court confirmed their prison sentences, in effect resulting in six of a total of 14 persecuted staff members of Cumhuriyet having to go back to prison.

Since those key elections, however, *Cumhuriyet* no longer seems to pose a threat. The century-old newspaper, which until recently was one of the last critical, independent publications, has since changed its senior staff, prompting the resignation of more than two dozen liberal and left-wing writers.

Some journalists are likely to remain imprisoned for a long time. The government has no sympathy for employees of the former media outlets owned by the media network of the US-based imam Fethullah Gulen, the main suspect behind the coup attempt against Erdogan in 2016.

Never quite the fourth estate

Even before the current witch-hunt against critics, the media in Turkey was never truly the "fourth estate". The Turkish press was active and at times even aggressive, but it never exercised as much influence over politics as the media in developed democracies.

The governments have been supervised first and foremost by the military. Military commanders saw themselves as the guardians of secularism, conducting three coups between 1960 and 1980, and several more subtle interventions. In this, the military was helped by a like-minded mainstream press, who would be free to criticize politicians and report on daily politics.

Until the civilian government under President Erdogan gradually pushed the military out of politics – for the first time using the judiciary on a massive scale against alleged coup-plotters – the army had set the "red lines" for the press. Even in the best of times, there were taboos

and restrictions on what could be publicly scrutinised: the role of the military, the state-Kurdish conflict, and official presentations of Turkish history were off the table.

Kurdish journalists felt the restrictions the most, landing in prisons in large numbers long before recent purges. For members of Turkish mainstream media, stretching the red lines would typically mean risking their jobs rather than imprisonment. In the decades marked by military dominance and high political instability, dozens of Turkish journalists fell victim to assassinations, unsolved until today. At least 56 journalists have been killed during the history of modern Turkey.

While initially expanding freedom of expression with a new press law in 2004, in anticipation of EU membership talks, the AKP's (Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi, The Justice and Development Party, an Islamist Political Party) tolerance to criticism decreased over time. Also, media patrons seeking to benefit from the steadily growing economy, forced journalists to walk on a tightrope not to hamper their business interests and alliances beyond the media sector. After the nationwide anti-government demonstrations in 2013, known as the Gezi Park protests, dozens of Turkish journalists were fired for their coverage of the demonstrations. The protests marked a clear turn in press freedom in Turkey. The pro-government media and even the mainstream press tried to muffle the demands and the scale of the protests.

Arrests related to the protests have resumed five years after the protests, prompting suspicions that the government may be using the Gezi Park protests as a tool to suppress any remaining dissent ahead of local elections scheduled in March 2019.

Changing laws, continuing pressure

As is widely known, the current environment is marked by a markedly higher level of government suppression, unsuccessfully veiled by legality. Thousands of known or imagined government opponents stand trial on terrorism charges. However, the use of laws to suppress a free media is not an entirely new phenomenon. Today, Turkey's vague anti-terrorism law, especially Article 7/2, which criminalises "terrorism propaganda", provides the most used tool to silence the media. Another problem is Article 299 of the Turkish Penal Code, which sets a punishment for insulting the President up to four years in prison, hampering

political discourse. The latter has been used to punish citizens from all walks of life, not journalists specifically.

In the past, there were other traps. Among these was Article 312 of the Turkish Penal Code, which imposed prison sentences for inciting religious or racial hatred, commonly used against those writing about Kurdish issues. Even Erdogan himself, then mayor of Istanbul, was sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment based on Article 312 in 1999, for reciting a religious poem.

After the European Union membership talks began with Turkey, and some problematic laws including Article 312 were amended, the authorities started resorting to Article 301 of Turkish Penal Code. The article criminalised "insulting Turkishness" in the mid-2000's. Back then, the world closely followed the trial of Turkey's Nobel-winning author Orhan Pamuk, who was charged under Article 301 for an interview he gave to a Swiss newspaper. The charges against him, and many other public figures, were dropped in 2006. The point of charging under Article 301 was not to send the accused to prison. The point, as explained to me in 2006 by lawyer Kemal Kerincsiz, the main orchestrator of a large number of 301 cases, was to defame well-known figures in the eyes of the public.

This had tragic consequences, when the editor-in-chief of an Armenian newspaper, Hrant Dink – also "marked" by his highly public 301 case – was murdered in broad daylight in front of his newspaper's office in Istanbul in January 2007. Many officials, it has turned out, knew that Dink was in danger, but failed or even refused to protect him.

Judiciary disrupted

In parallel to the growing powers of President Erdogan under the new presidential system, the Turkish judiciary has again become a vehicle for suppressing free speech. The damage done to the judiciary, by curbing its independence and subjecting it to the whims of the daily politics and will of the government, seems irreversible in the short term. Often, the legal process itself acts as the punishment. This is clearly demonstrated by the large number of pretrial detentions and farcical legal procedures which stretch on for years. Only a few of the imprisoned journalists have been given a verdict, according to the Journalists' Union of Turkey.

Alarmingly, the judicial hierarchy has also been disrupted. In several well-known cases, journalists released by the decision of a court – even by the country's highest court – have been ordered re-detained immediately by another court. In a well-known case, the Constitutional Court ordered writer Sahin Alpay to be released, but as several ministers publicly criticised the top court's decision, a lower court rejected it.

On top of that, the government ruled in late July 2018, that some 10,000 complaints filed by citizens at the Constitutional Court would be reviewed by a compensation committee within the Justice Ministry. It is worth noting that since the political system was changed after the June elections, the Justice Ministry, as all other ministries, are now directly regulated by the Presidential Palace. Furthermore, the committee's decisions could be appealed at local appellate courts, sending the cases back to the legal limbo inside Turkey. The purpose seems to block the route to the top court as well as to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg.

More alarming is that Turkey has signaled it may not implement decisions by the ECHR. This became apparent when a Turkish court decided to ignore the ECHR decision ruling that popular Kurdish politician, Selahattin Demirtas, should be released from prison. The court said the ECHR decision had not been finalised. Demirtas has been in pre-trial detention for more than two years, facing terrorism-related charges, which could get him sentenced for more than 140 years, should he be convicted.

New Turkey, new-style reporting

Given the high risks, what does news reporting in Erdogan's "New Turkey" look like? Here are some recent examples.

After the sharp downfall of the Turkish currency in August 2018, amidst the crisis caused by US sanctions following the long imprisonment of an American pastor in Turkey, Erdogan called the crisis "an economic war". The mainstream media, which by then had barely covered the impending crisis, simply picked up Erdogan's slogans in their headlines: "economic war", "we will not bow before anyone", "the currency siege", repeating his theories about why the Turkish lira was falling. Serious discussions about the looming banking crisis and chronic issues in Turkish economic policies were reserved to a very

few remaining opposition newspapers, foreign media, and online news outlets, many of which are blocked to Turkish IP addresses. A few days into the "economic war", Turkey's interior ministry announced an investigation against hundreds of social media users for provoking the crash of the Turkish lira with critical posts.

When a passenger train derailed in northwestern Turkey, killing 24 people and injuring more than a hundred in July 2018, critics said the accident had been waiting to happen. The officials had already been warned of the poor condition of the railway tracks and the lack of fortification under the rails in Edirne, a district regularly affected by flooding. But even after the tragedy, criticism could barely be heard. An immediate coverage ban was issued by the government. When the ban was lifted, only that of what little remained of the critical press in Turkey – estimated at some 20 per cent after the purges – dared discuss the possible neglect. The discussion fizzled out before the month's end, and the railway tracks were repaired within days. The train moved on. In any democracy, an accident of such magnitude would have sparked a serious national debate.

In comparison, let us recall another similar accident, at the time of a more vibrant media and political landscape. In 2004, under the same Justice and Development Party, or AKP government, a train derailed in northwestern Sakarya province, killing 41 passengers. Investigators found that the high-speed train had been launched hastily by the AKP government, without first modernising the old infrastructure. A heated public debate followed. The findings of an investigation into the accident were widely discussed in the media, amidst calls for the Transportation Minister Binali Yildirim to resign (yet Mr. Yildirim, today the Parliament Speaker and until recently, the Prime Minister, rejected the calls). Although no one resigned, the accident was not forgotten, and the train accident subsequently kept emerging in public discussions for several years.

Foreign media amidst turmoil

While the risks of reporting in the country have risen, Turkish-language services by foreign media, such as the London-based BBC Türkçe and Bonn-based Deutsche Welle, have seemingly taken over the role of the mainstream media. These online outlets produce a steady stream

of news from Turkey in Turkish, often jointly produced with local reporters on the ground, in Turkish. The opposition media run from Europe by Turkish journalists-in-exile also publish online. Among the most well-read critical online outlets are Özgürüz, *Diken*, *T24*, *Duvar*, *Bianet*, *Medyascope TV*, *Ahval News*, and *Artı TV*. Most operate on scarce resources, some are banned in Turkey, and all reach only a fraction of society as most Turks still rely on television news rather than online journalism. In addition, the government has introduced new legislation seeking to complicate online publishing, but its impact remains to be seen.

Those speaking foreign languages can opt for original reporting by foreign media, for its use of more neutral language and independent reporting. However, naturally, the foreign media covers only news of international impact or interest. The foreign media has not been immune to the growing self-censorship. I see my verdict in October 2017 as a message to the foreign press corps in Turkey, an attempt to create a warning example to my colleagues. While I became the first European journalist convicted and sentenced to prison in Turkey (as said, I am a dual citizen of Turkey and Finland) some have had it much worse.

At the time of writing, *Die Welt* correspondent Deniz Yucel, a dual German-Turkish citizen, was facing surreal charges of "terrorism propaganda" and "incitement to hatred", after a year in prison without an indictment. Yucel was released in March 2018 and moved to Germany from Turkey, but his trial will likely last for a long time. Mathias Depardon, a French photojournalist, was detained for a month in Turkey before he was deported to France, after years of living and working in Turkey.

For the past three years, the government has also resorted to a simpler way of pushing out foreign reporters: denying press accreditations.

At the time of updating this article in March 2019, the accreditation of several long-standing members of the foreign press, including the Bureau Chief of the ZDF (Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen), the German public service broadcaster, had been rejected. At least dozens of other foreign press members in Turkey were still waiting for their press accreditations, and not a single Turkish journalist working for the international media, had received their press cards for 2019. After

discreetly keeping quiet about this unusual delay for two months, the foreign press broke its silence after those still waiting for their cards, were barred from a press conference in Istanbul announcing a European Union grant for Turkish rail projects.

It is not known how many journalists have been denied a press card by BYEGM (The Directorate General of Press and Information), in the past couple of years. I personally know several European reporters who were denied press cards unexpectedly, after working in Turkey for years, losing their work and residence permits as a result. They had no option but to leave. My former American WSJ colleague Dion Nissenbaum, was abruptly detained from his home over a Twitter post in December 2016 and de facto deported to the US after three days. There have also been cases of foreign reporters being prevented from entering the country at Turkish airports, some of which have become public, while some have not. In the light of these developments, some foreign press refrains from publishing Turkish nationals' bylines and have almost eliminated travel to risky areas. While this has led to reduced on-the-ground foreign coverage from inside Turkey and decreased investigative on-the-ground reporting, it has not finished all critical coverage.

In December 2018, a novel attempt to create an association for foreign media in Turkey, called the Foreign Media Association, was underway. The founders promised its members a non-political platform, a network of colleagues instead of a press freedom watchdog, and its role in the media landscape remains to be seen.

Who sets an example?

This article is merely a brief overview of the situation, a record of my ongoing case from my perspective, and an attempt to describe the media landscape in Turkey. Little did I know that the note on my door three years ago was just a hint of the days ahead for us, of the incredible danger now facing every aspect of life in Turkey, not only journalism. No matter how my own case finally ends, I have few hopes for better times ahead as the government pushes on with authoritarian policies and – most importantly – as long as a significant portion of Turkish public supports this course.

The foundation for press freedom in Turkey was poor to begin with, hence none of us should have been surprised by today's turmoil – nor

should we have hailed the freedoms granted by the fragile EU process on "the good days" of the AKP government.

In Turkey, using laws against journalists is not a new phenomenon. However, never since the military junta rule in the 1980's, has the judiciary been as subjugated to the will of the political leadership as it is today. The judiciary has become a vehicle for the government to control the press, while President Erdogan often makes calls for the judiciary, in televised speeches, to "do what is necessary". Under massive political pressure, the institution has slid into chaos. Legal processes have become unpredictable, not following established routes, as lower courts reject and ignore decisions by the upper courts.

The only way out of this quagmire would be to urgently return to democracy and pluralism, exercise the separation of powers, and abandon the politics of hate speech and polarisation. As of writing this, there are no signs of political will to do any of this, and the reactions to Turkish politics from Europe remains rather weak. Yet it seems that Western pressure is still effective, given the series of releases from prison over the past year.

Press freedom organizations, however, have drawn attention to the growing insensitivity to press freedom all over the world, manifested in the growing number of attacks and hate speech against journalists. US President Donald Trump has been very open about his contempt of reporters, accusing long-established mainstream media organizations of producing "fake news".

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reported that in 2018, the number of murdered journalists doubled to 34 cases worldwide. The most infamous was the gruesome case of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi critic and a Washington Post contributor, who was apparently murdered by his own regime at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. The murder put Turkey in a difficult spot, not only diplomatically but also because of its own harsh treatment of journalists and critics.

Unfortunately, because governments in some highly developed democracies follow a similar course of promoting social divisions and resorting to populism, Turkey is currently left with few good models. Hence, while Turkey today sticks out as one of the most dangerous examples of disregard to free speech, the problem currently is also universal in nature.

13. Afghanistan: Navigating between enemies and restrictive forces

Abdul Mujeeb Khalvatgar

Media in Afghanistan have had their successes and failures since the overthrow of the Taliban regime in the late months of 2001. We have seen progress, but now we are also in danger of slipping back from the achievements we have made. More than 100 national and international journalists and media workers have lost their lives in Afghanistan since 2001 and more than 1,300 cases of violence, against media and freedom of expression, have been reported since 2001.

On the other hand, when one compares Afghan media with those of neighbouring countries, Afghanistan has the most independent and free media situation in the region. There are 483 operational media outlets, including 96 TV stations, 190 radio stations, and 197 newspapers across the country. If we rely on the facts published by the Afghanistan Media Directory (Nai, 2017), about 12,000 journalists and media workers are involved in the Afghan media sector. Out of this, in accordance with Center for Protection of Afghan Women Journalists (CPAWJ)[1], approximately 18-20 per cent are women.

The new era of media development in Afghanistan is short, less than two decades. Despite this fact, the media have developed magically in this period. There were no TV stations during the Taliban period (1996–2001); only one radio station was operating with non-stop Taliban propaganda, and only a few government newspapers were published, equally propagandistic.

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Media encouragement

Media in Afghanistan are responsible for developments in a variety of sectors. There are over seven million female students in the country, and one of the reasons for a high enrolment is the fact that the media convinced families to send their girls to school. A survey conducted by Altai Consultancy in 2016 showed that most of the population receives its information from radio and TV, including information on their rights, and indeed, their children's rights to study. More than six million Afghans cast their votes during the last presidential election in 2014, not least because the media encouraged the public to use their rights, despite the security challenges. IEC, the Independent Election Commission, Afghanistan's election management body, in 2015 announced their survey results. These showed that most of the election-related information the public received was through the media. It may indicate that the majority of the population made their decision to cast votes because they have been encouraged to do by stories in the media. In the recent 2018 Afghanistan parliamentary elections, according to the election management body, IEC, about nine million eligible voters were registered and the reason given was that the media had informed them of their civil responsibilities. Afghanistan's citizens, especially urban ones, mount protests against policies and even sometimes against some government actions if they think these policies and actions fail to correspond to their rights as granted to them in the constitution.

Twenty years ago, protesting against government action was a dream, or rather a nightmare, because such protests were defined as both sinful and criminal. How can it be, then, that people protest now? The answer lies in the fact that the media made public important parts of dominant discourses, and emphasized the citizens' rights. These examples are just some of many more results of free media performance and its results in Afghanistan. It is also worth mentioning that most of the public moves are being managed through social and mainstream media. In November 2018, the central government arrested a local police chief who was renowned for fighting with the Taliban in Wardak province near Kabul. On the evening of his arrest, groups of people in Kabul started to call for gatherings and protests, especially through social media. Next day at one o'clock in the morning, more than three thousand people gathered in Kabul and by 9 am the same day, the man, Ali, was released.

Furthermore, Afghanistan has one of the best media laws in the region. According to the rating made by the Center for Law and Democracy (CLD), a Canadian NGO working to promote and protect democracy, the law concerning access to information in Afghanistan is the best law in the world (CLD, 2018). Afghanistan has a Media Establishment and Performance Regulation legislation, while these two salient legal documents do not exist in neighbouring countries. To compare, in Iran there is no private media through the law, in China, there is no freedom of expression. In five central Asia "-stans" – Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan – the situation of freedom of expression is worse than Afghanistan, because either they do not have a direct law guarantee for freedom of expression, or the practice is more difficult than it is in Afghanistan. According to Freedom House, the score of Afghanistan is better than all the aforementioned countries (Freedom House, 2017). In Pakistan and India, such processes are more bureaucratic, either for access to information or for establishing a media outlet, facts which makes a free flow of information and media establishment time-consuming processes. Comparing Afghanistan's use frequency[2] (based on Afghan Mass Media Law) with Pakistan's related legal document[3], one sees how difficult it is to establish a radio in Pakistan, while it shows how easy it is in Afghanistan. Comparisons show that Afghanistan's mass media law is better than most related laws in the neighbouring countries.

Despite all of the above-mentioned achievements, Afghanistan is one of the most dangerous countries for journalists. The situation for journalists has caused many international observers to hold mistaken perceptions of media freedom of Afghanistan. Freedom House, for example shows Afghanistan as "not free" in the media sector (Freedom House, 2018). Reporters Without Borders, (RSF) recognizes Afghanistan as dangerous for media as its reporters are fleeing due to the danger they are facing. In their report for 2018, Afghanistan is ranked 118th out of 180 countries (RSF, 2016). We do believe the media are *partly* free in Afghanistan but we also recognize the fact that journalists face many difficulties in this country. RSF is not the only international entity describing Afghanistan as a dangerous place for the media. Citizens and the whole journalist community is badly affected.

If we look at the recent 18 years, in which the media has largely been a success story in Afghanistan, there are very clear instances, which have arisen since 2014 indicating the media situation is rapidly becoming worse. In the four years from 2014 to end of 2018, more than 50 journalists and media workers have been killed, while in the twelve-year period from 2001 to the end of 2013, fewer than 50 were killed. The current national unity government took office in 2014.

Deaths and violence

In 2018 alone, 18 journalists and media workers were killed in Afghanistan. The number of casualties is differently reported by other organizations and mainly has been estimated as lower than what is indicated here. The main cause of this difference is that here in Afghanistan, not only journalists, but all media workers are reported. The other organizations seem to count only journalists/reporters, a fact which seems unjust since in several cases, media *institutions* are targeted. During 2017, Afghanistan recorded more than 150 cases of violence against journalists. According to Nai Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan (hereafter called Nai); about 1,300 cases of violence against journalists have been recorded in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban in November 2001.[4]

In January 2016, the Taliban, the biggest enemy of the media in the country, announced it was targeting specific media outlets, which had reported on their activities during the fall of Kunduz, one of the Northern provinces in the country. Kunduz remained under their control for almost three days. Consequently, they targeted the staff of one of the biggest media companies, Moby Group.[5] They killed seven media staff and wounded 26 other employees. *Tolo* TV, owned by Moby Group had reported on Taliban crimes during the Taliban seizure of Kunduz. This included the burning of local markets, and raping female students at the Kunduz University dormitory. According to *Tolo* TV, during their control of Kunduz, the Taliban looted a market in the city, killed tens of innocent citizens, justifying this act by accusing them of having links with the government. This media exposure of the Taliban's crimes, especially the rape story, led the Taliban to designate media institutions as military targets. The consequence was the brutal attack on the Moby Group bus. Recently, in June 2018, a Taliban mobile radio

in Ghazni Province, which was one of their propaganda organs used to recruit youth into their ranks, was bombed and destroyed. After the incident, spokesperson for Taliban, Zabihullah Mujahid, wrote in a Twitter post as well as through an email to all the media, that because the government bombed and demolished their radio, the Taliban will not respect any media outlets and organizations, but will attack them (Nai, 2018).

According to Nai's recorded information, most of the journalists and media workers killed since 2001 (of them, 17 foreigners), have been killed either by direct and/or indirect involvement of the Taliban or ISIS.[6]

However, it is not just the Taliban, which threatens and violates the rights of journalists. Based on Nai's recorded data, the only systematic recorded data on violence against journalists since 2001, the Government of Afghanistan is behind more than 60 per cent of the cases of violence, excluding killings. In most of the cases, there has been full impunity: authorities have not persecuted or brought to justice persons behind the violence. This has been the case even if (or perhaps because) the person behind the violence was a staff member from one of the governmental entities. This high number of violent cases has become a strong point of criticism of the government for not supporting freedom of speech and free media, despite the existing legislation. It is worth mentioning that since the beginning of 2017, violent cases against journalists recorded by media support organizations including Nai have been reviewed by a committee, the Joint Committee of Government and Media. Almost 40 cases since 2001 have been reviewed and 49 others are under process. However, none of the cases committed by government personnel are reviewed.

Alongside the government, there are local powers, oftentimes called warlords, who are threatening journalists and the media in general. One illustrative case is when Mr. Nadim Ghori, editor-in-chief of *Sam* monthly and owner of a private historical museum based in Firozkoh (capital of the central Ghor province), was threatened by such local powers; his office was broken into and robbed in June 2018.[7] Local powerful people are always somehow connected with the government, either as government officials themselves, or by having connections with high-ranking officials.

Government failing to protect journalists

Furthermore, the government of Afghanistan has failed to prevent threats against the media from the Taliban and other terrorist groups. This has decreased the media sector's trust in the government, since according to Chapter 2, Article 34 of the Afghanistan Constitution, the Afghan government is obliged to support freedom of expression and a free media.[8]

There are several reasons for this lack of support for media from the government of Afghanistan: One is countrywide corruption in governmental institutions; another is the existence of extremists and Taliban supporters at different levels of the government. An obvious example is the Upper House spokesperson, who was a staff member of the Taliban's religious police during their government (1996–2001). A third reason could be remnants from the old communist regime, which ruled during, and for some years after, the Soviet occupation (occupation 1979–1988, supported government until 1992), an example being the president's ex national security advisor who recently resigned, but who was working in the attorney's department, in intelligence service, during that span of time. In addition, one of the obvious reasons could be the improvement of the media and their critique of government failures or bad performance. Thus, the government, not the structures and policies, but rather its staff and employees, somehow see the media as their enemy. In many instances, government staff ignore attacks on the media and do not condemn them. Despite this ignorance, media literacy is increasing gradually among Afghan citizens. Furthermore, the media have their obligation to make the government accountable through criticism, if necessary, and a responsibility to speak out to remind them of both obligations and promises. Upholding this role of the media has been an ongoing struggle between the media and the government for more than a decade.

Moreover, both the threats from the Taliban and other terrorist groups as well as government action or inaction have led to considerable self-censorship in the media sector in Afghanistan. This self-censorship is of course further encouraged by the Taliban, who see it as their task to exert pressure on the free media. During their period in power, they demonstrated that they do not believe in human rights or any related human values. However, trying to understand why Afghan

governments in the period after 2001 have behaved in an oppressive way is more challenging, especially when it comes to the National Unity Government of Afghanistan, which has been in office since late in 2014.

Prior to running for office, the National Unity government leaders submitted a signed letter to Nai and some other media; this letter supported organizations and assured us of their support for freedom of expression and a free media. Nevertheless, they have failed to secure the environment for the media to perform their duties and improve their work. The main example of the government not being able or willing to protect the media, appeared during the bloody attack by the Taliban on the Moby Group's staff, mentioned above, despite the fact that there had been prior threats from the Taliban against *Tolo* TV, one of the branches of Moby Group.

After the Taliban's explicit threats to target certain media outlets, and specifically after the January 20, 2016 attack on the Moby Group staff, media organizations started to set up meetings with the related government organizations, including the Presidential Office and security offices of the government, including the Ministries of Interior and Defence. These meetings were to discuss how to secure media and journalists and protect them from any likely attacks.

In the beginning, government officials seemed eager to receive media suggestions in this regard, but by the end of these meetings, they were resolved to bring forward their own thoughts on how to secure media, instead of listening to ideas from those of us who were media representatives. This happened because the media representatives admitted they were not experts on security, the military or safety; as such, they argued that this was the government's responsibility. Thus, the government used their own experts to find the best way to try to make the environment safe and secure. Despite those efforts, the environment is still not safe, and violence against journalists increases. In April 2018, a group of journalists and photographers who were covering a suicide attack in the Green Zone of Shashdarak in Kabul city were themselves attacked. Nine journalists were killed and six others seriously injured. ISIS claimed responsibility of this very bloody attack on the reporters.

Although the government did not protect the media community, meetings and negotiations with government bodies continued. These

meetings resulted in the establishment of a committee composed of members from government and the media, which was to meet regularly and discuss any challenges in this regard. The committee was named "Media and Government Joint Committee" and has local representative committees in every province in Afghanistan.[9] In addition, under the National Directorate of Security (NDS), a group was tasked to review all threats and coordinate the information with specific targeted/threatened media outlets, media staff and media organizations. The NDS group has a representative at the joint committee and is in contact with media outlets and organizations. But it is sometimes confusing whether the threats about which NDS releases to media outlets and organizations is actual security information about threats against the media, or whether such "threats" have been created by government to pressurize media to soften its critique and become increasingly intimidated.

Moreover, the Ministry of Information and Culture (MoIC) of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has also started to cooperate with media organizations and outlets aimed at facilitating meetings and sessions with government other officials.

Self-censorship in several directions

At this stage, it seems as if the government of Afghanistan is trying to show a robust level of support for the media. There is continuous contact between the government and the media sector, mainly to discuss safety and security issues. In some instances, media managers are warned that they are under threat and the government issues some recommendations for developing measures for physical security. After most of the warnings, media managers and journalists usually prepare the environment to make the situation as safe as possible for their outlets and themselves. Unfortunately, focusing on security sometimes causes them to forget why they are journalists and what they ought to be doing as professional journalists. Consequently, one of the main obligations of the media – to criticize the government to make sure it upholds its legal obligations and promises – is currently being forgotten. Almost all media outlet owners and top journalists think that the government is now close with the media and that criticizing government actions will only damage this collaborative atmosphere.

It is worth mentioning that although media owners and managers have different socio-political leanings, the circumstances have affected them all. In other words, pro-government, pro-opposition and independent media are all affected equally by the current situation. In a study based partly on interviews with 28 active journalists in five regions of Afghanistan, a clear majority (24) reported that they had faced violence in relation to their work during the previous five years, and had been in situations where their safety had been threatened. Only four answered that they had suffered no violence, three reported one occasion, 11 reported between 2–5 occasions, three reported between 5–10 incidents, while seven reported more than ten (Eide et al. 2019). Furthermore, according to research conducted by Saumava Mitra in 2017, cases of violence against journalists are increasing both qualitatively and quantitatively. Moreover, violence has not only become heavier qualitatively, but the number of instances of violence against journalists increased (Mitra, 2017).

The fact that the increasing level of violence against the media has been followed by inaction by government bodies, and hence ascribing impunity to the perpetrators of violence, has led to self-censorship arising in a new and different way. "Violent incidents against journalists almost always go unpunished. This impunity is fuelling widespread self-censorship" (Blomquist, 2018). According to Human Rights Watch, intimidations contributed to Afghan journalists' self-censorship (HRW, 2015).

A good and a broad example in this regard could be the silence of Afghan media toward the peace and reconciliation process talks that are now proceeding through quadripartite meetings between the United States, China, Pakistan and Afghanistan to draw a road map for reconciliation and peace in Afghanistan. There has not been a single word about guaranteeing freedom of expression and free media in Afghanistan during these talks. It is worth mentioning that in the same negotiation processes in the past there had been some acquiescence from the Taliban. The Taliban also suggested that it was willing to soften its stance on some issues to facilitate a peace process. It said it was willing to accept a government system that "gives the right of education for women and men" and allows "freedom of expression" (Raghavan, 2015). However, this time not only did Taliban not raise the

issue, but even other media failed to comment, because they do not want to damage the existing atmosphere of relations with the government.

Furthermore, in a statement, The Afghan High Peace Council, the entity that facilitates negotiations between the Afghan government and armed groups of the opposition, said that Afghan media should not de-stabilize the peace and reconciliation processes by reporting on them, unless the council officially announces something. Furthermore, a ceasefire with the Taliban during the days of the Ramadan Eid, in June 2018, caused the media to refrain from criticizing the Taliban. It is believed that during the ceasefire, thousands of Taliban members came to the cities and half of them have not returned to their own areas, thus representing potential threats against those who oppose the, including the media, especially in Kabul.

A glance at Afghan media and their coverage of the National Unity Government, compared to its attitude towards previous governments since 2001, shows that the trend of the media openly criticizing the government has decreased. This happens despite the rising level of corruption; despite the fact that the security situation has declined and the economic and political situation in Afghanistan is worse than at any time since 2001. Moreover, due to the rising level of corruption, the governmental attitude towards the media has changed. Some individuals at the government level clearly that see the media as their enemy. The government has some unprofessional and obscure connections with some media managers and owners, which enables the government indirectly to influence some of the media's programs and content.

This self-censorship in relation to government is combined with self-censorship due to Taliban threats. The main subjects omitted in such processes of self-censorship are Taliban activities, including the killing of citizens, among them women, burning local houses and facilities. This self-censorship not only occurs in rural areas, where these extremists exercise much control; it also takes place everywhere, even in the big cities, including the capital Kabul. If it continues, it is possible that the media may be changed into a silent sector, which always thinks about its own safety and security, but does not pay justice to its ideals, its raison d'être.

If this trend is not opposed, Afghanistan will lose one of the miracles in its modern history. It will lose the freedom of expression and free

media, which have been the result of the direct sacrifice of the lives of almost one hundred journalists and media workers. Furthermore, it will put at risk the lives of thousands of media staff members, not to mention the results of tens of millions of dollars of the international community's taxpayer money granted to build an independent media situation in Afghanistan.

Still hope

I do believe that there is still room to support Afghanistan's freedom of expression and free media. Afghanistan media still needs to prioritize more skill building programs through which their confidence as a sector can grow once again. There is need for the international community to re-allocate financial support to media capacity building. The trainings should range from beat reporting and analyses to investigative reporting.

There is a need for Afghanistan as well as for international allies of Afghanistan to re-announce their commitment of support for human right values, including the right to freedom of expression. Media in Afghanistan need to be reminded that critique of governments and of powerful institutions is one of the main duties of free media worldwide.

I do believe that Afghanistan media does have the capacity to learn more and increase its watchdog functions of powerful people and institutions in our war-torn and corrupted country. Nevertheless, it needs a powerful commitment of international institutions in that they support the sector in order to keep those in power on their toes and accountable to the population.

I also believe that it is for the international community to remind the Afghanistan government to uphold its international commitment and its promises laid out in international laws, including the Human Rights Declaration and Citizen Civil and Political Rights Convention, and all laws guaranteeing press freedom and unhampered access to information.

Notes

1. http://www.cpawj.org/en/
2. http://atra.gov.af/en/page/6912/6935/6936
3. http://www.pemra.gov.pk/
4. Please see: https://nai.org.af/data-maps/

5. http://www.mobygroup.com
6. Please see: https://nai.org.af/data-maps/
7. http://nai.org.af/files/documents/mw/Monthly%20Report%20157%20English.pdf
8. https://www.mfa.gov.af/constitution/chapter-two-fundamental-rights-and-duties-of-citizen.html
9. This author is a member of Kabul media and government joint committee.

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14. Transnational dialogues

Cartoons, Daesh and the white terrorist

Atta Ansari

"There is always an 'Oslo-Process' behind a dialogue or a reconciliation plan." A Swedish friend of mine was laughing as he was trying to poke my Norwegian sentiments after a discussion about how much Norwegians love to present themselves as a nation of peacemakers. I replied, "Whether our efforts are successful or not, let history judge. At least we are trying." (Implying that the Swedes were not doing anything).

Jokes apart, I do not know if it was by accident, but something similar did really happen when the world was in flames after the cartoon controversy in 2005–2006. Some Norwegians, including Muslim and Christian leaders, politicians and academics, immediately started to play the role of firefighters, becoming empathetic listeners and mediators. Trying to calm down the whole situation and encouraging people to talk, rather than shout slogans and promote hate from both sides.

Norwegian journalists were among the first who created a space for dialogue beside the ongoing coverage, to understand the gravity of the cartoon-conflict from various angles, and to discuss how to cover it. Even a team of Christian and Muslim community leaders travelled together in Arab countries to calm down the furor, and to emphasize the need for a peaceful dialogue.

I can recall one morning in January 2006 when I received a phone call from Ashraf Al-Karda. He asked me, "Have you heard the news?

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A Norwegian Christian magazine has just republished the Danish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him?" I replied, "My God! Now this is going to become a Christian-Muslim conflict."

Ashraf was at that time working as a freelancer for the newly established TV channel Al-Arabiya and for a Norwegian company TV2-Nettavisen. I had been working for the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) since 1989. We both lived in Oslo. He grew up in a very restricted Islamic society in Saudi Arabia and moved to Norway as an adult. I grew up in the metropolitan city of Karachi in Pakistan, and later in Oslo from the age of 13 years. We had very different backgrounds and political views, but we had one thing in common; our Muslim background, and we were both working journalists. Very few Muslims worked in newsrooms in the Nordic countries at that time.

Looking for an end

In the wake of the burning conflict created by the Muhammad caricatures published by Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*, we often discussed when and how this horrible conflict would end. Moreover, the Norwegians were directly involved after the Christian conservative weekly *Magazinet* published the same cartoons in the name of free speech. It was presented as an act of solidarity and support of free speech, which now was under pressure. The editor-in-chief of *Magazinet* was heavily criticized and accused of fueling tensions.

I had memories of the time when the Iranian religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini demanded Salman Rushdie's head. Norwegians were directly involved in the conflict, as Rushdie's Norwegian publisher, William Nygaard, narrowly survived a murder attempt by an unknown person. Although no one has been arrested or convicted, most people believe that a Muslim terrorist tried to kill Mr. Nygaard.

What happened in 2005 and 2006 was beyond anyone's imagination. We used to ask many questions, such as:

- Would *Jyllands-Posten* have published these insulting cartoons if they had Muslim journalists working in their newsroom? (We thought they might have warned the editor what chaos these cartoons may create.)

- Did the editor speak to any Muslim scholar or Islam expert in Denmark before publishing? (We thought warnings might have stopped them or given the frame of publishing a clear context.)
- Is there only one cartoon with the bomb in the turban, which is problematic? (We thought the two depicting Muhammad as a terrorist and a womanizer were the most provocative cartoons.)

The cartoons painted a picture of Muhammed as a useless figure for our modern time. He seemed rather in opposition to modernity and basic human rights. Most Muslims do look at Muhammed as a merciful and kind person, a man with new ideas of how to develop a just society by teaching about animal rights, giving women the right to inherit the wealth of their husbands or fathers. His rules and laws may be outdated in our time, but they challenged the norms of his time.

Most Muslims saw the Danish cartoons in a context of deliberate provocation, a Western newspaper using its right to draw and publish nasty and insulting cartoons of Prophet Muhammad. The religious ones saw it as an act of sin. The political ones saw it as an act of imperialism. We were both journalist and we saw it as an act of Danish ignorance and naivety.

Confusing for journalists

Not only for politicians and academics, but for journalists and editors too, it was a confusing time. Should we support the deliberate provocation by *Jyllands-Posten*? Should we republish some of the cartoon, or all of them? Some of my Norwegian colleagues were, and still are, against publishing provocative and insulting cartoons of religious figures and symbols. They recall how European media before the Holocaust portrayed Jews. Other believed it was even more important to support *Jyllands-Posten* and *Magazinet* as the reactions against them were violent. As the cartoonists and editors were under direct threats, we all had to stand together and defend the right for free speech – in one way or other.

Difference of opinion among journalists and editors existed in almost every newsroom across Europe. Even within *Jyllands-Posten,* there were many different opinions among the working staff and team of editors. However, the mainstream media did not reflect this internal debate to their viewers and readers.

Minority journalists were under huge pressure from both sides, those who defended the cartoons, and those who did not. Our "own" communities and journalist-friends in Muslim countries were asking: "What kind of journalism is this? Don't you have any ethical standard or political sense?"

I was invited to host a debate at Oslo Press Club about freedom of speech. Cartoonist and editors were in the panel. I was asking questions. The panel was answering. I was doing my job, being very careful but pushing for a debate. I asked a direct question: "Why don't you as a cartoonist draw cartoons of Muhammed?" One of the panelists replied; "It's because of *you* Muslims. I don't want to pay the price with facing threats…."

Soon after the net trolls were out of the cage. Hundreds in the US and Europe posted humiliating pictures and videos mocking Islamic religious symbols.

Consequences of the provocation

A Danish imam travelled around demanding Muslim leaders act against offending cartoons of their prophet in the West. He had examples of cartoons from *Jyllands-Posten* and others posted on the internet compiled in a paper file. Reactions did not come as shocking news at a time of wars going on in important Muslim countries where the US and Europe were heavily involved. The war in Afghanistan was still going on, and Iraq had been attacked after the presentation of American and British lies, accusing Saddam Hussain of supporting Al Qaeda and hiding weapon of mass destruction.

Thousands of Muslims were killed and tortured during European and American military actions. Millions of Muslims had, and still have, a strong feeling of being under attack from the strongest nations in the world – Europe and the US.

Demonstrations after demonstrations were announced all over Europe. The anger and the violence provoked by the cartoons came closer and closer to our doorstep. Angry long-bearded men chanting *Allah O Akbar* (God is great) in Lahore, Kabul, Tehran, Damascus, Delhi, Dhaka, Jakarta, Beirut etc. Most of the protesters never read the context or saw the cartoons published by *Jyllands-Posten*. Many in the West wondered why they were so angry.

Many were killed during these demonstrations, which fuelled the anger even more. Properties worth billions of dollars were vandalised and burned down. It was a moment of tear for Norwegians, especially when their own flag, for the very first time in history was set on fire, and the embassy in Damascus attacked.

European diplomats complained that cartoon provocation had created a threating situation for embassy personal and aid workers in some Muslim countries. They were not happy, but few did openly criticize *Jyllands-Posten*. The suicide attack on the Danish embassy in Islamabad in 2008 confirmed exactly what diplomats had feared most. The Norwegian embassy building was also damaged in the same attack.

Most of those who died in cartoon riots were Muslims. Many were beaten and shot by police and military forces protecting embassies and other Western properties in Muslim majority countries. Tension was growing in Europe as well. Many diplomats from Muslim countries in Europe were worried about the situation getting out of control. However, Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen refused to meet ambassadors from 11 Muslim countries who wanted to discuss ways to calm down the situation. Four months later, in February 2006, Mr. Rasmussen was forced to change his attitude after massive protests from Danish diplomats and a boycott campaign against Danish products in Arab countries.

The editor-in chief of *Jyllands-Posten* published an open letter to Muslims around the world. Now he was talking to Muslims globally – not only to Danish readers of his newspaper – explaining that *Jyllands-Posten* believed in democratic rights of free speech and freedom of religion. Mr. Carsten Juste distanced himself from demonizing certain nationalities, religions and groups.

Broken trust

For the very first time in history, the European media and journalists were targeted and aggressively criticised by a huge population of Muslims. It contradicted what we had seen and learned from history.

In many Muslim countries, most people always welcomed Western journalists. The BBC and other European and American channels were popular among a considerable number of people. They were more trusted than local media, which was often controlled by governmental censorship.

However, this trust was now broken. Western journalists working in the field were now under direct threat and targeted more than ever before. Attacks on Christian minorities who had been living in peace in Muslim countries increased substantially in the years that followed.

Some academics and journalists, including myself, emphasised that the media in Europe should avoid portraying a "black and white picture": the white majority as the "tolerant" one, and Muslims as the "intolerant". We should not only publish opinions and actions of hard-liners, but also reflect views of Muslim academics, Norwegian experts on Islam and international politics, as well as individuals of Muslim communities. Only in this way, could we present a larger picture of different opinions, both politically and religiously, to decrease the gap.

Oslo talks 2006

Ashraf al-Karda came up with the idea of a Nordic-Arabic dialogue meeting for journalists and media experts. His idea was discussed in a meeting of the Nordic Journalists Federation in February 2006. Interestingly, the Danish delegation did like the idea, but they refused to host any dialogue meeting in Denmark.

The Norwegian Journalist Federation (NJ) decided to arrange a dialogue meeting in Oslo in cooperation with the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Free Word Trust and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting, held in April 2006, brought together media experts and working journalists from a variety of media companies based in Egypt, Qatar, Lebanon, Norway, Denmark, UK, etc. The meeting was conducted in a friendly atmosphere. Many of us brought questions to this meeting, rather than solutions and answers.

None of the Muslim journalists was in favor of publishing cartoons in *Jyllands-Posten*. It was pointed out that given the current political situation and lack of a common global understanding of free speech, newspapers should be careful before offending religious feelings. We had entered a new age of communication. Something published in one country was no longer hidden from rest of the world. Some saw it as an imperialistic act and others as pure naivety. There was a huge communication gap and difference of opinion about how one should understand the context of and explanation for the commissioning and publication of the cartoons.

Nobody was really discussing the Danish angle, the motivation for defying the unwritten ban on portraying the prophet. The focus was mainly on the international impact, that is, how the cartoons were perceived in a time of war and the reality of our world, with huge gaps regarding education and understanding of democratic values. However, there was no war in Denmark and Norway. Many journalists could not realize and understand why people were so angry about some cartoons of a prophet who lived 1,400 years ago.

The use of violence and aggressive actions was clearly condemned. The need for more cultural and religious knowledge in newsrooms was underlined.

Several of the participants have later referred to the Oslo-talks as a beginning of an international dialogue on freedom of speech and challenges faced by the media in a polarized and fast-paced digital media reality. IFJ's Secretary General Aidan White and several of the participants drew momentum from the first Oslo-talks into other international debates on the same themes. After the meeting in Oslo, NJ's leader Ann-Magrit Austenå was invited to a Norwegian-Indonesian working group planning for a global conference on cultural dialogues and freedom of expression in Bali.

Conference marathon

After the Oslo-talks and the Bali conference, many other national and international conferences were initiated. They were mostly financed and supported by media organizations or educational institutions based in Europe and the US and targeted Westerners working in the media field.

Attending some conferences since 2006, I was sometimes disappointed, either by the superiority demonstrated by some participants, or the level of politeness. Sometimes, we did not dare to discuss the controversial issue of blasphemy and a growing violent culture among religious groups, in both Europe and Muslim countries. And at other times, it all seemed to be a drama of a never-ending clash of civilisations, as forums became the platform for discussing all issues within Islam and Islamic societies; gender inequality, child marriage, forced marriages, homosexuality, violent jihad, hate against West, secularism vs. religiosity etc.

A huge amount of money and other resources have been spent to discuss how we can promote free speech, but the outcome as real support of local media and working journalists is still very low. Educational activities in Muslim countries were not given much priority. Alternatively, as a Pakistani journalist participating in a conference in Lillehammer said: "Europe is spending all this money to protect their economic interests in Muslim countries. That's why they want us to understand why it is important for them to print insulting caricatures of our prophet."

Conferences have helped some journalists and experts to meet and establish contacts. Muslim journalists and academics have been invited to Western countries to present their views and perspectives. However, after a short while, the frequency of provocations from media and social media went down. So did the frequency of conferences and cooperation across borders. However, the need for supporting working journalists in some Muslim countries is even higher than before. They face censorship and allegations of blasphemy, threats and violence orchestrated by religious groups.

Minority bashing

In the aftermath of the cartoon controversy, minorities in Muslim countries were put under pressure by local groups of religious fundamentalists, the same segments who were active in creating a worldwide protest wave. In Pakistan, Afghanistan, Egypt, Malaysia, Indonesia, Nigeria, as well as in other countries, we witnessed people from Muslim, Christian and Hindu minorities accused of blasphemy. In some cases, Muslims belonging to same sect were blaming each other for committing the sin of blasphemy.

Some of those accused have been even been killed in a horrible way on the spot by angry mobs. I consider many of these killings and violent attacks on minorities a form of "revenge". You could hear people saying: "we don't want European or American freedom of speech in our country." Implicitly, freedom to criticise holy prophets is unacceptable.

Violence against minorities have been justified as a punishment for offending religious sentiments. Before 2005, there were very few attacks on religious minorities in Muslim countries. Moreover, even fewer cases of blasphemy. Warlike situations in Afghanistan, Pakistan,

Iraq, Libya, Indian-controlled Kashmir, and later in Syria boosted such attacks against minorities. Weak governance and corrupt police forces have given small radical fundamentalist groups more political space than they have deserved, considering their poor public support.

Sadly, you can turn to Europe and see minorities under racist attacks and political pressure here as well. Many Muslims growing up in Europe before the 9/11 terror attacks in the US, including me, were never asked questions about religion. Our loyalty to the nation and national values was never questioned.

The deadly attack on the French satire magazine *Charlie Hebdo,* which presumably was a response to their publication of prophet Muhammed cartoons, cemented the "us" and "them"-narrative even more. Again, we witnessed how an act of the pen was retaliated with violence and murder, although not many Muslims in Europe reacted when the cartoons were first published in *Charlie Hebdo*. In addition, not many Muslims have ever approved or supported the killings of *Charlie Hebdo's* journalists. Still, we have seen a growing number of violent racist attacks on Muslims in many European countries. Abusive and racist remarks on social media or comments in a web debate are very common. A growing number of politicians and right-wing activists arguing harshly against immigration and explaining socioeconomic challenges in European cities as a "Muslim-problem".

The occurrence of *Daesh*, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) which may be seen as an after-effect of the American led invasion of Iraq, became a new game-changer, as significant as the 9/11 terror attacks in the US in 2001 and *Jyllands-Posten* publishing the Muhammed cartoons in 2006. Attacks like the one on *Charlie Hebdo* and Jewish centres, and vehicles being used to kill innocent pedestrians in several countries, may be connected to the war in Syria, with the growth of *Daesh*, which represented a new form of religious and political extremism among Sunni Muslims, spreading across the world.

In recent years, the increase in refugees and migrants crossing into Europe via Turkey and Libya has often been used as a pretext for right-wing extremists' increased hostility toward minorities, particularly against Muslims. Parts of the harsh language, the arguments and aggression often championed by the right-wing extremist, have now been adopted by some mainstream leaders and parties. We have seen voices

criticising Islam and Muslims getting louder and reaching out to larger groups of voters. Some organisations, specific bloggers and websites focus one-sidedly on critique of all the negative consequences of migration and highlighting differences between Muslims and Norwegian values. According to some activists and politicians, democracy, equality and free speech are purely Norwegian values – and they are not compatible with Islam. These voices are now represented in the parliament through the Progress Party, one of the coalition partners of the national cabinet. Recently the Progress Party, in their annual national congress, decided to put forward a national law banning the Muslim call to prayers known as the *Azan*. Current national legislation gives local union councils the right to decide whether to allow the *Azan*. The only problem is that none of the mosques in the entire country has ever applied for permission to announce the *Azan* from a mosque minaret. Who needs the *Azan* from a minaret when you have an app on your cell phone?

A group of young men and women have been radicalised in the aftermath of the war in Iraq, and the anger increased after the insulting cartoons of Muhammad. Radicalisation accelerated after the emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), a sectarian and brutal religious militant group in Iraq and Syria. Almost 80 Norwegian Muslims have joined the war against Bashar Al Assad's regime. Half of them either died or came back to their homeland Norway. Some are imprisoned in jails or camps and others still missing.

The very first public demonstration by this radicalised group of young Muslims, which later named themselves the Prophet's Ummah, was organised in 2010. The occasion was resentment against the Norwegian Police Security Service (PST), which had a Facebook page with racist comments and links to an offending cartoon. The debate here was not monitored according to any ethical standard. We do not know if it was intentional or just a matter of obliviousness. What we know is that one of the founding members of Prophet's Ummah, who reacted to this, was censored and blocked by PST. The newspaper *Dagbladet* reported the story, but they were also criticized for republishing the cartoon.

Minority reporting

From 2005 up to now, I have noticed a slow, but steadily increasing professional attitude among mainstream journalists in Norway. It is

my observation that national media is presenting diversity in a much better way than 13 years ago, at the same time, not backing away from reporting critical stories about and from the minority communities.

Bringing forth different voices from minorities and reflecting diversity of opinions inside various communities, is an extremely important task to prevent the "we and them" narrative. Daily newspapers, such as *Aftenposten* and others have promoted free debate by letting young Muslim debaters write opinion articles. Many young voices have been given space in mainstream media. The majority seems to consider Muslims born in Norway as Norwegians and treats them equally. This reality is extremely important to represent in the media.

The Norwegian media has, since 2009, strongly encountered the narrative of radicalised Muslims by allowing their spokespersons to participate in media debates. Not by banning or censoring them, but by letting them talk and listen. It may be true that exposure is the best counter-tactic facing extremism. Words against words. As ISIS is on the verge of defeat in Syria, recruitment to Jihad and the group Prophet's Ummah is on the decline in Norway.

A new generation of Muslim lawyers, doctors, journalists, teachers, writers, social activists, actors, and politicians has emerged, wishing to play an active and positive role in Norwegian society. Many appear in the media primarily as Muslims, but some are also invited because of their education, talent or profession.

We have witnessed groups of racists increasing their activities and targeting young Muslims. Some women have been severely bullied on social media, and have at least for a while lost courage and withdrawn from the public debate. Muslim women speaking against Muslim men are equally badly treated by groups of men on social media.

Newsrooms all over Norway are still very dominated by white, middle-class ethnic Norwegians. This is hopefully changing as a number of journalists from minorities have been recruited into mainstream media in recent years. According to my observations, almost half of them are working for Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK). Working journalists with minority background are often perceived as role models, integrated, as well as bearers of multiple identities, being both non-white and Norwegian. Most of them produce all kinds of stories, not as "Muslim Journalists" or "Immigrant Journalists". They are

sharing views and experiences from growing up in Norwegian society, and delivering authentic reports of contemporary Norway. Twenty percent of Oslo's population have their roots in other countries. That is not the percentage in the newsrooms in Oslo. Diversity seems still not to be on the agenda for most of the media companies.

Terror in Norway

As the group of young radicalised Muslims, The Prophet's Ummah, became more outspoken in 2011, the peaceful society of Norway experienced its deadliest terror attack post World War II.

On July 22 that year, a Norwegian terrorist shot 69 people, mostly youngsters, dead at a Youth Camp hosted by the Labour Party on the island of Utøya. They were hunted and shot one by one, on the island, by a single man, Anders Behring Breivik. Eight others were killed by a car bomb that exploded and destroyed much of the central government office a few hours earlier. These were well-planned attacks carried out by the same man, a self-claimed Nazi and admirer of Hitler, who wanted to punish the Labour Party for promoting multiculturalism and "contaminating" Norwegian race and culture.

In the first few hours after news of the attack broke, many internationally recognised media channels and news sites in the US and Europe strongly speculated that Al Qaeda was behind these coordinated and massive attacks in Norway. *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Fox News* and *CNN* assumed that the terrorists were Muslims. Many experts suggested the attack to be "Islamist terror." Few, however, went as far as the British tabloid *The Sun*. Even the next day, their speculation continued on the front page with this headline: AL QAEDA MASSACRE – NORWAY'S 9/11. A few speculations from Norwegian experts were also noted.

Some Muslims were attacked by angry Norwegians who also assumed that the attackers were of the Islamic faith, as registered by the Norwegian Center against Racism. Three hours after the bomb blast in Oslo, Breivik laid down his weapon and gave himself up to the police at Utøya. The terrorist was a blue-eyed, white, ethnic Norwegian. It was a very strange situation for many analysts, journalists, editors and terror experts frequently appearing on TV screens. This time, no Muslims were to blame, unlike in Madrid, London and New York. No community

leaders or imams to be hunted down by newshounds. Muslim leaders and communities shared the nation's grief by attending ceremonies and crying in public. Simultaneously, many must have wondered how the Norwegian media would tackle the situation if (God forbid) the next terror attack in the land of the Nobel Prize would be carried out by a Muslim.

Journalism of the future

Tensions fanned by the cartoon controversy are still high, both in Europe and in Muslim countries. The controversy was like a vitamin injection for many hardliners. They now had a new common cause, the fight against "Western freedom of speech." The same groups are violently resisting any challenge to their religious rhetoric and dogma. Their end goal is to Islamize whole societies and build theocratic state systems.

The situation is especially depressing in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Rising Hindu extremism in India is alarming too. Outspoken journalists are targeted by Hindu nationalists and attacked by elected politicians. In Muslim countries, hundreds have been accused of blasphemy, and some killed by mobs. Bloggers have been kidnapped, murdered and jailed. Journalists and editors criticizing the rhetorical misuse of religion to justify violence are accused of following a Western agenda.

In Europe, a small segment of the population is outright racists or Nazis. However, far too many have adopted their rhetoric of suspicion against minorities. Mainstream political rhetoric such as "you are not Norwegian" or "you are not Polish" is forcing alienation and distance between people of different origin. In the Norwegian public sphere, attacking debaters and intellectuals promoting co-existence is not uncommon, especially on social media.

We live in an era where every single person can publish or broadcast live from almost anywhere in the world. We are using freedom of expression and modern communication technology to promote our ideas and sharing experiences. Not listening, but sharing is the new trend. Lobby-bloggers, opinion-makers and ideology-based channels telling mainly one side of the story, challenge traditional and independent media, which strive to be objective.

It should be a global journalist responsibility to counter narratives of hate and suspicion against minorities. Challenging the so-called

"alternative facts" and analysing politicians' rhetoric in the light of laws against racism and human rights laws should occur more often. We must ensure that not even a single voice is stifled. Those who want to be heard, must be allowed to speak without facing threats and harassment.

The mainstream media must play the role of a driving force for democratic rights and an open and inclusive public conversation. Engaging young readers and viewers by representing their stories must be part of the new global journalistic responsibility.

Minority rights, gender equality and anti-racism should work as editorial guidelines for leading media channels all over Europe. I like to hope that over the past 12 years, we have all learned at least one thing; freedom of speech is a common struggle, a universal right for every member of our global society. It has *nothing* and *everything* to do with East or West, religiosity or secularism, poor and rich etc. We all need it to think freely, communicate freely and to criticise actions in disfavour of humanity at all levels.

When it comes to the question of practicing press freedom, one cannot overlook cultural differences, levels of education and local perception of media. Neither can we ignore global and regional geopolitical facts and consequences of the many wars since 2001. The media is always an easy target for political exploiters, extremist groups, or those who want to maintain their illegitimate power in corrupt societies in the Islamic world.

In Norway, the Public Broadcasting (NRK) had a Muslim woman wearing a headscarf (*hijab*), as a presenter for a TV series about Parliament elections in 2017. It spurred an enormous number of reactions against NRK. The Broadcasting Council received thousands of complaints, asking how the national channel could promote Islam and oppression of women by hiring a *hijab*-wearing woman as a TV presenter. The "hijab-haters" made no complaints against the same young woman, Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini, when she three years earlier became the most critical and outspoken Muslim voice against ISIS and their supporter group, the above-mentioned Prophet's Ummah. In 2014, Al-Hussaini even called this group "Satan's Ummah" in her famous speech in front of the Parliament, and thus became a public figure already as a teenager. Many youngsters born and raised in European cities today have a strong feeling of being alienated and marginalized

by their own societies, because of their colour or religious identity. The latest trend in Denmark is to judge people by which part of the city they come from. Ghetto has become an acknowledged official term to use for areas where more than 50 per cent of the population can be defined as non-Westerners. It means mainly people of all colours and ethnicities other than white Danish. Even those born in Denmark 30 years ago, are considered as non-Westerners. Their contribution as individuals, or their qualities and skills seem not to matter in how society defines them. Youngsters, white and non-white, are connected to a global web offering fake news and false comfort by confirming inferiority. There is much to suggest that rubble and conflicts will continue for many years to come. That is why journalists and editors cannot remain naive or indifferent, either consciously or unconsciously.

15. Tunisia: The long path towards freedom of speech

Rym Benarous

If the people will to live
Providence is destined to favourably respond
And night is destined to fold
And the chains are certain to be broken
Humat al-Hima (Defenders of the Homeland)
– Tunisia National anthem

FREEDOM. Freedom of speech, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, individual freedom, freedom of inquiry, press freedom... For decades, freedom was synonymous with crime in Tunisia and severely restricted. All the basic human rights related to freedom were prohibited, since they were the worst enemies of autocracy and dictatorship.

In order to better understand the current situation in Tunisia, we must first go back in history and assess freedom of expression's state during the last decades before the outburst of the revolution. A flashback is needed to understand the extent of the problem, that the genesis of dictatorship is not recent and that the state-control on Tunisian media started during the colonial period. Then, after its independence in 1956 and until 2011, Tunisia had known only two presidents, Habib Bourguiba (from 1956 to 1987) and Zine El Abidine Ben Ali (from 1987 to 2011). For more than 55 years, the country was a one-party state and during many years, specifically the last two decades before the Revolution of 2011, the country suffered from horrors of despotism, tyranny, censorship and all kinds of abuses. Opponents were arrested, tortured

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or forced into exile. Independent thinkers and dissidents were hunted down, harassed, repressed, jailed and forced to keep quiet. Those who did not obey and submit paid a heavy price. Very often, their lives were threatened and their relatives' daily lives became a nightmare.

Journalists were considered the worst enemies of the old regimes, simply because freedom of speech is intimately linked to press freedom and both include the right to have an opinion, to speak and to be heard. Obviously, local public and private media were under close control until 2011. They contributed for years to reflect a polished and an attractive image of Tunisia, an illusion of a free, multicultural and stable country.

Did the situation evolve or change after the Revolution? Experts agree that freedom of expression and press freedom have nowadays become essential components of the social and political landscapes. Nevertheless, establishing democracy is a long and fragile process and some attempts to restrict freedom of speech and to muzzle media are still noticed. Divided in three parts, following a chronological order from the dawn of the 20th century to 2018, this chapter aims to trace freedom of expression's evolution in Tunisia with a specific focus on press freedom and its long history with censorship and state control.

Emergence of journalism: the genesis of dictatorship

In order to preserve their regimes from the citizen awareness or anger, a strict state control and restrictions were imposed to media during the Bourguiba and Ben Ali eras. But if we analyze history, we can easily find that media supervision and monopoly started during the French protectorate (1881–1956). Journalists and newspaper owners were harassed, tracked down and intimidated by the French colonial forces because of their writings and political views. In 1925, a decree issued under French colonial authorities proclaimed that the reception, the broadcasting, the editorial line, the content and obviously the regulation were exclusively under colonial administrative control. These dispositions were applicable to Radio Tunis, the very first Tunisian public radio, launched in 1938. Few decades after, with the emergence of television, the mission to muzzle media became more pressing. All means were employed to reach that end.

Newspapers

The very first daily printed newspaper was launched in Tunisia on July 22, 1860. Published in Arabic language and titled *Arra'id Attunisi*, it became the official Tunisian newspaper after the Independence (1956). In 1907, Tunisian activists and intellectuals had the idea to create a newspaper in French language and launched *Le Tunisien* to make their voices heard and their anti-protectorate position known both in Tunisia and in France. Referring to the National Center of Documentation, during the period between the beginning of the 20th century and the Tunisian Independence in 1956, a very large number of newspapers were launched either in Arabic or French language. Of the most popular newspapers were *Taht Essour*, *Al Mabaheth* and *L'action Tunisienne,* the last one founded by Habib Bourguiba himself.

As mentioned in the introduction, journalists and newspaper owners were persecuted and prevented from doing their job well by the French colonial forces due to their writings and political views. After the Independence and during the Bourguiba era, press freedom experienced ups and downs. During the first decade, Bourguiba encouraged the development of public and private media, but all still state-controlled. To ensure their survival and long-term future, newspapers had to be neutral, and the media landscape was uniform and disciplined. The opposition press titles were entirely controlled by the party-state and faced economic troubles. Consequently, in the absence of financial support and due to the frequent foreclosures and suspensions, their existence was very hypothetical (Camau & Geisser, 2004). Journalists were frequently writing articles about social and syndicalist issues in opposition publications. They were also writing about human rights violations and denouncing the practice of torture. Humorist articles and caricatures were frequently published and prominent state figures ridiculed, such as former Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali. The only red line was president Bourguiba and any criticism about him was leading to an immediate sanction. At the end of his presidency, state-control on media became more rigorous and many newspapers completely disappeared (ibid.).

Radio

The very first official Tunisian radio was launched in 1938 under the French protectorate. Radio Tunis-PTT was established by Phillipe

Soupault and its content was broadcasted in Arabic, French and Italian. During the first year, it was predominantly used religiously – particularly during Ramadan. For example, it would signal the break the fast make a call to prayer, and read out verses from the Koran regularly during the day. The station underwent several of its biggest transformations just a year after its launch. It was renamed Radio Tunis, as we all know it as today, while a second studio was installed, which meant that content could be broadcast in both French and Arabic to satisfy the masses.

A second radio was launched the same year. This allowed a separate and simultaneous broadcast of Arabic programs (current National Radio) and French (current RTCI). After the Independence, the radio stations were entirely state-owned and controlled and the programs were focusing on development and social reforms. Obviously, presidential activities were taking the lion's share of the radios' content. According to Derek Hopwood and Sue Mi Terry, in 1973, Bourguiba gave a series of lectures on his own life at the Institute of Press and Information, and for three months, every Friday, members of the government, officials, students and teachers were summoned to listen to the president talking about himself. The talks were rebroadcast on radio and television and later published (Hopwood & Terry, 2016). Furthermore, Hopwood and Terry tell that on November 7, 1987, Habib Bourguiba awoke as usual and switched on the radio. He was shocked to hear at 6.30 A.M. Zain al-Abidin Ben Ali's broadcasted statement about Bourguiba's overthrow (ibid.).

For a long time, private radio stations were not allowed to broadcast and the state's strategy was to establish regional public radios. It started with Bourguiba and continued with Ben Ali. The very first private radio station, *Mosaïque FM*, was launched on November 7, 2003 and 13 per cent of shares of this station were owned by Belhassen Trabelsi, Ben Ali's brother in law. The date coincided with the day Ben Ali overthrew Bourguiba and became president. Many other radio stations, all state-owned, were also launched at the same datewhich became one of the strongest symbols of Ben Ali's regime.

In October 2011, twelve radio stations obtained their licenses.

TV stations

Television was officially introduced in 1966 in Tunisia and by 1972, transmission covered the country. A relay station to link up with the

European transmissions was built at Al Haouaria in 1967 and a second channel was introduced in 1983. Several channels followed

Obviously, the content was totally under state-control and censorship was often used. Nobody who worked in the official media could express themselves against the regime (Webb 2014). Following the initial years, satellite reception arrived. It was bad news and a new challenge for the old regime. The regime tried to tax installed satellite dishes, and the aim was to discourage people from using these. When licenses were handed out to private radio and TV stations later, the legal framework was not changed (Ennaji, 2014).

The Ben Ali era

Freedom of speech in Tunisia experienced its worst days during the Ben Ali era, especially after 1990. During his presidency, nobody was allowed to express his point of view and to comment, especially on political, economic and social issues. To resume, there was no freedom at all for citizens and obviously not for journalists. Censorship very common. Ben Ali's police state kept an iron grip on both private and state-owned media, imposed wholesale repression and posed as a victim whenever its bodies were accused of censorship. The former regime's point of view was clear and precise: the press had to be muzzled. No matter the price, everything had to be under control to prevent breaking the myth of a pseudo democratic country that officials tried to convey abroad. Moha Ennaji writes that those who were assigned to control the media under Ben Ali communicated the image of a democratic regime to the world, one with a developed media landscape with modern technological development. But throughout the period, media content was subject to close control and censorship. Journalists were communicating official information and avoid controversy (Ennaji, 2014)

To secure this control, enemies of the free press used several methods: money, favoritism, preferential treatments, privileges granted to missions abroad, selective choice of beneficiaries of public and governmental advertising, senior positions responsibility, threats, etc.

The direct result of these continuous campaigns of oppression and forced submission of the journalistic sector, all categories included, was an insipid and monotonous journalism and a complete absence of investigative journalism. In the same way, very few new media plat-

forms were launched in Tunisia, since obtaining broadcasting licenses depended on the agreement of the leaders whose mission was precisely to curb the media. Even more stunning, the censorship under Ben Ali was not limited to local media contents but also included the international press. Indeed, many French newspapers, also satirical ones, such as *Charlie Hebdo* and *Le Canard Enchaîné* were banned and untraceable in Tunisia for more than a decade. In 1992, *Liberation* was temporarily prohibited, but then allowed again in very limited quantities. In 2007, one edition of the daily newspaper *Le Monde* and two editions of the weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur* were not distributed in Tunisia. The reason was that they contained articles written by Taoufik Ben Brik, a staunch opponent of the Ben Ali's regime. The different websites relaying journalist's items were also blocked.

Emergence of internet: the Ben Ali nightmare

In the 1990's, the emergence of internet and the growth of new web technologies were immediately placed on the top list of threats for Ben Ali's dictatorship. His regime imposed a lot of restrictions on Internet. All Internet Service Providers (ISPs) were obliged to route their Internet traffic via the Tunisian Internet Agency (ATI). Many websites, blogs and forums were censored in Tunisia. Many cyber dissidents were arrested and tortured. So, despite the emergence and the rapid spread of the internet in the world, Tunisia stayed hermetic and Tunisians were still reduced to a stony, deafening silence. A noisy silence full of frustration, unarticulated violence and hate.

During Ben Ali's presidency, dealing with the absence of free and pluralistic media and in spite of the imminent emergence of internet, the access to a credible and relevant information was likely a mission doomed to failure. Censorship embraced also the web and many sites were inaccessible, meaning information sites, opponents' blogs, discussion forums, international NGOs defending human Rights, freedom of speech and transparency (Amnesty International, Freedom House, Reporters Without Borders, IFEX). Even video sharing platforms such as Youtube and Dailymotion were blocked. Rather early, Ben Ali seized the magnitude of the Internet phenomenon that transformed the world to a connected city and greatly reduced the distance and thus the access time to information (Benarous, 2016).

Considering this as an imminent threat, the former regime from 1996 implemented a sophisticated monitoring system aiming to spy on every user action, supervised by a "cyber police" division and set up by the Tunisian Internet Agency, which provided the equipment. Those techniques included some sites being blocked, but also interceptions of emails and immediate identifications and geolocations of IP user addresses.

To achieve this goal, international and especially U.S. and European companies were involved, spying email contents through their "Deep Packet Inspection" facilities. Vernon Silver confirmed it in the survey published by Bloomberg News (Silver, 2011). However, instead of deterring opponents, the sophisticated technological arsenal deployed by Ben Ali created a new battlefront. Feeling constantly spied and unsafe when surfing on the net, Tunisian citizens became experts in defeating censorship by regularly using proxy servers to visit the blocked sites and protect their electronic correspondences. Ammar404 was the nickname given by Tunisians to Internet censorship and it became one of the biggest symbols of militancy against internet block.

In January 2011, on the eve of his departure and in a desperate attempt to calm citizen's anger, Ben Ali promised in his last speech as a president to put an end to censorship and to give more freedom to people. During that evening, censored Twitter and Youtube again became available for Tunisian netizens.

Post-revolution

While trying desperately to block all information and communication channels and to impose his diktat on media, Ben Ali finally accelerated his downfall. In January 2011, Tunisia threw out this dictator and his subordinates. The Tunisian people were free. Their way to freedom was through an exemplary pacifism, which leads them to a pluralistic and sustainable democracy.

On this long and perilous road of emancipation, Tunisians learned how to free themselves from useless chains, to push the boundaries between theory and practice, to learn the importance of press freedom and freedom of expression. The 14th of January 2011 was the beginning of a new era. It was not only the end of a political dictatorial regime. It also marked the downfall of a complex and well positioned structure of media control and censorship. Since that date, Tunisian journalists have

worked without hindrance, forgetting censorship, hierarchical controls, imposed topics and items banned of diffusion. Since this revolution, a long cleansing up and professionalization of the journalistic sector, started expecting to provide a high-level quality of media content to better inform the citizens. However, this is no easy task, especially with the constant and accelerated flow of the news in the country since 2011.

Working every day under pressure and constantly seeking for scoops, make reporters, even the most professional of them, sometimes lose the notion of caution, abandoning the most basic rules of ethics and journalistic deontology, i.e. not to share information only after checking its accuracy with credible sources. Acting like this, journalists exposed themselves to strong reactions even to prosecutions, a notable change! Indeed, while under Ben Ali, journalists were subject to sanctions, abusive sacking, physical attacks or arbitrary arrests, today the dispute settlements with media take place before the courts. Thanks to this main achievement from the democratic process initiated since 2011, institutions of justice now position themselves as the third estate, authorized to deliver neutral and impartial judgments in the conflicts between media and complainants.

To protect journalists from attempted subjugation but also to make them more responsible about their work and more professional, the creation of an Independent Commission for Audio-visual Communication (HAICA) was announced in the decree law No. 2011-115 of November 2nd 2011 and officially started its activities in 2013. In November 2011, the Tunisian government also passed decree 115 (No. 2011-115 of 2 November 2011), which is intended to replace the restrictive press code of 1975. The new one allows journalists to freely access information and removed a requirement for prior authorization from the Interior Ministry for the diffusion of some kinds of publications. The code also included a reduction in the protections and privileges enjoyed by public authorities, including those related to defamation and information pertaining to state security.

Both these decrees were set up to regulate the media and to improve the quality of journalistic content. Furthermore, these texts also list sanctions applicable to the journalists in case of professional mistakes and omissions, considering the code of journalistic ethics. Periodically, organizations and especially the National Tunisian Journalists' Syndi-

cate (SNJT), initiated workshops and meetings with various actors of the media sector in order to identify potential improvements to the Decree 115. However, while journalists and media were learning to make their first steps on the path of democracy and press freedom, a phenomenon appeared to disrupt the process and to accelerate the rate. This terrorism caused great damages in Tunisia. Media coverage of terrorist attacks has become a major challenge for all editors and journalists.

Nowadays, more than eight years after the Revolution, Tunisia has definitely adopted democracy. Tunisians are practicing freedom of speech and journalist's freedom of press in their daily life. The learning process was not easy and many mistakes were made throughout this period. In its latest global report on press freedom, Reporters without Borders (RSF, 2018) ranked Tunisia 97th out of 179 countries. In 2010, the country was ranked 164rd. Can we say that press freedom is definitely acquired? The answer is very complex and many attempts to muzzle again journalists were noticed during the last years. Other point, most of media are owned by businessmen and they don't give interest to investigation. They only are looking for the buzz, for the advertising revenues and for the earning. Last but not least, some of the Tunisian media's owners give the opportunity to some political parties to do their propaganda on their media during elections campaigns. All these practices represent a threat for the sustainability of press freedom. That is why, journalists have opten for the creation of a new independent regulation's structure, The Council of Press (Le Conseil de Presse), to help reverse the decline in media freedom in the country.

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16. Literature and limits

Stories from Indonesia

Andina Dwifatma

In 1996, Indonesian author Seno Gumira Ajidarma published a story collection entitled *Jazz, Perfume, and the Incident*. The book was about the Dili Incident (sometimes dubbed the Santa Cruz or Dili Massacre) in East Timor where Indonesian soldiers killed more than 250 pro-independence protesters in East Timor. The event took place in the Santa Cruz cemetery, the city of Dili, on 12 November 1991 and was part of the genocide practiced during the Indonesian occupation of East Timor (Ajidarma, 2004). At that time, Seno was an editor at the journal called *Jakarta Jakarta*, an urban lifestyle magazine that published under *Kompas* Gramedia Group, one of the eight biggest media conglomerates in Indonesia (Tapsell, 2017). Seno sent a reporter to investigate what happened in Santa Cruz and was terrified by the reports. According to several interviews with persons who had witnessed the incident, there were killings, torture, rape; Indonesian soldiers forced people to eat their Rosario, pregnant women were killed, their bellies ripped open to make sure the fetuses were dead as well, and severed heads were planted on house fences as symbolic warnings. What happened in Santa Cruz was a violation of human rights at a level beyond imagination.

When it was time to write the article, Seno was extra careful since he was well aware that under President Suharto's authoritative leadership style at the time, one mistake could put an end to the magazine. He tried his best to make the narrative less threatening to the government. He interviewed people from the military to give the article a sense of

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balance. Nevertheless, the first edition (Seno had planned to publish a thematic series) sent the government into a fury. Jakob Oetama, owner of the *Kompas* Gramedia Group, asked him to stop writing. *Jakarta Jakarta* was closed and Seno ended up unemployed. That was when he decided to write his novel, *Jazz, Perfume, and the Incident*. In 2002, the English version of the book was published, to reach a greater audience. Seno used nicknames for the city of Dili and the people, but the rest of the story was based on pure, solid facts. In the foreword to the book, he wrote, "Call it fact if you will. Call it fiction, if you prefer. It's just a metropolitan novel" (Ajidarma, 2002). Seno then coined the sentence, which later became popular in both the media and the literary world: "when journalism is silenced, literature must speak up."

The *Jazz* book has brought Seno popularity not only among literary fans, but also in the activist community. It provides information about the cruelty and savagery of the New Order (name given to Suharto regime) which the public might not otherwise be aware of, or more possibly, might be unable to discuss for fear of repercussions. *Jazz* is actually not the first work in which Seno criticizes the government. His story *Penembak Misterius*, about a sniper who has been assigned to kill a politician, was published in the mid-1980s. After *Jazz*, Seno has consistently exposed and condemned government-sponsored violence. He wrote a short story *Clara*, about the rape of ethnic Chinese women in the May 1998 riots, the play *Kenapa kau culik anak kami?* [Why did you kidnap our children?], as well as the short story *Telpon dari Aceh* [Phone call from Aceh] in 1999. Seno's strategy, to use literature when journalism is not possible, put him in a unique position to reach a larger audience, both literary fans and people who are interested in political events. As one of the most-read authors in Indonesia, Seno's works exemplify the middle-class artistic mode of resistance (Bodden, 1999).

From authoritarianism to freedom of expression

Since declaring its independence on August 17, 1945, Indonesia has experienced three changes of democracy, i.e. Parliamentary Democracy (1949–1957), Guided Democracy (1959–1965), both under President Sukarno; and Pancasila Democracy (March 1966–May 1998) under President Suharto. The period of Parliamentary Democracy, which Indonesianist Herbert Feith called Constitutional Democracy, has several distinct characteristics, including civilians playing a dom-

inant role; civil liberties were rarely infringed; and, government used coercion sparingly. When Sukarno came up with the idea of Guided Democracy, those distinct characteristics were pretty much gone. This is because in his attempt of implementing Guided Democracy, Sukarno put executive authority, especially himself as president, at the center of power. Sukarno even exercised his power in the pop culture sphere, where in 1965 he sent to jail Koes Bersaudara, an Indonesian band, which specialized in The Beatles' songs, because they seemed too "westernized".

A great contrast to liberal democracy, Guided Democracy later resulted in economic collapse and a power struggle between the army and Indonesia's Communist Party or PKI. In 1965, there was massive killing by Indonesian soldiers who targeted civilians allegedly involved with the Indonesia Communist Party (PKI). Finally, an army *coup d'état* on 11 March 1966 forced President Sukarno to hand over power to Suharto. The new president called his government the New Order [Orde Baru], implying a brand-new Indonesia which was to be better, stronger, and more prosperous. However, the New Order slowly began to shift to a dictatorship (Bhakti, 2004). Freedom of expression was highly regulated. For example, any writings, discussions, seminars or works of art, which discussed the 1965 mass murder, were banned. Books by the leftist author Pramoedya Ananta Toer were prohibited. Suharto also issued the 1966 parliamentary decree, which bans Marxism-Leninism, the PKI, and other leftist organizations (Hearman, 2015).

In August 1968, a few years after Suharto had seized power, *Sastra* magazine published a short story, *"Langit makin mendung"* ["A darkening sky"], written under the pen name "Ki Panji Kusmin" often interpreted as an acronym of "Kibarkan Panji Komunisme" or "Unfurl the Banners of Communism". It told the story of Prophet Muhammad descending to Earth with the Archangel Gabriel to investigate why there were a decreasing number of Indonesian Muslims being permitted to enter into heaven. They find that Indonesian Muslims are being corrupted by *nasakom*, a government policy during Sukarno's administration, which combined nationalism, religion, and communism (Deakin, 1976). The author used narratives that were considered offensive by some, especially by Muslims. For example, when talking about Indonesian Muslims, the narrative informed the reader:

"There has been an exceedingly long drought in that area, and the heat of the sun has been burning up their stupid brains for far too long."
Gabriel also warned Muhammad that:
"Your Excellency's faithful have almost yielded to the teachings of this false prophet Nasakom."
There was also a conversation between the President and the Minister of Health about the influenza epidemic in Jakarta:
"Say, General, can this 'flu cause death or not?"
"No, sir."
"So there's no danger?"
"No, sir. The only danger is from the Communists, sir!"
"Oh, you and your Commie-phobia!"

The magazine was immediately banned from North Sumatra. Angry Muslims attacked *Sastra*'s Jakarta office. H. B. Jassin, a respected figure in Indonesian literature who was the magazine's editor-in-chief, was accused of blasphemy; he was sentenced to one-year suspended imprisonment. The real identity of Ki Pandji Kusmin (some said that it was H.B. Jassin himself) remains a mystery until this day.

A Nobel candidate

Another name that is very important in Indonesian literature was Pramoedya (Pram) Ananta Toer (1925–2006). Considered the only Indonesian author worthy of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Pram was best known for his four novels, the *Buru Tetralogy*, which told the story of Minke – wordplay from the Dutch pronunciation of "monkey". The Minke character was inspired by Tirto Adhisoerjo, a brilliant journalist whom some consider to be Indonesia's father of journalism. Tirto was known for his sharp criticism towards the Dutch colonial government.[1] He started life studying for a medical degree but ended up establishing his very own newspaper, *Medan Prijaji*, in 1907. He used the newspaper as a medium for educated native Indonesians. *Medan Prijaji* lasted for five years. In 1912, Tirto was exiled to Bacan (an island located in South Halmahera Municipality, North Maluku, Indonesia).

Pram's life was not so different from the life of Tirto. He was imprisoned for 15 years for his novels and political outspokenness, first by the

Dutch colonial government, then by Sukarno, then Suharto. In October 1965, Pramoedya was arrested during the events, which brought Sukarno down, and the New Order began. His work was banned, and his unpublished writings, personal archives, and research materials were destroyed. Pram spent fourteen years on the remote Buru Island, without writing utensils for the first seven years. He created the *Buru Tetralogy* by telling the stories orally to his fellow prisoners (Toer & GoGwilt, 1996). Pram used Tirto's voice to offer an alternative narrative about Indonesia's history as a nation. This is important because during New Order, the version of history recounted massively and structurally through school lessons and books was a version approved by the government. The *Buru Tetralogy* was known for its very personal narrative, using the first-person point of view, dealing with power manifested in culture and society in everyday life. It was always Pram's intention to challenge the conservative history of the Indonesian nationalist movement and the Indonesian literature, which others were producing at the time. He especially wanted to give nationalist figures such as Tirto Adhi Suryo and Mas Marco Kartodikromo the recognition they deserved; that is, as founders of the independence movement (Vickers, 2013).

The two narratives

After his 32 years in power, Suharto was overthrown as a result of the dictatorship, corruption and economic crisis of his regime. In May 1998, Suharto handed over leadership to Vice-President B. J. Habibie. Indonesia officially entered the era of the Reformation. As the tap on the freedom of expression was opened wide, Pancasila[2], the nation's ideology, faced a tremendous challenge. The values of pluralism carried by Pancasila are currently threatened by intolerance and the exclusive attitude of religious radical groups. People from different groups grew suspicious; they cultivated distrust and hatred towards one another (Victoria, 2017). This situation has provided a fresh breeze for the extreme right. The ideology of *al khalifah al Islamiyyah* (the notion of forming a government based on Islamic law[3]) and radicalism is increasingly popular. Nowadays, authors face hostility whenever they write about topics deemed insulting to someone else's religious values. They may be branded as *kafirs* (infidels) and charged with committing blasphemy. Publishers (especially bigger, more profit-oriented ones)

started to apply self-censorship. I experienced this self-censorship first-hand when publishing my first novel, "*Semusim, dan semusim lagi*" ["A season and then another"] with Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2013. In one section of the book the protagonist talks about some people who love cats because they believe that the cat was Prophet Muhammad's favorite pet. The protagonist then wondered what would happen if Prophet Muhammad was "a bit eccentric and loved the neon iguana instead". The publisher cut off the "a bit eccentric" part right away.

Thus, even 20 years after the beginning of the Reformation Era, Indonesian authors still face the challenge of limits being placed on their literary activities. Indeed, there is no one dictatorial figure feared by everyone, but instead there are symptoms of fascism in the air. I would argue that these symptoms manifest themselves through at least two narratives. First, the purification of Islam, which means that everything that is not in accord with "Islamic" values should be considered offensive and should be resisted and opposed. In 2012, a hard-liner group, Islam Defenders Front (FPI), reported publishing company PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama (GPU) to the Jakarta Police for circulating a book it claimed "defamed Islam" (Mahditama, 2012). Two days later, GPU not only recalled the books, which were already in circulation, but also burned hundreds of them in the front yard of their office. The book burning was witnessed by the Chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI)'s Fatwa Commission, Ma'ruf Amin (who is currently running as President Jokowi's candidate for Vice President) and three other MUI officials. Also present was President Director of Gramedia Pustaka Utama, Wandi S Brata. The book in question was a translated version of Douglas James Wilson's *Five cities that rule the world.* In the book, Douglas wrote that Muhammad conquered Mecca by becoming a marauder and pirate, attacking Meccan caravans, and ordering assassinations in order to gain control of Medina (Hasani, 2016*).* The book-burning case is a perfect example of when freedom of expression collides with values held by the so-called majority. In such situations, publishers choose to yield to their threats in order to avoid commotion.

Second, the so-called danger of communist revival is another sign of incipient fascism. For some reasons and stemming from unknown sources, sections of the population fear that the PKI will return to power in no time. To get a better picture of this, let us look at what happened

during the event of the Ubud Writers and Readers Festival (UWRF) 2015. Three discussion sessions related to communism and 1965 were cancelled, including a panel to discuss what happened in Bali during the 1965 massacre,[4] a screening of *The look of silence* documentary film by Joshua Oppenheimer, and a photo exhibition of *The act of killing* about 1960s survivors. These cancelled discussions extended to other issues that could potentially "disturb the public peace", such as a panel on the Bali reclamation project. In a project, developer Tirta Wahana Bali International (TWBI), wanted to build artificial islands that would cover almost half of Benoa Bay in south Bali. The project was canceled in August 2018 due to the expiry of TWBI's license and strong opposition from the community whose members organized themselves in For BALI (Forum Rakyat Bali Tolak Reklamasi Benoa). UWRF also canceled two novel launches; *From now on everything will be different* by Eliza Vitri Handayani about the life of youth in the early reform period in 1998, and *The Crocodile hole* by Saskia Wieringa, a lecturer in Amsterdam and a researcher on gender studies. *Crocodile Hole* was banned because the content included information about Gerwani (Gerakan Wanita Indonesia, or Indonesian Women's Movement) one of the largest Indonesian women's organization in the 1950s and 1960s, and an affiliate of the Indonesian Communist Party (Dwifatma, 2015). I was at UWRF 2015, attending the Emerging Writers Program. The ridiculous fact about all the sessions canceled is that nobody really knows why the communism topic should be banned. All the policemen and *pecalang* (local security officers in Bali) who asked nicely for those sessions to be banned did not really understand what communism is, so it was rather pointless trying to reason with them. The discussion on the book, *The crocodile hole,* was later moved to a restaurant and a number of plain-clothes police were present taking photos of those in attendance. When asked what the photos were for, they looked confused and said "documentation".

On a larger note, rising radicalism and the fear of communism are serious threats for the nation. When ex-governor of Jakarta, the Chinese Christian Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (known as Ahok), was charged with blasphemy, there were many fake news/hoaxes circulating through social media and text message applications (Yee, 2017). Ahok has angered religious radical groups in Indonesia for referring to a verse of

Al Qur'an during a campaign session in Kepulauan Seribu, Jakarta. He told the people there not to be fooled by so-called Islamist politician who use the verse, Al-Maidah: 51, to justify that Muslims should not be led by non-Muslims (Lamb, 2016). Another event worth noting was a small rally against communism held in Jakarta on September 29, a day before the commemoration of the September 30 movement.[5] The rally participants centered their protest on the issue of revival of communism. A week before, this same issue sparked a mob attack on the office of the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI). An angry mob attacked YLBHI during a public event, claiming that the event is supporting communism (*The Jakarta Post*, 2017). However, in a recent survey conducted by Saiful Mujani Research Center (SMRC), 86.8 per cent of people do not believe that there is a revival of Indonesia's Communist Party or PKI. Only around 12.6 per cent agree that there is currently such a revival and only five percent of all Indonesians feel that the PKI's revival is a threat to the nation (Balowski, 2017).

What is next in store for Indonesian literature?

The previous examples are indeed not encouraging for Indonesian literature. After going through the dictatorship in the Suharto era, the country's literary scene is now experiencing threats from radical religious groups. They may not be many in number, but their voices are loud and they are not reluctant when it comes to using violence. The literary world in Indonesia also faces threats from unfocused fears about the rise of communism. Earlier this year in Padang, West Sumatra, the Army held a book raid, which allegedly sought to suppress the teachings of communism. The same thing also happened in Kediri, East Java, at the end of last year (Arbi, 2019).

I would argue that the hope for Indonesian literature today lies in the generation of young writers. They are the privileged generation, in the sense of having easy access to various versions of Indonesian history, while at the same time staying connected to what is happening globally. A survey conducted by *Trio* showed that Generation Z, those who were born in mid 1990s to mid-2000s, are not afraid to talk about sensitive issues since they are much more open-minded than previous generations (Gerintya, 2018). Accordingly, authors from the younger generation are also becoming more open-minded when it comes to writing stories.

Take Norman Erikson Pasaribu (born 1990), for example. He is openly gay and has written about LGBT issues in almost all of his works. His latest poetry book, *Sergius Seeks Bacchus* (Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2016) won first prize in the 2015 Jakarta Arts Council Poetry Competition and was shortlisted for the 2016 Khatulistiwa Literary Award for Poetry. In the book, Norman wrote about his own experience as a gay person, as well as Indonesian society's dynamic relationship with LGBT issues. The book was named after two fourth-century Christian martyrs whom the gay community has adopted as icons, and contains thirty-three poems—the number of poems corresponding to the age at which Christ was crucified. Norman, like many other young Indonesian authors, is not limiting himself when it comes to the scope of his writing. Instead of doing self-censorship, these young writers try to be as honest and as open as possible.

The strongest advantage to fiction lies in its power of storytelling. Good storytelling can play with emotional, motivational and psychological aspects of the reader's ontology. Compared to news or scientific articles, fiction shows clearer and stronger sympathy for the fate of humankind. Fiction may not be directly about social politics, but it cannot be completely free from social and political context. Fictional works, however bizarre or surreal they may be, do not come from empty space. They always contain memories, events, experience and knowledge of the authors and the society they live in. Norman's poems and stories, for instance, not only tell his personal experience as a gay person, but also the hetero-normative standards existing today in society and how it puts LGBT people in difficult situations. Those stories might help make people aware of what happens in society and empathize with those who are marginalized. In that sense, authors should never stop learning new things and keep their minds open to various subjects in their everyday lives. Authors should also not hesitate to address topics that might conflict with the dominant narrative in society. It is precisely in this condition that fiction can take the role of providing alternative views for the community. Instead of limiting fiction, we should encourage literacy and intertextual understanding for readers, so that fiction is not merely understood as the author's fantasy; nor should it be condemned as something dangerous which needs to be silenced. Only by having the courage to do so, can a writer

see to it that her or his fiction is enjoyed both as a work of art and an alternative source to truth.

Notes

1. There is no definite period of Dutch occupation in Indonesia. It was Sukarno who, in his 1950 speech, said that Indonesia was colonized by the Dutch for 350 years. This information was adopted by history books at schools, but lately many doubted it because there were no regions in Indonesia that were colonized by the Dutch for that whole period. See Resink (2012) for further reading. The book *Bumi Manusia* covers the period between 1898 and 1918, where the Dutch's Ethical Policy helped empower the educated Indonesian elite, members of whom later established new organizations and developed leadership.
2. Pancasila is the official national principle of Indonesia. The name "Pancasila" was coined from Old Javanese words, "Panca" (means 'five') and "Sila" (means 'principles'). Pancasila was a concept brought together by Indonesia's founding fathers, and it was Sukarno, the first president, who crystallized the concept in his speech on June 1, 1945. The five principles are belief in one God; just and civilized humanity; the unity of Indonesia; democracy; and social justice. See Jhoner (2018) for further reading.
3. In the aftermath of Suharto's fall in 1998, some radical Islamist groups (the most vocal one: Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia) promoted the view that Indonesia needs a radical change from democracy to *al-khalifah al-Islamiyyah* (Islamic caliphate). The idea of *al-khalifah al-Islamiyyah* is the nation should be based on Islamic law instead of democracy. HTI made use of growing public dissatisfaction with the weak impact that political, economic, and law reforms introduced in the reformasi era had when it came to improving people's daily lives. See Muhtadi (2009) for further reading.
4. See Cribb (1991) for further reading.
5. The 30 September Movement (often abbreviated as G30S) refers to Indonesian National Armed Forces members who assassinated six Indonesian Army generals on 1 October 1965 due to a coup plan. In the days that followed, the army blamed the coup attempt on the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). It led immediately to the imprisonment and death of thousands of alleged Communists and Communist sympathizers. Under the "New Order" regime, the movement was later called "G30S/PKI". See Roosa (2006) for further reading.

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PART THREE

The changing shades of global diversities

17. Gendered, sexualized and ethnicized clashes in Turkey's media

Nil Mutluer

> Imagine a scene is in Kabatas, a neighbourhood in the middle of Istanbul. Between seventy and one hundred frenzied men come from the direction of Gezi Park, shouting and singing. They are drunk, their upper bodies are naked. They are wearing trousers, bandanas and leather gloves. They approach a head-scarved young woman who is pushing her baby daughter in a pushchair. They assault her, and go so far as to urinate on her, yes, literally to piss on her.

This was a bogus story first published in a Turkish pro-government newspaper (Karip 2014). The story was later proven false, but not before it had attracted the attention of the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who used that story to provoke outrage over the violation of honor which this scene depicted. He aimed this outrage at his conservative followers so as to buttress his popular support base. He shouted that they, the violent group of men who came from the Gezi protests, had attacked his "headscarf wearing sister". He added that this sister was a mother, and the daughter-in-law of one of the AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, the Justice and Development Party) mayors, and that she was the victim of violence. Who was to blame? Obviously, the guilty were the Gezi protesters and the anti-headscarf-mentality of the Kemalists. Several columnists and journalists in the mainstream media followed Erdoğan (Karip, 2014). The alleged harassment was elaborated upon in a sexualized way by the media's opinion personas, who did not refrain

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from using "juicy" sexual innuendos with great relish, seemingly "to expos'" the perversity of the putative attackers.

Screenshot 1. The photoshopped photo

Headline: Sabah finds the evidence to Kabataş in 52 seconds. *Bianek*, 2015, March 11.

Screenshot 2. The real footage of the photoshopped photo from security cameras

Headline: What really happened in Kabataş. *Sözcü*, 2014, February 14.

When footage from security cameras was eventually released, it turned out that the story was fabricated and completely bogus. However, the mainstream media carried on "framing" the gendered, sexualized and religious story as if it was true (Yüksel-Peçen, 2018). The main media went so far as to produce Photoshop visuals to add credibility to this bogus story (Bektaş & Somer, 2015).

During the current period of the AKP holding political power in Turkey, what is new is the way such bogus stories are owned and manipulated by leading politicians, public figures expressing themselves in a vivid, outspoken, sexualized way (Mutluer, 2019), mainly to polarize society. They persist with such messages even after they have been refuted and proven to be false. In its period, the AKP and its leader, President Erdoğan, reshaped the relationship between state, society, family and the market (Öztan, 2014) as well as the media (Çarkoğlu et al. 2014; Karadağ & Bulut, 2016; Yeşil, 2018) to pursue AKP's neoliberal, authoritarian and hegemonic goals (Akça, 2014).

The aim of this chapter is to examine how embedded relations between the media and the government allow the AKP to pursue its socio-political agenda by utilizing gender, sexuality and ethnic issues. More specifically, I seek to show that news published in the mainstream media serve more than simply the cultural and political values which Erdoğan and the AKP endeavor to instill in the collective consciousness of the society. Not only do they manipulate the truth by using binary oppositions (e.g. secular versus Muslim, Turkish versus Kurdish, modern versus traditional), but they also produce new binary oppositional categories, above all, Erdoğanists versus all others. To analyze their aims, I focus on two particular issue areas: gender and ethnicity.

To reveal how the media construct a certain approach to conflict and/or peace, one normally analyzes media frames with local political history in mind, examining the repertoire of symbols and signifiers through which frames are constructed, and relates these to the local media structure of the specific locality (Yüksel-Pecen, 2018). Accordingly, in order to examine AKP's outspoken way of framing identities and manipulating the truth, my first task is to present the change in power relations between the media and the state in Turkey. Then I focus on the continuation and novelties of two intersectional cases while seeking to discuss new socio-political dynamics on gender, sexuality,

ethnicity and nationalism. The first case is the debate around turbans and headscarves, and the second one is the issue of representation of the Kurdish spaces and guerillas' bodies.

Media and the state in Turkey

Certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images and sources of information are constantly repeated and designed as tools of media frames to "provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments" (Entman, 1993: 51–52). Such frames are also used in the coverage of ethnic and religious groups. Publishing gendered bogus stories or framing conflicting ethnic, religious issues in a gendered way are not new phenomena either in Turkish political history or in mainstream media (Çarkoğlu & Yavuz, 2011; Christen, 2007; Finkel, 2000; Karlidağ & Bulut, 2016; Yeşil, 2014, 2018; Yüksel-Peçen, 2018). Media commercialization and privatization in Turkey started in the 1980s as part of neoliberal policies, however this did not create a distance between government/state and media relations (Kaya & Çakmur, 2011). There was a heavy pressure on the media, particularly in the form of censorship after the 1980 coup, a point in Turkish history when the so-called National Security Council and the army became oppressively dominant actors in the political scene. During the 1990s, media groups had the power to exert pressure on politics, but with rising economic problems and various legal needs (e.g. obtaining media licenses and maintaining them), the media groups became more dependent on the politics of the incumbent government and state (Christensen, 2007; Finkel, 2000; Kaya & Çakmur, 2011).

Existing embedded government/state and media relations became more pronounced when the AKP came to power in 2002 (Akser & Baybars-Hawk, 2012). During the AKP period, the media owner companies from the banking, energy, construction and tourism sectors, had strong relationships with the AKP and the power elite to "stimulate the agenda of the media and their news discourses" (Karlıdağ & Bulut, 2016: 12). During that period, independent media and objective journalistic activities came increasingly under pressure as a result of clientelist media ownerships. The media-owning companies, which are also bidders for state tenders, did not wish to create a conflicting atmosphere that would work against their interests. Facing a potential conflict of interests, the

media owned by these influential firms did not criticize government (Sözeri, 2015). Media owners challenged the government only when their interests were under threat (Akser & Baybars-Hawk, 2012).

The AKP's repressive policies towards media organizations and journalists gained a significant momentum especially after the 2013 Gezi uprisings, which president Erdoğan regarded neither as an instance of civil disobedience nor a peaceful response to his increasingly repressive policies and polarizing discourse, but rather, as a direct *coup attempt* targeting himself and his government. In March 2015, the AKP majority passed two major sets of legislations, which enhanced police powers Law (No. 6638), and increased and tightened executive control over the Internet and Communication Law (No. 6639). The net effect of these new legislations was a shrinking civil space and severe restrictions on the freedom of speech, press and the right to assembly.

After the July 15 2016 coup attempt these restrictions on free speech were further expanded. During the state of emergency, which was declared after the coup attempt and which the AKP government claims to have been masterminded by Fethullah Gülen, a US-based cleric, tens of thousands of public servants, including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, teachers, academics, police and military personnel, were dismissed from public service. Moreover, a huge number of civil society associations, foundations, private universities and media organizations have been closed down or disbanded by invoking emergency decrees. Among those people and institutions who were hit by these decrees, were also names and organizations known to be politically and ideologically at odds with the Gülen Movement. Thus, the coup attempt gave Erdoğan, in his own words, a "god-sent" opportunity to crackdown on all possible types of political opposition to his rule.

In April 2017, a constitutional referendum, together with the subsequent general elections in June 2018, were both held in the repressive atmosphere of the state of emergency; this state of affairs introduced a system of executive presidency and consolidated Erdoğan's position as the strongman of Turkey. After the June 2018 elections, in words of Human Rights Watch, "the state of emergency ended, but not the repression" (HRW, 2019). In this repressive environment, with the overwhelming majority of opposition media outlets closed down, even the business-interests of the mainstream media owners were not

enough to motivate them to take a critical stance toward government's policies. Thus "mainstream" and "pro-(AKP) government" became almost synonymous adjectives to describe the political positioning of media outlets.

Turban-headscarf binary: the reconstruction of the "ideal woman"

Gender, especially the female gender, is a very effective discursive area which may serve as a tool to transform sensitive messages that set the boundaries of both political and everyday life. Policies developed regarding women's bodies, the womb and their reproduction go a long way to determine the political limits and values within the society. Women, as Ruth Miller argues, are regarded as citizens with a reproductive identity (Miller, 2007). Furthermore, what Ayse Parla calls the modern citizen's body (Parla, 2000) and what Miller refers to as "the womb" (2007) is the biopolitical space shaping the process of citizenship formation in legal, political, biological and racial terms. Thus, the question of political belonging is an issue of reproduction far more than of rights (Miller, 2007). Biopolitical space situated in the modern citizen's body or womb has always been used and framed as a political tool. In this regard, in addition to the policies and discourses developed around the reproductive identity of women, woman's attire, gender attributes and conduct all have a symbolic value for instilling "ideal" values as the hegemonic norm within society.

When the AKP first came to power, the debate on the wearing or non-wearing of the headscarf by women was at the forefront. It was one of the main issues which caused discrimination against many Muslim women (Göle, 1997; Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2014). There were two opposing representations of the ideal woman; one was espoused by the Kemalists, who regard themselves as the founding elites of the secular Republic, and the other was espoused by the AKP. These two political forces are in many ways incarnated over the issue of the headscarf (Mutluer, 2016). Adherents to the former are opposed to the wearing of the headscarf, and those of the latter are in favour. These positions reflect the different class dynamics and political affiliations of Turkish women. Until the 1980s, the non-headscarf- wearing women were regarded as educated and from the middle-class, whereas the head-

scarf- wearing women were presumed to belong to the uneducated "lower class". With the rise of political Islam during the 1980s and 1990s, headscarf-wearing women started to be active in this movement. Furthermore, more headscarf-wearing women than before started to attend the universities. Thus, as their visibility in politics, education and everyday life increased, they began to be perceived as a political threat to secularism and secular values by Kemalists.

The founding Kemalist elites of the Turkish republic aimed to restrict religious political activities; they considered religious political activities and symbols to be against "modernity". From this perspective, many Islamic practices were considered threatening and reactionary. Kemal Atatürk's foundation of a secular state and his state-led secular society was designed as an ideological necessity, an imposition protecting the state against religious reactionary and anti-Turkish sentiments, and assisting the country's entry into modernity (İnsel, 2001; Çelik, 2001). Therefore, secularism or *laiklik* – as it was called and supported by the Kemalist founders – was positioned as a shield protecting the country's secular, Turkish, Muslim identity (Kara, 2004; Ünder, 2001; Öztürk, 2016). Adjectives like "secular" or "secular-Turkish" on the one hand and "democratic", on the other, have been positioned from the very beginning as rivals, descriptive words, which mutually demarcate and restrict each other's respective spheres of influence. Thus, those who identify themselves with secularism or with democracy found themselves positioned as each other's "other" (Mutluer, 2016; Gülalp, 2017).

In 1984, following the 1980 coup, the self-styled "Kemalist" junta of the period, used its National Security Council to impose the ban on the headscarf. Thus, it was not the early Republicans, but the later adherents of a self-styled version of the Kemalist ideology, who in the aftermath of the 1980 coup came upon the idea of imposing a legally enforced public ban on the women's attire.[1] The policy of banning the headscarf even so far that public (state) officials felt justified to establish "persuasion rooms" (*ikna odaları*) at the entrances of the universities to compel headscarf-wearing woman to unveil. Such measures dramatically discriminated against headscarf-wearing women as they were not only deprived of their rights to an education and to work, but they were also stigmatized in daily life (Akbulut 2008; Göle, 1997; Korteweg & Yurdakul, 2014; Şişman, 2009; Türkmen, 2006, 2007).

Since then, the meanings attributed to women's head-covering became symbolic of political conflict between the Kemalists and Political Islamic groups. The Islamists called what they wore on their head "headscarves" [başörtüsü]. For Kemalists the headscarf was the traditional attire of Anatolian women, so they instead used the term "*türban*" to emphasize the political, anti-Kemalist and anti-secular aspect of a supposedly Islamic reaction (Mutluer, 2016). Thus, the "headscarf-türban" became the primary symbolic issue in the conflict between the secular Kemalists and Islamic groups.

The turban-headscarf dilemma has been employed by both Kemalist governments and the AKP as a tool polarizing the society, especially after the coup in the 1980s. The state/government-led media have framed the issue according to the needs of the powerholders and/or of the prevailing hegemony of the period. The above-mentioned bogus Kabataş story broadcast widely in the media is a distinct example. This example, as already noted above, allowed Erdoğan to utilize the symbolic "headscarf-turban" tension in his favor, in an impassioned, vocal and gendered way. With this story, Erdoğan was able to introduce his new, ideal-nationalist-religious woman as a role model for all other women. He went so far as to also introduce the binary opposition to that ideal, namely, introducing the participants in the Gezi uprisings as persons to be feared and hated. They were, after all, nothing but [Kemalist] headscarf-phobic men who–so the bogus story went–were incapable of controlling their sexual urges, basic instincts and bad temper when they saw a headscarf-wearing woman (Mutluer, 2019).

Six years later, in the now extremely marginalized opposition media, on February 16, 2019, another case of sexual assault against a headscarf-wearing woman by the name of Merve Demirel, made the headlines. Accompanying the news reports was a photo, clearly showing a police officer sexually assaulting Merve Demirel by feeling her up, while the police were taking a group of protestors from TAYAD (*Tutuklu ve Hükümlü Aileleri ile Dayanışma Derneği* [Association for solidarity with detainees' and convicts' families]). A few days later, a woman journalist, Derya Okatan from the news site Artı Gerçek, pubished an interview with Merve Demirel.

Unlike the bogus Kabataş story, this was an actual substantive case of sexual assault against a headscarf-wearing woman and Okatan's in-

terview with her was a commendable piece of real journalism. In this real case of sexual assault, however, the victim was protesting against the AKP government, and the perpetrator was a policeman who was supposedly acting on orders to protect that government against such protests. In this instance, therefore, the might of the AKP government came down on the side, not of the headscarf-wearing victim, but on the side of the perpetrator. Minister of Interior, Süleyman Soylu, defended the perpetrator by declaring the victim's family and by implication the victim herself, to be politically undesirable: "A project women," said Soylu, "whose father has been expelled for being a FETO (Fettullah Gülen Terror Organization)[2] member, and whose brother is a member of DHKP-C" (Devrimci Halk Kurtuluş Parti-Cephe, [Revolutionary people's liberation party-front], a left wing underground organization). The irony here was the fact that the two political organizations which Soylu implied Ms. Demirel to be affiliated with (through her father and brother) – FETO and DHKP-C – are actually positioned at opposite ends of the ideological (left-right) spectrum in Turkish political life. In any case, the different political affiliations of the victim's family members, or indeed her own political standpoint, cannot be used to justify the hard fact that she was sexually assaulted by a police officer. But this is Erdoğan's new Turkey, and the person who "got it in the neck" was not the perpetrator, namely the police officer who assaulted Merve Demirel, but rather the journalist Derya Okatan, who had interviewed the victim. Okatan was taken into custody soon after Soylu declared the victim politically undesirable.

The question which the opposition MP Hüda Kaya of HDP (*Halkın Demokrasi Partisi*, [Peoples Democracy Party]) asked in the parliament, summed up the whole episode quite nicely: "Those who spin the lie of a headscarf-wearing women being sexually assaulted in Kabataş for years on end, my question to you is: where is that woman now? Can you still say 'they have assaulted my headscarf-wearing sister?'" (T24, 2019).

Disposable Kurdish bodies

The Kurdish issue is perhaps the area, which witnessed the most visible and dramatic swing by the AKP from standing for freedom but moving to oppression, from life to death. The Kurdish issue, and the Kurds' bodies became a problem area for the state especially after the

formation of the PKK (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê* [Kurdistan Workers Party]) in the late 1970s and early 1980s when the armed conflict between the state and the PKK started. This was also when the state's "hegemonic control" became visible in the media (Ercan-Bilgiç, 2008). Since then, Kurdish demands or even any discussion of their ethnic identity or cultural rights, have been consistently framed as separatist or terrorist acts (Arsan, 2014; Yüksel-Peçen, 2018). The leader of the PKK, Abdullah Öcalan, was represented as "the head of the terrorists", and referred to the "baby-murderer" (Ercan-Bilgiç, 2008), and the places and geographies where Kurds live were stigmatized as dangerous neighborhoods (Mutluer, 2011).

However, the AKP government took bold steps, which no other government in the republican era had done: Kurdish TV and radio channels were opened to broadcast by the state-owned broadcaster TRT (*Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu* [Turkish Radio and Television Institute]) in 2009. Öcalan's letter calling on the PKK to declare a cease-fire and withdraw from Turkey's borders was read out during the 2013 Newroz[3] celebrations in Diyarbakır[4] and this event was broadcasted live throughout Turkey. The state started direct negotiations with Öcalan and the PKK and even mobilized public support by referring to these negotiations a peace process.

This was the closest that Turkey ever approached to securing peace and restoring normal life in this issue area, but paradoxically, it was also the point, which saw the beginning of the most radically oppressive policies being implemented by the state. (Çelik et al., 2015).[5] Each step taken to ensure life and peace, was followed by a step in the opposite direction, and between 2009 and 2011 more than 2000 Kurdish political activists were arrested. With the beginning of the civil war in Syria, the relations between the state and the PKK, as well the pro-Kurdish political parties such as HDP (*Halkın Democracy Partisi* [People's Democracy Party]) assumed a more international character and tensions deepened. One of the directly relevant incidents occurred between October 6 and 12, 2014, when, during the protests against IS' (Islamic State) siege of the Kurdish controlled Syrian city, Kobane, a total of 49 people died in 40 cities of Turkey. Furthermore, seeing that the pro-Kurdish HDP and its popular leader Demirtas are serious rivals for Kurdish votes, and that with the support of the leftists and libertarians, HDP had the potential

to topple down the AKP majority in the parliament, Erdoğan put an end to the peace process as abruptly as he started it back in March 2015. After the June 7, 2015 elections, in which the HDP managed to pass the 10 per cent electoral threshold, armed conflict between the state and the PKK resumed, and a war of unprecedented ferocity raged in the Kurdish regions. It was as if the peace process had never happened. Prolonged curfews, demolition of entire neighborhoods and even cities and mass killings of civilians became commonplace in Kurdistan, that is, in the southeastern regions of Turkey.

The tension had a direct impact on the media newsrooms. Newspapers' approaches to publishing the events and framing the PKK and Kurdish issue varied according to their relationships with the government. According to Yüksel-Peçen's analysis, "the framing of the Kurdish issue shows that despite the emergence of a moderate media discourse on the PKK and the Kurdish issue during the peace talks in 2013, a significant lapse back to the old narratives of terror and national security occurred in certain media outlets following the change of discourse of the central government after March 2015" (2018: 3). In addition to old narratives of terror and national security resurfacing in the media, social media broke on to the scene and became one of the most prolific sources where hate discourse against the Kurds and the PKK members fermented.

The case of the PKK fighter Ekin Van, whose real name is Kader Keyser Ertürk, is perhaps the best example of this lapse back to the old narratives, as she is the first woman fighter whose naked body, in 2015, was exhibited on the social media. She lost her life in an armed conflict on 10 August 2015 in Varto. In the words of an İHD (*İnsan Hakları Derneği* [Human Rights Association]) report, "Two photos of Kader Kevser Ertürk (Ekin Van) were taken on the spot where she was shot – one clothed, and one naked, both showing her lying in the same position. The photos also show the legs of three different men. Before long, the photos of Kader Kevser Eltürk's naked, dead body were circulated in the social media" (author's translation) (İHD, 2015). The governorship of the province of Muş initiated an investigation into the event, yet the police gave no significant explanations.

A photo showing the naked body of a dead Kurdish woman fighter with three men's legs near her, apparently taken right after an armed

conflict, is a direct assault on the honour and the virility of the enemy's (the Kurdish man's) masculinity and national values. Moreover, the timing of leaking this photo was not coincidental either. It was a moment when the female combatants who fought against ISIS were being glorified in the European media. As Mari Toivanen and Bahar Baser Ozturk argue:

> […] the juxtaposition of female combatants with IS [ISIS] fighters allows the depiction of the participation of the former as exceptional and heroic and as one that deconstructs the masculinity of its adversary. The role of female combatants in the ongoing conflict is represented in the British and French media through the construction of sexualized and modern-day heroine figures that are largely glorified (Toivenen & Başer Özturk, 2016: 294).

Following Toivanen and Başer Öztürk's argument, an assault against a woman fighter's body and her honour, is an assault, which frames not only the woman fighters, but also all the other women who identify themselves with the Kurdish nationalist movement as well. In this context, it must also be noted that the Kurdish political movement puts a special emphasis on gender equality and the role of the YPG (*Yekîneyên Parastina Gel* [People's Protection Unit]) women fighters' involvement in the Syrian war, especially against ISIS.

Additionally, images of raided houses, damaged cities and buildings in the Kurdish provinces have also been served to the media in a language suggesting gender and ethnicity-based disparagement and misogyny. The photos of soldiers of special forces were taken either in the interior of the households or in front of the buildings with sexist graffiti, which were then publicized in the mainstream media.

The photo on the left is of a Special forces soldier in front of a graffiti "*Bodrum*/The basement, is where love is experienced the best". The Turkish word *Bodrum* has a double meaning. It is firstly the name of a popular resort town in southwestern Turkey, which is famous for songs about summer love. But it also means "basement" – so the graffiti also refers to the killing and burning of more than 170 people, including children and civilians, in the basement of a building in the raided Kurdish town of Cizre, in which they had been trapped between 14 December 14, 2015 and March 2, 2016 (THİV, 2016). As such, the

Screenshot 3. A photo of a Turkish special forces soldier in front of a damaged house

Headline: The corpses in the basements in Cizre disintegrated when they were handed to the families. *Artı Gerçek*, 2018, January 2.

Screenshot 4. Inside of one of the raided houses

Headline: One more addition to scandalous photos. *Cumhuriyet*, 2016, March 28.

graffiti intends to humiliate the Kurdish people, by referring to their violent loss in an ironic, sexually abusive way.

The second photo also has sexualized military connotations. It also belongs to a special forces soldier in front of a mirror on which there is a message written in lipstick: "Making Love in Yüksekova is something else" (Cumhuriyet, 2016). Yüksekova is another raided Kurdish town, and the photo shows, in the mirror, the master bedroom, most probably belonging to the mother and father of the family. As such, it represents a direct violation of what is considered the most private and intimate space in a family home in a traditional society.

Such sexually assaulting visuals intend to present how the state tends to dehumanize Kurdish lives, which are under siege and how it can spatially transgress borders of even the most intimate spaces where Kurdish people live. At the same time, both photos depict transgressions of the bodily borders of the Kurds as well. By invading the bedroom of the mother and the father of the family, it implies a direct threat by the state to the Kurdish nation, specifically to Kurdish women who, as mothers, represent the sexuality of the nation (Yuval-Davis, 1997) and who has the possibility and expectation of raising future generations of Kurds.

Throughout the conflict, security forces presented Kurdish opposition members and fighters as "disposable bodies" in the social media. Nagel points out that "racial, ethnic and national boundaries are also sexual boundaries" (Nagel, 2000). In the oppressive and colonial mindset, the oppressed are regarded as "bodies" rather than "minds" (Shohat & Stam, 1994). In times of war, such bodies become boundaries where sexual and ethnicized assault is possible (Enloe, 2000). Particularly at times when a state of emergency or exception is declared, the bodies of the ethnic, gendered, sexual and religious others can be regarded as out of the norm (Agamben, [1995] 2010). In such times, others' bodies may be "abjected" (Kristeva, 1982; Young, 1990) by the power centers such that torture or sexual assault on those bodies or killing them may be treated as normative events. The old political nationalist, ethnicized, gendered, sexualized policy in the Kurdish issue has continued during the AKP era. As the Kurdish population is considered less than human and outside the law, their deaths, from this perspective, are not considered to be losses. They are merely "disposable bodies" (Mutluer, 2011).

To conclude

Analyzing media frames in recent Turkish political life, along with altering socio-political power relations in specific issue areas, reveals the continuities and novelties in state-media relations. Using gendered and sexualized symbolism for political purposes are not new practices in the history of Turkish politics. The issues examined here, as in the case of the Kabataş incident, or concocting sexual expletives to humiliate political opponents in the Kurdish case, are unfortunately part of a long tradition. Yet, in no other period of Turkey's republican history, have such practices taken on the proportions of an officially embraced policy by the incumbent government. Previous governments have always been careful to publicly distance themselves from such practices or to officially deny that such things have ever happened. What is new in the AKP era, particularly in the post-Gezi period, is that discursive use of aggressive and divisive gendered and sexualized symbolism has become the norm, which is condoned and even encouraged from the highest echelons of political power. What this will lead to, particularly after the recent constitutional changes in the political system of Turkey, which introduced a model of strong executive presidency with Erdoğan as the president, defies imagination.

Notes

1. Sevgi Adak (2014) makes a compelling argument that Kemalists of the early republican era had a much more subtle approach to enforcing the "modern dress codes" for women, than did their descendants in the 1980s and 1990s. For one thing, the early Kemalists never officially banned the religious attire of women, and for another, even though there was a central policy in place to "encourage" and even compel women "to uncover," the implementation of that policy was left to the discretion of the local agents of the central government, who took local sensitivities into consideration when goading women to uncover, and treaded carefully so as not to give the impression that they were attacking the honor of the women, or their families, or of the community in which they were operating. By contrast, the post-1980 Kemalist approach attempted to invade the bodily borders/limits of women, which was perceived as an attack not only the honor of the women's, but also on the honor of society, or as Ruth Miller (2007) would have put, an attack on the society's womb.
2. Fettullahist Terror Organization — the derogatory name the Government uses to refer to the Fethullah Gülen Movement.
3. Newroz is regarded as the spring festival and as the beginning of the Kurdish new year. Those celebrations have also become another debated issue between the state, the Kurdish people and the PKK.

4. Diyarbakır, or Amed in Kurdish, is a city which has a symbolic value for Kurdish people. It is regarded as the capital of the Kurds living in Turkey, at least by the Kurdish nationalist movement.
5. For detailed discussions on Peace Process and its chronology, please see Necmiye Alpay & Hakan Tahmaz (2015). *Barış Açısını Savunmak: Çözüm Sürecinde Ne Oldu?* (Defending the Peace Process: What Happened in the Peace Process?).

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18. Indonesia: Diversities and media discrimination

Lestari Nurhajati

The mass media maps in Indonesia are changing. Changes occur in the regulations, the number of media companies, as well as the convergence of the media. In the "new order" era (1966–1998), only 180 SIUPs (Publishing Business Licenses) were issued to print media. Ahead of the elections 1999, the number of media publications rose to 1,600, but after the election the number decreased. In late 2016, online media increased to 43,400. While the increasing of online media was in a great number, there only about 500 online media were being registered by the Indonesia Press Council. The increasing numbers of online media are not balanced by the quality of news coverage, since many issues were still marginalized, whether they appeared in online or print media.

Mass media, in this chapter represented by the press, is considered as the fourth pillar in the state system in Indonesia. Although it is often communicated that the press must be neutral, objective, and impartial, the press is oftentimes inevitably aligned, particularly partisan to the interests of the particular audience it represents. Habermas (1984) says that communication of democracy is emancipatory. In this chapter, the emancipatory role and its obstacles are analysed by looking at the media and a diversity of minorities in Indonesia. Communicative action, i.e. open discussion, creating confidence without pressure from any party, without coercion and violence, will create a conducive public sphere, the embryo of a democracy that contains the value of autonomy and freedom. On the other hand, some Indonesian mass media still dis-

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criminate on issues and interests such as gender, religion/belief, ethnic and sexual minorities.

Discrimination is usually noticeable either as a set of emotions of negative reference or as "negative behaviour before a group, based on a negative prejudice or attitude" grounded "in stereotypes or beliefs about the negative attributes which mark that group". The discriminatory actions and attitudes are usually linked to segregation, stigmatisation and social exclusion. Immigrants, women and, horizontally, the immigrant women, are those who suffer the most, with these practices and attitudes (Cunha et al., 2007).

Castells (2010) explained that empirical studies show the media are not independent variables in inducing behaviour. Their messages, explicit or subliminal, are worked out, processed by individuals placed in specific social contexts, thus modifying what was the intended effect of the message. But the media, and particularly audio-visual media in our culture, are indeed the basic material of communication processes. We live in a media environment, and most of our symbolic stimuli come from the media.

When discrimination occurs in society, media have possibility to amplify it or take a stand defending the groups facing discrimination.

The media, in the role of the fourth pillar/fourth estate, shoulders a heavy responsibility. Although in practice the work of a journalist cannot simply act independent from media policies, since the content of a news medium is ultimately not solely in the hands of an individual journalist. According to Shoemaker and Reese (1996) there are five levels affecting media content: (1) the individual worker's tier: the social, economic, and educational background of the journalist; (2) medium-level media concerns: the interests of audiences, including news value, objectivity, and story structure; (3) media organizational setting: gatekeeping, news perspective, and external sources such as interviews, informants/sources and others; (4) extra-media tariffs, media owners, advertisers, etc., and (5) ideological factors such as feminism, religion, certain groups, etc.

Thus, when we look at media content, it will be a product of various dimensions, not only the individual level of journalists, but also the level of editorial staff, media ownership policy, advertisers, and also the level of ideology harboured by particular media.

Media alignment as a necessity

The media is supposed to be present for the benefit of the wider community, as a venue for the voices of the people who may not be heard by government and parliament. Media alignment to the people is a necessity. Media trends have changed very quickly lately, and online media have become "the golden path". In Indonesia, almost all print media have their online versions.

Castells (2009) argued that whatever our economic system is, we should learn to live with the internet. In a modern setting, media institutions should focus on the various opportunities, but also the dangers involved. The cultural effects of communication technologies are often unpredictable, since they are also related to social forces. This condition seems an integral part of the present and future life situations.

Various participants in society have recognized the benefits of strengthening online media. Online media in Indonesia unfortunately do not shy away from publishing discriminatory news/stories concerning gender, religion/belief, or ethnic and sexual minorities. This concern is voiced by the Director of The Alliance of Independent Journalists in Indonesia (AJI), Suwarjono, in a discussion that was supported by TIFA foundation (A non-profit organization promoting open society in Indonesia) in the early 2016: "The media does not involve and support the community such as the minorities' ethnic, race, religion, or LGBT issues that are currently lacking clarity. We hope the media can improve their understanding of the function and role of the media" (Amri & Manan, 2016). So inevitably, in the end, the basic knowledge, mental readiness and toughness of the journalists as the spearhead in the field, are key to producing a good and true news.

Factuality or facticity can be interpreted as reporting a situation and condition as it is, neither embellished nor reduced, nor polluted by any particular interpretation or opinion. But in practice the news often contains interpretations and opinions by journalists. When these opinions and interpretations enter into news coverage, bias occurs. According to the ideals of news journalism, bias is something we must always strive to avoid.

A country of diversity

According to the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics, the country's population (approximately 267 million) is divided into 1,331 ethnic groups, and has a linguistic diversity of more than 700 languages. Six religions are recognized by the Indonesian Government; their adherents are distributed as follows: Muslim 87.2 per cent, Christians (other than Catholics) 7 per cent, Roman Catholic 2.9 per cent, Hindu 1.7 per cent, Buddhist and Confucian 0.9 per cent, and unspecified (other beliefs) 0.4 per cent (Kementrian Agama RI, 1965).

The adherents of "other" beliefs are not much reported or covered by the media. Such minorities experience discrimination, both in the media and in the real world. Examples of this are Ahmadiyah, Syiah (Shia), as well as Christian sects who differ from mainstream Christians.

The SETARA Institute in 2017 reported on "Conditions of Freedom/Belief in Indonesia 2106" and emphasized that freedom of religion/belief had not been fully guaranteed by the state (Setara, 2017). To the contrary, the practices of intolerance, discrimination and violence continue to occur. The report also highlighted that during 2016, 270 violations of freedom of religion/belief were perpetrated. Persons associated with organs of the state were involved in half of these incidents. Included in the state acts are provocative public statements capable of inciting people to violence. Such provocative public statements by state actors inciting violence, were covered by the mass media, and by this means, the media became involved in discrimination against minorities holding uncommon religious beliefs.

One incident involved 1,500 members of the Cikeusik Muslim Movement, which in February 2011 killed three Ahmadis (detiknews, 2011; Firdaus, 2011; *Tempo*, 2011; Voa-islam, 2011). Some Indonesian media used the word "clash' to explain the incident. These media also used the word "misguided" and "must be converted" (Voa-islam, 2011) to justify assaults and discrimination against Ahmadis. Another case were the attacks on Shi'a residents in Sampang in December 2011 and August 2012 which killed two people, while six people were injured (Shofwan, 2014). Dozens of houses were burned and hundreds of Shiite residents fled. The word "clash" was again used by the largest newspapers and magazines in Indonesia; including *Kompas*, *Tempo*, *Gatra*, *Okezone*, and *RCTI*. Not infrequently they also use the word

"heretical", "Islamized", "blasphemy religion" and call the perpetrators somewhat euphemistically as "non-Shi'a" (Shofwan, 2014).

Ethnic minorities

The ethnic minority issue is quite difficult to simplify, because some ethnic issues are related to religion. Schulze (2004) explained that the Ambon fight (1999–2003) said to be between Christians and Muslims, left many dead), as well as Poso (1998–2007) also between groups adhering to the two religions, and Sambas (West-Kalimantan, 1999) where conflicts started erupting during Indonesia's transition from authoritarianism to democracy (starting in 1998). These conflicts were linked to the struggle for political power and control over resources in the context of decentralization. All three conflicts shared similar causes resulting from the *transmigrasi* – the partially forced migration of other ethnic groups (both during Dutch colonialism and later) to new locations less densely populated; and the disrespect of local customs by migrants coupled with social, economic, and political competition between locals and migrants (Koko, 2018; Sucahyo, 2018). In all three ethnic minority-issue cases, violence by indigenous actors specifically targeted migrants in order to defend indigenous local resources, particularly land, from encroachment by migrants and the Indonesian state.

Thus, writes Schulze (2004), there is little to suggest that the Sambas conflict was somehow inherently more ethnic than the other two. Indeed, the ethnic narratives advanced by the non-Muslims in all three conflicts were broadly similar in their emphasis on the indigenous experience of physical, social, cultural, and political displacement by migrants from other ethnic backgrounds. Yet, participant and observer narratives on the Ambon and Poso conflicts were largely framed in religious terms while those on the Sambas conflict cast the violence as ethnic.

According to Schulze (2004), we could see that the conflicts regarding ethnicity are related with the political condition in Indonesia. Whenever it comes to ethnicity issues, Indonesian media often just report about conflicts and problems, and do not include historical context or try to add expert suggestions on problem solving.

A special case is the Chinese ethnic community, in Indonesian called *Tiongha*. The Indonesian Media have a long history of discrimination

against them (Heychael, 2017). Purdey (2003) said opinions among ethnic Chinese about how to express their identity and culture after May 1998 (the fall of Suharto's New Order Era) were less polarized than actions occurring on the political scene. There was, as noted, after the fall of Suharto, a general sentiment that Chinese cultural activities should be allowed to re-emerge, on the surface at least, in the form of dance, *barongsai* and so on, at official events.

The *Tempo* magazine, August 31, 2015 edition, published a main report regarding the arrival of thousands of workers from China along with various development projects in Indonesia. The magazine used the headline "Welcome Chinese Workers", and many parties point to this as a form of *Tempo* racism towards ethnic Chinese groups as in Indonesia, the ethnic is accused of taking over economic power (Utomo, 2015). The headline shows how the media had a cynical approach towards the arrival of Chinese workers in Indonesia. In addition, the previous governor of Jakarta (of Chinese descent) faced many-faceted discrimination (see Ade Armando's chapter in this volume).

The issue of pluralism in Indonesia is challenged. In the mass media, there are still many journalists who do not understand the dangers of breakup and disunity posed to the nation in the name of ethnicity. Indonesia has long had the motto "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" (Unity in Diversity, adapted in 1950) but very little of this ethic is reflected through the mass media.

Sensitive gender coverage

A closer look at online media in Indonesia reveals that they tend to disregard gender sensitivity and describe women mainly related to domestic issues, or also "*ibuism*" – "motherly", i.e. that women are important if they are mothers, have kids, and do not work outside of their home. The strong statement, "Ibuism Negara – State Motherism" refers to a national program during the New Era which constructs women's role as a domestic unpaid worker. This program largely controlled women's participation in society (Janti, 2018; Putri, 2017; Suryakusuma, 2015). This is still visible since, in media interviews with women politicians, or women workers in general, journalists tend to ask them about their successes in the domestic area. This condition is indirectly part of the success of the "new order", which introduced the ideology of "*ibuism*"

including women as *"konco wingking"* – a friend behind a husband.

However, since that period, the issue of "*ibuism*" has largely shifted to issues of women's bodies, female sexuality, and women's clothing associated with morals and religion. Nowadays, women tend to be judged or questioned about their moral and religious values if their appearances differ from what is considered feminine stereotypes.

When women are raped, the media tends to disclose the identity of the victim, humiliating her by revealing details of the event, and thereby causing the victim and her family to be traumatized by such heavy-handed coverage. This makes women's experience with rape as being "double victims", both of direct violence, and the psychological violence perpetrated by the media (Himawan & Handayani, 2018; Sucahyo, 2018).

Whatever the news content, it ought to frame women's issues as though women were as human as men. Thus, when journalists give women exposure in the news, it should be seen as logical and natural. This does not happen as long as women are degraded in news issues, regarded solely as objects and not as full human beings. The values of humanity, when women's issues are covered, still seem to be ignored.

News and gender bias

According to Denis McQuail and colleagues (2005), bias is a tendency to abandon the path of objective truth consistently by misappropriating information. In news, bias is defined as a systematic tendency that is more aligned to one side or position than the other. The four types of biases are (1) partisanship, including editorial approval or authorization on behalf of a particular person; in this instance, the content of the media is openly and intentionallly partisan; (2) propaganda on the other hand is *intentionally* partisan, but the goal remains veiled; it is not easy to identify this bias if such propaganda enters the news; (3) unwitting bias is open and unintentional, such as the selection of a topic that is considered to have news value; and (4) ideology, which includes a veiled and unintentional bias "embedded in the text".

In Indonesia, we witness first and foremost the two last biases. The practice of gender bias is seen in various forms across media texts, not least in headlines and leads. Examples of texts with clear gender bias, can be seen below, by word choices: "joined in to harass the victim",

"got a chance to harass the victim", "said Tyas, who has a plump, sexy body with a 36 B bra" (Setiawan, 2011), "Virgin with 3 children?" (Pos Kota, 2012).

Explicitly, clearly and overtly, the above sentences demonstrate a complete insensitivity towards women. Not only do these excerpts demean women, but some also portray victims of violence as participants in amusing incidents. This media phenomenon may be seen as the result of business interests, which aims to attract the attention of audiences, through sensational reporting and thereby increase circulation. Socially, they seem to have internalized patriarchal culture. Thus, media outlets oftentimes construct women as second class citizens, lower than men, as weak, in need of protection, and as a gender whose members have to adhere to beauty ideals if they are to have positive value, or be regarded as part of popular pornography and thus exist simply as sexual objects. A gender biased perspective causes the media to produce and reproduce patterns of gender relations that are unfair and unequal. The media often describes women as weak, and they are reported as "crying helplessly" (Eki, 2009).

May Lan in the book "Pers, Negara dan Perempuan" (2002), mentions how in the Indonesian media during the New Order era, women were described as subordinate to men. There are several things that show this.

The first subordination is the exploitation of women through criminal news involving women both as victims and perpetrators. In cases where women are victims of rape, for example, they will be affixed with various "beautiful" frills, "minimal clothes", "night out", and other tendentious characteristics. The second is women are explained as marginal people who do not have authority over themselves. The third is found in reports on celebration of women on particular occasions, such as Mother's Day, Kartini's day, etc.[1] The fourth is that the portion of news about women is still very minimal and does not touch on aspects of women's empowerment. Women's emancipatory discourse does not come forward.

Sexual minorities issue

In cases of LGBT people, negative opinion in the mass media may culminate in an increasing outbreak of violent incidents and an escalation

of stigmatization and discrimination. To quote from the official website *Arus Pelangi* (NGO with concern for sexual minorities), the following official statements were represented in media without contacting any LGBT representatives/sources (January 2016):

> The Minister of Higher Education and Technology Research, M. Nasir, affirmed that groups of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) should not enter university campuses. According to him, these groups could damage the role of a campus as a moral guard. The universities should be able to maintain the correct moral values and values of the nation. (Aminah, 2017; Batubara, 2016; Laeis, 2017)

It is also expressed by the Chairman of MPR RI (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (MPR); Republic Indonesia (RI) – Indonesia's House of Representatives), Zulkifli Hasan: "Yes indeed this is a new phenomenon. *Yes*. This did not fit with our culture, it should be banned because it does not fit with the culture of Indonesia" (Fatmawati, 2018). Member of the parliament from the fraction X PPP[2], Reni Marlinawati: "this practice in addition to violating religious norms also conflicts with positive law. We firmly reject and are vehemently opposed to this practice" (Indrawan, 2016).

The Minister of Education and Culture, Anies Baswedan, said that such deviant behaviour, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT), among adolescents should be a concern for parents and teachers. The teachers must be aware of the importance of the values held in education, such as religious values, Pancasila[3], and culture. Parents and teachers should be aware of the values that should be taught, grown and developed from an early age. In fact, most experts mention this as a duty even before the child is born (Indrawan, 2016).

In 2015, The Alliance of Independent Journalist Indonesia (AJI) shared their report about the news coverage of LGBT in Indonesia. It shows how often the media covered news of LGBT by basing their reports on sexual orientation, promoting sensasional elements and bombastic titles. The media also obscured the distinction between sexual and gender identity. Moreover, the media tend to cover such news from sources abroad, such that the public perception is that LGBT is a "foreign" issue, while in real life, LGBT is an integral and equal part of Indonesian society.

According to AJI, the media coverage tends to report negatively on LGBT issues, especially when news of a crime involves an LGBT person. The main source of news in such cases would be a law enforcer, while LGBT-persons, as (alleged) perpetrators of the crime, are not offered any space. News with a negative tone also appears in online news. Allegedly, this happens due to lack of understanding among journalists/writers about gender diversity. For example, news about a celebrity who may be *bisexual* is considered strange from the point of view of many people's lives. Identity as a bisexual tends to be labeled as greedy and unlawful and might even be considered a social aberration (Ichsan, 2017; Kurniawan, 2017; Tribunnews, 2017). This statement strengthens the negative stigma of society against LGBT groups.

Media coverage should be siding, whatever the source ...

Online media development now exceeds print media in Indonesia. It is now almost certain that young readers of the Y generation (born 1980–1995) and Z generation (born 1996–2005) (Jorg, 2017) mainly consume news online (Nurhajati et al., 2015). More dramatically, then, social media and search engines have become the source of news. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Path, and other social media platforms become indicators as to whether or not an event can enter the news category (Nola Media Grup, 2018).

The significant development in the era of digital media is the rise of amateur information producers who actively distribute news, insights and opinions (Owen, 2017). Digitalization has impacted journalism in many ways. One of these ways is that it has even been easier for the public to speak out, since spreading content is free and large audiences can be reached through social media platforms (Fonseca, 2017). Everyone flocks to the newsmakers in various ways. Citizen journalists provide invaluable information that can democratize media, as well as nations (Revis, 2011). The speed of news via social media, though, seems to be the main concern of its producers, and accuracy tends to be neglected.

Social media credibility is increasingly difficult to maintain, even if it is strongly believed to be the "earliest and fastest" newsbearer of this century. Although paradoxical conditions occur, journalists and

media workers in general also rely on social media to generate news. Trends discussed in social media, will very quickly be processed by journalists to become news. This condition is reasonable if the actual and factual conditions reported are true. It becomes a joke when the issue in social media is just "trash" (worthless information) that is picked up by journalists to generate news.

Web news and social media can be regarded as a color enhancer that is attractive in the world of communication, and has its own specialties that do not exist in conventional media. Audiences can also be an information tool, they can interact with each other, and they can communicate directly with media persons who possess considerable information. This constitutes a condition that is not much different from Habermas's basic idea of the public sphere itself, which allows for the exchange of communication between one party with others as egalitarian and emancipatory. This is reinforced by the thought of Castells (2001) that new communications technologies will ensure new forms of horizontal civil participation, which do not depend on traditional mass communication or large political organizations. Finally, each individual can actively participate in the democratic development of true public opinion spheres.

On the other hand, a sad condition may occur in the shape of recycling messages. Due to limited field staff, the online media will "cannibalise" news from an initiator. Regular news coverage is no longer the rule. Just imagine how this may develop concerning news on gender, ethnic, religious and sexual minorities.

So should social media be banned from being used as news references? Of course not. But journalists need to be more sensitive and careful in sorting out reliable and adequate news sources through social media, by re-checking the original source, and assessing this source's credibility. Furthermore, media managers and owners' credibility must be checked for the benefit of the wider community. As media economist Robert Picard states, journalism is "designed to separate fact from fiction and rumour, to provide information fairly, and to produce accuracy and credibility" (Fonseca, 2017).

Castells (2009) has warned us about the unpredictable cultural effects of communication technologies. Media need to protect society rather than pure business values, stick to separating fact from fiction

and fact from rumour, providing information fairly, and to producing accuracy and credibility.

Recommended: training diversity

Media discrimination on the basis of gender, religion/belief, ethnicity and sexual minority status in Indonesia is documented. Compulsory training of diversity and tolerance would be a positive addition to basic journalism training.

Various parties who are concerned with respect towards diversity and anti-discrimination, need to be continuously reminded of double standards. Since Indonesia has a wide variety of ethnic groups, religions, etc., it is very important that Indonesian journalism promotes a solid understanding that journalism is designed to separate fact from fiction and rumour, to provide information fairly, and to produce accuracy and credibility. Moreover, the public has to be educated in media literacy, the need of accuracy and credibility in news, especially in dealing with negative news about minorities.

Notes

1. In Indonesia two days celebration women: Mother's day on 22 December (actually as part of commemoration on Indonesian Women's Movement), and Kartini's day on 21 April as Kartini's (an Indonesian heroine) birthday.
2. Fraction number 10 in Indonesian Parliament from Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP). PPP is a political party based on Islamist Ideology.
3. Pancasila, pronounced Panchaseela, is the philosophical basis of the Indonesian state. Pancasila consists of two Sanskrit words, "panca" meaning five, and "sila" meaning principle. It comprises five inseparable and interrelated principles. They are: Belief in the one and only God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives, and social justice for all people of Indonesia (http://www.indonezia.ro/republic.htm).

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19. Passenger on the globalisation train

Olga Stokke

The other. Who was the *other*? In the neighbourhood where I grew up, everybody appeared to be part of a quite homogeneous group. Even though some suffered from illnesses, alcoholism, scarce means, the differences were small, after all. At least from the outside, the majority seemed to live a normal life where the men would go to work every day, the women would be homemakers. All shared the same Norwegian history, culture, traditions. All probably shared the understanding of belonging to the same group,

I grew up understanding that those who were different were religious people, those who went to church on Sundays. Ethnicity was not an issue. Conflicts arose if neighbours disagreed on trees or houses growing too high. There was no intrusion of a strange religion or different rules of life and behaviour. Real controversies, wars and conflicts, were elsewhere, caused by others.

However, I remember an old woman teacher who brought the big, exotic world closer to us. She returned after having served as a missionary on the island of Madagascar east of Africa. Although, since she was Christian, and we were not very religious, we were not too curious about her adventures.

More fascinating was the neighbour truck driver who went off to Germany. Wow! I also wanted to become a long distance driver; I also wanted to go abroad.

Olga Stokke is a Norwegian journalist. Since 1986 she has worked for Aftenposten national newspaper in Oslo.

There were no immigrants in my hometown. My parents never saw or met a foreigner. Black people were on television and, at that time, there was only one TV channel and one radio station. We were not in the possession of a telephone; if urgent, we were allowed to borrow the neighbour's telephone. I grew up ignorant of the existence of the national newspaper, *Aftenposten*, where I work today.

My mother never left Norway. Sometimes there was little money and even little food, but neither hunger nor war made her flee. She stayed at home, as many others would have preferred to do if they could, instead of becoming refugees.

Around 25 years ago, in 1993, when the American scholar Samuel Phillips Huntington published his article *Clash of Civilizations,* I had already been a journalist for more than 13 years. I had started reporting on migration, integration and human rights. Three years later when he followed up with a book based on his article, I had travelled to distant countries in Africa and Asia. My mother still talked about Africa and Asia as countries, not as continents.

I had been in slight touch with the feeling of being the *other*, not in a hostile way, but by simply experiencing being part of a minority – a white in an African country.

I was a passenger on the globalization train – transcending borders. The initial mantra was connecting people, integration.

These days we hear the whistles: globalization must halt. European countries are again building walls to keep migrants from entering our territories. We are afraid that they – the other – will change, challenge, and destabilize our societies.

Huntington argued that future wars would not be fought between states, but between cultures. Islamic extremism would become the biggest threat to the West. He argued that Western civilizations with individual liberty, political democracy, human rights, rule of law and cultural freedom are unique, not necessary to be forced on other civilisations, but to be preserved, and protected. His views were highly debated. Critics argued that his ideas created an exaggerated gloomy forecast that would widen the gap between people. His supporters blamed the former for being naive ignoring his sharp analysis.

The first immigrants to Norway came from Pakistan, Turkey and Morocco in the late 1960s and early 1970s. They represented some-

thing new and exotic with their black hair and dark skin. They worked long hours, established small mosques in basements and warehouses. Eventually they brought their wives, and children. Even today, immigrants import spouses from the homeland, and thereby to some extent contribute to the cultivation of old, rural traditions.

Many Norwegians were quite ignorant of the immigrant's backgrounds, religious faith, cultures and traditions – until it became clear that they did not intend to forget their roots.

Norwegians are proud of their democracy, human rights, gender equality and female prime ministers. However, the *other* was present in Norwegian society long before the first immigrants arrived from Pakistan. The others were in the shadows, in the dark corners of our playground: For generations the Sami people were discriminated against. Romany travellers were sterilised by force and they were deprived of their children.

Norway had to move on, to be open-minded, generous and tolerant towards the other. The overall focus on immigration in Norway has been integration. *We* expected them to be grateful and willing to adopt our rules and values.

After the Second World War Europe rapidly developed its economies, democracies with freedom of speech and press, standards of living. People were connected! Wars and clashes still took place elsewhere in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Vietnam, Angola, and Eritrea.

However, was the official notion to create a common *we* a naïve concept? Were politicians and journalists ignorant of radical, conservative, patriarchal values that some immigrants were importing? Journalists did, and still do, write about forced marriages, honour killings and parents preventing their youth from becoming too influenced by liberal western values.

More than 20 years ago, nobody would have questioned that a man from the countryside in Pakistan took the role as a spokesperson for all immigrants – regardless of religion and national background. Today this would never work. The ethnic diversity is visible through a global patchwork of organisations. It is taken for granted that women and youth address their own issues.

A few years ago, I interviewed three women with Pakistani and Turkish backgrounds that I had interviewed 20 years earlier. How was

life after all these years in Norway? Well, they had lost some, and gained some. Inevitably, they had experienced aspects of culture-clash, but they had taken advantage of the possibilities in their new country. They had studied, worked and gone public with their struggles. These women carried the torch and prepared the ground for their sons and daughters – in order to harvest a good standard of living and a happy life.

Integration of people and cultures is a continuous process. However, why do some develop radical views, even devote themselves to extreme groups? Why do some Muslims in democratic countries embrace extreme versions of Islam? ISIS has been successful in recruiting thousands of young Muslims, also from Europe, to join their violent project. There is no room for the other in their house.

Due to reports from scientists on terror, such as Thomas Hegghammer (2016) and Western authorities such as the Norwegian Security Police (PST) the reason why young people from Western countries join terror groups such as ISIS, is complex.

They point to different aspects such as low education and degree of employment, a criminal background. These young Muslims do not feel included, not accepted nor wanted by the majority. They are, therefore, easily recruited by extremists who invite them to join a big, warm, global family – the Muslim Ummah (community). Converts to Islam who adopt extreme versions of the religion often have similar socio-economic backgrounds. They also have the feeling of being an outsider. In addition, the role that Western countries play in the Arab world – such as US invasion in Iraq – has influenced many to turn to violent extremism.

Edward Said, the Palestinian-American professor and author of the book *Orientalism* (1978), argued that the terrible events of September 11 was a turning point, for the West, but not least for many Muslims. They experienced hostility and suspicion, as if all Muslims are terrorists in disguise.

Polarisation is a victory for extremists such as ISIS. They want people, civilisations, to clash in order to spread their ideology and establish their caliphate.

The Western world applauded the Arab Spring. Eventually oppressed Muslims protested against dictatorships and hardships. Regimes were overthrown. Nevertheless, it turned out that in several states, there was

no trustworthy alternative to replace the old regimes. In the emptiness after the states had collapsed, extreme Islamists took the opportunity. This also contributed to an increase in right-wing extremism in the West.

Geert Wilders, one of the most popular politicians in the Netherlands wants to ban the Q'uran, shut down all mosques and stop immigration from Muslim countries. At the same time, Muslims are fighting extreme Islam.

Innumerable Muslims enjoy their Western lives, they prefer to live in a Western democracy to a Muslim state. Western Muslims such as the Norwegian doctor and author, Mohammed Usman Rana, who describes himself as a conservative Muslim, asks Muslims to stop the fire in the house of Islam. He calls for a fight for democracy and freedom, against extremism.

Clashes between Sunnis and Shias have erupted these last years. ISIS (Sunnis) have slaughtered their Shia brothers and sisters. They have taken Yezidi women as sex-slaves – or killed them. In Iraq, the tensions between Sunnis and Shias have been high. Ahmadiyya Muslims are fighting oppression in many countries.

According to the Norwegian professor in Middle East and North-African studies, Bjørn Olav Utvik (Utvik, 2014), today's Europe has not been formed by a gradual ascent towards enlightenment, guided by liberal thinkers. The idea of liberal and secular Islam versus a political and fundamental Islam faces problems.

Utvik underlines that political Islamists were in the front row when Muslims were fighting for more freedom and democratic elections during the Arab Spring. He mentions bodies such as the Muslim Brotherhood, and conservative Salafists.

Brexit. Right wing parties attracting large numbers. Thousands of migrants heading for Europe. Trump as president in the US. Collapse of EU ahead? What role will NATO play? Turkey? What will happen in France, in Germany? People are nervous that all this will lead to the destabilisation of Western democracies and change of values. So European countries close their borders, build new walls. How is that really the solution?

Those who want diversity can make a difference. Confrontation – without contempt – could be one of the solutions, by meeting the *other* with curiosity. Confrontations create dialogue – and change.

My mother eventually met an immigrant, at the hospital, shortly before she died. She appreciated the kind service she received, and the migrant woman was happy to be useful, to make a living. Fulfil a dream. We all change a bit by meeting the other.

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20. From journalist to refugee – and the long road back

Kristin Skare Orgeret

> I survived the attack, the bomb and a year in hospital. It was after I came to Norway that I realized that I had lost my identity. My identity as a professional woman, as a journalist. I understood that most refugees never get their original identity back.
> (Hasina Shirzad, Oslo 2018)

Scandinavia, as well as the rest of Europe, experienced a dramatic increase in the number of immigrants and refugees entering in their countries in 2015. The majority came from Syria, as the conflict there escalated and the possibilities for a solution were slim; however, refugees also came from countries such as Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq and Eritrea. Most of the refugees, including refugee journalists, left their professions behind when they fled their homelands. In 2015, 21,000 individuals applied for asylum in Denmark – an increase from 14,815 in 2014 and 7,557 in 2013. These numbers are still quite low compared to neighbouring Sweden's 162,877 asylum seekers in 2015, and even though the number of citizens is 9.8 million, compared to Denmark's 5.7 million, the relative number is much larger. Norway was situated somewhere in between its two neighbours, but still much closer to Denmark, with 31,145 asylum seekers, one third of these were from Syria. At its peak, the flow of asylum seekers into Norway rose to more than 8,000 a month. Historically the highest number of asylum seekers arriving in Norway prior to 2015 was in 2002; that year the total number

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was 17,480. However, suddenly, in 2015, Norway received three times as many refugees as it had in preceding years.

The three Scandinavian countries reacted quite differently to the influx of refugees. The Danish regime met the new situation by introducing a range of initiatives to convince refugees not to come to Denmark. The government cut back social security support to refugees by 45 per cent and it was proposed to remove refugees physically to camps outside the urban areas (Reuters, 2016). Danish authorities may confiscate belongings whose value is in excess of $1,450 (USD) from asylum seekers in order to defray the costs of supporting the migrants' during their stay in the country. Furthermore, the minimum time for family reunion[1] increased from one to three years. The sceptical attitude towards migrants is also seen both in ordinary day-to-day life and in the media (Associated Press, 2016). Foreign minister Inger Støjberg published a statement in Middle East newspapers telling how unattractive it was to be a refugee in Denmark. The campaign was met with opposition, also among other Danish politicians and groups such as "Refugees Welcome to Denmark" and #Peoplereachingout, which stressed the need to bid migrants welcome.

Swedish people, from across the political spectrum, have generally shown an open and generous attitude towards the refugees, except for the anti-migration party Sverige Demokraterna (SD, an anti-immigration party). However, the Swedes changed during 2015. In September, 2015, 30 per cent wished to reduce the number, in December, when the country had received more than 16,000 refugees, 55 per cent of the citizens argued that Sweden should accept fewer refugees (Nelson, 2016). Again, Norway was situated somewhere in between its neighbours. Increasingly, the Norwegian public debate was characterized by growing worries of the society's inability to receive and integrate such large numbers of refugees. Seventy per cent of the asylum seekers arrived between September and November; the numbers seriously challenged the existing reception system. Furthermore, 5,000 people arrived through a new refugee route in the northernmost part of Norway, crossing the Russian border at Storskog, many on bicycles.

The unexpectedly large number of arriving asylum seekers in the Scandinavian countries became the dominant political issue during the last months of 2015; this resulted in extensive media coverage as

well as explicit and mediated ideas about what a refugee "should" or "ought" to be and do. An example of the latter is how mediated images of young men photographing themselves with the aid of a "selfie-stick" just after their safe arrival on a Greek island provoked many Europeans who viewed these images and wonder how refugees who could afford a smart phone actually fitted into the European idea of a "real refugee".

Several scholars have stressed how the refugee crisis represents a challenge to journalism (Abu-Fadil, 2017; Di Salvo, 2016; Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017; Greenslade, 2015). We do not know much about how the refugee situation represented a crisis to the journalists who fled. The focus of this chapter is on refugees with a journalistic background, who struggled to find their way back into journalism, with some illustrations from Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Through qualitative interviews with five refugee journalists in Norway, Sweden and Denmark as well as a close reading of the material they produced, this writer has explored the experiences of refugee reporters in Scandinavia. The project leader of a Danish project for refugee journalists was also interviewed. The explorative approach serves to give some insights into the "borderland existence" of being in the situation where one is somewhere between a refugee and a journalist. Hopefully the resulting insights reveal what such journalistic points of view may have to offer the so-called 'receiving' countries.

A journalist – full stop

> The experience of being a refugee was a shock. I felt like a criminal. Like being accused of something I was not even aware of (Shirzad, 2018).

Hasina Shirzad came from Afghanistan to Norway in 2015. At the age of 22 she had just finished her bachelor's degree in journalism and was working for an election commission when the office car in which she was riding blew up. Whereas Hasina's boss and his young son were killed, she survived, with wounds covering much of the right side of her body and which found her subsequently hospitalized for three months. It took her about a year to manage to walk properly. Then her mother decided to sell all her belongings so as to let Hasina flee the country.

> For a long period of time that was all I was – a refugee. This status created a barrier between me and the world. I tried to accept the loss of my identity. I saw all the people around me who gave in and somehow came to terms with the new situation. I thought – Why can't I be like the other Afghan girls and boys who accept their fate. They told me – give up. Your education will never be recognized here. But I have always been this person who dreams big. I couldn't give in. It was larger than me. It was like a curse, but, if I accepted the new role I was given, there would be no meaning to my life.

According to the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) 25 per cent of highly-educated refugees find work which involves low levels or no level of educational qualifications. Among job-seekers whose background is Norwegian this percentage is two. Women have particular difficulties to find a job relevant to their education and training. There are no numbers for journalists in particular, but as all Norwegian media houses publish in Norwegian, it is probably even more difficult for highly educated refugee journalists to find a relevant job. "Nobody saw me as a journalist anymore, as a perfectionist, as the person I used to be in my home country. I was just an asylum seeker. Just a number, that was all I had become" (Shirzad, 2018).

Hasina learned Norwegian and fought a long battle to have her studies from Afghanistan recognized in Norway. From within the project "Akademisk Dugnad" which supported "students at risk," she found a position as an intern in the large Norwegian newspaper *Dagbladet*. She stresses how refugee journalists may contribute to better reporting in the countries of arrival:

> When I read the stories from my own country, the context is often lacking, no wonder people here feel that Afghanistan is a far-away country, with people it is hard to understand or feel connected to. The information often goes through so many agencies, so many institutions, that the real analysis is missing. Nobody asks why, and people feel alienated. If the journalist doesn't understand, how will the readers do so?

Step by step Hasina reclaimed a professional identity. In *Dagbladet*, she became a resource; her expertise was useful about a region, a country, its culture and language. In this way she became a valuable addition to

Norwegian journalism. She describes how she felt different from the Norwegian journalists, who all, with the exception of a "second-generation" immigrant from Iran, were all blond. Together with Norwegian colleagues, Hasina participated in reporting on the so-called "October children"; these were a group of 130 seventeen-year-old refugees who turned 18 between September and December 2017 and subsequently were refused permanent residency in Norway; they risked being deported to Afghanistan. In cooperation with her colleagues, Hasina gave these October children faces and voices, contextualizing their lives through a series of articles on these young asylum seekers.

> There are many factual errors. For instance, you read that in Afghanistan women only have a first name. That is not even true. From the media perspective, Afghanistan always feels like an alien place. I am the first Afghani most Norwegians have ever spoken to, and they are surprised: You seem so normal, so much like us. I want to bring that perspective into Norwegian journalism.

However, covering the stories of Afghan refugees was not sufficiently satisfying for Hasina, but, in line with other research, she found taking the step from being an "immigrant journalist" to a "journalist" to be a difficult process (Orgeret, 2008).

"I am not necessarily so interested in writing about Afghan asylum seekers, my motivation for being a journalist is to get the truth across." Hasina's attitude echoes that of the Norwegian journalist Kadafi Zaman who ten years earlier described how his Pakistani background was an additional strategic asset when it came to covering cases related to South Asia. Conscious of this advantage, Zaman nevertheless stressed that he refused to play the role of a "multicultural'" or "Norwegian-Pakistani journalist". He wanted to be respected as "a journalist – full stop" (Zaman, interview, in Orgeret, 2008).

The experience of journalists with a mixed or foreign background in a Scandinavian country may be seen as a double edged-sword: Such journalists' particular backgrounds are their strengths and their particular expertise, in terms of languages and multiple cultural understanding. At the same time taking the step from being an "immigrant journalist" or a "refugee journalist" to a "journalist – full stop" may be challenging.

Information

Friday 9 October 2015, the Danish newspaper *Information* published a unique issue, both in terms of size and content. Whereas an ordinary Friday issue is 20 pages, this issue was 48 pages, entirely produced by refugees with a journalistic background. Around ten journalists from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraqi Kurdistan, Thailand and Kenya participated in the process, which continued for three weeks. The majority had recently arrived in Denmark. Many of them were highly experienced journalists in their home countries. Some had even been imprisoned due to their professional activities and sacrificed a lot for the idea of free and vibrant journalism. It was when the number of refugees arriving in Denmark "exploded" in 2015, that the Danish Union of Journalists (DJ) came up with an idea of creating a network of refugees in Denmark who had a journalistic background. The idea was to try to connect the refugee journalists in a network and also allow them to come closer to the Danish media organisations. This was how the newspaper *Information* came in contact with refugee journalists and proposed the idea for a special issue. The refugee journalists were actively involved in the process from the very start. They decided the content and the focus of the articles:

> We had lived the stories we were writing about, had experienced first-hand, had an unrivalled context to the stories. It was almost a citizen journalism with a professional touch kind of thing. We had contacts to sources that only we could get, and this was very valuable in telling in-depth, eye-opening stories (Interview, Helsinki, 2016).

Information's issue represents an alternative platform for communication between the refugees and the Danish newspaper readers. Most of the articles are about the refugee situation or contextual topics such as IS or the role of Russia and Iran in Syria. The stories cover a large spectrum – from politics, discussions in the Danish Parliament, and bureaucratic rules for asylum seekers. There are also feature stories depicting the friendship between a Danish family and a refugee family from Libya, and about how a new language is most easily learned in a workplace. Most of all, the newspaper gives refugees a voice, and many get to share their very diverse stories: from a Somalian couple who were refused asylum but who could not be returned to Somalia;

to 28-year-old Mohammed Anowar from Myanmar, who just wants "a legal job". As a whole, the newspaper presents a varied and complex representation of what refugees and their very different lives may be. The articles present stories and angles that are seldom found elsewhere in the mainstream media, a mainstream that mainly presented negative interpretations of the refugee crisis and "very rarely as a case of political responsibility or long-term visions" (Kryzanowski et al., 2018). This was also the point made by *Information*'s project leader, Charlotte Aagard: "One million refugees came to Europe the autumn of 2015, but our media lacked largely one core perspective: that of the refugees themselves!" (Interview, May 2016).

In the issue of *Information*, voices and perspectives which we not often get to hear are included, such as in an extensive interview with human smugglers Abo Hassan, 28 years old, and Lakman, 30 years old from Syria, and the vendor of plastic boats Murat, aged 50, from Turkey. *Information* opens up for a wide spectrum of migrants and challenges the stereotypical ideas of a migrant as *either* a passive sufferer *or* an aggressive criminal. Also, views which are common misconceptions are challenged. In the editorial entitled "No peace – no prize", written by journalist Zach Khadudu from Kenya, he urges the Norwegian Nobel Committee not to award the Peace Prize for 2015:

> We are living in an extraordinary chaotic time which calls for extraordinary actions. When human suffering is in epic proportion, and children are swept to death by raging waters of the Mediterranean, it cannot be business as usual (…) While it is of course important to recognize that there are many unsung heroes working hard to build peace – and who perhaps deserve a Nobel Peace Prize – in these extraordinarily times the Nobel Peace Prize 2015 should not be awarded. (Khadudu, 2015)

Several of the articles in *Information* have a particular political or analytical perspective aimed at influencing policy-making, such as, for instance, the story "The Kurds are Leaving Kurdistan" and "Three Myths that Define the Refugee Crisis". One of the journalists expressed in an interview:

> Of course, we want to be heard by those in power, by the politicians and form opinion. *Information* was an arena, a possibility to reach

> out, to get heard. Becoming a refugee what I missed most was exactly the privilege of having a platform, a possibility to reach out. (Interview, Copenhagen, November 2016)

Information's publishers Christian Jensen and Mette Davidsen-Nielsen described the refugee journalists as follows:

> Each of them has their own story, their destiny, their professionalism and their dreams for the future. But we hear them so seldom and only sporadically. For the politicians, the refugees are solely a problem to be solved as soon as possible, and most of them prefer to do so without even looking them in the eye – such as Immigration Minister Inger Støjberg who in spite of a ten days warning has not found time to give an interview to the news team.

As the Minister did not reply, the journalists eventually filmed their questions and distributed them on Youtube with the final words: "Inger Støjberg you can still make it. Deadline is 7 pm, Thursday 8 October. We do hope you can find 15 minutes". The fact that the questions were left unanswered somehow gave them additional rhetorical strength.

A number of cultural and professional differences were found in the process of creating the *Information* issue. The project initially wished to leave all writing and editorial work to the refugees, while the process of making the newspaper in all other aspects should run as usual. However, it soon became clear that the members of the group of refugee journalists varied a lot in terms of language skills, professional experience and culture. As a result it became evident they had different approaches to what "good and effective journalism" is. This echoes earlier studies of diverse journalistic cultures, for instance the one by Thomas Hanitzsch (2007). To obtain a final product that was in compliance with *Information*'s general quality requirements, several articles ended up being written in cooperation with Danish journalists. The process was both enriching and challenging for those involved, not least did the different cultures of journalism and practices come to light during the cooperation (Interviews, 2016). For instance, whether a journalist could explicitly take side in a news story was a burning question wherever there were quite diverging views, and hence a topic, which was vigorously debated during the process (Interviews, Copenhagen, 2016).

Information's project manager Charlotte Aalgard described the culture of Danish journalism as one where independent reflection is considered a prerequisite to obtain good results. Thus, there can be collisions with this culture its expectations when journalists new to Denmark possess on one hand a high level of respect for the prevailing institutions of power, and on the other hand express loudly and stridently opinions and feelings. Aagard also explained that she had met a new and somewhat challenging situation where, in guiding these new colleagues, she had to deal with persons not used to having the license to voice their own opinions and disagree with their workplace superiors.

Cultural perspectives were clearly present within the particular Special Issue of *Information.* The article "A Small Story about Arabic Poetry" includes several Arabic poems written by refugees from Syria, and lucidly illustrates how poetry may be a fruitful avenue for expressing issues linked to development and social change by using genres other than those of traditional political journalism. The visual perspective is taken well care of, not least in Swedish photo-journalist Magnus Wennman's powerful series "Where the Children Sleep". In early 2015, Wennman traveled through seven countries in the Middle East end Europe where he met refugee children. He had asked them to show him where they go to sleep at night. Another example is the film review about Jonas Carpignano's film *Mediterranea,* which was launched in June 2015. This illustrates how art and culture may be a very convincing point of entry for presenting a complex reality and working for social change. The story of the feature film is so topical to this issue of *Information* that it could have been taken from its headlines, as it depicts an account of the plight of African fruit-pickers in Southern Italy and their dreams about Europe. The "debate articles" in *Information* provide a refugee/integration perspective, from international politics to close contemplation of Danish culture – as presented from the standpoint of an outsider: "It takes time to get used to dogs on a leash".

In the refugee journalists' issue of *Information,* nine of the fourteen refugee journalists were women, and it is particularly the women who introduce and feature gender perspectives to the articles. The front-page story "When the Men Flee, the Women Pay the Price", describes a situation where 75 per cent of those who flee are men, as in the case of Iraqi Kurdistan. The story discusses what this implies for the women

Information

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Screenshot: *Information*, 9 October 2015. Headline: When the men flee, the women left behind pay the price.

through the voices of women, whose point of view we otherwise seldom hear. The Thai journalist Yechiela Pojanamesbaanstit describes how women from Thailand are often mistaken for prostitutes in Denmark: "Nobody thinks that I am a proud woman". The Syrian journalist Lilas Hatazhet's dialogue with her close friend Sham, who still lives in Damascus, contributes with a touching female perspective on war and flight: "after a journey – as long as a difficult birth – I applied for asylum in Denmark". It is a powerful dialogue of two women who share the feelings of loneliness, difference and loss, although under very different circumstances. Some of the journalists came from traditionally patriarchal and gender divided societies, but also expressed that there were large internal differences in these countries. As one of them stated, it is unfortunately a fact that it is those men who are most open-minded in terms of gender equality who leave, and it is the most conservative men who stay (Interview, 2016).

The *Information* project was limited to a single issue – that of October 9th 2015. After the production of this issue, a couple of the journalists were offered more assignments for the newspaper, but for the majority the project did not lead them to further developments. This was what the journalists found the most negative about the experience:

> There is so much more potential in this network of refugee journalists. We could have made some extraordinary investigative stories if the project was continued. There was so much resource material of people who had contacts in places where a "standard" journalist on assignment would not go. There were people with trusted contacts and access to human smugglers, to refugees in closed camps, to militants, to authorities. These journalists being refugees themselves, and from places of conflict affecting the world's peace today, would unravel some valuable issues by embedding or going undercover and blending in. (Interview, Copenhagen, 2016)

Some of the refugee journalists said that the best part of the process was that they were more conscious about their own norms and values through the cooperation with journalists from other backgrounds (Interviews, Copenhagen and Helsinki 2016). Brigitte Alfter describes the processes, which arise when journalists from different journalism cultures are to cooperate: "The will – and over time – ability to cross cultural borders in thoughts and dialogue is an indispensable tool in cross border journalism". (Alfter, 2015: 125)

Although the *Information* refugee journalists felt included, they expressed in interviews that they did not necessarily see themselves as having taken charge of the project. However, the networking experience that the *Information* case involved for the journalists should not be underestimated. Furthermore, the refugees' stories reached an audience where otherwise many would receive very little firsthand information from refugees. A study made for the Red Cross in 2015 showed that 77 per cent of the Danes have no contact, or hardly any, with refugees and immigrants. There are in today's world of information, more chances than ever to be part of the world, to learn about political and social conflicts elsewhere. However, it seems that most audiences stick to their local media even other opportunities to connect to the world are highly present. Hence the main responsibility for introducing the

world to the audiences still lies to a large extent with the national media institutions. Here newspapers such as *Information* can play a major role, offering their publication as an arena for new journalistic perspectives and provide a stepping stone for refugee journalists wanting to continue in their profession.

Building bridges between new and old Swedes

When he arrived as a refugee in the small town of Landskrona in Sweden in 2014, journalist Ali Abdallah, took the initiative to start his own *News Café*. The idea was to invite Swedes and migrants to the local library to discuss current affairs with a guest such as a local politician or communal worker. The aim is to give refugees or the "New Swedes" as he calls them, insight into Swedish politics and current debates. The discussions were recorded and shared on Youtube to inform both the Swedes and the newcomers about what was happening in the city, in Sweden and out in the world:

> The idea emerged soon after I arrived in 2014 and started reading the Swedish newspapers to learn the language. I found the Swedish media lacked the newcomers' perspective and I found it interesting to engage with newcomers and share their views, rather than simply being talked about. (Al Abdallah, Interview 2016)

Al Abdallah started the *News Café* on his own, but was also dependent on the local authorities to support him with the locale and technical equipment. Al Abdallah included both local citizens and other refugees in his plans from the very start to ensure their active involvement and ownership to the project.

A number of the *News Café* programs present issues that may enlighten and inform both newly arrived refugees about the Swedish system and society, as "ell as sharing knowledge about the background of some of the "New Swedes" to the "Old Swedes". For instance, in September and October 2015, Ali Al Abdallah invited representatives from the local public sphere to discuss and share knowledge about the Swedish health system, local social services and the role of youth in the region. Al Abdallah and some of his migrant guests explained what they were finding new, difficult and interesting in Sweden, compared to their own backgrounds.

Al Abdallah invited guests to the local library in Landskrona and talked with them in front of an audience who were free to participate with questions. The sessions were filmed and then published on Youtube, so as to reach a broader audience of both Swedish citizens and refugees. A lot of people commented on Facebook during and after the programmes, and some of the comments were included in the process of making new programs.

Al Abdallah used his own perspectives as a Syrian journalist, seeing things a bit from outside, but stressed that he has also learned from Swedish journalistic traditions and culture. The Swedish influence is illustrated by how he uses the popular Swedish pop group Abba as the soundtrack accompanying his website.[2]

> Refugees as a minority are very concerned about what's happening in Sweden. And so the initiative came from that need to provide more balanced information to and about newcomers. Another aim is to teach the language, and let newcomers get a glimpse of what appears in the Swedish media, and specifically things that relate to them.
>
> I think unbalanced reporting has resulted in a negative image about newcomers in Sweden. I am trying to change that. My aim is to educate my entire public, wherever they are from. (Al Abdallah, Interview 2016)

The challenge of getting politicians who are critical toward refugees and immigration aboard was also experienced by Ali Al Abdallah in Sweden. Several times, politicians from all parties (particularly the right-wing populist SD) accepted his invitation to the program. Al Abdallah explained that an overall aim with his programs was to promote policy change by making the voice of the refugees more widely heard in Swedish society (Interview, 2016). Al Abdallah found the mediated discussions concerning the role of Swedish companies and the business sector in helping the newcomers to be the perhaps most important contribution to bridging the gap between new and old Swedes.

New angles

Refugee reporters offer new angles to society in general, and migration in particular. This is important as several studies establish a clear relationship between media coverage of migration and to what degree most

people are interested in the topic (IOM 2011). The stories provided by the refugee journalists present alternative perspectives to most stories involving migrants in the mainstream media, which often are cases of crimes or tragedies. A review of academic work on European media coverage of refugees reveals a scholarly consensus arguing that news media presented refugees as a problem or a "crisis" for Europe (Chouliaraki et al., 2017). European media often portray the immigrant in a negative and even "dehumanizing" manner (Esses et al., 2017) and very rarely do we find examples of immigrants or refugees successful inserted in society (Ketabchi, 2013). As most of the serious challenges facing our world today transcend national borders, communication cannot exclusively operate within national or cultural borders. The refugee journalists' contributions often bridge the gap between the local and the global. Their stories may support the process of increasing audiences' media literacy about foreign cultures and of moving in the direction of what Ulf Hannerz (2004) has called a "well-informed cosmopolitan citizenship". The relationship between the media and the real world is never one-to-one, and the more multifaceted and nuanced the stories we receive are, the more realistic our impressions of the world existing outside our own localities.

Several of the journalists interviewed stressed freedom of expression as the largest difference between working in their home country and in Scandinavia: "It was a delight to meet the concept of press freedom and to be able to express all my opinions freely! Not like when I worked in Syria as a journalist where there was no press freedom in the media" (Interview, Copenhagen, 2016).

Although of very different nature and scale, the examples shown here demonstrate that it is very important that different groups of a given society are given the possibility to engage in an ongoing, constitutive conversation where, in spite of different intentions and conflicting positions, individuals have the possibility to take part in thinking about, adapting to, and changing society. Perhaps the most important change to have been generated by the initiatives discussed here is that they challenge the often static and binary opposition of senders and receivers common in reporting on conflict, and they emphasize that to gets one's own story heard is also a part of a broad understanding of freedom of expression. The experiences shown here are examples of

different ways to report the complex phenomenon of migration without reinforcing simple stereotypes. And perhaps the most important dimension is seeing the refugees as rich human resources not as a social or political burden.

In terms of finding one's way back to one's professional identity, the cases here illustrate that it is often a long and cumbersome process, but it may also be highly rewarding both for the individual journalist and the society.

Notes

1. Those who apply for family immigration are usually the spouse or child of someone who lives in Denmark. http://xn--familiesammenfring-t4b.dk/betingelser/?lang=en
2. http://alialabdallah.hemsida24.se/integration-32861745

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21. Seeing the *other*, reflections on the *we*

Globalization and citizenship

Elisabeth Eide

> Flashing for the warriors whose strength is not to fight
> Flashing for the refugees on their unarmed road of flight.
> (Bob Dylan: Chimes of Freedom, 1964)

In the course of my many years of journalism, academic research, and work-related travel, I have devoted considerable time reflecting on my "intersectional self" as a journalist, academic, writer, and as a privileged woman of the "West". One of my major experiences has been learning to see the world from different places, by the "methodology" of changing lenses. Almost two years of residence in Peshawar, Pakistan in the late 1980s, living among Afghan refugees and a diversity of international actors with stakes in the still ongoing Soviet-Afghanistan war, taught me to question the notion of normalcy. Not that this normalcy is a fixed and stable entity, but that "it" is at least a far cry from the taken-for-granted social and material life in the small, modern and rich nation Norway. I also learned that people with very different backgrounds could cherish some of the same music, as when an Afghan who fought the Soviet occupation told me about his infatuation with Bob Dylan, or a British aid worker who loved Persian Sufi musical culture.[1]

This chapter addresses globalization, citizenship and diversity, drawing on research as well as travel experiences. It also includes experiences of war and humiliation, and addresses the refugee situation faced by the world today.

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Being seen by the "other", contrapuntal reading

One of the most revered travelogues published in Norway is "A Mouthful of Ganges" written by the Norwegian poet and novelist Paal Brekke (1962), following extensive travels in India. Brekke met with several people who doubted his ability to understand the Indian "backyard" of the world, as some expressed it, due to his having grown up in a rich, peaceful country. One social worker questioned his notion of "the world as one", as she saw a diversity of worlds and difference everywhere (Brekke, 1962). Through narrating these encounters, he suggested a self-critical examination of the travelling Northerner. This "reflexive" way of travelling, seeing and being seen by others, contributes to what Said (1994) called "contrapuntal reading": defined as

> […] simultaneous awareness both of the metropolitan history that is narrated and of those other histories against which (and together with which) the dominant discourse acts. [...] In the same way, I believe, we can read and interpret English novels, for example, whose engagement (usually suppressed for the most part) with the West Indies or India, say, is shaped and perhaps even determined by the specific history of colonization, resistance, and finally native nationalism. At this point alternative or new narratives emerge, and they become institutionalised or discursively stable entities. (Said, 1994: 59–60)

Said takes on Jane Austen's "Mansfield Park" as one example, where it is tacitly and uncritically understood that one family has earned its riches through plantations in Antigua (Said, 1994: 100 ff). This long tradition in literature, both fiction and non-fiction, in historical accounts, science and travel writing, has been challenged by oppositional readings and writings, such as the work of The Subaltern Studies Group (Ashcroft et al., 1998; Spivak, 1988) – scholars in India who try to (re)write history from the perspective of the colonial subjects – or scholars and writers who oppose the traditional narratives on "Africa" (Achebe, 1995; Orgeret & Tayyebwa, 2016; Schipper, 1999). These and many others have contributed to an important, diversified post-colonial tradition in academia, as well as suggestions for "decolonizing of the mind" (Nandy, 1990; wa Thiong'o, 1986), as a source of liberating the intellects of former colonial subjects, as well as those of the former rulers.

Othering through history

Colonialism, from the perspective of the colonizers, involved extreme methods of *othering* and excluding persons unlike themselves. *Othering* has been defined as a process by which the empire can define itself against those it colonizes, excludes and marginalizes (Ashcroft et al., 1998); and indeed, it involves the process of defining an enemy, be it by racialization or other exclusionary practices. Othering is a way of defining a positive identity for the self, leaving little space for self-reflexing.

We are still – all over the world – deeply immersed in a world of *othering*, whether it is the spontaneous *I-am-different-from-her* self-definition, or more politically tainted discourses marginalizing other beings or groups, based on gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, disability or related characteristics. The European history of discrimination and isolation of such categories of people as the lepers and the "insane" (Foucault, 1999 [1973]), not least facilitated by clerical authorities are illustrative cases. So are the century-long pogroms against Jews in Europe. More recent, but much ignored in the history of the pre-war Western world, is the deeply shameful experiences of the Evian Conference in 1938, where nations of the world discussed "the Jewish question" and most countries refused to accept Jewish refugees from Austria and Germany.[2] This refusal left most of them – together with other "deviants" – facing the dreadful fate of extermination under the Nazis.[3] This may partly be explained by European leaders regarding Jews not as fellow citizens in need of protection, but first and foremost as *Jews*, *others* (Sartre, 1963). The lack of recognition opened the way for exclusion and extermination on a massive scale. While not a parallel to today's refugee/migrant situation, the rhetoric of state leaders, concentrating on state interests and refugees as disturbing the national equilibrium, still share some of the same features.

The transnational

Transnational processes and mobilizations are of course nothing new arriving with modern media technology. Many conflicts and burning issues have been and are far from national. In the late 1970s, the man later to become Iran's leader through gaining the upper hand/hijacking the Iranian revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini, recorded his speeches on

cassettes, later to be smuggled into Iran and broadcasted from many mosques there (Sreberny & Mohammadi, 1995). For decades, migrants and refugees have found ways to send remittances to their families "back home" (Tharmalingam, 2011), and these remittances globally by far exceed the total amount of development aid allocated for the "Global South" (Daramy, 2016).

Technological progress has of course facilitated transnational processes, both in organizational (finance, migration) and political ways (political alliances, insurgent networks, the "war on terror"). Not least has modern technology been of great importance to global surveillance, and thus to be used as facilitating obstacles to transnational migration (Eide & Kunelius, 2018; Eide & Lånkan, 2016; Greenwald, 2014; Harding, 2014; Thorsen, 2016). The Snowden revelations became a global story helped by journalists who did not see it as their duty to be loyal to the interstate surveillance regimes; such journalists were aware that interstate surveillance tends to contribute to the undermining of peoples' democratic control over prevailing power structures.

Travelling images

Still internet does enhance the flow of ideas and cultural items/products, and not least, ways in which media expressions travel ultra-fast across borders. A pertinent example is the event of a rather insulting cartoon of the Prophet Mohammed (no doubt inspired by the cartoon crisis emerging in 2005–2006), which travelled via MMS in 2008 from an internal regional newspaper to a *madrasa* educating Taliban/suicide bombers in the tribal areas (FATA)[4] between Afghanistan and Pakistan. A Norwegian reporter was there to investigate the recruitment to Taliban. As the MMS was shared between the students, they immediately began to threaten the reporter. He found himself in danger, not only because the people in this area suffer much from the ongoing war in Afghanistan and are deeply religious, but also due to the low (media) literacy rate (Eide, 2009). Images travel; discourses do not always travel with them, and contexts vary substantially – something strikingly clear in transnational studies of the cartoon crisis (Eide et al., 2008; Hahn, 2008). One expression, once it has been dislocated from its original context, and transported to a very different community of interpretation will stir reactions often amazingly different, and sometimes even

fraught with violence, from those in its country of origin. The long lasting "cartoon controversy"[5] demonstrates to what extent this holds true: A situation where images intended for local or national debate, by way of an increasingly diversified citizenry (more individuals than before with "double belongings"/allegiances), may still end up quite far away. As Sreberny iterates, in a globalized world with "numerous cultural environments, it is frankly impossible to expect there to be shared meaning about them" (Sreberny, 2016: 3487).

More recent events such as the assassination in January 2015 of twelve cartoonists/journalists at *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris allegedly in connection with their critique of Islam (although they have also critiqued other religions), has contributed to increased tension and polarization in European societies, reviving narratives such as the "clash of civilizations" (Huntington, 1996). Others would suggest a "clash of extremisms", as when Muslim extremists trigger responses from extreme right wing anti-Muslims (Berger, 2017). Apart from the special challenge of treating extremists, steadily inspiring new debates on freedom of expression and "no platforming", many conflicts also demonstrate the need for transnational dialogues as a way of coming to terms with living together in a world made less spacious by travel and migration. These travels may enhance productive and inventive diversities, and freedom of expression seems to be the best way to guarantee minority rights.

Digital media connect people. Optimists speak of the rise of a participatory culture, of dialogue and the opening for individuals broadcasting or documenting events. This is particularly relevant in a war situation, as shown in Syria, where mainstream journalists did not travel to many of the worst affected areas (Al-Ghazzi, 2014).[6] Digital media may be powerful ways of mobilization against oppression, as demonstrated in 2011 Tunisia (Breuer et al., 2015). Moreover, the modern cell phone has become both a strong navigator and connector, and a threat (regarding often-invasive surveillance) for refugees. Pessimists emphasize how digital media contribute to the fragmenting of public spheres, enable spaces where hateful speech and threats thrive, with consequences for vulnerable people, among them ethnic and sexual minorities as well as refugees, and contribute to the harassment of women in a particularly sexualized way (Landsverk, 2015). Research

on benefits and disadvantages is bound to continue as a larger part of the world's population connect to the internet.

… on their unarmed road of flight

The world's number of refugees has reached a preliminary peak (IOM, 2018) with almost 69 million people who are either living outside their country or are internally displaced (IDPs), (CBS news, 2018). This number is expected to rise, in spite of Europe and other developed nations opening border control posts on continents other than their own. Illustrating this phenomenon are the measures taken in Agadez, Niger, to block trans-Sahara flight by imprisoning smugglers and returning refugees and migrants back to their home countries (Documentary, NRK 09.01.2018), or European treaties with authorities in Libya and Turkey. This is all facilitated with the strong support from EU, by way of both funds and police/military trainers. Bøås (2017) writes of a hierarchy between refugees, the *visible* and the *invisible* ones, the latter being the ones who do not reach Europe and thus are not included in the European notion *refugee crisis*. He mentions that there are 2.6 million refugees around Lake Tchad, this situation having long been overshadowed by the war in Syria.

Low or middle-income countries are hosts to 86 per cent of all refugees, and IDPs represent a large proportion of this number (IOM, 2018). Thus, countries poorer than those traditionally thought to represent the "Global North", are shouldering the overwhelming weight of responsibility for people fleeing. In the Global North, walls are erected (as between the U.S. and Mexico) and measures taken against further "influx", while political parties critical or hostile to refugees/migrants have increased their support bases. The treatment of new-arrivals may also trigger this increase, since deteriorating conditions signal differing life standards and human values. In many cases, refugees/migrants are "'warehoused' in detention centers" (Eriksen, 2016: 79) and remain "superfluous, unnecessary and inert, they are neither efficient consumers nor producers and can therefore be dispensed with" (ibid.). This rather cynical remark is written referring to the way in which "neoliberal ideology has become an integral part of the contemporary migration regimes" (Eriksen, 2016: 77). A corollary of this situation is that refugees' options to establish early connection to the labour

market in the country of arrival are relatively few. Statistics for Norway show that a little less than half the refugee population (persons aged 15–66) are working, while for the population at large, the percentage is 71 (Olsen, 2018).

Technological gains have made it easier for refugees to be "updated momentarily and continuously about migration routes, job opportunities and the whereabouts of their relatives or contact persons in Europe" (Eide, 2019; Eriksen, 2016: 123,). In some cases, "contact persons" may be a euphemism for human traffickers or smugglers, who, on one hand represent a necessity for people in need of transgressing borders, and on the other a brutal and cynical exploitation of vulnerable refugees and migrants, by making their travels expensive, risky and in many cases even fatal. In 2017, 3,129 persons died while attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea, while in 2018 the number was 2,160.[7]

"Overheating"

According to Eriksen (2016), we live in an overheated world. The process of global warming demonstrates a total planetary interconnectedness, made increasingly clear by scientific reports as well as citizens' actions, represented in the press to a varying extent (Eide et al., 2012; IPCC, 2018). Climate change invites us to realize that what we do/consume (including travel) in one part of the world, may have fateful consequences for people living in vulnerable regions. More directly, the "large-scale movements of rubbish from rich to poor countries have become common practice" (Eriksen, 2016: 109). Another contributing reality is population growth and the ensuing growth in energy use. The paradox is that the "most dramatic forms of overheating are in this respect produced by a few people who cannot bear to 'feel the heat'" (Eriksen, 2016: 102). This paradox is emphasized by COP[8] negotiations, where the poor nations continuously remind the rich nations of their historic responsibility and their obligation to be in the forefront of mitigation while also funding climate adaptation in the most vulnerable nations.

Global warming in vulnerable regions (such as the Sahel and South Asia) may also create new large numbers of 'climate refugees'. So far, the UN does not recognize these as actual refugees (Midtflo, 2014). A fundamental dilemma is the politically predicted economic growth, which

will not easily enable the drastic measures recommended by the COP 21 (2015) Paris accord, a scenario, confirmed at COP 24 in Katowice.[9] The fact that other concerns, such as ongoing wars and conflicts, seem to relegate climate to the background, will also make it harder to have climate mitigation steadily on top of the agenda. Suggested intersections between climate change and war, weapons production, and violent conflict are disputed (Selby et al., 2017). More emphasis seems to be put on the ways in which climate change may generate violent conflict, than how violent conflict and war in itself may contribute to climate change, through emissions for example, when oil fields are set on fire, or when warriors deplete or neglect forest resources in a war situation, such as in Afghanistan.

The "T" factor

Another symptom connected to "overheating" is transnational extremism and terrorism. While local issues drive some cases of insurgency, others are transnationally organized or interconnected, and groups inspire each other, even if rivalries frequently occur. Terrorism is in the context of this book much associated with Islamist extremism, with the exception of the 2011 terror in Norway, instigated by a right-wing extremist (See Chapter 14 in this volume).

Researchers discuss the extent to which the "terrorist" label is justified. There are numerous definitions of the word: from the old dichotomy, that one person's freedom fighter is another person's terrorist to an identification of 109 separate definitions made in more recent research (Freedman & Thussu, 2012: 7). Some of these involve the creation of fear through violent acts; others also include definitions of both subjects and objects. Then there is the discussion of whether the "targets" (objects) are legitimate (other warriors) or not (civilians). Some researchers adhere to the term "state terrorism" (Galtung, 2002).

Even so, a multi-causal approach to insurgency (the opposite of media simplification) pinpointing the local anchoring and social functions of certain groups, is still needed in journalism. Root causes of terrorism may be war/invasion and/or armed conflict, combined with poverty and lack of opportunity leading to recruitment; extremist religious streams; social humiliation/lack of recognition, and state neglect of citizens' needs. Some insurgents, claiming to represent "true

Islam", may hold large numbers of people hostage by threatening those who do not subscribe to their version of religion and labelling them as 'un-Islamic, as during the siege of Islamabad, Pakistan, in November 2017.[10] Social media recruitment to extremist groups has become an increasing challenge, in both Norway and elsewhere (see Chapter 4 in this volume).

The other – besieged and humiliated

Debates among international scholars on the consequences of the U.S. invasion in Iraq in 2003 are still ongoing, and much history is still unwritten. Some claim that this invasion is an important part of the explanation for the growth of extremism in the Middle Eastern region; others still legitimize the 2003 invasion by referring to Saddam Hussain's brutal dictatorship. Legacy media largely went along with the politicians insisting on Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Media turning points occurred when it became clear – through the media – that Iraq did not possess such weapons, and not least when Seymour Hersch revealed the Abu Ghraib photos of torture and humiliation of Iraqi prisoners in the New Yorker (2004).

Some of the images of humiliating torture scenes were explicitly gendered. One male prisoner is photographed having his head covered by female underwear; other images showed women soldiers/officers mocking nude, male prisoners, for example by treating them as dogs, estimated to be particularly humiliating in a Muslim culture.

A meta-narrative appeared with a photo showed a wife and a son studying an image from Abu Ghraib of their spouse/father under torture. This may serve as an example of how the "subaltern other" by way of a reporter may get access to parts of their own story. This move, and an award-winning photo from Marc Bojou (2003) showing a black-hooded prisoner trying to comfort his son behind barbed wire, demonstrates human compassion and resilience in the midst of the horrors of war.

Gayatri Spivak writes that "unless we are trained into imagining the other" no lasting peace will be achieved (Sanders & Spivak, 2006: 97). This training, as is one of the aims of this volume, is far from present among the soldiers who "do the war" on the ground. We may also question the contribution of journalism in this respect, as history

shows (Knightley, 1975) professional loyalty to national warring parties remains a strong tradition.

Censorship and the need for *translation*

The Abu Ghraib pictures are far from professional. They originate from "primitive" versions taken with cell phones. However, the revelations, which came to travel globally, would not have been the same without these devices. Cell phone technology has become more and more central to people's lives in late modernity. Images travel more than ever before. Travelling is also about language barriers. Some may appear as amusing, as when a signboard observed in a restaurant in Seville, Spain told visitors, "We do not speak English, but accept your broken Spanish"; to remind travelers that English is not to be taken for granted and of the alternative option being to learn some of the language spoken in the countries they visit. At times, refugees on their way to Europe have to rely on Google Translator to find a safe route. In war situations, language deficiencies may be fatal. Iraqi journalist Burhan Fasa'a tells of the siege and the fall of Falluja (2004), that the U.S. troops were frustrated with Iraqis who did not speak English:

> Americans did not have interpreters with them, so they entered the houses and killed people because they didn't speak English. They entered the house where I was with 26 people, and shot people because [the people] did not obey [the soldiers'] orders, even just because the people couldn't understand a word of English. (quoted in Phillips, 2005: 42)

This and other critical stories from Fallujah were among those which did *not* travel far, as they failed to make it into the mainstream press. In spite of the then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour and other prominent executives expressing concern for the civilians caught up in the fight over Fallujah, the American media seemingly "contributed to the subversion of truth in Fallujah". Journalists were in many cases prevented from entering the city, but "corporate media showed little concern regarding their denied access" (Phillips, 2005: 43), and thus most of the published reporting came from journalists embedded with the U.S. troops. This is just one of many examples of reportage texts being subject to a "travel ban", but also underlines

the importance of language as a crucial means of communication in situations of life and death.

The journalistic field – enlarged and belittled

The challenges faced by journalism and media are many. As the public spheres addressed by traditional (legacy) media remain largely national or local, the issues mentioned above and indeed other related ones are increasingly global, and demand knowledge of wider historical, social and political contexts and processes. As Jenny Erpenbeck writes,

> To investigate how one makes the transition from a full, readily comprehensible existence to the life of a refugee, which is open in all directions – drafty, as it were – he has to know what was at the beginning, what was in the middle, and what is now. (Erpenbeck, 2017: 39)

The main character in this novel, a retired professor, has the opportunity to indulge in studies of these three aspects. Journalists in a hard-pressed industry have lesser opportunities. Legacy media in many parts of the world face a dwindling audience while the digital multinationals (Amazon, Facebook, Google, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) help generate new ways of news generation, commercially tailored to individual news consumption. Simultaneously they have to face the "chronic tension between the universalizing forces of global modernity and the desire for autonomy in the local community or society" (Eriksen, 2016: 7).

The interplay between social and traditional media is substantial. Social media – in terms of quantitative reach but with no truth claims or guidelines – may penetrate traditional media and change their priorities. The processes are reciprocal: social media actors "graze" on traditional media, while traditional media increasingly use social media to enhance their product and outreach. Besides, powerful rulers try to marginalize traditional media in favour of social media such as Twitter. U.S. president Trump is but one example, Pakistan's ousted PM Nawaz Sharif harvested complaints from journalists since he would issue his statements through social media and stop arranging press conferences. Such attitudes from political leaders, combined with shrinking editorial staff in traditional media (online or offline) diminish journalistic opportunities for dialogue, for deliberation and for fact checking.

Moreover, political polarization combined with large-scale digital access have in many cases encouraged "echo chamber" activities; people seek websites that confirm and/or reinforce their convictions. This is far from new, since organizations, clubs and societies have, to some extent, for decades and centuries functioned in the same way, with their smaller, limited spheres (Gripsrud, 2017), or indeed "sphericules" (Gitlin, 2002: 168). On the other hand, those societies did not substitute/background traditional media to the extent they tend to do now, also in terms of time-consuming activities. Among young people, the most likeable news consumption will be accessing news through Facebook or related platforms, whose commercially driven algorithms substitute the *redactional* functions of traditional media (Eide & Kunelius, 2018). Whistleblower Edward Snowden, through his careful co-operation with journalists Greenwald and Poitras emphasized the need for journalism's *redactional skills* to secure that the information revealed did not put any individuals in danger (Kunelius et al., 2017).

Transnational Literacy

The digital seems to be at the core of discussions of both media development and education. However, while the digital revolution allows more people than ever access to news and stories from different corners of the planet, this does in no way automatically entail more transnational literacy. (Sanders & Spivak, 2006)

> However unrealistic it may seem to you, I would not remain a teacher of the Humanities if I did not believe that at the New York end – standing metonymically for the dispensing end as such – the teacher can try to rearrange desires noncoercively […] through an attempt to develop in the student a habit of literary reading, even just "reading", suspending oneself into the text of the other – for which the first condition and effect is a suspension of the conviction that I am necessarily better, I am necessarily indispensable, I am necessarily the one to right wrongs, I am necessarily the end product for which history happened, and that New York is necessarily the capital of the world. (Spivak, 2004, in Sanders & Spivak, 2006: 26)

Spivak rhetorically questions both Western academic supremacy as an individual "feeling", as well as an institutionalized one ("the one to

right wrongs"). She strongly combines – or indeed associates – literary reading with ethics and responsibility, in an attempt to conceptually and ontologically "de-center" the world. If we substitute the literary reading for "reading the world" and understanding our "distant Others", we may imagine another challenge for journalism and its ethical standards *standing beside* the digital revolution, but *enhanced* by it. This is one of the ways in which Gayatri Spivak, born and raised in Kolkata (Calcutta), and appreciated at institutions of higher learning in many countries, tries to reason with her own status as an academic celebrity and leading intellectual.

For journalists and journalism researchers, one of the ways in which to adapt Spivak's recommendations and her perspective is *working together*, across borders (made more difficult to cross by visa regulations) and across professional divides between journalists and academics, and indeed between the "representing intellectuals" and the marginalized. Spivak has herself crossed borders when travelling to Adivasi (indigenous) areas in India, and promoting "indigenous" literature (Devi, 1995).[11] In her preface to Mahasweta Devi's book *Imaginary Maps*, Spivak writes that "ethical singularity" (Spivak, 1995: xxv) is a way of engaging profoundly with a person so that responses come from both sides, thus enhancing responsibility and accountability. The latter are key words in journalism ethics. This ethical singularity, Spivak writes, cannot be likened to the "exchange of radicals and the oppressed in times of crisis" or the "anthropologists claimed intimacy with their informants" (ibid.). Furthermore, she suggests that this "encounter can only happen when the respondents inhabit something like normality", but that the full achievement of such an ethics is *impossible, but worth aiming for* (ibid. e.a.).

What do experiences of normality entail? My own experiences indicate that normality occurs more easily when *sharing meals*. In many countries, though, security regulations prevent both diplomats, NGO representatives and military personnel from doing so, with dire consequences.[12] In journalism, spending time, not parachuting (sadly one of the endeavors of modern-day foreign reporting) in and out of a country during heated conflicts, also helps to gain a deeper understanding and a degree of transnational literacy.

Simultaneously the realization of being a privileged traveler remains an important and necessary point of reflection for journalists and

academics. As Kwame Appiah writes; we "may be able to learn about values from societies where science is less deeply implanted than in ours: if scientific method has not advanced our understanding of values, then its superiority offers no reason to suppose that our understanding of values is superior" (Appiah, 2006: 43, see also Nandy, 1990; Shiva, 1988). In some cases, the (spontaneous, unconscious perhaps) sense of superiority may be seen as a continuum of colonialist attitudes, as when former empires such as France consider it their task to interfere with migration regulation from/through the Sahel (see above), deploying military forces commanding/training local soldiers and police.

At home

Processes of developing transnational literacy may begin "at home". Research has demonstrated that Norwegian citizens who live in areas where they are in contact with migrants/refugees and their offspring, are less skeptical towards "foreigners" than those who live in areas with few or no "foreigners" (Steinkellner, 2018). In recent years, Europe has experienced an increased influx of refugees from the Middle East and parts of Africa. Parallel to this (but not necessarily solely triggered by it) we witness an increased polarization in ongoing debates directly or indirectly defining what the nation should be and who may belong to it. On one hand, there are varieties of parties and groups hostile or critical to migration, as well as a rise of neo-Nazi movements, particularly in Eastern Europe, but also to an extent in the Nordic countries. On the other, there are initiatives such as "Refugees welcome", with a plethora of groups across the country – and then all the in-betweens.[13] As part of this polarization, accusations such as betrayal of the nation and opting for a Muslim/foreign majority are both repeated, and challenged.

Beyond these discussions, there are deeper conflicts as to how one defines a nation, belonging and nationhood. A nation's ethics ought to be judged according to how that nation or country treats its minorities, but we easily realize that many nation states fail to adhere to this standard. Religious and ethnic minorities are persecuted, even killed in large numbers, in countries such as Afghanistan, Egypt, Myanmar and Pakistan. The number of Christians is diminishing all over the Middle East (Fossum, 2007). Moreover, in Europe, groups hostile to (Muslim) immigrants or refugees have attacked and killed people of

minority background. In Germany and Sweden, arsonists have set fire to asylum centers. At the level of political-ideological debate, discussions occur as to what it takes to be seen as a *citizen*, as belonging to the nation. Is it enough to obtain formal citizenship? Does one have to be born in the country to qualify? Will differences in exterior factors such as dress (hijab, turban), religious belief or even, in subsequent generations will skin colour relegate groups of people to the margins as still "not-Norwegian", "not-French", or not-Indonesian?

The debate was raised in Norway after a commission (Brochmann II) assigned to predict the consequences of high-level migration to the country, presented its report and revealed differing positions towards the question of belonging (Eide, 2018). National Statistics Norway (SSB) defines the "immigrant population" as people born in other countries, and includes those born in Norway, but whose two parents were born abroad. Some critics argue that this definition is too wide since it includes persons born in Norway, while others, by employing notions such as 3rd and 4th generation, seem to want it even wider.[14]

The debate may be analyzed as one of defining demarcation through emphasizing difference; ultimately, again, a question of *othering*. Journalist conventions imply dwelling by the poles in a polarized reality or debate, but also by contributing to polarization by, for example, focusing more on differences than similarities (Eide, 2011). In the debate on Brochmann II, quite a few voices belonged to young women, born and raised in Norway, who asked whether even their grandchildren would be considered to be *foreigners*. Throughout, they promoted a larger *we* in their ideas of Norwegian-ness, while simultaneously supporting a dynamic definition of the nation. This also represents a new step from the previously articulated *hybrid* or *hyphenated* identities such as "Norwegian-Pakistani" or "French-Lebanese" (Maalouf, 2000), which are still widespread. Young Norwegians with migrant backgrounds increasingly seem to adhere to a *discourse of defiance,* challenging many parents' honor culture on one hand, and simultaneously defying aggressive claims that they should denounce their heritage and culture to qualify for inclusion. One powerful example of such youthful contradictions, are the "Shameless girls" (Bile et al., 2017), who assert themselves by taking for themselves an "in-between position" (Eide & Røsok-Dahl, 2019).

The *we* seems to be a fluctuating entity in today's world. Media coverage of climate change, or global warming, at times suggests a global *we,* recognizing that there are certain crises that few of us can totally escape, even if the burdens are still unequally distributed. More limited *we's* may occur as media accordions, playing both wide and narrow, mixing tunes both of harmony and dissonance.

Coexistence, war and peace

I stayed in Paris for a month visiting a university, just six weeks after the assassinations in Paris in 2015 at Charlie Hebdo and at a Jewish shopping center; I lived not far away from the Centre des Études Arabes (Center of Arabic Studies). To mark their view regarding the terrorist attacks, this center used the symbols of the three monotheistic and related religions (Christianity, Islam and Judaism) to shape the word *Coexist* outside their main entrance.

Paris, 2015. Photo: Elisabeth Eide.

Such simple communication in times marked by crisis and antagonism opposes the "clash of civilizations" doctrine otherwise rather popular in present-day Europe. We may also consider this as stating that living together does not necessarily entail accepting all the ideas and practices

of the *other*, but as a recognition of the need for some degree of coexistence. As Chantal Mouffe writes, "when democratic confrontation disappears, the political in its antagonistic dimension manifests itself through other channels" (Mouffe, 2009: 114). She addresses "the growth of other types of collective identities around religious, nationalist or ethnic forms of identification", which emphasizes the need for democratic confrontation; it is "preferable to give them a political outlet within an 'agonistic' pluralistic democratic system" (ibid.). Agonistic pluralism entails both recognition of conflict and differences.

> Politics aims at the creation of unity in a context of conflict and diversity, it is always concerned with the creation of an "us" by the determination of a "them". The novelty of democratic politics is not the overcoming of this us/them opposition – which is an impossibility – but the different ways in which it is established. The crucial issue is to establish this us/them discrimination in a way that is compatible with pluralist democracy. (Mouffe, 2000: 25)

Paul Gilroy's concept of *conviviality* connects to Mouffe's *agonism,* as it speaks to "how everyday multicultural practices rest on a radical and complex ability to be at ease in the presence of diversity but without restaging communitarian conceptions of the selfsame ethnic and racial difference" (Vallovan, 2016: 204). Gilroy himself emphasizes Britain's "long experience of convivial post-colonial interaction and civic life has, largely undetected by government," which has "provided resources for a functioning, even vibrant multiculture; although we do not always value, use wisely or celebrate it as we should" (Gilroy 2004, see also Gilroy, 2001).[15]

The utmost feature of antagonism is war, through which recognition of the *other* comes to a standstill and is replaced by military hostility, accompanied by simplistic and brutal enemy images, and by euphemisms such as "take out" instead of killing. National media feel the pressures of loyalty, and in many cases, they obey (Nohrstedt & Ottosen 2005, 2014)

In 1962, Bob Dylan wrote "John Brown", a ballad of mother and son. Mother praises her son who at a very early stage decided to enlist for the U.S. in Vietnam, to take part in "a good old-fashioned war". Mother follows son to the railway station and predicts his successes and medals.

For a while, she receives letters regularly, but then John Brown stops writing to his mother. Half a year later, she receives a message that he is on his way home. When the train halts, he is the last one to leave, needing assistance by others to descend. His hands are gone, and his face is marked with injuries. At first, mother does not recognize him, but then tries to make him explain what had happened. He has a hard time responding, and while she turns away in disgust, he shares with her some of the lessons learned: "I thought when I was there: what am I doing here? […] But the thing that scared me most, when the enemy came close, I saw that his face looked just like mine." (Dylan, 1962). This spirit was also featured during Christmas in 1914, as British, French and German soldiers came out from their respective trenches in Flanders to exchange food and music for a short while (Carion, 2008).

Such a recognition of the *enemy* as one being close to oneself, happened in some cities in Afghanistan in June 2018, as there was a ceasefire during the celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr. In Kabul and other cities, unarmed Taliban soldiers with their traditional headgear, joined celebration with the local population. Eyewitnesses report on embraces between supposed enemies, many taking selfies to document this extraordinary moment (Culbertson, 2018).

It did not last, though. However, it provides a hint of how realities might develop, if the *other* is something else and more than the name of the enemy.

Notes

1. This way of thinking about normalcy and the world was later reinforced by a one-year sojourn in India in the early 1990s, and half a year in Pakistan (Lahore), again in 2006.
2. The Evian conference was held in Evian, France in the first half of July 1938, and the main topic was the 'stream' of Jewish refugees from Austria and Germany. Only a few countries were willing to accept refugees unconditionally.
3. Norway refused a large group of Roma people from re-entering the country in the late 1930s. This led to many of them perishing in the concentration camps.
4. FATA = Federally Administered Tribal Areas, they are administered directly from Islamabad, the capital.
5. The controversy started in 2005 with the publication of 12 cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten, and harvested global protests after the news was spread among others by imams residing in Denmark (Eide et al. 2008).
6. This article presents a critical assessment of using the term "citizen journalism" for many different digital media usages during the war in Syria.
7. https://missingmigrants.iom.int/region/mediterranean [Accessed 2018, December 12]

8. COP = conference of parties, parties are in this context governments.
9. http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php [Accessed 2018, January 10]
10. An organization called Tehreek-e-Labaik held a siege around the capital Islamabad with a couple of thousand men, as a part of their protest against a new suggestion for parliamentarian oath. Later, the same organization was allowed to stand for national and regional elections (summer 2018).
11. Bengali writer Mahasweti Devi published three stories titled «Imaginary Maps», which were translated by Spivak, who also wrote a preface and the afterword to the volume. The book is dedicated to "all the indigenous people of the world"
12. Author's experiences from Afghanistan represent one example.
13. The current main Norwegian opposition party has raised a critique of the tough migration policy of the government, and their formula: "strict, but humane" policy has been critiqued both by left and right-leaning politicians.
14. In 2017, there were 1,013 persons with four foreign-born grandparents and two Norwegian-born parents, most of whom were below 18 years of age.
15. Gilroy prefers to say "multiculture rather than multiculturalism, for there is in fact, in the UK, no such active ideology."

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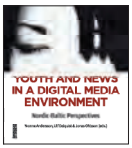

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TRANSNATIONAL OTHERING • GLOBAL DIVERSITIES

This anthology addresses complex, interconnected issues, such as the rise of extremism and terrorism, diversity and minority rights, as well as the situation for freedom of expression in eight different countries, most of them with a Muslim majority population. Extremists recruit terrorists through social media, and target minorities as well as freedom loving people by utilizing their freedom of expression to threaten the rights of others. This happens not least in countries with a long experience of dictatorship. Journalists face huge challenges when reporting on these issues. The contributors are both academics and journalists, conveying their experiences from transnational research co-operation as well as reporting from the ground in conflict areas. Thus, this volume addresses itself to journalism students as well as professional journalists and others who need to navigate in a world in which both extremists and authoritarian states may stifle gender and minority rights, as well as the right to report and express oneself freely.

Elisabeth Eide, (Dr. Art.) is professor of journalism studies at Oslo Metropolitan University, and has worked at Oslo and Bergen Universities, as well as Punjab University and Université Panthéon-Assas, Paris. She has worked as an academic, writer and journalist, and published a large number of books and research articles on conflict journalism; climate journalism; gender and journalism; journalism and diversity and has received several awards for her work. She has worked and travelled much in South Asia and the Middle East.

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ISBN 978-91-88855-18-3