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Journalism Review

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THE NZ MOSQUE MASSACRE

Dilemmas for journalism and democracy

SPECIAL REPORT: 'Three strikes' New Caledonian independence referendum, Fiji general election and social media

EDITED BY DAVID ROBIE AND PHILIP CASS

- ✦ The dichotomy of China Global Television Network's news coverage
- ✦ Environmental justice in Bangladesh
- ✦ Iwi radio in the era of convergence
- ✦ Green Climate Fund and the Pacific post-2020
- ✦ Malaysia's Anti-Fake News Act
- ✦ Communication and Latin American migrant women in NZ
- ✦ Rohingya statelessness and *The Daily Star*

PHOTO ESSAY: TONGAN GANGSTERS IN PARADISE – Todd Henry

DOUBLE EDITION



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EDITORIAL: Terrorism and democracy

THIS edition of *Pacific Journalism Review* is a special issue on several fronts in this our 25th year. First, it is a double issue—the first in our history. Second, it began production as an ‘unthemed’ issue, partly to catch up with a backlog of accepted peer-reviewed papers that had missed recent themed editions. However, the tragic mosque massacre in the New Zealand city of Christchurch in March, and recent ballot box expressions over political futures and independence meant a group of papers emerged with a ‘terrorism and democracy’ theme.

New Zealand will be learning to live with its ‘loss of innocence’, as *Me-diawatch* presenter Colin Peacock describes it, for the months ahead after the shock of a gunman launching his obscene act of livestreamed terrorism with a bloody assault on two mosques in Christchurch during Friday prayers on 15 March 2019 designed to go viral on global social media. Fifty people were killed that day, with another dying from his wounds several weeks later, unleashing an extraordinary and emotional wave of #TheyAreUs solidarity across the country. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, providing inspired and compassionate leadership to a traumatised nation, declared at the Hagley Park national memorial service two weeks after the atrocity:

As-salaam Alaikum. Peace be upon you.

They were words spoken by a community who, in the face of hate and violence, had every right to express anger but instead opened their doors for all of us to grieve with them. And so we say to those who have lost the most, we may not have always had the words.

We may have left flowers, performed the haka, sung songs or simply embraced. But even when we had no words, we still heard yours, and they have left us humbled and they have left us united. (Ardern, 2019).

The Christchurch outrage carried out by an Australian white supremacist who shall remain nameless in this editorial, following the precedent set by Ardern who refused to grant his name the notoriety he craved, has set many challenges to the journalism profession in a country that has had scant experience of terrorism. In the aftermath, the news media as well as the country at large have had to grapple with ongoing issues of discrimination and casual racism, as well as the forthcoming trial of the accused terrorist, the first person who will be tried under New Zealand’s *Suppression of Terrorism Act 2002*.

New Zealand news media organisations have agreed to a protocol for covering the trial of the accused gunman (see p. 28) in what *New York Times* columnist Kevin Roose branded the world’s first ‘internet-native mass shooting’ (Shafer, 2019). This includes restricting coverage of statements that ‘actively champion

white supremacist or terrorist ideology’, and the details of a manifesto of hate circulated to media and the Prime Minister’s Office moments before the attack began. The protocol, signed by senior editors representing *Stuff* (formerly Fairfax), Television New Zealand, Mediaworks, New Zealand Media and Entertainment (*The New Zealand Herald* group) and Radio New Zealand, has not been without controversy. Media Freedom Committee chair Miriyana Alexander, who is also *The New Zealand Herald’s* premium content chair, has said that within that framework, each newsroom would decide what would be appropriate.

While all New Zealand media have named the accused gunman in their coverage, *Stuff* editorial director Mark Stevens says there has been some re-consideration of this approach. At the very least, some news organisations have scaled back use of his name. However, although many commentators view the protocol and coordinated policy around coverage as a considered and responsible approach to the atrocity and maintaining the principles of ‘open justice’, there has also been some criticism, especially internationally.

A Canadian doctoral researcher studying media coverage of terrorist attacks criticised what he described as ‘hypocritical’ coverage in Western media. Writing in *The Conversation*, Houssein Ben Lazreg (2019), argued that while the ‘carnage’ had been condemned extensively across geographical borders, ‘some reporting in England and Canada has been troubling’. Among examples he gave in an analysis of newspaper coverage, the London *Daily Mirror* was cited for its reporting of an ‘angelic boy who former associates revealed was a likeable and dedicated personal trainer running free athletic programmes for kids’.

Just a week after the massacre, New Zealand announced that it would ban military-style semi-automatics and assault rifles and followed this up with the enacted new law just 26 days after the shooting. Along with French President Emmanuel Macron, Prime Minister Ardern has also led the so-called ‘Church Call’ initiative for tougher measures against social media corporations that have been blamed for the proliferation of the 17-minute mosque livestreamed video and other ‘weaponised’ hate content. As Ardern complained to Parliament: ‘They are publishers, not just the postmen’ (Graham-McLay, 2019).

In an interview with RNZ *Mediawatch’s* Jeremy Rose, my colleague, assistant editor Khairiah A. Rahman, spoke of her research about representations of Islam and Muslims published in this journal last November. Research by her and Azadeh Emadi of Glasgow University in 2017 involving 14,349 stories that included the word Islam found that nearly 13,000 of them mentioned either terrorism or Islamic jihad.

There appears to be a growing misconceived hatred for a faith supported by 1.5 billion of the world’s population, but more importantly, this destructive trend is promoted by the media, consciously or not, and has the potential



Figure 1: The New Zealand media have been forced to think the way they work in the aftermath of the Christchurch massacre.

to ultimately cause an unnecessary and irreparable rift in civil society.
(Rahman & Emadi, 2018, p. 185)

For every New Zealand story that mentioned Islam, there were seven that mentioned Islamic terrorism. The ratio in overseas newswire stories was even higher. ‘We found that stories tend to be more fair and balanced when Muslim voices are represented. And they tend to be negative or confused in their treatment of Muslims and Islam when the Muslim voice is absent or manipulated,’ Rahman told Rose (2019). She added that virtually all of the stories mentioning terrorism or jihad lacked a Muslim perspective.

However, the situation had ‘changed dramatically’ since the massacre. ‘In the last week... the New Zealand media did actually make a difference,’ Rahman said. ‘I think they’re leading the way. It’s not just about Muslims or Islam or Islamophobia, but it’s about representation of diversity and the different voices in societies where there is predominantly one sort of culture.’

Her views were shared by former journalist Mohamed Hassan, a graduate of Auckland University of Technology who now works for the Turkish public broadcaster TRT World in Istanbul: ‘The coverage has been incredibly sympathetic. I think a lot of the media has done really well and has been really generous in opening up those spaces and giving those spaces to Muslim voices.... myself included’ (Rose, 2019).

In this edition of *Pacific Journalism Review*, three writers—an Australian cartoonist living in New Zealand, an RNZ *Mediawatch* presenter and an Australian Muslim journalist, broadcaster and academic—present wide-ranging commentaries.

The New Zealand Herald's cartoonist **Rod Emmerson**, who worked on issues over Australia's 1996 massacre at Port Arthur, Tasmania, reflects on his experience of the 'heartache, turmoil and absolute dread'. RNZ *Mediawatch* presenter **Colin Peacock** analyses how New Zealand media have been forced to rethink the way they work in the aftermath of the Christchurch massacre, adding that their 'freedom to report the truth will take on a whole new importance'.

Nasya Bahfen of RMIT, who delivered the keynote speech at the annual Journalism Education Association of New Zealand (JEANZ) in Wellington in December 2018, examines the contrast between how multicultural Australia is 'in real life' and 'in broadcasting' with a breakdown of Census data. Including reflections in the wake of Christchurch, she shows how lack of media representation feeds into hateful stereotypes.

In Fiji, the country went to the polls in November 2018, the second general election in 12 years—and the second since the 2006 military coup—and **Sri Krishnamurthi** of AUT's Pacific Media Centre returned to his homeland to cover it. It was the first time he had visited Fiji since he joined the exodus after the first coup in May 1987, and he was determined to come to grips with the legacy of the 'coup culture'.

Jope Tarai of the University of the South Pacific offers an examination of the impact of social media. His findings showed that the ruling party of Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama had a 'significant advantage' in Fiji's social media landscape, but opposition efforts and Facebook 'reactions' were beginning to challenge this dominance.

Former Queensland University of Technology's academic **Lee Duffield**, who was in New Caledonia three months earlier in the lead-up to the historic referendum on independence from France in November, provides background on a history of oppression and racism, while **David Robie** files a Special Report from the Kanaky 'front line' about the vote. He had covered '*les événements*' three decades earlier having written the 1989 book *Blood on their Banner* about the conflict.

IN THE unthemed section, **Thomas Fearon** of Australian National University and **Usha M. Rodrigues** dissect the China Global Television Network's news values through using the 2015 port of Tianjin explosions that killed 173 people as a case study while making comparisons with CNN coverage. They argue that CGTN is increasingly torn between its 'dichotomous role as a credible media' and its propaganda function.

Bangladesh, one of the most environmentally vulnerable countries in the world, is examined by **Jahnabi Das** of the University of Technology Sydney through the role of its newspapers in covering river systems and climate change over a seven-year period between 2009 and 2015. She also looks at the influence

of journalists on the question for environmental justice.

New Zealand's 'iwi radio' stations have operated for the past three decades, broadcasting a mixture of te reo Māori and English language programming throughout the country. The 21 stations currently operating are part of a strategy to improve the 'severe decline of indigenous language'. **Rufus McEwan** of Auckland University of Technology charts the transformations of indigenous radio and Māori media.

Jale Samuwai and **Jeremy Hills** of the University of the South Pacific deconstruct the Climate Green Fund, which is portrayed as the 'timely saviour' for the climate finance needs for vulnerable countries. They argue that changes are needed in the way funds are allocated in future with a focus on Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS)

Malaysia's surprising general election result in May 2018 has been widely hailed as the advent of a seismic shift for press freedom in the country. **Joseph M. Fernandez** of Curtin University has examined the role of the country's draconian media control armoury that was often 'wantonly and oppressively' applied under the previous government and how the new government sought to repeal it.

In Manila, **Pauline G. Estella** and **Jonalyn Paz** of the University of the Philippines-Diliman argue for a rethink in the way the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is being reported with research that reveals while there is an adherence to the tenets of development journalism, there is actually a dominance of 'prominence' (prominent individuals) in news values.

Trevor Cullen of Edith Cowan University reveals in research over a 10-year period in Papua New Guinea between 2007 and 2017 that there has been a dramatic decline in coverage by the *Post-Courier* newspaper of the prominent health issues of HIV, malaria and diabetes since 2013.

In New Zealand, **Luciana N. Hoffman** of Waikato University and **Evangelia Papoutsaki** examine the communicative ecology and narratives of Latin American migrant women and the complexities of empowerment. A study in Indonesia by **Ana Nadhya Abrar** of Universitas Gadjah Mada deconstructs the relationship between the Governor of Central Java and coverage by two major Semarang daily newspapers and critiques the role of the provincial Press Club.

Finally, in the unthemed section, **Kasun Ubayasiri** of Griffith University explores the framing of the Rohingya in Bangladesh's largest circulating English-language daily newspaper, *The Daily Star*. He concludes the nationalist newspaper has failed to successfully deliver human rights journalism.

The journal edition concludes with an evocative portfolio of photographs in the Photoessay section by independent photojournalist **Todd Henry**. His *Gangsters in Paradise* portfolio of Tongan deportees is linked to the impressive work he did for a *Vice* digital media platform video before the New Zealand publishing arm closed down in a controversial cost-cutting move.

PACIFIC JOURNALISM REVIEW welcomes Nicole Gooch who has joined our editorial team from Australia. She has joined Khairiah A. Rahman as assistant editor and brings with her a wealth of Pacific and journalism experience. Her first article for the journal was a 2012 Frontline investigation, 'Sulphate Sunrise', which probed the Brazilian nickel producer Vale SA's controversial operations in New Caledonia.

Nicole is passionate about journalism in the Pacific and is researching a doctorate about the extraction industries in New Caledonia, where she was born. She has postgraduate international affairs qualifications and has been lecturing at Wollongong University this semester. Nicole has practical experience as a journal editor, including having edited *PASA*, the Pacific regional magazine on sexual health, published quarterly by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). She will assist the Frontline section editor, professor Wendy Bacon.

As-salaam Alaikum to our *PJR* readers. Peace be upon you.

Professor David Robie

Editor

Pacific Journalism Review

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The New Zealand mosque massacre

1. The heartache, turmoil and absolute dread of Port Arthur

Commentary: The Port Arthur Massacre of 28-29 April 1996 was a mass shooting in which 35 people were killed and 23 wounded in Port Arthur, Tasmania, Australia. The gunman pleaded guilty and was given 35 life sentences without possibility of parole. Fundamental gun control laws within Australia followed. The Christchurch Mosque Massacre in New Zealand of 15 March 2019 involved two inner city mosques in the South Island city when 50 people were killed (another victim died six weeks later taking the death toll to 51). The accused gunman, a white supremacist, has been charged with 51 murders and 40 attempted murder counts, and also charged with terrorism. The author, a leading cartoonist, reflects on the parallels and contrasts between Australia and New Zealand and writes of the vitriol directed at him because of his satire: ‘My effigy was hung in a tree in Ipswich, and we lived daily with the threat of a drive-by attack on the family home. This sort of stuff rattles you to the core, but it also fills you with the adrenaline and conviction to barge on regardless. Such is the power of the pen and satire.’

Keywords: cartooning, hate speech, hate violence, massacres, New Zealand, Christchurch mosque massacre, racism

ROD EMMERSON

Cartoonist, The New Zealand Herald

ROAMING the ruins of Tasmania’s Port Arthur is a sobering experience. I’ve made two pilgrimages there and on each occasion, been blessed with cloudless skies, millpond waters, manicured lawns and gardens, rich green landscapes dotted with the hint of spring colours. The picture postcard vistas belie its macabre history.

These now frail stone, skeletal buildings stand as a sentinel to a period of history that saw these grounds as home to the most brutal of criminals Britain could possibly muster.

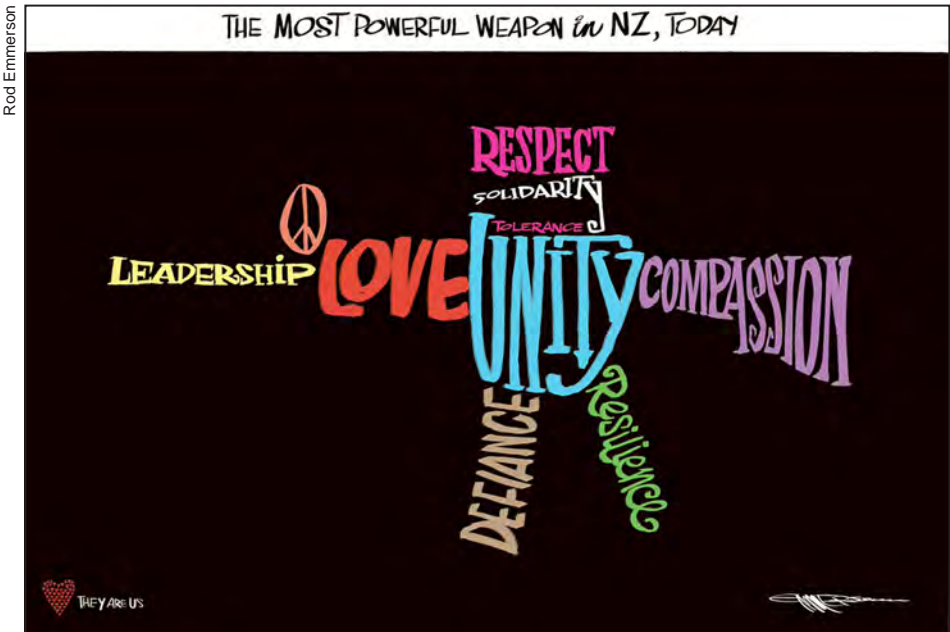
In the middle of all this damnation is a memorial to a more recent tragic event—the Port Arthur Massacre on 28-29 April 1996, when a 28-year-old local

apparently flipped out over a long-standing grudge involving a property dispute and went on a shooting rampage with an AR15 rifle, killing 35 people. Most of the slain were tourists to this corner of Australian history.

The youngest victim was Madeline Grace Mikac, just three years of age. For his barbaric act, the 28-year-old terrorist is now 51 and serving 35 life sentences concurrently, with an additional 1035 years without parole.

The coincidental parallels with the Christchurch shootings on 15 March 2019 were in lax gun laws; nationality of the alleged shooters; their similar age; the weapon of choice; New Zealanders among those killed and the age of the youngest victim.

Collectively, these acts of home-grown terrorism have cut short 86 innocent lives (one survivor from the Christchurch mosque attacks died later on 2 May 2019).



Rod Emmerson

Figure 1: Rod Emmerson’s ‘most powerful weapon’ comment on the Christchurch mosque massacre.

I covered the Port Arthur tragedy as an editorial cartoonist, working from Rockhampton in Queensland, servicing a string of papers throughout the Australian Provincial Press (APN) network and beyond. The grief, pain and suffering that we, in New Zealand, have all been experiencing as a community is sadly, all too familiar.

What makes it worse, is that this vile, calculated act in Christchurch allegedly was carried out by an Australian, on a very soft target. New Zealand is a welcoming, peaceful, inclusive country—not without its own social ills, but a

place that I have proudly called home for well over 15 years. It beggars belief that this poison has followed me here.

My experience of covering the Port Arthur aftermath is one of heartache, turmoil and absolute dread. It was of course, another time and another country. The year 1996 was an election year in Australia and the new Howard government had been in power a mere seven weeks when this atrocity occurred.

The government promised immediate gun law reform and the wider community welcomed it, but with six state parliaments, two territorial parliaments and two federal houses of parliament, time was not all on Howard's side.

The resistance from rural communities, gun clubs, gun shops, gun owners and NRA-affiliated lobbyists managed to mobilise a terrifying campaign of fear-based hysteria that put the politicians and journalists on notice.

Like many of my contemporaries, I was subjected to death threats, warnings of beatings after work, and almost had 10 cubic metres of gravel dumped in my driveway, a mess averted by an alert truck driver.

My effigy was hung in a tree in Ipswich, and we lived daily with the threat of a drive-by attack on the family home. This sort of stuff rattles you to the core, but it also fills you with the adrenaline and conviction to barge on regardless. Such is the power of the pen and satire.

The 1996 March election was also the entry point for the Ipswich fish'n'chips shop owner, Pauline Hanson, who first stood on a Liberal Party ticket. She was sent packing at the last minute after her racially-charged campaign, but won the seat as an independent.

Her maiden speech as the MP for Oxley was laced with racism, attacks on multiculturalism, Asian immigration and the Aboriginal community. It may well have appealed to the toothless underbelly but Australian communities and Asian countries were horrified. They reacted strongly, denouncing her diatribe.

Tim Fischer, the deputy Prime Minister, and many government ministers, condemned her tirade at every opportunity, especially in light of the trade connections with Asia. The elephant in the room though was none other than Prime Minister John Howard, whose silence was considered to be a formidable nod of approval.

Thus the seed of hate was planted in Australia's conservative politics and it has done nothing but germinate, grow and spread like gorse across the political spectrum, spawning the likes of Fraser Anning. Hanson is now a regular, welcome guest on morning TV chat shows and a 'go to' for comment on current affairs programmes. Visual click-bait.

Off radar, Rashna Farrukh, a Muslim journalist based in Canberra with SKYNEWS Australia, handed in her resignation on 16 March 2019. Her personal story appeared on ABC Online (Meade, 2019). Rashna cited the Jekyll and Hyde of SKYNEWS Australia and as she explained, could no longer turn a blind eye to the platform it was providing to inflammatory, right-wing commentary.



Figure 2: Rod Emmerson’s take on New Zealand gun laws after the Christchurch mosque attack.

Rashna says she stood by while the ‘fear and hate’ continued to grow, until it became unbearable. ‘I am done being a part of something I do not stand for, and I urge other young journalists to do the same.’

New Zealand was being fed the same diet via SkyNZ of course, and in hindsight, it’s cringeworthy realising this is our closest neighbour, yet much of the nightly content is so foreign to our values and way of life. If only SkyNZ had replaced it with the ABC, rather than FoxSports.

But this is the new weapon—words. Words dressed and served as healthy debate, labelled free speech but laced with opinionated razor blades of misinformation and vitriol, much of it aimed at disenfranchised and voiceless minorities.

As my Sydney peer Cathy Wilcox expressed in a *Sydney Morning Herald* cartoon depicting a young Muslim child in a swing, saying, ‘Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can inspire someone to kill me.’ Sadly, how very true. We now have a duty of care to individually and collectively call it out and shut it down.

The globally-applauded New Zealand response to the Christchurch tragedy has been one of genuine love, compassion, and inclusiveness. I doubt that the Friday Call to Prayer—a united remembrance and defiant stand against the ideology behind this tragedy—would ever have happened in Australia.

Such is the divide.

Yet you need only read the open letter to Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern from a 13-year-old Muslim student in Melbourne to grasp the depth of appreciation

from abroad (Joyan, 2019). This is the New Zealand I know and love. As we move through to a gun debate, I'm not anticipating the response I experienced 26 years ago (he said, fingers and toes crossed multiple times).¹ (Cheng, 2019; Christchurch mosque attacks, 2019).

Quite the opposite.

We are better than that, and I'm eternally grateful to find myself on the right side of New Zealand history—and on the right side of the Tasman.

Mā te kotahitanga e whai kaha ai tātau (In unity, there is strength).

#TheyAreUs

Note

1. The *Arms (Prohibited Firearms, Magazines, and Parts) Amendment Bill* banning semiautomatic and military grade firearms was introduced in New Zealand's House of Representatives for its first reading on 1 April 2019, and became law 12 days later.

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Rod Emmerson, cartoonist on The New Zealand Herald, was the 1996 QLD winner of the Print, Television and Radio section of the MBF Awards for his work on The Gun Debate. This commentary was first published in The Herald almost two weeks after the Christchurch massacre. The names of the killers in both countries have been withheld on principle.

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The New Zealand mosque massacre

2. 'End of innocence' for media and nation

Commentary: The massacre at two mosques in Christchurch on 15 March 2019 forced New Zealand's news media to rethink the way they work, whose voices they amplify—and why. Telcos, bloggers, advertisers and the government have all reacted in ways that changed what people see, hear and read. The author examines some of the ways the massacre has left a mark on the New Zealand media.

Keywords: digital media, journalism practice, livestream, Mediawatch, New Zealand, racism, social media, terrorism

COLIN PEACOCK

Editor/presenter of RNZ Mediawatch

MANY commentators and politicians airily claimed the terrorist attack in Christchurch on 15 March 2019 changed New Zealand forever. Another common refrain—echoed on our newspapers' front pages the day after the attack—was that this marked 'the end of our innocence'. Any complacency about the threat of extremism here was extinguished and things will never feel quite the same for many New Zealanders—especially Muslim ones, of course.

The cancellation of public events, including university graduation parades in April, and the presence of rifle-toting police officers on city streets was a startling sight. The New Zealand Police said it was a temporary measure with the nation on high alert and things would return to normal.

The New Zealand media need to be vigilant about incursions into their freedom too in this 'new normal'. Some small but significant steps have been taken in short-term responses to the crisis.

To show or not to show the gunman's content?

Soon after the first eyewitness reports of shots being fired at the mosques came to the media's attention, so did the disturbing digital content the gunman created: a GoPro live-streamed video on Facebook and a 'manifesto' of racism and violence. It was—as media commentators around the world pointed out—a massacre made to go viral (Warzel, 2019). It also dovetailed grimly with the

business model of major social media platforms (Christchurch, mosque shootings, 2019) which were not able or willing to stop the shooter's material spreading online.

Many media organisations weren't sure what to do with it. At 6pm on the day of the massacre, state-owned TVNZ News briefly showed scenes from the early part of the livestream video in a news report. TVNZ subsequently repeated the same short sequence from the video.

TVNZ head of news John Gillespie told *Mediawatch* that TVNZ chose not to broadcast the gunman's footage from inside the mosque and never showed his face. But TVNZ did broadcast three seconds of moving footage showing the cache of ammunition in the shooter's car and then froze the shot for a further three seconds.

'We included this in our breaking news on Friday—among nine hours of rolling live coverage—and it has been used again judiciously since then in light of the national discussion on gun reform,' Gillespie said (Peacock, 2019a).

Why? 'It shows the high degree of pre-meditation and planning that went into Friday's attack,' he said (Peacock, 2019a).

In an article which directly asked Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg to switch off Facebook live streaming, Newsroom.co.nz journalist Bernard Hickey (2019) said: 'It's as if that 17 minutes of awful, awful footage has metastasised and is now propagating itself around the internet to fuel yet more hatred and potential copycat actions.'

But for a short time on Friday, 15 March 2019, *Newsroom* also ran images from the gunman's video. Some people who saw it on the site told *Mediawatch* it showed shooting from outside and the gunman's first victim. Mark Jennings told readers later: 'If we were in this situation again we would not use any of the images' (Jennings, 2019).

In Australia, news shows on TV channels 7 and Nine ran small sections of the gunman's video soon after the news broke and told their viewers they would see no more. Both of them aired more of it in their evening news, according to the ABC's *Media Watch* show in Australia. (ABC *Media Watch*, 2019) The ABC, Australia's public broadcaster, said it would not publicise the gunman's manifesto document, but a political correspondent read aloud from it live on ABC News 24. Rolling news operation Sky News Australia ran footage from inside the mosque with bodies visible but blurred, prompting Sky TV in New Zealand to take the whole channel off air for four days (We stand in support, 2019).

RNZ's *Checkpoint* news special that day also detailed some key claims in the gunman's manifesto and described the images of weapons from his defunct Twitter account. RNZ decided not to broadcast or publish those details after that. Reporters were told delving into the background of the attacker, was part of rigorous reporting, but only verified information about the attacker's activities

and backgrounds should be reported in context.

In all these cases, those editorial decisions were made before it was clear how many had died and precisely how. Hard and fast rules for this sort of material need to be established urgently.

Giving the manifesto the oxygen of publicity

Opinion was divided over the so-called manifesto, which was deemed objectionable by New Zealand's Chief Censor. The order has exemptions whereby journalists and researchers can apply for permission to consult the 74-page document after paying a fee of NZ\$102.

New Zealand's two main newspaper groups took contrasting stances. *The New Zealand Herald* applied for permission to keep a single copy for its journalists' reference. 'The alleged gunman is part of this story and we can't shy away from that. It doesn't give his abhorrent views a platform,' *The New Zealand Herald* said. *The Herald on Sunday* wrote about the man charged with murder with many references to the freshly-banned manifesto (*The New Zealand Herald*, 2019).

'People are searching for answers to New Zealand's most horrific act of terrorism. They're searching for light in dark corners and this is such a place, despite how difficult that may be,' the *Herald on Sunday* said. The newspaper argued that exposure would be more effective in outing extremism that could contribute to further attacks. 'If the information can in any way equip authorities and experts in being alert to people with these types of ideologies—and help the public be wary—we have done our job,' the newspaper said (Peacock, 2019c).

It is, of course, impossible to test that or know for sure if it was a job well done.

Stuff (formerly Fairfax Media New Zealand) took a different view. 'It's child-like nonsense. Ban it, fire every copy into the sun, it's a waste of time,' *Stuff* correspondent Charlie Mitchell said (Mitchell, 2019). His newspaper *The Press*—the daily paper in Christchurch where the attack took place—also backed the ban in an editorial: '[It] serves as a practical guide to what is acceptable in this country. Should a resident or visitor not completely understand where the line is, the censor has made it plain' (*The Press*, 2019).

The Press said the ban may actually help police and intelligence agencies because people found to possess the manifesto opened themselves to further investigation—just as they would with other forms of objectionable material like child pornography.

Internet providers club together to reduce the risk

New Zealand's biggest internet service providers jointly blocked access to websites hosting and circulating the gunman's video and manifesto, including forums 4Chan and 8Chan, notorious for hosting random content including a 'cesspool of hate' (4chan, n.d.). 2 Degrees, Vodafone, Spark and Vocus wrote to

the bosses of Facebook, Twitter and Google (A call from the companies, 2019). They said: ‘We call on you to join at the table and be part of the solution.’

It was a bold but unprecedented move driven by the social media platforms and global online forums’ failure to stop the spread of the material. Some internet and media freedom activists fear legitimate use of the internet could be curbed in the future if ISPs again concurred that a crisis demanded such extraordinary action.

Their concern peaked when it was revealed that plans to lift the block were reversed by the ISPs after input from the government the week after the attack (Sachdeva, 2019).

Advertisers pull back—and ponder a change of direction

In a joint statement, the Association of New Zealand Advertisers and the Commercial Communications Council pointed out that ‘advertising funds social media’. It added: ‘Businesses are already asking if they wish to be associated with social media platforms unable or unwilling to take responsibility for content on those sites.’ (Association of New Zealand Advertisers, 2019)

On the ad industry news site stoppress.co.nz, ad agency director James Mok said it was time the industry better reflected cultural change and diversity in New Zealand. He wrote:

Our work should represent New Zealanders with respect. We can no longer avoid the responsibility to be diligent about every little choice we make. The stories we tell and the people we feature in advertising are our chance to show New Zealanders who we really are. (Mok, 2019)

The biggest spender on social media advertising in New Zealand is the government. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern was non-committal when asked if the spending of an estimated NZ\$100 million a year would be withheld from the platforms she had criticised. Minister for State Services, Chris Hipkins, later told media the government had asked for urgent advice on its advertising spending with Facebook (RNZ, 2019).

Cash-strapped mainstream media companies would welcome some of that spending if it was siphoned away from social media.

Soapbox-style media reflect on themselves

After the attacks, talk radio station Newstalk ZB deleted a 2017 opinion column in which its Christchurch-based host Chris Lynch asked ‘Does Islam have any place in public swimming pools?’ The host apologised for it on air (Broadcaster Chris Lynch apologises, 2019).

NZME head of talk radio Jason Winstanley said several items had been pulled from ZB’s websites because they were ‘upsetting people’. Some of that content was there for precisely that purpose in the first place. Right-wing British pundit

Katie Hopkins was an occasional guest on the network until she was sacked by her paper and radio station in the UK after calling for a ‘final solution’ in the wake of the Manchester bombing in May 2017—and for Western men to ‘rise up’ (Katie Hopkins, 2016).

Winstanley said: ‘Our priority is to do the best we can for all New Zealanders, and honour those who have lost their lives.’ It remains to be seen what that means on air at Newstalk ZB, and whether other talkback radio hosts and opinion writers with a track record of stirring up controversy over race and immigration change their approach.

Dialling down the comments

Comments sections in mainstream media often turn toxic, even for stories which aren’t especially controversial. *Stuff* disabled online comments after the Christchurch mosque attacks for fear of people posting offensive and upsetting remarks. *Stuff* editor Patrick Crewdson unveiled a new policy for readers’ comments two weeks later (Do read the comments, 2019). New terms and conditions for comments were more explicit about personal attacks and prejudice included list of 20 topics on which *Stuff* would no longer not publish readers’ comments (Terms and conditions, 2019).

‘There is a direct link to the Christchurch attacks,’ *Stuff* editor-in-chief Patrick Crewdson told *Mediawatch*. ‘What we have learned from bitter experience is that even with heavy moderation on some of those topics (on the list) it is virtually impossible to host a meaningful conversation. We will still cover those topics with fair, ethical and balanced journalism’ (Peacock, 2019b).

Kiwiblog—where a lot of offensive comments have been posted anonymously in the past—also changed its policy. Publisher and founder David Farrar said only people using their real names would be able to publish comments automatically so readers would know who they were.

Hate speech laws get a following wind

As in post-Port Arthur Australia, gun law changes have been rushed through in New Zealand—and the government has also indicated it could introduce new hate speech laws too. New Zealand has already grappled with this in 2005 after the United Kingdom drafted its own hate crime laws (Hurley, 2018).

Some academics, broadcasters and conservative groups have warned that any proposed laws here would be a threat to freedom of expression—including the media. Last year, well-known entrepreneur Sir Ray Avery tried to prosecute media outlets under the *Harmful Digital Communications Act*—essentially an anti-cyberbullying law.

The move failed, but those who want to bring the media to heel could try again if momentum builds against what they believe to be hate speech, which

fosters far-right principles. ‘I would rather the government looked at what’s already there and decide whether any of that can be improved and made to work properly,’ New Zealand’s pre-eminent media law expert Professor Ursula Cheer told *The New Zealand Herald* in March (Hurley, 2019).

Security laws tightening?

In 2018, Australia’s biggest news media companies united to fight new national security laws that could criminalise reporters and their sources (Peacock, 2018). New Zealand media may need to do the same in the coming months. On April 1, the *National Business Review* warned that ‘some bureaucrats—the intelligence services come to mind—might be mindful of the maxim to ‘never waste the opportunity offered by a good crisis’.

The inquiry into the Christchurch terrorist attack will now be a Royal Commission, zeroing in on New Zealand’s security services.

The main questions will be whether the attack could have been prevented, whether the security services have the right tools to monitor extremist communication online—and whether they chose the right targets for surveilled.

The opposition National Party—which could have been leading the government now after emerging as the top-polling party in the 2017 election—has called for wider powers for the Security Intelligence Service and the internationally-oriented Government Communications Security Bureau. National Party leader Simon Bridges claimed they operated with ‘both hands tied behind their backs’ and need greater powers.

The media in New Zealand have good reason to worry about what the intelligence service would do with freer hands and longer reach. In 2014, the Prime Minister’s office ordered an investigation of a leak which created a front-page story for Fairfax Media political reporter Andrea Vance. Her scoop revealed that dozens of New Zealanders were illegally spied on by the GCSB.

The inquiry, ordered by the Prime Minister’s office and headed by former senior civil servant David Henry, found her movements around Parliament had been tracked and details of phone calls from her Press Gallery office recorded. Parliamentary Services handed over this private and sensitive data. The head of the service later paid for this over-reach with his job and apologised (Small, 2014).

Simon Bridges also called for the revival of an internet surveillance programme canned by the previous government. Project Speargun was revealed by NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden in 2014 (Newshub, 2017).

Reporters with sensitive stories would be vulnerable to such potentially unlimited interception. The forthcoming Royal Commission into the terrorist attack in Christchurch is bound to uncover things the government will want to conceal or at least ‘manage’. The temptation to withhold information of genuine public interest will be great.

Investigations by the media—also hungry for answers—will overlap with the official work and could bring them into conflict with the powers-that-be who feel backstopped by national security imperatives.

New Zealand's search and surveillance laws are already strong—and open to abuse. Investigative reporter and author Nicky Hager discovered this when his home was raided in 2014. Police officers wanted the source of the leaked emails at the heart of his lid-lifting book *Dirty Politics* after the 2014 election campaign.

Using the recently beefed-up *Search and Surveillance Act*, police seized and copied documents and computers, including those belonging to his daughter. They also asked private companies for details of his phone, online accounts and his travel and banking records. The raids and breaches of his privacy were eventually deemed unlawful and followed by apologies and out-of-court settlements.

Hager's legal battles only came to an end in February 2019 when Westpac Bank apologised for handing over private information to police and paid a confidential sum as a settlement.

Whistleblowing under pressure

A new law overhauling the powers of spy agencies in 2017 created a new offence for people passing on classified information. The changes made it easier to people to make a 'protected disclosure' to the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security. But those who pass information to journalists may face up to five years in jail.

This has yet to be tested, but it will be a brave member of the intelligence services who leaks information to the media on that basis. Journalists will also have the added worry of possible prosecution if they are pressed to reveal sources.

The current government is also exploring whether the law and procedures to protect whistleblowers at work need to be strengthened. 'Anyone who raises issues of serious misconduct or wrongdoing needs to have faith that their role, reputation, and career development will not be jeopardised when speaking up,' Hipkins said (Hipkins, 2018).

Some Australian state governments already support whistleblowers who contact journalists if they have not had 'honest concerns' properly investigated by a relevant higher authority but there are no such shield laws in New Zealand.

Exposure of activities that are illegal, corrupt or unsafe are clearly of genuine public interest, but by the end of public consultations no media organisations had argued for change. New Zealand's State Services Commission is to report back on the law later this year and it remains to be seen if any change to the *Protected Disclosures Act 2000* recognises the role of the media.

Journalists step up to scrutinise extremism

Another challenge for the media now is to investigate extremism in New Zealand

and the communities and cultures here in which it might thrive—or those which may actually be camouflaging it.

‘The response to this Christchurch abomination needs to be long-lived and thorough,’ *New Zealand Herald* investigative reporter Matt Nippert declared one day after the attacks. He asked for tips on far right extremist activity worth investigating. ‘We’ll see where it takes us,’ he told his social media followers one day after the attack (Nippert, 2019).

However, in the long run it is no easy task. There will be suspicion and rumours which could mislead journalists and prompt over-reaction among the audience. There will also be emotional debates about gun control, and internet regulation played out in the media in the months ahead and more intense and divisive debates about free speech, freedom and religion.

The ghastly deaths in Christchurch and the fallout from the attack have pre-occupied the media ever since, but as journalists get to work raising awkward questions in a new environment, their freedom to report the truth will take on a whole new importance.

We will all see—as the *New Zealand Herald’s* Matt Nippert said—where it takes us.

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THE NZ TERROR TRIAL COVERAGE PROTOCOL

We are the senior editors representing the major accredited news media companies in New Zealand (TVNZ, *Stuff*, Mediaworks, NZME and RNZ). As a group and as individual editors we are committed to ensuring the outlets we represent cover the upcoming trial of Brenton Tarrant comprehensively and responsibly. We have agreed to abide by these guidelines throughout the trial.

Background

Brenton Harrison Tarrant is charged with 50 counts of murder and 39 charges of attempted murder relating to shootings carried out at two mosques in Christchurch on Friday, 15 March, 2019. Victims of the terror attack include citizens of twelve different countries. We represent accredited New Zealand media organisations that plan to attend the trial and associated proceedings for the purposes of reportage. As editors we are mindful of the public interest in the trial, in New Zealand and internationally.

We are also mindful of our role as the 'eyes and ears of the public' in the context of court reporting. In this instance, we acknowledge the particular importance of this function, given the many victims' friends and families outside New Zealand who may otherwise be unable to engage in the trial process.

We are aware that the accused may attempt to use the trial as a platform to amplify white supremacist and/or terrorist views or ideology.

Guidelines

We agree that the following Protocol will apply to our outlets' coverage and reportage of the trial:

- (a) We shall, to the extent that is compatible with the principles of open justice, limit any coverage of statements, that actively champion white supremacist or terrorist ideology.
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt the commitment set out at (a) shall include the accused's manifesto document 'The Great Replacement'.
- (c) We will not broadcast or report on any message, imagery, symbols or signals (including hand signals) made by the accused or his associates promoting or supporting white supremacist ideology.
- (d) Where the inclusion of such signals in any images is unavoidable, the relevant parts of the image shall be pixellated.
- (e) To the greatest extent possible, the journalists that are selected by each of the outlets to cover the trial will be experienced personnel.
- (f) These guidelines may be varied at any time, subject to a variation signed by all parties.
- (g) This Protocol shall continue in force indefinitely.

Signed:

Miriyana Alexander (NZME and chair of the NZ Media Freedom Committee)
John Gillespie (TVNZ)
Shayne Currie (NZME)
Mark Stevens (*Stuff*)
Paul Thompson (RNZ)
Hal Crawford (Mediaworks)

April 2019

3. 1950s vibe, 21st century audience

Australia's dearth of onscreen diversity

Commentary: The difference between how multicultural Australia is 'in real life' and 'in broadcasting' can be seen through data from the Census, and from Screen Australia's most recent research into onscreen diversity. In 2016, these sources of data coincided with the Census, which takes place every five years. Conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, this presents a 'snapshot' of Australian life. From the newest Census figures in 2016, it appears that nearly half of the population in Australia (49 percent) had either been born overseas (identifying as first generation Australian) or had one or both parents born overseas (identifying as second generation Australian). Nearly a third, or 32 percent, of Australians identified as having come from non-Anglo Celtic backgrounds, and 2.8 percent of Australians identify as Indigenous (Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander). Nearly a fifth, or 18 percent, of Australians identify as having a disability. Screen Australia is the government agency that oversees film and TV funding and research. Conducted in 2016, Screen Australia's study looked at 199 television dramas (fiction, excluding animation) that aired between 2011 and 2015. The comparison between these two sources of data reveals that with one exception, there is a marked disparity between diversity as depicted in the lived experiences of Australians and recorded by the Census, and diversity as depicted on screen and recorded by the Screen Australia survey.

Keywords: Australia, census, diversity, Islam, media representations, New Zealand, Screen Australia

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MOST academic writing is unapologetically dry, but it seems wrong to launch blithely into this commentary on diversity and the media without mentioning the Christchurch mosque attacks. On the day I put this article together from a keynote presentation I made to the 2018 conference of the Journalism Educators Association of New Zealand (JEANZ), a terrorist opened fire at two Christchurch mosques during Friday prayers, killing 50 adults and children and wounding a further 39 people. He was a white Australian and well-armed with magazines strapped to his legs and a car stocked with



Figure 1: A young woman prays outside Ponsonby Masjid in Auckland in the wake of the Christchurch atrocity on 15 March 2019.

extra ammunition. He had written a manifesto of nearly 40 pages explicitly declaring the attack as terrorist in nature. He attacked when the places of worship were packed, with the intent to take out as many Muslim New Zealanders as possible, while the Bangladeshi cricket team nearly became collateral damage as the players fled for their lives.

As I watched with horror from across Te Tai-o-Rehua, it occurred to me that such an attack was entirely predictable and I was not the only one who thought that. Repeatedly, after the attacks, Muslim voices pointed out that what had happened in Christchurch was not a shock (Rose, 2019) while Australian and New Zealand media engaged in some rare introspection (and more than a few crocodile tears). In June 2016 in Perth, Australia, a mosque was firebombed at night during Ramadan, when the number of worshippers attending was likely to be higher. That attack in Perth (Weber & Roberts, 2016), a spate of fatal shootings in mosques across the United States (Coleman, 2017) and the Christchurch shootings tragically and horrifically underscore the points that I and other researchers who work in the ‘media and diversity space’ (for want of a better description) have been making for years (for example, see Fares, 2015). We have been arguing about the need for more attention to be paid to the threat posed by giving far right voices a platform, along with the importance of accurate media representation that does not narrowly define what it means to be American, Australian, New Zealander and so on (Figure 1).

In the Australian context, there is a demonstrable history in the media of the exclusion and dehumanising of specific religious and ethnic groups, and the portrayal of these groups as violent, invading enemies. The Christchurch attacks are an end-result of a history of problematic reporting on diverse or multicultural societies, where the erroneous portrayal of a seemingly homogenous country, devoid of any diversity except that which came from angry brown and black people, contributed to the atmosphere of Islamophobia. Such reporting motivated the terrorist to preserve his culture—the dominant, mainstream, normal culture portrayed in the media—which he believed to be under threat, as outlined in his incoherent manifesto. This media narrative was also evident in New Zealand (Rahman & Emadi, 2018).

In multi-ethnic countries, the portrayal of ethnic minorities in the media has constituted an emerging area of academic interest over the past few decades. Australia has had one of the most concentrated patterns of media ownership among developed countries (Jakubowicz, 2010), where a small number of commercial interests control the private media sector which exists alongside public broadcasting. The public broadcasting sector in Australia is spread over two organisations—the ABC which is similar to the BBC, Radio NZ, and other public service broadcasting models—and SBS which is specific to Australia, as it has a specific mandate to cover multicultural issues (Flew, 2011) sharing some similarities in its mission and vision with broadcasters such as Māori Television in New Zealand. The commercial sector encompasses the press (state and local) and broadcasting outlets of News Corporation and its effective monopoly cable service Foxtel, and the Fairfax media group including print/online outlets (at state and local) and radio. In 2018, Australian commercial broadcaster Nine announced a takeover of Fairfax, which was approved by Australia's federal court in November 2018 (Barker, 2018). A third, traditionally important sector in the Australian media landscape is that of community broadcasting. There are more than 360 community radio stations around Australia producing media content by and for their local communities (Hess & Waller, 2015). Programmes cater to a wide range of audience interests including shows targeting different ethnic groups, religious communities, young people, radio for the print handicapped, fans of different music genres, Indigenous audiences, etc. The sector is powered by the labour of 20,000 volunteers and held up as one of the world's most successful examples of community broadcasting (Anderson, 2017).

The related issues of representation and diversity in the Australian media have been the subject of research by Phillips (2009) which concluded that in the Australian media,

...instead of a range of peoples and cultures, we see mainly Anglo faces, projecting an archetypal image of a 'white Australia' that is more applicable to the 1950s than it is today.

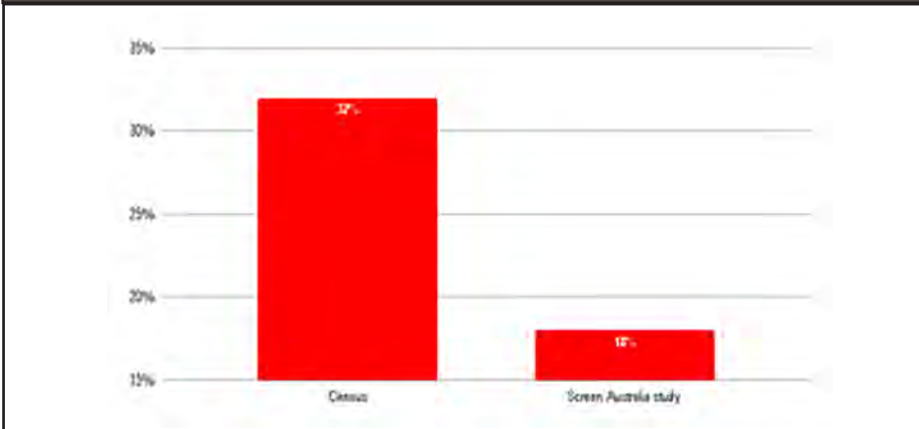
Studies such as those by Ewart and Beard (2017) or Nunn (2010) find that the problematic media in which ethnic minorities are portrayed by the Australian media reflects the manner of representation found in other Western countries with multicultural populations—for example, in associating specific cultural, religious or ethnic groups with crime, and situating groups externally to the dominant culture. Lack of representation as ‘Australian’, and the media’s use of discourses of otherness, as outlined by Dunn, Klocker and Salabay (2007), reproduces racist and discriminatory sentiment against ethnic and religious minorities. In terms of the Australian media, the ‘...diversity of race, culture and religion is largely absent from the news services, unless people from ethnic minorities are posing a social problem of some kind’ (Phillips, 2011). An objective review of the relevant literature finds it hard to avoid the conclusion that mainstream Australian media contributes to, and constructs, a very narrow definition of ‘Australian’ that borders on reductivism. As I have previously argued (Bahfen, 2016), the commercial media in Australia on the one hand stresses the importance of national values and harmony, but on the other hand amplifies the voices of division and hate through portraying sections of Australian society as deviating from, and not belonging within, that framework of national values and harmony.

Within this context of a disparity between diversity in reality and as reported/portrayed in the media, one group as the focus of this tension is the Muslim community (Bahfen & Wake, 2011; Ho, 2007; Aly, 2007; Kabir, 2006). Much of the Western media typically portrays Muslim women as, paradoxically, either veiled victims in need of liberation, as threatening non-conformists whose clothing is seen as visual shorthand for ‘otherness’ or as sexualised, exotic beings (Posetti, 2017). Hess and Waller (2011) describe how ‘in Australia, the media’s relationship with Islam is arguably the most controversial dimension of reporting on cultural diversity at present’. While much of the research on diversity in the media in Australia has looked at the news media, some studies have found that specifically within the realms of film and television Australia’s diverse demographics are either un-represented or represented narrowly. In a content analysis of Australian drama Klocker (2014) found inter-ethnic relationships, on the rise in Australia and contributing to an ‘unprecedented level of ethnic diversity into our homes’, were portrayed on TV in physical terms without acknowledgement of committed, long-term partnerships between Australians of different ethnicities. On the issue of quotas (of the kind used with some success in the United States), Hammett-Jamart (2004) concluded that resistance to quota-based policy on the grounds of interference with the market belied the fact that ‘commercial forces alone will not enable diversity’ and called for a discourse of cultural diversity in any Australian pursuit of such a policy.

The difference between how multicultural Australia is ‘in real life’ and ‘in broadcasting’ can be seen through data from the Census, and from Screen

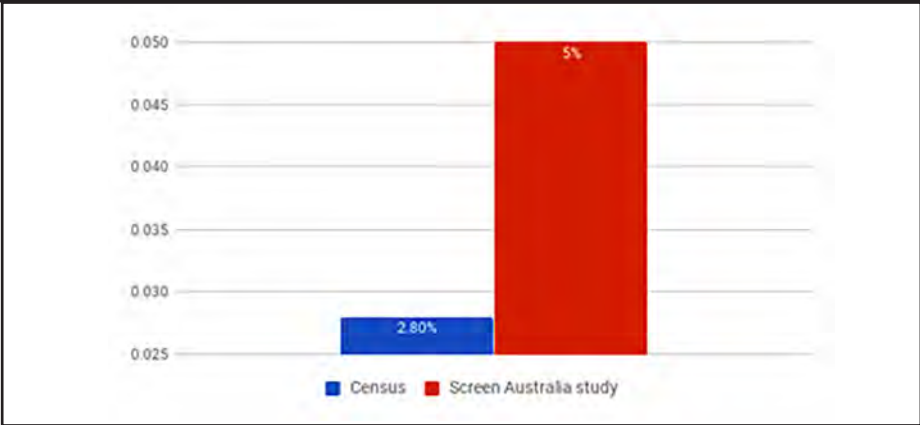
Australia's most recent research into on screen diversity. These sources of data coincided in 2016, with the Census taking place every five years. Conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, it presents a 'snapshot' of Australian life. From the newest Census figures in 2016, it appears that nearly half of the population in Australia (49 percent) had either been born overseas (identifying as first generation Australian) or had one or both parents born overseas (identifying as second generation Australian). Nearly a third or 32 percent of Australians identified as having come from non-Anglo Celtic backgrounds, and 2.8 percent of Australians identify as Indigenous (Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander) (Figure 2). Nearly a fifth or 18 percent of Australians identify as having a disability. Screen Australia is the government agency that oversees film and TV funding and research. Conducted in 2016, Screen Australia's study looked at 199 television dramas (fiction, excluding animation) that aired between 2011 and 2015.

Figure 2: Characters with non-Anglo Celtic backgrounds



The comparison between these two sources of data reveals that with one exception, there is a marked disparity between diversity as depicted in the lived experiences of Australians and recorded by the Census, and diversity as depicted on screen and recorded by the Screen Australia survey. For example, when it came to characters of non-Anglo Celtic backgrounds, 18 percent of characters on screen were depicted demonstrating this cultural diversity—but that is just over half the percentage of the Australian population who identify as coming from a non-Anglo Celtic background, according to the Census figures (Figure 1). While there are shows on television that depict, through the medium of television drama, households of people from non-Anglo Celtic backgrounds (for example, SBS's *The Family Law*), these shows tend to be aired on public broadcasters, not commercial ones, especially the public broadcaster with a specific mandate to cater to and represent the country's diverse audiences.

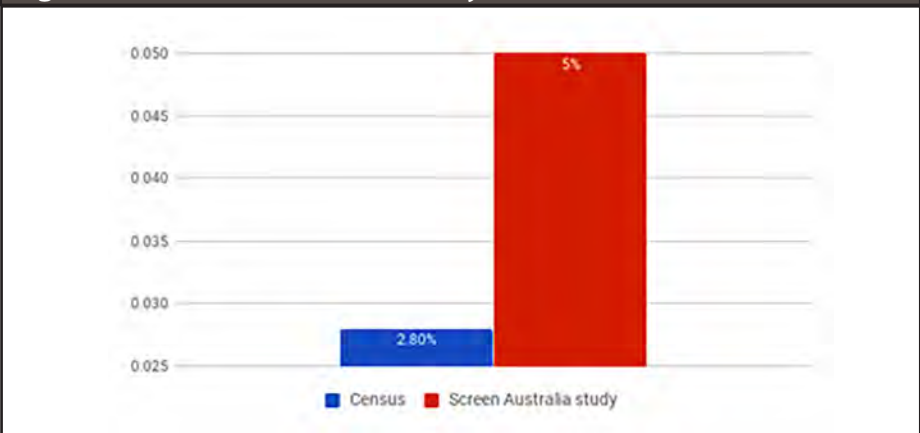
Figure 3: Indigenous characters



In an overall depressing examination of the two sources of data, one result stood out when a comparison was undertaken of the Census figures versus those from the Screen Australia study. During the timeframe in which the Screen Australia study was undertaken, it was found that Indigenous (Aboriginal) characters are over-represented on screen (Figure 3). Such characters include those of the main roles in shows like *Cleverman* (an ABC production about an Indigenous superhero). This over-representation is a welcome change from previous studies in this area, which have found an under-representation of Indigenous life—for example, in the area of women’s leadership (Ryan, 2016).

In broadly defining diversity, I have included people with a disability, who—as other more comprehensive studies have found—have been under-represented in the media in Australia, where ‘representations of Australian identity are mostly based on the concept of a strong, masculine, fighting body’ (Ellis, 2019, p. 40).

Figure 4: Characters with disability



A comparison of the figures from the 2016 Census with the study by Screen Australia in the same year serves to emphasise this disparity, with only four percent of characters onscreen shown with a disability despite 18 percent of people in Australia identifying as having a disability (Figure 4). *Please Like Me*, a television drama shown on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, was singled out for praise by Screen Australia for including main characters with a disability and positively depicting these characters.

There were other ‘positive signs’ in the Screen Australia survey, including the finding that out of the nearly 100 drama programmes that aired on Australian screens between 2011 and 2015, 64 percent included at least one character who was not Anglo-Celtic, and the general finding that children’s shows and comedies tended to be more diverse than other dramas (Screen Australia, 2016)

In discussing the differences that exist—some quite markedly—in the Census and Screen Australia’s study between the differing categories that can be grouped broadly under the rubric of ‘diversity’, economy of scale emerges as a factor that accounts for the disparity. Australian broadcasters feel producers in other nations, such as Canada, were at a competitive advantage because their local broadcasters helped them put together project financing deals (Aisbett, 2007). The ABC and SBS by comparison are limited in their abilities to fund programming and are likely to fund established content-makers, who in turn do not represent the diversity of their (theoretical and actual) audiences (Coles & MacNeill, 2017). From the perspective of those cast in the screen content, an actor of Asian descent felt that ‘Australia is about 20 years behind the US in terms of being more open [and] “colour-blind”’ (Screen Australia, 2016). I posit that because of a markedly smaller market in Australia compared to similar multicultural countries such as the United States or Canada, commercial broadcasters and producers in Australia are not likely to consciously improve on showing diversity in media because they worry that this type of product would not get audiences. A second factor worth considering when looking at the disparity between the lived experiences of diversity among Australians, compared to their mediated homogeneity as depicted on screen, is the influx of alternative content sources and programming. The monopoly of traditional commercial broadcasters is being eroded with iTunes, Netflix and Stan (a local Netflix-like company). This permits audiences to have a wider choice of broadcasting to listen to and watch, including overseas productions with more cultural diversity.

Obviously, there are limitations in straight comparisons of the data from the Census and the Screen Australia study. One of the first that comes to mind is that the Screen Australia study looked specifically at television drama—and beyond this genre, in other realms of the media, diversity is playing catch-up. For example, while the journalism industry remains overwhelmingly Anglo-Celtic in commercial media, there are documented nascent efforts by journalism or

media educators to improve this situation. The Reporting Diversity project in 2007 (Hess & Waller, 2011) represented one such early effort and comprised a collaboration between what was then the Journalism Education Association (JEA) and the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (now JERAA and the Department of Home Affairs respectively). These types of projects stem from a recognition among journalism academics that ‘news media representations contribute to the social exclusion of Muslims’ and that ‘few researchers have explored these issues from the perspective of journalists, journalism educators, media trainers, and communication specialists’ (Ewart, Pearson, & Healy, 2016).

As one of the few journalism educators in Australia coming from a culturally, religiously, and linguistically diverse background, in addition to researching the media’s lack of diversity and journalism educators’ attempts to overcome it, I am also attempting to address the gap in knowledge in this area through, for example, developing a specific subject for students enrolled at La Trobe University where I work, tentatively called ‘Journalism and Diversity’, to be taught on site at the Islamic Museum of Australia (a La Trobe partner). Quoting my frustration at the overwhelmingly homogenous nature of the industry I prepare my students for, Jakubowicz (2010) explained that as far back as 2009, I posited that there are three potential responses to the systemic bias in reporting—refuse to have anything to do with the Western media as they are ‘inherently evil’; seek to join the media as a mainstream journalist and change attitudes through interaction and have Muslim organisations engage with the media to enlarge their knowledge of Islam and Muslim communities. While media depictions of Islam and Muslims in places like Australia and New Zealand comprise just one of the most glaring examples of problematised media representation, efforts to overcome the lack of onscreen diversity, coupled with the normalisation of an exclusionary paradigm within which diversity is portrayed (one end result of which is the type of terror attack seen in Christchurch in March 2019), are signs of just how far the industry has to go.

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SO MANY ISLANDS
Stories from the Caribbean,
Mediterranean, Indian and
Pacific Oceans

Edited by Nicholas Laughlin
with Nailah Folami Imoja

So Many Islands brings together stories from the distant shores of the island communities in the Caribbean, Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and Pacific. Giving voice to their challenges and triumphs, these writers paint a vibrant portrait of what it is like to live, love and lose the things most precious to them on the small islands they call home.

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4. Fiji's coup culture

Rediscovering a voice at the ballot box

Commentary: The second Fiji General Election in 12 years, since the fourth coup in 2006, took place on 14 November 2018, and once again the key players were the three parties that gained seats in Parliament in the 2014 election. The three parties: FijiFirst, the incumbent government led by the 2006 coup leader Voreqe Bainimarama; the preeminent opposition, Social Democratic Liberal Party (SODELPA), whose leader was the instigator of the first two coups, Sitiveni Rabuka; and the National Federation Party (NFP) which was led by former University of the South Pacific economics academic Professor Biman Prasad. The 2018 election was widely seen as another sign of progress for Fiji's fragile democracy and both the significant protagonists were former military commanders and coup leaders seemingly committed to democracy. The media remained cowed, a legacy of the *2010 Media Industry Development Decree* (MIDD, 2010), giving rise to using other forms of media such as social media platforms, with Facebook being the most popular. This commentary reflects on the experience of a journalist on a postgraduate assignment to report on the 2018 election.

Keywords: corruption, elections, fake news, Fiji, political journalism, Qorvis, social media, Taukei

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Introduction

THE RESULT of the 2014 General Election in Fiji was a foregone conclusion. The freshly-minted FijiFirst, the newest significant party in the country with 2006 coup leader Voreqe Bainimarama as leader, won 59 percent of the vote, earning 32 seats, with the Social Democratic Liberal Party (SODELPA) taking 16 seats and the National Federation Party (NFP) three seats.

Bainimarama's FijiFirst Party is the political embodiment of that military objective of transcending ethnic schisms, but it fought the election on two distinct communal fronts. In 2014, FijiFirst had obtained fairly solid support from the Fiji Indian community and around 40 percent of the Indigenous vote, with SODELPA obtaining most of the remainder. (Fraenkel, 2019, p. 3)

That FijiFirst won the elections for a second term in November 2018 was no surprise, while the reduced margin of their victory was in some respects. The party won with a reduced majority, a surprising 50.2 percent of the vote, much lower than expected and gained 27-seats in the 51-seat Parliament.

A key thrust of FijiFirst's campaign, to an even greater extent than in 2014, was to play on deeply entrenched Fiji Indian insecurities. (Fraenkel, 2019, p. 18)

SODELPA with 39.85 percent was the leading opposition party, winning 21-seats and correspondingly rewarded with the five seats which were lost by FijiFirst. The makeup of Parliament was completed by the NFP which won three seats, the same number as in 2014. The other three parties—Unity, HOPE and the Fiji Labour Party—which contested the elections did not make the 5 percent threshold required by the constitution to gain a seat in Parliament.

Although only some 70 percent of the total vote was initially counted due to adverse weather conditions, it was declared a legitimate result by the Fijian Supervisor of Elections, Mohammed Saneem (quoted by Krishnamurthi, 2018f), saying 'We have reached that benchmark, but this does not mean that counting has stopped, this does not mean that we will be counting again, this does not mean that the results will only be for 70 percent of the polling places.' Saneem announced that all the provisional results announced that night were 'actual results from those polling places'. He added that voters were now able to 'understand the dynamic of the results of the election'.

Background

Auckland University of Technology (AUT) hosts a Pacific Media Centre (PMC) which provides close attention to Pacific affairs, in a region that much of the mainstream New Zealand media largely ignores. One PMC postgraduate course—the JOUR810 International Journalism Project involving assessment in partnership with the University of the South Pacific Journalism Programme—focused on the uncertainty of what might happen during the Fiji General Election in 2018. I was dispatched to report on the elections in real-time. AUT (PMC and its *Asia-Pacific Report* publication <https://asiapacificreport.nz>), Radio New Zealand, *Stuff* and Radio Tarana were the only news media outlets from New Zealand present for the elections. According to the AUT project course contract brief, the assignment offered

an opportunity for students to develop a creatively focused journalism research and publication project relevant to the theme of political and experiential journalism and video storytelling based on the Fiji General Election—the second since the return to democracy after the country's

fourth coup in 2006. The project will be based on professional experience of coverage of Fiji with a range of election stories in partnership with Pacific Regional Journalism Programme at the University of the South Pacific (USP) and its media outlet *Wansolwara News*. The students would be based at USP and be attached to both: a) *Asia Pacific Report* at the PMC, and b) *Wansolwara* at USP. (JOUR810 International Journalism Project Contract, 2018)

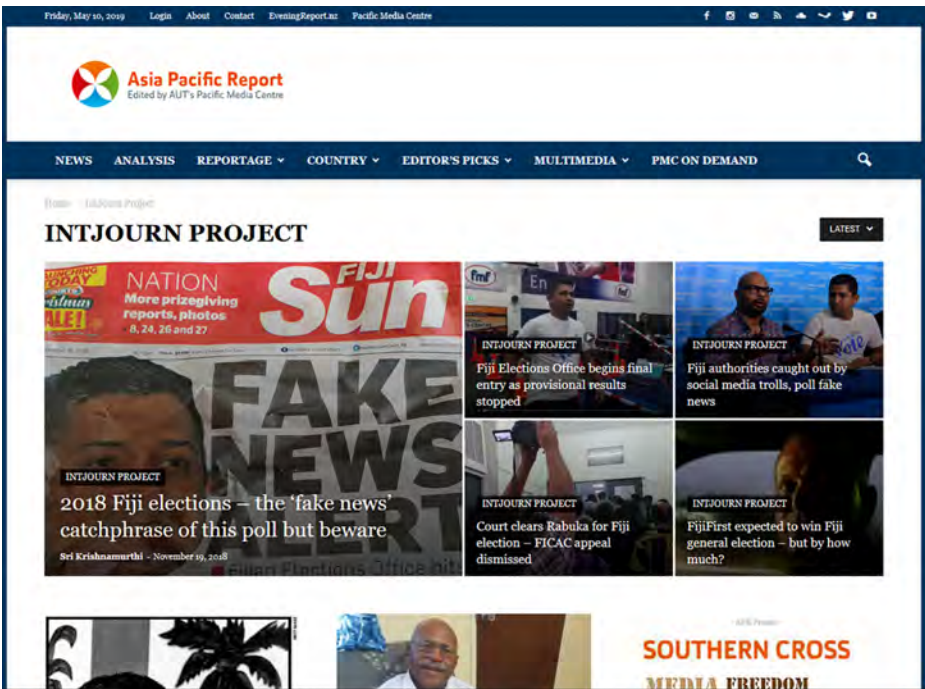


Figure 1: The *Asia Pacific Report* home page of the International Journalism Project Fiji general Election assignment in Semester 2, 2018.

Pre-elections coverage

Under the auspices of the project, I was able to make two visits to Fiji for the first time since the Sitiveni Rabuka staged his inaugural coup on 14 May 1987 for a total of three weeks. The first two-week assignment was spent in Fiji during the mid-semester break in September 2018 (originally the election date was expected during this period) and the third week coincided with the actual election on 14 November 2018.

Fiji has developed much in the 30 years since I last lived there and I migrated to New Zealand where I worked as a journalist for the New Zealand Press Association (NZPA) news agency (which closed in 2011 after 131 years) and other media. Fiji now has a population of 913,537 and is projected to pass the one

million mark by 2025 (Population of Fiji 2020 and Fiji population statistics, n.d.).

There were malls galore in Suva giving a superficial impression of affluence. Just as there were construction sites and cranes towering over the city giving the aura of growth and prosperity. Nothing can be further from the truth as homelessness, poverty, housing shortages and health services were all problematic, but conveniently swept under the carpet during the elections.

In Fiji, 45 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line, more than 250,000 individuals. According to economic surveys over 50 percent of the population lives on less than F\$25 a week and cannot meet their basic needs. The increase over time is apparent—in 1977, 15 percent of the population were living below the poverty rate, in 1991 this increased to 25.2 percent and in 2003 to about 34.4 percent. Professor Biman Prasad argues that the incidence of poverty is now more than 45 percent and approaching 50 percent. (Guadiana, 2016)

That led to the inevitable question of where all the investment money in Fiji was coming from. ‘Fiji now owes over \$500 million to China which amounts to be about 40 percent of all our external debt,’ said the leader of the NFP, Dr Biman Prasad (Krishnamurthi, 2018b). This was dismissed by the Economy Minister, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, as being of little concern because of a World Bank analysis of Fiji’s national debt.

Minister Sayed-Khaiyum said that the World Bank had done a thorough analysis of the national debt and was convinced that it was manageable. (Chinese banks provide 40 percent, 2017).

With that, and issues around landownership, the question of indigeneity and who should be called ‘Fijian’, the scene was set for the second post-coup general election.

Landownership

For as long as I can remember there have been vexed landownership issues in Fiji. These issues have been mainly between the two major ethnic groups, the *iTaukei* and the Fiji-Indians, or Indo-Fijians. Indigenous Fijians (*iTaukei*) believe landownership is their birthright and as such FijiFirst maintained a targeted campaign to appeal to the 60 percent of the Indigenous Fijian population. While assured of Fiji-Indian support it was the split vote of the *iTaukei* that saw the party sweep into government in 2014 and would again in 2018.

The sensitive issue of the abolition of the Great Council of Chiefs (GCC) in 2012, an institution that had been in existence since 1876, involve what was considered an assault on Indigenous rights. Bainimarama said the GCC was abolished because it was considered as not-fit-for-purpose in a multicultural Fiji as

among its ills it maintained the privileges of the old *iTaukei* order. Bainimarama campaigned on both the planks of stability and indigenous landownership, but were the people listening to him or SODELPA and the NFP in greater numbers in 2018?

Indigeneity

While Bainimarama stood on a multicultural platform for all Fijians, Rabuka had always backed Indigenous rights and supported the call for the restoration of the GCC. At the same time, Rabuka wooed the NFP, a predominantly Fiji-Indian party, thereby creating the impression that with the inter-ethnic harmony he was the man of the people.

If SODELPA became the government, he promised:

‘We’ll change back to Fijians for the native Fijians and everybody else goes back to their ethnic identities.’

That switch is, for many ethnic Fijians, the most controversial of all the FijiFirst government’s many policy changes. It is commonly perceived as an attack on Indigenous identity. (Fraenkel, 2019, p. 13)

When I arrived in Fiji for the first time before the election in September, I decided to do pre-election coverage, interviews with leaders of parties and with media outlets, asking them how they intended to cover the elections. However, it was not as easy as that. The contentious *Media Industry Development Decree* (MIDD), which came into force in 2010, needed to be considered because it kept the media cowed with a ‘climate of fear’ (Pareti, 2009; Robie, 2009, 2016, p. 98).

The decree became an Act in 2015 and is a draconian piece of legislation that gives journalists the feeling of having the police or military looking their shoulder constantly, or even listening-in their phone calls. I recalled conversation that I had with Television New Zealand Pacific Affairs reporter Barbara Dreaver on her detention by the authorities on that trip and how she, on one occasion, went back to her hotel room and found her laptop had been tampered with.

The Media Industry Development Authority (MIDA) was established through the MIDD and has the power to enforce the decree and to investigate possible violations. The MIDD also established a separate media tribunal to hear cases referred by the authority, and to impose penalties on journalists whose work is deemed to be against the ‘public interest or public order’. Violations are punishable by a fine of up to FJ\$1,000 (US\$530), or imprisonment of up to two years for journalists; the penalty for any media company that breaches the decree may be as high as FJ\$100,000 (US\$53,000). (Freedom House, 2015)

Mindful that I was on assignment for AUT’s IJP course and the thought of possibly spending time in Suva’s police cells did have an effect of deterring

me from some of the interviews I had originally planned to do. I shared the sentiment of Samisoni Pareti, the *Islands Business* editor who, reflecting on the trauma faced by journalists in Fiji, wrote:

The time for the media in Fiji to take a good look at itself, on how it responds to the constant cycle of coups, is long overdue... Peacefully using the powers of influence it has been entrusted with, the news media can be a force for the good of all in Fiji. (Pareti, 2009, p. 275)

The media law is designed to intimidate and it does that to great effect right through the Fijian news industry. I believe this legislation explains why none of the local media outlets responded to requests for my interviews (with the exception of the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation (FBC) which I did not approach because it is closely tied to the government). I believe the fear and intimidation from years of being conditioned would have prevented them from speaking with me.

Then, on September 6, the government sent an e-mail to the University of the South Pacific requiring an 'Internship (Application for Waiver of Work Permit)' five days after my arrival in Fiji. As this bureaucratic wrangling with the authorities would take longer than the two weeks I would be there, I decided to proceed with my interviews very carefully, continually looking over my shoulder for any sign of trouble.

It was decided best not to approach Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama, his deputy, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, or the military for interviews, due to the sensitivity over a New Zealand journalist attached to the USP's *Wansolwara* newspaper and website for fear of my presence causing problems for the local institution. That ruled out the governing FijiFirst party for interviews, leaving just the option of opposition party leaders, and leaving the government interviews to the partner students at USP (other USP student journalists carried out the FijiFirst interviews in collaboration).

Sitiveni Rabuka, the leader of SODELPA, the largest opposition party, promoted a vision designed to appeal to the Indigenous *i-Taukei* people, the restitution of the 1997 constitution and the re-introduction of the Great Council Chiefs which had been abolished by the Voreqe Bainimarama government in 2012 after being in existence for 136 years.

Gone was the authoritarian military figure of some 31-years ago whom I had seen at the back of Parliament mustering MPs into a truck after his first coup in May 1987. In his place sat a confident, reassuring political leader who had previously been Fiji's elected Prime Minister, serving between 1992 and 1999.

Rabuka said before the elections:

The biggest challenge to multiracialism all over the world is understanding—cross-cultural understanding. As long as we understand each other we

can co-operate—not integrate and not assimilate, but we can harmoniously co-exist. (Quoted in Krishnamurthi, 2018d)

The third of the parties which made Parliament in 2014, and again five years later, was the National Federation Party, which is the oldest surviving political party in Fiji, having been founded in 1968. Led by Dr Biman Prasad a former economics professor from the University of the South Pacific, the party's key policies were a promised 'living wage' of \$5 an hour and a guaranteed \$100-a-tonne sugar price.

The General Election

With the scene being set for the General Election, I returned to Fiji for the event just hours before a 48-hour media blackout period was enforced (RNZ, 2018). There were two major events that may have had a bearing on the outcome of the election, but the impact of both remain unknown today.

The first was a Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption (FICAC) appeal against the dismissal of charges, for allegedly providing a false declaration of assets under the electoral rules, brought against former Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka. In the High Court, Chief Justice Anthony Gates dismissed the appeal, saying the magistrate, a month previously, had been correct in his findings that the prosecution had not been able to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt (Krishnamurthi, 2018e).

Justice Gates added that FICAC took the appeal from the Magistrate's Court to the High Court, as was its right, and vice versa Rabuka could have appealed the decision had it gone against him, thereby cancelling the notion that something was amiss two days before the country went to polls. However, the timing of the appeal could be seen to be vexatious given the hearing was two days before the elections and had Rabuka lost he would not have been able to stand in the elections. Instead he possibly could have spent the rest of the week in prison and had all of his supporters' votes annulled.

More importantly, once again downtown Suva streets could frighteningly have seen a rampaging by the 2,000-strong supporters who sang songs of jubilation on the steps of Parliament when the case was dismissed. The notions of rampaging on the streets of Suva brought back memories of the reality in 1987 (Kristoff, 1987) and then it happened again in 2000 (Marks, 2000).

The question looms of how did that affect Rabuka's personal vote? His candidate number was 530, whereas the Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama had the number 688. In 2014, Fiji introduced a new open list proportional representation (OLPR) system, and each candidate was accorded a number. The people voted for the number rather than a name at the ballot box. As an aside, one of the vagaries of the OLPR system became clear with the election of Alipati Nagata.



Figure 2: The scene outside the High Court in Suva for the FICAC appeal against the dismissal of electoral charges against Sitiveni Rabuka on 12 November 2018.

Among those, FijiFirst's third highest vote-recipient was Alipati Nagata, whose electoral number 668 closely resembled Bainimarama's number 688. Contrary to his subsequent protestations, he secured his seat largely due to erroneously completed ballots. (Fraenkel, 2019, p. 24)

However, had the FICAC appeal been heard earlier or after the elections, would Rabuka and his party have gained more votes?

Fake news and social media

The second issue was the effect of social media during the media blackout period of 48 hours before polling day, which was extended due to voting taking place in areas that were affected by heavy rain. While MIDD hangs over the media like the sword of Damocles, the authorities had no control or did not choose to control social media. Statistics counter Global Stats noted that 85.51 percent of people in Fiji were on Facebook from October 2017 to October 2018. In comparison, Twitter had 1.19 percent for same period (StatcounterGlobalStats, n.d.). The media blackout created a vacuum for those who indulged in the black arts of fake news and the media trolls who were strongly active at the time.

Already, prior to the 2018 election, commentators had discussed the proliferation of blogs and social media and their influence on Fiji's political scene (Foster, 2007; Walsh, 2010) while researchers Patrick Vakaoti and Vanisha Mishra-Vakaoti had analysed the impact on social media after the 2014 election:

Editors who stood up to the regime's intimidation ... were deported ...
Even when formal restrictions were lifted, reporters prudently exercised

deliberate self-censorship for fear of retribution from the regime'. Restrictions on traditional media saw the proliferation of internet-based media sources and discussions. Blogs, social networking sites and social media accounts burgeoned. Although internet-based media platforms were not widely accessible they influenced a shift in the way Fijians, both locally and internationally, digested political information and (at times) misinformation. (Vakaoti & Mishra-Vakaoti, 2015, p. 189)

Ashwin Raj, chairperson of the Media Industry Development Authority (MIDA), admitted being caught out by the ferocity of social media.

'It is a completely new terrain, [during] the last elections [2014] we weren't talking about fake news; social media is now saturated with this stuff,' said Raj during the elections. 'This is now a completely new phenomenon. Obviously, we know who the culprits are, why they are doing it and what they are doing.' (Krishnamurthi, 2018g)

Pacific Freedom Forum (PFF) co-chair Bernadette Carreon accurately told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)

The media is not allowed to publish any information regarding the election and so there have been reports of some fake websites coming up during the blackout and we call it fake news because it could potentially influence the voting. (Murray-Atfield, 2018)

Qorvis and NADRA

The proliferation of fake news and social media trolls was a curious trend given that FijiFirst employed Qorvis, a Washington DC-based Public Relations firm that is an expert in the art of influencing elections in many countries.

An advocate for using online tools for manipulating people, Qorvis was reported on Twitter (according to unaudited financial declarations) as having been paid \$1.9 million for advertising and \$80,000 for social media by FijiFirst for the month of September. The question remains whether FijiFirst exploited social media in an attempt to influence the outcome of the elections? (Cohen & Webb, 2017).

A month after winning the elections, FijiFirst appointed Anne Dunn Baleilevuka as Commissioner of the Online Safety Commission, with a mission to eliminate online safety concerns and passed the *Online Safety Act* which came into force on 1 January 2019.

Another concern was the involvement of NADRA, a Pakistani election management system software company that had been embroiled in controversy because it had been accused of corruption, ballot stuffing, tampering with voter registration and giving ID cards to terrorists (*ABC Pacific Beat*, 2017). However,

an ABC *Pacific Beat* report exposing this did not say where this took place.

As the ballots were being counted, the Fiji Elections Office unwisely announced ‘provisional results’ drawing on results phoned in from around three-quarters of all polling venues, then stopped publicly releasing those results and restarted the count from scratch based on centralisation of official paperwork. Exactly the same practice had been followed in 2014. That method is tailor-made to raise suspicions, and wild allegations swirled on social media about a secret computer program designed to deliver a fraudulent FijiFirst victory. (Fraenkel, 2019, p. 24)

I did not see any evidence of this; and the supervisor of the elections, Mohamed Saneem confirmed that NADRA was not used in the result management system. (*Fiji Sun*, 2018).

Conclusion

Regardless of the rumours, the fact remains that FijiFirst won a close election as the people once again found their voice at the ballot boxes. Then again it is difficult to win a third term on the Treasury benches for any party and the multitude of factors that come into play when the elections are on-hand.

The economy, social welfare, GDP, ethnic-bias, appeal through the charisma of a party leader, policy planks, stability of the Nation are just a few factors that could come into play in 2022. As Jon Fraenkel so eloquently points out:

Political parties long bear the identity that drove their inception. FijiFirst initially emerged as Bainimarama’s personal vehicle for the retention of state power, with the backing of the RFMF. Its incumbency and military backing differentiates it from the previous reformist parties of 1987 and 1999, which never contested an election from office. Yet FijiFirst has not established a political base outside the state, and the military has now been constitutionally affirmed as the guardian of that state. FijiFirst’s inability to forge coalitions, or countenance new alliances, also indicates the precariousness of its hold on office, and left its leaders watching as a new generation of politicians started to emerge on the opposition benches. (Fraenkel, 2019, p. 27)

That ‘inability to forge coalitions’ spells out the dilemma for FijiFirst: to continue to go it alone, or it may have to consider a coalition partner in future and with potential partner party leaders. As it stands, potential leaders for 2022 appeared to me to be lawyer Lynda Tabuya (SODELPA); broadcaster Lenora Qereqeretabua (NFP); and HOPE lawyer Tupou Draunidalo—all impressive politicians, and all most importantly, women.

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5. Social media and Fiji's 2018 national election

Abstract: Political campaigning on social media in Fiji was first witnessed in the 2014 national election. In the Fiji 2018 general election, social media political campaigning had evolved with greater complexity and a wider variety of implications. This research examines and highlights the use of social media by political parties and candidates in the 2018 national elections. This examination provides comparative social media discussions between the two elections; 2014 and 2018. The research uses digital ethnography as a methodology to examine and highlight social media use, by political parties and candidates in Fiji's 2018 national elections. The research found that FijiFirst, as the ruling government, had a significant advantage in Fiji's social media landscape. However, opposition social media efforts and growing Facebook 'reactions' were beginning to challenge FijiFirst's social media dominance.

Keywords: censorship, elections, Facebook, Fiji, politics, social media, voting

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Introduction

SOCIAL media use in political campaigns and engagement has been wide spread around the globe. Some scholars argue that the impact of social media was initially highlighted through the 'Arab Spring' in 2011 (Boulianne, 2015; Gerbaudo, 2012). But President Obama's 2008 online campaign has been seen as one of the earliest moments in the use of social media in politics (Enli, 2017; Boulianne, 2015). Most, if not all, scholars agree that social media in politics has and continues to expand around the globe but its impact or influence is still a matter of great debate (Gil de Zúñiga, Molyneux, & Zheng, 2014; Boulianne, 2015; Gerbaudo, 2012).

Similarly, in the Pacific, social media use in political discussions and engagement has risen dramatically in recent years (Tarai, Finau, Titifanue, & Kant, 2015; Cave, 2012). This can be attributed to the expansion of interconnectivity and increasingly competitive internet costs (Cave, 2012; Minges & Stork, 2015). In PNG, Logan (2013) had followed and documented the increasing use of mobile phones and online political discussions. She argued that a majority of the online interactions revolved around corruption and governance-based issues in PNG, discussed by bloggers and commentators (Logan, 2013). In Vanuatu, Facebook

groups such as Yumi Tok Tok Stret had expanded in 2012 and 2013, amplifying a variety of issues (Cave, 2012). In Solomon Islands, Forum Solomon Islands International was active online as a Facebook group since 2011 and covered political and governance issues (Afuga, 2014). All of these online discussions culminated in some form of political action or reaction from the governing elite.

In Fiji, social media and politics largely stems from the nation's coup history and its subsequent implications on media freedom (Robie, 2001; Robie, 2016; Singh, 2015; Tarai, 2015; Morris, 2017). This was particularly evident shortly after the 2006 coup, where online discussions initially flourished with blogs (Foster, 2007). This was a reaction to the direct media censorship witnessed at the time, when people resorted to blog sites as the alternative means for accessing information (Foster, 2007; Singh, 2015). In a similar pattern, social media political discussions, specifically on Facebook in Fiji have emerged out of ongoing variations of censorship. For instance, direct media censorship in news rooms shortly after the coup of 2006 has evolved into a culture of self-censorship, cultivated by what was known as the *Fiji Media Industry Decree 2010* (now *Media Act*), and Constitutional 'claw back' clauses (Robie, 2016; Morris, 2017). In 2006, there were media censors appointed by the regime at the time to exclude media content that it deemed 'to create disorder'. This form of direct censorship had since been replaced by laws with massive penalties, which fuels a habituated media culture that discourages a free media and investigative journalism. This dynamic of media censorship has coincided with the rise in interconnectivity, internet access and the expansion of digital technologies across the Pacific region (Minges & Stork, 2015; Tarai, 2018).

Social media and political discussions in Fiji began with a Facebook in group called Letters to the Editor Uncensored. Initially, this was an online social media group designed to publish unpublished letters by print media outlets in 2011 (Tarai, 2018). Since then Facebook groups like these have succumbed to the curse of the 'bubble effect', where over time the tendency of likeminded online users to agree and interact only with each other has increased and subsequently online discussions and debate have declined.

However, by 2014 in Fiji's first elections under the 2013 Constitution and its *Electoral Act*, the role of social media in political campaigning was witnessed for the first time in Fiji's political history (Tarai, Finau, Titifanue, & Kant, 2015). It was evident that Facebook is Fiji's most preferred social media platform, compared to Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Facebook Pages and its advertising features were fully maximised by more social media savvy political parties such as FijiFirst, SODELPA and NFP (Tarai et al., 2015). FijiFirst appeared to have a planned social media strategy thanks to its huge financial budget and controversial access to a variety of resources (sometimes including state based resources) (MOG, 2014).

For the 2018 national election the dynamics of social media in Fiji and its use in political campaigning has evolved with greater complexity and detail. As such this research seeks to examine the use of social media by political parties and candidates, in the 2018 national elections, to provide comparative discussions between the two elections of 2014 and 2018.

To achieve this objective the research used Digital Ethnography as a methodology using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

Methodology

Digital Ethnography is an iterative-inductive approach to examining and studying online and offline related dynamics usually through a mediated form of contact (digital technologies) and participant observation (Pink, Horst, Postill, Hjorth, Lewis, & Tacchi, 2016). These dynamics are subject to the context and content of what is being examined and how it is being examined. The research draws on a key principle of digital ethnography which is ‘Reflexivity’, in which knowledge is produced and gathered through encounters with digital users and the observation of facets within the context being examined (Pink et al., 2016). In this regard, qualitative and quantitative methods were used in specific ways to capture the necessary data required to inform the research objective.

Quantitative data was drawn from accessible FacebookCountry data sets and Social Media Analytics Software. Qualitative data involved informal and open ended discussions with willing party members and voters. Participants encountered requested anonymity and informal unstructured discussions. This aspect has become an ongoing implication of Fiji’s fragile and highly polarised political landscape and nature. These methods facilitated a reflexive approach to the data gathered which was coupled with ongoing online observations. In addition to this, trips were undertaken to all of Fiji’s electoral divisions in the lead up to polling day. These included the Eastern division in Ovalau, Macuata in the Northern division, Lautoka—Nadi in the Western division and the Suva-Nausori corridor in the Central division. These trips involved a variety of offline participant observations and approaches that helped inform the examination of digital dynamics in Fiji’s electoral divisions.

Fiji and Facebook

Facebook is Fiji’s most popular and actively engaged social networking site. In the lead up to the polling month of November there were an estimated over 500,000 active Facebook accounts in Fiji (Fiji Audience Insights, 2018). The central division is estimated to have the largest Facebook account audience with over 60 percent of Fiji’s estimated total Facebook users (Fiji Audience Insights, 2018). Around 82 percent of the Facebook access was through a mobile or handheld device, while 18 percent was accessed through immobile devices

Age	13-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+	Total
Estimated accounts	110,000	200,000	120,000	60,000	29,000	15,000	534,000
Percentage	20.60%	37.5%	22.47%	11.24%	5.43%	2.81%	100%

such as desktops (Fiji Audience Insights, 2018). This indicates the increasingly competitive and affordable internet data costs, which have been easily accessed through handheld and mobile devices.

Accessible Facebook data estimates indicate that those within the ages of 21 to 30 constitute the highest number of Facebook accounts at around 37.45 percent of online users in the lead up to the elections (see Table 1). The Fiji Elections Office released registered voters data on 17 September 2018 as shown below. Interestingly, those within the ages of 21 to 30 constituted the highest number of registered voters, at around 24.29 percent. However, it is instructive to note that there are more estimated Facebook accounts than registered voters. At this point in September registrations were continued until the Writ of Elections was issued on 1 October 2018. In addition, it is also evident that there are people in Fiji with multiple accounts. Despite these aspects, the estimates do confirm that the highest registered age group for the elections were the most frequent users of social media.

Age	13-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60-70	71-80	80+	Total
Male	14,263	78,030	76,681	57,599	50,547	27,971	11,434	2,909	319,434
Female	14,177	76,017	72,241	54,393	49,450	30,279	14,140	3,989	314,686
Total	28,440	154,047	148,922	111,992	99,997	58,250	25,574	6,898	634,120
Percentage	4.48%	24.29%	23.48%	17.66%	15.77%	9.19%	4.03%	1.09%	100%

Another interesting aspect about the 21 to 30 age group, is the fact these were those who were born in the years between 1988 and 1997 (see Table 2). The 21 to 30 age group are part of what can be termed as the 'Coups-Constitution' generation, because 1988 was a year after Fiji's first two coups and 1997 was the year that Fiji's 1997 Constitution was promulgated. This period marked the initial political events and continued to have implications on Fiji's media landscape and its vulnerabilities. It also marked a period in which SODELPA leader, political candidate, Fiji's first coup maker and former Prime Minister, Sitiveni Rabuka had significant control of Fiji's political landscape. The 1997 Constitution was abrogated by the coup leader of 2006, FijiFirst Party leader and current Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama. Interestingly, the 'Coups-

Constitution' generation was now being shown the two main former coup leaders, Sitiveni Rabuka and Voreqe Bainimarama, through social media.

Official party pages

There were six political parties competing in the 2018 Fiji national election. These were the Fiji Labour Party (FLP), FijiFirst Party (FFP), HOPE—Humanity, Opportunity, Prosperity, Equality, National Federation Party, Social Democratic Liberal Party Fiji (SODELPA) and the Unity Fiji Party. All of these parties had varying levels of social media presence and engagement depending on financial and technical resources, coupled with expertise. It was evident that only some parties saw social media as a useful platform and had established their presence much earlier with creative patterns of engagement. In order to take a snapshot of this presence and creative patterns of engagement, an analytics tool was used to examine official political party page data from 1 November to 1 December 2018. This period covered two weeks before and after the election day on 14 November 2018. This analytical data does not cover individual candidate pages or platforms, but is restricted to officially listed political party pages only.

Table 3: Analytics data for official political party pages, 2018

Facebook Page	Total fans	Total change (>/< 1000)	Interactions (per 1000 fans)	Sum of reactions	Sum of shares	Sum of comments	Sum of page posts
FijiFirst	110,694	1800	926	76,961	4,652	20,465	132
NFP	34,407	1902	971	24,052	3,363	4,775	97
SODELPA	25,665	2383	1736	32,413	3,694	5,666	78
FLP	12,933	4	8	99	0	2	1
Unity Fiji	7,408	1101	1699	10,128	1,021	538	45
HOPE	3,369	927	1214	3,269	209	125	20

Note: The statistics are between 1 November 2018 - 1 December 2018.

It is important to note that these figures do not necessarily indicate support but some level of interest in the information provided by these pages and their political parties. As such, FijiFirst's official page has had the highest level of interest, gathering over 110,000 interested accounts (see Table 3). It also had the highest sum of reactions (76,961), shares (4652) and comments (20,465). FijiFirst's presence on social media has been extensive, similar to the 2014 national elections. It has a coordinated social media presence across a number of social networking platforms that are not limited to Facebook. These include Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. These social networking sites simultaneously or in a coordinated fashion have amplified FijiFirst's social media campaign-

ing. These high numbers of interested accounts, reactions, shares and comments are a product of a number of circumstances. FijiFirst's budget and financial resource is considerably larger than the rest of the political parties in Fiji. It spends around F\$1.9 million on advertising and a little over F\$80,000 on social media (Krishnamurthi, 2018). From a media marketing and public relations position, FijiFirst has had an advantageous position being in government since 2014, with its party leader being the most publicised public political figure even before the 2014 elections. Without caretaker conventions for a caretaker government to oversee the elections period, the incumbent FijiFirst government has had significant social media and campaigning advantage (MOG, 2014; MOG, 2018).

The National Federation Party's official page was the second highest performing, gathering around 34,407 interested accounts but its sum of reactions (24,052), sum of shares (3363) and comments (4775) were third behind SODELPA and FijiFirst respectively. The NFP has continued to advance its social media focus through Facebook with a number of platforms, such as Twitter and the use of YouTube for documenting events. Its social media presence has been built and advanced over time since the 2014 elections.

SODELPA's official page was the third highest performing, gathering around 25,665 interested accounts, but its sum of reactions (32,413), sum of shares (3694) and comments (5666) was the second highest among all political parties behind FijiFirst. SODELPA's social media presence has carried on from 2014 with a significantly evident level of reactions, shares and comments. This can be attributed to the increasing level of social media engagement of its supporters and critics alike. In addition to this, the party's individual candidate pages (such as Sitiveni Rabuka, Lynda Tabuya, Mosese Bulitavu and Niko Nawai-kula's pages) considerably raised the level of the party's social media presence compared to 2014.

Fiji Labour Party had a listed page during the period examined, which now does not exist online. It had 12,933 interested accounts with very minimal reactions. During that time two other pages emerged under similar names with newly appointed leader Aman Singh being the face of one and former leader Mahendra Chaudry being the face of the other. Fiji Labour Party's social media presence and interaction has been negligible and at times ambiguous.

Unity Fiji gathered 7408 interested accounts during the period examined, with a notable sum of reactions at 10,128. The party's social media and marketing presence was assisted by Party leader Savenaca Narube's opinion pieces published in the media discussing economic issues. These were informed by his experience as the former governor of the Reserve of Fiji. This is was also coupled with the party's experienced marketing members, such as Liga Gukisuva.

HOPE was able to garner an estimated total of 3369 interested accounts with a relatively sizeable sum of reactions at 3269. The party's leader, Tupou

Draunidalo, was a former NFP party member and President in 2014. Her new party initially gathered some level of social media support and engagement. However, the party's social media engagement was marred by controversy and antagonistic implications due heated online debates and exchanges.

Reactions to the party

Facebook increased the number of reaction options to online content in 2015, which allowed users to express 'online emotions' through the use of 'emoji reactions' (McAlone, 2015). These now include 'Like, Love, Haha, Yay, Wow, Sad, and Angry'. The analytics tool utilised was able to assess emoticon reactions of specific political party posts during the period examined (1 November to 1 December, 2018).

Due to the media blackout rules of the elections, which also covered social media, political parties had to either shut down their pages before 12 November or announced they were not going to be posting any online content. Therefore, social media content analysis of reactions in the lead up to polling day ranged from the 1 to 11 November 2018.

Table 4: Top 10 most 'loved' posts before polling day

2018 Ranking	Page name	Reactions - love	Content type
1. 11/10	Lynda Tabuya (SODELPA)	2118	video
2. 11/7	Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka (SODELPA)	1603	photo
3. 11/3	SODELPA	1237	photo
4. 11/3	SODELPA	1130	photo
5. 11/2	Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka (SODELPA)	1118	photo
6. 11/8	Lynda Tabuya (SODELPA)	1023	video
7. 11/4	Lynda Tabuya	994	photo
8. 11/2	FijiFirst	834	video
9. 11/5	Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka (SODELPA)	805	video
10. 11/8	Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka (SODELPA)	683	photo

The most 'Loved'

The top ten most 'Loved' content or posts during this period was collated (Table 4). SODELPA's Lynda Tabuya released an impassioned 2min 37sec video, four days prior to polling day, which became the most 'Loved' content before the day of the elections. The video was viewed over 65,000 times, shared more than 750 times and attracted more than 7000 reactions online, with more than 450 comments. nine out of the top 10 most 'Loved' social media content all belonged to Fiji's largest opposition party—SODELPA. FijiFirst's two hours 43minutes live streamed

video from a Northern Division rally was ranked as the 8th most ‘Loved’ content, which attracted a little over 5500 reactions, with more than 90,000 views and was shared at around 200 times, with more than 2000 comments.

The most ‘Angered’

The top ten social media content which attracted the most ‘Angry’ reactions ranged from November 2-10, 2018. Eight of this top ten content was released by the FijiFirst official page. Interestingly, the most ‘Angered’ content was 8th ranked in the top ten most ‘Loved’ social media content (see Table 5). This was a 2hours 43min live streamed video from a Northern Division rally in Savusavu. This video garnered around 2,498 comments which saw heated exchanges between SODELPA and FijiFirst party supporters.

Table 5: Top 10 most ‘angered’ content

2018 Ranking	Page name	Reactions - angry	Content type
1. 11/2	FijiFirst	217	video
2. 11/5	Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka (SODELPA)	217	video
3. 11/5	FijiFirst	31	video
4. 11/10	FijiFirst	26	photo
5. 11/6	FijiFirst	24	video
6. 11/10	FijiFirst	22	photo
7. 11/9	FijiFirst	21	video
8. 11/10	FijiFirst	21	video
9. 11/8	Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka (SODELPA)	20	photo
10. 11/8	FijiFirst	19	video

The second most ‘Angered’ content was the featured Radio Fiji One, live streamed and live radio broadcasted debate between Rabuka and Bainimarama on 5 November 2018. This debate was one of the most galvanising live debates for viewers, voters and radio listeners. The debate was done in indigenous Fijian between the two leaders, which was viewed over 48,000 times, gathering over 5500 comments (most of which were expressed in real time). While the two leaders were both controversial in their own right, significant anger was levelled at the host, who was accused of being biased and unnecessarily antagonistic towards the opposition party leader, Sitiveni Rabuka. Numerous sentiments expressed in indigenous Fijian also capture the underlying distrust of certain media outlets such as FBC and continues to exemplify Fiji’s skewed media landscape.

The ‘LOL’—‘Laugh out Loud’ emoticon gauges users’ response of laughter and sometimes ridicule directed at specific online content. Out of the top ten most

Table 6: Top 10 most 'LOL' (laughed at) content

2018 Ranking	Page name	Reactions - Haha	Content type
1. 11/2	FijiFirst	340	video
2. 11/1	FijiFirst	262	video
3. 11/10	FijiFirst	244	photo
4. 11/9	FijiFirst	233	photo
5. 11/10	FijiFirst	206	photo
6. 11/4	Mosese Bulitavu	198	photo
7. 11/1	National Federation Party	193	photo
8. 11/6	FijiFirst	189	photo
9. 11/10	Lynda Tabuya	188	video
10. 11/5	Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka	135	video

'laughed' at online content, FijiFirst produced six of the most laughed at social media content. The top five all featured FijiFirst social media content relating to its events and campaigning promises. In fact, interestingly once again the 8th ranked most 'Loved' online content, the most 'Angered' was also the most 'Laughed at' social media post. This was the FijiFirst campaign rally which was live streamed for 2 hours and 43 minutes in Savusavu. The sixth most laughed at content featured SODELPA candidate and Member of Parliament, Mosese Bulitavo ridiculing FijiFirst's campaign rally in Labasa (Northern Division), where he claimed that people merely pretended to support FijiFirst for the free T-shirts and food provided. Rabuka's debate with Bainimarama which attracted a considerable number of angry responses, became the tenth most 'laughed at' social media content, with Tabuya's video which was the most 'Loved' as the ninth 'laughed at' content.

2014 vs 2018 elections

The social media landscape in 2014 was estimated to consist of under 300,000 active accounts (Tarai, Finau, Titifanue, & Kant, 2015) but four years on it has expanded to more than 500,000 accounts. The increasing interconnectivity and affordability of internet costs continues to fuel Fiji's growing social media landscape. In addition to this, the constrained and skewed media landscape continues to make social media an appealing platform for engaging information, despite its credibility and accuracy at times.

Those in their 20s and 30s that were registered for the elections constituted a significant proportion of estimated online users. In 2018, there were around 320,000 Facebook accounts estimated within the ages of 18 to 35 in Fiji. This

indicated that out of the 534,000 estimated total accounts in Fiji, 60 percent were within Fiji's youth policy age of 18 to 35. However in 2014, this age group was estimated to have constituted 70 percent of Fiji's total Facebook population. This decline from 70 to 60 percent can be attributed to the increasing popularity of other social networking sites for much younger users. These social networking sites include Instagram, Snap Chat and TikTok to name a few. For instance, a number of students in the University of the South Pacific, in their late teens, early twenties have revealed that Facebook has become less appealing than other social networking sites. There is seemingly a shift to more 'selfie' and 'fun filter' orientated social networking platforms (Snap Chat and Instagram), with more entertainment features such as edited music clips and videos (TikTok).

In terms of official Facebook pages, FijiFirst's social media audience was the largest in 2018, as it was in 2014. However, it has seemingly downplayed its 'multi page' pattern from 2014, emphasising its official party page more than any of its other Facebook pages. FijiFirst, since 2014 and in 2018, has the most well-resourced social media and marketing campaign (Krishnamurthi, 2018). The political party's reach and interconnected platform has been dominant since 2014. This has been aided by its advantageous political position within state affiliated resources and institutions (MOG, 2018). However, increasingly social media discussions are indicating greater scepticism and frustrations targeted towards FijiFirst. In 2014, there were pockets of cynicism against FijiFirst but this has certainly escalated in the three years leading up to the 2018 elections. The snapshot data of online Angered and LOL Haha emoticon reactions in the lead up to the 14 November election day, reveal a considerable level of cynicism and ridicule towards FijiFirst's social media pronouncements. This is not to say that FijiFirst does not have online support, but its opposing views appear to be more vocal, pronounced and in greater quantity than 2014.

SODELPA's most pronounced and evident social media savvy candidate was Lynda Tabuya. Her social media campaigning presence was evident since the Nadi ATS march in early 2018, where her campaigning team live streamed the event coupled with drone images. The Tabuya team ran offline and online strategies that targeted young voters. This involved sports events such as volleyball matches and concerts, which engaged more weekend participation and youth interest. The team's short informative videos, catchy local tunes and Facebook group strategies brought a new and fresh social media political dynamic. Tabuya's Facebook page had more than 77,000 interested account users and during the campaign period her team acquired one of Fiji's largest Facebook Forums, which had over 100,000 active accounts. Perhaps the biggest evidence of Tabuya's social media prowess was the fact that her short video on 10 November four days before the elections, was the most 'Loved' short video among the compared pages content.

SODELPA as a party gathered a significant social media presence over the

last four years. MPs such as Mosese Bulitavo, Niko Nawaikula, Salote Radrodro and Aseri Radrodro have been known to update a variety of Facebook forums, some of which have more than 100,000 active accounts regularly.

The National Federation party continued to maintain and expand its social media efforts with an added Instagram account and an interactive Twitter account taken on personally by the party leader, Professor Biman Prasad. NFP's social media presence has also been boosted with the well-known local personality Lenora Qereqeretabua who was a candidate and continues to have a notable online following. Smaller political parties' social media efforts were limited due to specific priorities, approaches and areas of focus.

Facebook continues to be the most populated social networking site in Fiji. There have been considerable political discussions that have expanded onto Twitter and produced high quality of debates at times. However, by quantity Facebook still outnumbers all other social networking sites. In addition to this, Facebook groups in Fiji have expanded from its earlier dynamics of small groups like Letters to the Editor Uncensored (LEU) (Tarai, 2018). For instance, groups such as Fiji Exposed Forum, which accommodate more than 140,000 account users, have made media headlines for its claims of exposing government corruption and promoting transparency (Beldi, 2018). Arguably the biggest Facebook group in Fiji is Chat Fiji, which accommodates over 230,000 active accounts. The dynamics of influence in these groups has become increasingly evident with a number of viral videos generated from within these groups (Tarai & Drugunalevu, 2018). Suva as the capital city and the central division at large, continues to have the largest estimated audience than any other area in Fiji. With the Suva-Nausori corridor continuing to increase in population and density, more and more users are logging on from within the central division.

Since 2014, Facebook continues to grow steadily with a variety of new dynamics and complexities. One of these complexities has been brought by the recently instituted *Online Safety Bill*, which has fuelled local concerns about its possible limitations and implications on social media (Tarai, 2018). These dynamics did not limit social media campaigning during the elections because it was enforced in early 2019 (Tarai, January 21, 2019). Social media continues to be a prominent arena for political discussions, debates and campaigning. It is creating more space for citizen engagement and exchange, while providing opposition parties with creative opportunities to challenge FijiFirst's social media dominance.

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6. The New Caledonia independence referendum

What happens now?

Abstract: This article gives an interpretative treatment of the historical record, from France taking possession of New Caledonia in 1853, through to the current Matignon process, assessing indications for coming developments. Focused on the debate over independence, it considers: interests of the French state as both arbitrator and participant in events; relations among the indigenous Melanesian Kanaks, European French *Caldoches*, and smaller ethnic communities; memories of colonial exploitation obstructing progress; the large nickel industry; immigration, and associated minority status of Kanak society—a central problem. It describes the alternation of left and right-wing parties in government in France, with Socialist Party governments commencing moves towards independence, possibly in association with France, and conservative governments moving to countermand those moves. It posits that the parties in New Caledonia have improved their chances of finding a positive outcome through jointly participating in government during 30 years of peace.

Keywords: Caldoche, Kanak, immigration, independence, Matignon Accord, New Caledonia, Noumea Accord, nickel, referendum

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Introduction

THE CONTEST continues in New Caledonia despite the pronounced majority against independence at the referendum on 4 November 2018. In that poll 141,099 French citizens resident in the territory decided on the question: ‘Do you want New Caledonia to accede to full sovereignty and become independent?’ They voted ‘no’ by a margin of nearly 13 percent, yet that did not settle the burning issue of more than 60 years (*RF*, 2018). One reason is that the margin was considered close for a situation in which two large communities, the indigenous Kanaks and European French, needed an agreed, very clear and conclusive outcome. Secondly the rules agreed to by the parties under the 1988 Matignon process permit the Kanaks to obtain two further referendums on independence in the coming four years.

This article provides an interpretative review of the historical record, emphasising

as salient dates: 24 September 1853, when France took possession, and 8 May 1988, which marked the re-election of the French Socialist President François Mitterrand and the outset of the Matignon Accords. It sets out to establish causes and effects of the present-day impasse, identifying contributing factors: conflict held over from a bitter colonial past; the Kanak movement leveraging indigeneity in its competition with the *Caldoche* settler society; the French state attempting to mediate while remaining a contestant for power, its policy on independence fluctuating with the alternation of left or right-wing governments in Paris—which might yet determine a final outcome; the great wealth generated by nickel, and problems linked with it, including immigration where Kanaks have become a dissatisfied minority. A final section views prospects for change in the status quo as being very likely enhanced by the experience of 30 years' peace and co-operation.

Past abuses

A tragedy befell the Melanesian people, the Kanaks of today's New Caledonia in 1853 with the proclamation of France's possession of their land. On the ceremonial occasion, Le Fevre (2013, pp. 42-43) observes there had been no consultation or assent, and chiefs in attendance were excluded from the formalities and signings, 'apparently not even qualified to serve as witnesses'.

Chappell (2003, p. 188) discounts European claims that colonisation brought peace, development and unity of society:

In practice, French colonisation was one of the most extreme cases of native denigration, incarceration and dispossession in Oceania. A frontier of cattle ranches, convict camps, mines and coffee farms moved across the main island of Grande Terre, conquering indigenous resisters and confining them to reserves that amounted to less than ten percent of the land.

The policy was abetted by 19th century theories about race, which held that Melanesians were savages 'incommensurably different' to Europeans and becoming extinct (Le Fevre, 2013, p. 41, p. 305). The colonisers encountered violent resistance, most traumatically during the 1878 Grande Revolte led by the senior chief Attai (Fisher, 2013, p. 29; Le Fevre, 2013, p. 64).

The drive for colonisation operated on several fronts:

- Convict transportation began in 1864, adding 250 souls to 100 free settlers. A total of 30,000 prisoners were transported until the abolition of the practice in 1897.
- Free settler immigration was encouraged, engendering the intractable problem of the eventual outnumbering of the indigenous population.

The 1887 *code de l'indigenat*, in force until 1946, enabled land confiscations outside the protections of metropolitan French law (Le Fevre, 2013, p. 64),

reducing reserves by 57 percent (Le Fevre, 2013, p. 68). Kanaks could not leave reserves without permission and did unpaid labour for public works. Fisher (2013, p. 30-31) provides figures indicating the effects of dislocation and psychological derangement, disease and violent conflict on the Kanak population. This was estimated to be 45,000 in 1860, but reduced to 27,100 in the 1920s, recovering to some 30,000 in 1940 and close to 104,000 in 2019. With increased immigration of Europeans, Polynesians from Wallis and Futuna and Asian labourers from Indonesia, Japan and Vietnam, the approximate Kanak proportion of total population steadily dropped from close to 100 percent in 1850 to 68 percent in 1887, 50 percent in 1956, 46 percent in 1969 and 39 percent by 2018.¹

Le Fevre (2013, p. 52) wrote about the ‘myth of Melanesian collective property’ (quoting Merle, 1995), describing the ancient landscape, with each feature named, denoting pathways of ancestors, *chefferies*, related also to traditional hierarchies of entitlement. In this interpretation, that lay of the land and custom was misunderstood, or wilfully misconstrued by French officials as a simple ownership in common. There were arbitrary seizures and colonial authorities took it on themselves to prescribe certain lands for tribes, the *tribus*, as their reserves.

The discovery of nickel in 1874 brought great wealth and opportunity to New Caledonia, with per capita Gross Domestic Product now close to Australia’s, but also brought major environmental, industrial and political problems, especially associated with more people being brought in and large-scale expansion.

The roots of present-day distrust—‘memories of injustice, exploitation and oppression which often remain strong in local tradition’ (Henningham, 1991, p. 28)—grew out of 19th century colonialism. Confronted by aggressive and expropriative strangers the Kanaks struggled to resist through to the cultural awakening and impactful political mobilisations of the latter 20th century.

Shock of war and post-war reforms

The Kanak population fell to its smallest number around 1930. The French-owned company *Société Le Nickel* generated more migration (Fisher, 2013, p. 29) and provided rich investment opportunities for settlers, notably the ‘fifty families’² seen as a thriving local bourgeoisie, itself increasingly interested in self-government though always ‘within the Republic.’ As war loomed, Australian, British and New Zealand governments diverted exports of the strategic mineral away from Japan, installed military facilities in the South Pacific, including Noumea, and assisted the Gaullist Free French to establish control.

New Caledonia’s occupation by up to 100,000 United States and New Zealand troops gave the same jolt and expansion as in Honiara, Port Vila or Townsville. The famous ‘casual generosity’ of the GIs, many black and independent enough to destroy ideas about genetic servitude, changed minds. Kanaks ‘experienced what it was like to be treated as relative human equals, to be paid fair wages for

work, and travel freely outside of a reservation’— with complaints from settlers about a new ‘arrogance’ among ‘natives’ (Le Fevre, 2013, p. 74-76).

New Caledonia shared in the global post-war decolonisation movement. A multi-racial reform party, the Union Caledonienne (UC) dominated the Territorial Assembly until after 1969; the *code de l’indigenat* went, and Kanaks had full French citizenship by 1958. French legislation under a leftist government, a *loi-cadre*, allocated restricted powers to the colonial legislature. The UC supported by Kanaks and poor white or Asian workers, attempted reforms including the still-popular social security system, *La Cafat* (<https://www.cafat.nc/>). In reaction, expatriate or settler groups rioted in Noumea in 1955 and 1958, demanding removal of the UC and there were bomb attacks in 1962 after France’s loss of Algeria (Chappell, 2003, p. 190).

Shock of recolonisation

On his return to power in 1958, De Gaulle offered the French colonies independence with no money from France, or incorporation in a greater French community. Confidence in the system was strong enough that enrolled New Caledonian voters opted for ‘France’ by 98 percent in the 1958 referendum (Fisher, 2013, p. 50). France then imposed a systematic recolonisation (Chappell, 2003, p. 188), commencing a contest between right and left-wing intentions for New Caledonia through to this day. Chappell (2003, p. 190) documents the Gaullist High Commissioner, Laurent Pechoux, removing powers of the elected colonial government—initially control of the civil service, police and radio station. The 1963 constitutional law, *loi Jacquinet* (Chappell, 2003, p. 191; Fisher, 2013, p. 56), abolished the positions of colonial Ministers and relegated the legislature to consultative status only.

The immediate reasons for this policy, which predictably caused bitter, long-term resistance, were that the French government was determined to conduct nuclear testing in the South Pacific, following the loss of testing ranges in Algeria and would not ‘give a megaphone’ to possible opponents (Steinmetz in Frediere, 2018; Duffield, 2018). Such testing by the Americans and British had already drawn strong opposition (Henningham, 1991, p. 40; Maclellan, 2017; Duffield 2018a). The Gaullist project fitted traditional colonial policy: France could recover glory as an independent nuclear power, demonstrating global influence through its overseas dependencies. French nationals looking to gain fortunes or perform good works would be protected (Le Fevre, 2013, p. 18; Fisher, 2013, p. 85). Economic growth brought some share of advantages to all; missionaries, including many who strove to help indigenes, received validation through the continuing existence of large Christian congregations.

Nickel production virtually tripled from 1967 to 1971 (Fisher, 2013: 57), with the immigrant population increasing by 20 percent. As 2000 Algerian *pied noirs*

re-settled in New Caledonia, Chappell (2003, p. 199) notes that ‘attitudes’ also arrived; former colonials could bring resentments and rejection of multi-cultural ideas. Migrants received special agency assistance and Prime Minister Pierre Messmer wrote his famous 1972 memorandum declaring that indigenous nationalism should be neutralised by creating a non-indigenous majority, through ‘an operation of overseas colonisation’ (Chappell, 2003, p. 191; Fisher, 2013, p. 56). ‘Breed whites,’ said the Noumea Mayor Roger Laroque (Chappell, 2003, p. 191).

France and instability in the Pacific region

French governments seeking to uphold France’s strategic, political, cultural and economic prominence (Henningham, 1991, pp. 21-23) became a source of instability in the South Pacific after 1960. The inter-governmental Melanesian Spearhead Group, supporting and including the Kanaks, obtained re-inscription of France by the United Nations Decolonisation Committee. That diplomatic check exhibited the phenomenon of newly independent states pursuing their own interests. It reflected extensive conflict over the nuclear tests which continued until 1996 and aggravated relations with Australia and New Zealand. Matters worsened after the bombing of the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior* on 10 July 1985 in Auckland, an enactment of the ‘deep state’ that no French government would completely disown, delivering only very recalcitrant apologies over time. The sour exit of the French from Vanuatu also drew opprobrium (Fisher, 2013, pp. 53-55; Le Fevre, 2013, p. 5). Relations recovered after 1988, notably after the end of nuclear tests in 1996.

Protest and the *Évènements*

The year 1969 saw the bitter realisation by Melanesians that they had lost majority status in the general population, ascribing it to a deliberate manipulation of numbers (Henningham, 1991, p. 122), a moment seen by Chappell (2003:200) as a turning point for Kanak awakening: ‘The outnumbered Kanak now had to assert their indigeneity as leverage, but calls for Kanak independence—tied to socialism—polarised politics and ethnic relations.’ A positive sense of Kanak solidarity had been generated by the cultural revival movement under the inspired leadership of Jean-Marie Tjibaou, but now resistance and response would bring the territory close to civil war.

Returning youth leaders who had experienced the Paris May revolution, like Nidoish Naisseline from a chiefly family in the Loyalty Islands, ran into hard-line suppression of their protests (Chappell, 2003, pp. 193-97). Kanak groups began a decade of direct action: civil disobedience, hunger strikes, circulating tracts, challenging colour bars at chic restaurants or hotels and pervasive graffiti (Chappell, 2003, p. 198). Some made contact with revolutionary regimes in Cuba or Libya.

This change ended the liberal period that had seen gradual progress towards independence. The multi-cultural *UC* lost most of its non-indigenous membership and support to the conservative party, *Le Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la France (RPCR)*, headed by Jacques Lafleur, which won the 1977 territorial elections.

Most white Caledonians and other immigrants, fearing exclusion, fled towards the right, and loyalists were already manipulating dependent Tahitians and Wallisians into violent action against pro-independence Kanak (Chappell, 2003, p. 200).

Jean-Marie Tjibaou's independentist front briefly came into office in 1982 with support from a break-away group from the loyalist majority, his accession once again provoking violent actions by right-wing gangs. Hope of a turn-around arose with the election of the Socialist Party President François Mitterrand in 1981 (Chappell, 2003, p. 200), but rising conflict obstructed dialogue.

Armed clashes called *les Évènements* started in 1984 in a setting of 'almost intolerable tension and violence' (Fisher, p. 61). In September the Kanak political groups formed the socialist united front, the *Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste (FLNKS)*, declaring plans for a government in exile, flying the new Kanaky flag and calling a boycott on elections set for November 18. The *Évènements* are seen as having started with the smashing of a ballot box by the activist Éloi Machoro on election day (Fisher, 2013, p. 61). One month later, he organised the occupation of a large land-holding where he was killed by a police sniper. Kanaks had burned down polling stations and erected road-blocks, where fatal exchanges took place with anti-independentists, including the ambush killing of two brothers of Tjibaou with eight other Kanaks (Fisher, 2013, p. 61). Clashes went on for more than two years.

Architecture of a peace

From the 1950s, French Socialist Party governments concentrated on building relationships and constructing a deal that might enable a peaceful independence, usually in a form of association with France. They produced structures and principles ultimately followed in the Matignon process. Conservative governments, under De Gaulle and later Chirac, would stop the process and undo the work done. Their local affiliates participated in negotiations when they were happening, but also waited for opportunities to set things back.

Socialist Party initiatives for settlement

The 1956 *loi-cadre* (under Overseas Territories Minister Gaston Defferre) transferred certain powers to elected assemblies, enabling the *UC's* experiment in multicultural government. While mostly rescinded during the Gaullist

recolonisation, it did foreshadow the current allocation of all but five key powers to the territorial legislature (defence, foreign affairs, justice, law and order, and currency). Eventual transfer of those powers now defines the independence debate.

In July 1983, the Minister, Georges Lemoine, convened all parties in France, proposing the 1984 elections ahead of a five-year lead-up to a vote on independence. It anticipated the Matignon formula, delay before a referendum and mutual recognition contained in the Matignon accords. Kanaks would receive acknowledgement of an ‘innate and active right to independence,’ and would accept all New Caledonians taking part in the decision-making (Fisher, 2013, p. 60). Also anticipating Matignon, the agreement foundered on disagreements over the electoral list, Kanaks demanding stiff residential voter qualifications to off-set their minority status.

The August 1985 Fabius-Pisani law, made as the Socialist Party faced defeat in the forthcoming French elections, offered independence in association with France under Article 88 of the French Constitution, an untried device for affiliation of a partner state. A similar proposal is under discussion in 2019. The plan delineated three provinces where Kanak and Caldoche parties could respectively govern and exercise substantial powers, in effect a power-sharing arrangement carried into the later accords. It envisaged a vote the following year by residents with three years standing, on a limited independence, with France retaining central powers like defence and security. The three-year rule would become an ongoing sticking point (Fisher, 2013, p. 60; Chappell, 2003, p. 200).

Shock of the Chirac premiership 1986-88 and deaths on Ouvéa Island

The notoriously combative conservative French politician Jacques Chirac was Prime Minister from 1986-88, during which time he attempted an immediate closing down on independence for New Caledonia. Concurrently campaigning for election as President of France in 1988 and working with the French-loyalist *RPCR*, he set up the referendum on independence in 1987, open to three-year residents. The poll was boycotted by Kanaks, produced a 98.3 percent ‘no’ on a 59 percent turn-out of registered electors. A second statute initiated moves towards removing Kanak citizens’ Customary legal status which provided preferential access to joint acquisitions of reserve land (Bernigaud in Duffield, 2018). A garrison of 6,000 troops fanned out among the Kanak villages, to keep order and eventually help with development projects, but this exacerbated dissent.

Chirac’s disruption of the evolving search for a settlement abruptly ended with the hostage-taking crisis and military action on Ouvéa Island, in which six police and 19 Kanak fighters were killed. Both Mitterrand and Chirac had approved the armed response to free the hostages, on 5 May 1988, between the two voting rounds in their election. Mitterrand won and called a general election which returned his

Socialists to power. Exhausted political leaders were anxious to talk once the incoming Prime Minister, Michel Rocard, could get proceedings underway.

The Matignon and Noumea Accords

The conference at the Matignon Palace was acclaimed as deft statecraft which brought Lafleur and Tjibaou together after five years. The agreement and the supporting Oudinot pact, drew on the principles established in previous attempts, under Defferre, Lemoine and Fabius-Pisani. It committed both sides to respecting the right of the other to live in New Caledonia (Bernigaud in Duffield, 2018). There would be a referendum for independence after a decade.

Recognising Kanak anxieties about population, a separate electoral roll for territory voting would use long-term residency: those enrolled in 1988 could vote in 1998. The three provinces plan would continue, giving *Caldoche* interests in the South based on Noumea and giving Kanak leaders formal power in the North province and Loyalty Islands, including significant options for engagement in the nickel industry. The provinces selected members for a legislative Congress, which emerged with a small anti-independentist majority. France would fund an ambitious economic development programme in Kanak-held areas and expanded education and training. The Accord was signed in Paris on 21 August 1988, approved in a national referendum by 80 percent, on a 37 percent voter turnout.

The Matignon Accord did not obliterate tensions and unresolved conflicts. Where the Évènements had dissuaded immigration, the new era brought minerals expansion and revived it. Tjibaou and his deputy, *Yeiwéné Yeiwéné*, were assassinated in 1989 by a follower claiming they had conceded too much. LaFleur died in 2010. Part of the agreement had been that the French government would buy his shareholding in the nickel company *Société Minière du Sud Pacifique* for the Northern province—valued at US\$21.25 million in 1990 (Fisher, 2013, p. 67). The arrangement demonstrated much about the strategic importance of nickel, the actual great wealth of holdings and power among the *Caldoche* elite, its entrenched position in the institutions as well as a sense of social responsibility and disparities of wealth and opportunity which the transfer to the Kanak dominated province was meant to help alleviate.

The successor agreement, the 1998 Noumea Accord was brokered by yet another Socialist premier, Lionel Jospin, and approved by a referendum in New Caledonia by 72 percent with 74 percent of eligible voters taking part. It extended the time limit for the independence referendum by another 20 years. As part of economic rebalancing, it dealt extensively with the allocation of nickel resources geographically and among companies and institutions, including provincial governments, producing an accompanying industry agreement, the Bercy accord. The referendum plan contained a safety valve feature whereby if the first vote was ‘no’ (as it was) there was provision for two more referenda in

2020 and 2022. The French state began handing over all government powers save the ‘five.’ Under terms of a new Organic law, New Caledonia received the status of an associated country able to enact separate legislation, *lois du pays*, overseen by France’s Constitutional Council not its government. It affirmed use of a separate electoral list recognising ancestral or long-term residency (Fisher, 2013, pp. 69-71; Robertson, 2018). Some excluded residents have unsuccessfully appealed to international tribunals or the United Nations.

Commentaries and the *Lendemain*—prospects for the future

The Macron government convened new Paris negotiations late in 2017 to set in motion the November 2018 referendum. The 20 years’ interregnum since the Matignon talks produced peaceful, but insecure, political relations. Two broad, opposing camps made a loose orthodoxy: Kanak, independentist, poorer, left wing versus European, anti-independence, richer and right wing. Both sides had divisions, the anti-independentists in particular forming new parties, like *Caledonie Ensemble*, still loyalist, but determinedly multi-racial—taking most of the *RPCR* support base. Collaboration in government under the Accord with Ministers coming from both the majority and minority had bolstered civility. Political violence and racist outbursts subsided markedly.

Yet both sides became stubborn when debating the dangerous question of who could vote. It was agreed that those on the 1988 rolls and their descendants would qualify, with other conditions available to confirm enrolment, such as long-term residency tests or votes for Kanaks living abroad. The insistence on beginning at 1988, already excluding many residents of 14 or more years’ standing, is bound to become less sustainable as time progresses. Anti-independentists unsuccessfully appealed to a constitutional court against the 1988-plus-10-years rule, citing wording in the Accord that might have moved the residency cut-off date from 1998 to 2004 (Fisher, 2013, pp. 101-102).

Kanak demands that all citizens with *custom* status should automatically be enrolled, and enrolment procedures simplified, ended in compromise. With 25,000 Kanaks missing from the special roll, 11,000 were automatically inscribed from the general, French national roll (Robertson, 2018). A United Nations monitoring commission criticised the ‘unreliable’ state of files and poor communication with electors by local government offices managing the poll, specifically at Noumea and Dumbea, strongly anti-independence areas (UN, 2018). The rolls require work and will cause more disputes.

Nickel industry

New Caledonia is renowned as the world’s fifth largest producer, pushing ahead with new mines and processing facilities. Nickel provides 80 percent of territory export earnings. Fisher (2013, p. 129) noted some of the difficulties that could arise from large-scale engineering and mining works:

Even one major nickel plant in an island economy is a massive undertaking, involving billions of dollars, complex technological and metallurgical challenges, labour concerns, social and environmental factors... Even for the French State, the projects are enormous ... Added to that is the fact that the relatively inexperienced New Caledonian Government, and provincial administrations, under their new-found powers from the 1998 Noumea Accord, are tackling these large projects in their first years of existence, while developing legislative frameworks along the way.

Complex ownership and financing arrangements add to conflicts over environmentally damaging strip-mining projects, with seven main mines now in long-term production or coming into operation. The Kanak parties have a major political stake in the local public sector company *Société Territoriale Calédonienne de Participation Industrielle (STPCI)*, which acquired 30 percent of SLN under the Accords. They want revenue to tackle poor housing, employment, public education and general health. Commercial interests from Australia, Canada and Japan have large holdings, but French interests dominate, predominantly the state-owned Eramet corporation.

Interests of the French state

The French state in its awkward position as arbiter, stake-holder and participant in the politics of New Caledonia and enforcer of law and order would much prefer to stay there. The national government continues to commit more than US\$1.435-billion annually to New Caledonia (Fisher, 2013, p. 125; Henningham, 1991, p. 22) while insisting (Girardin in *LNC*, 2019) that any outcomes will respect an abstract local ‘public interest’. It retains substantial control in the disputed policy areas of immigration and the nickel industry, where French law may take precedence, for example as retained external powers, or a duty to keep strategic reserves (Chappell, 2003, p. 191), or where the Accords are silent or found to be ambiguous.

It operates a large military command from Noumea, seeing national interest in its role as a guarantor of security in the South Pacific and Western ally—a strategic bulwark to keep out prospective new entrants like China. The military space programme is taking over from nuclear testing. The tradition of protecting French citizens remains strong. There are 278,000 in New Caledonia, up to one-third from metropolitan France. Adding to the wealth produced by nickel is the windfall of the huge, expanded Exclusive Economic Zone acquired by France, through its overseas territories, under the 1982 United Nations Law of the Sea Convention (<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/countries-with-the-largest-exclusive-economic-zones.html>). A large section extending West from Grande Terre contains hydrocarbons, not yet thoroughly surveyed. The Accords allocate prime control to New Caledonia, but leave space for interpretation over

the use of EEZ resources (Fisher, 2013, pp. 125-6; Henningham 1991, p. 22). Interest in New Caledonia in metropolitan France may be sluggish, as with the low voter turnout in 1988 (Duffield, 2018b), but might readily be activated as in the past by any return to violence, or a perceived abandonment of rich natural wealth to a potentially weak and fickle independent state.

Public servants—valuable resources and subject of discord

Use of European French functionaries remains important to effective governance, but is taking up prime jobs and adding to the population imbalance. Independentists must continue trusting the professional detachment of, for example, those working for the Kanak-dominated Northern province government. Similarly, nickel has brought in highly-skilled staff. Whatever the political impacts of immigration, the skills and technology transfer are widely promoted as essential, at least until Kanak personnel can be brought up through education and training schemes. Those are provided especially under the Accords, but measures of school performance and outcomes of training programmes have lagged and change will require time (Fisher, 2013, pp. 141-43).

The armed forces, police and paramilitary Gendarmerie make up a large ‘French’ presence with unfortunate histories of conflict, mainly with Kanaks. Since the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing (Robie, 2005) and the New Caledonia *Évènements* (see Robie, 1989—a comprehensive chronicle including investigative sections also on the fate of the Greenpeace ship), questions will be raised about the quality and discipline of these forces, and their control under a new government. The police presence remains widely valued and is considered essential, though with reservations about the numbers fielded to meet possible disturbances, as during the 2018 referendum. Tension exists in districts prone to violent disturbances where police will maintain check-points.

An indicative factor in the debate over immigration, population and independence is the presence in New Caledonia of more than 6000 retired French civil servants drawing premiums up to 175 percent on already substantial pensions, which are available to state retirees after service anywhere in France or its dependencies if they go to live in an overseas territory. This scheme to boost the numbers of an educated European population is expensive and will be phased out from 2027 (Fisher, pp. 117-19). Such premiums are not available to New Caledonia government employees and Kanak representatives propose cancelling them after independence (Duffield, 2018c).

Social relations and electoral politics—what future?

Consensus can be imagined around the notion of an independence in association with France, though independentists will want the five residual powers always assumed to be on offer in the 2018 referendum. They proposed the inclusion of the

qualifying expression ‘full sovereignty’ with the connotative, near-absolute ‘independent’ in the referendum question (Dayant, 2018). That is an instance of the Kanak leadership’s focused political intent, a level of sophistication doubted as opinion polls suggested a much bigger ‘no’ vote in 2018. The result indicated a more viable contest. It undermined the attempted knock-out blow against independence by the *RPCR* under Pierre Frogier, who asked the French government to scrap further referenda as foregone conclusions, a request the government refused (Frédière & Poisson, 2018). The voting proved the Kanak organisation could produce a big indigenous vote strongly for ‘yes’ with significant support beyond the Kanak population. It signalled that a community-based ‘get-out-the-vote’ campaign would reliably deliver big numbers with scope for a second type of operation to extend the movement’s appeal into a wider community.

Much will depend on the Kanak assessment of their position and any chances to get an additional net seven-percent, and reverse the 2018 referendum result, by 2022. Demands for electoral reform might see more Kanaks enrolled, but not enough to succeed if such calls are confined to a single minority community. Independence strategists might consider census data which in recent years has included growing numbers of people who might be approached for support, that is, those who describe themselves as neither Kanak nor European, but as New Caledonian, mixed race, undisclosed or other. It might be false encouragement, as the Kanak share of the population continues to decline in the face of immigration. Many of those who identify themselves as ‘mixed race’ are likely to be Wallisians, who make up nearly nine percent of the population and are not allied with the Kanaks. Additional categories would also contain more Europeans (Fisher 2013, pp.109-111, 117). However it might also indicate a possible reservoir of residual support, from individuals and small groups, including younger voters normally more sympathetic towards independence.

The FLNKS and associated bodies face a choice: to continue with the aspiration of a pre-1853 Kanaky, basing their power on cultural and ethnic-nationalist solidarity; or to build on the two-part offering, independence and full sovereignty in association, which might attract many non-Kanaks. The new state might be a Kanaky headed by Kanaks instead of by French Europeans, but in full association with the demanding modern world. Taking such a product to prospective new voters would mean venturing further into the Western system of campaign politicking which so far has been more the preserve of the anti-independence camp. The *Caldoche* parties also may campaign to get additional support from demographic niches, though the figures suggest that hopes of a mass cross-over of Kanaks voting ‘no’ had no substance.

An important option for change would be to resolve the political deadlock between the Kanak population and the *Caldoches*. The participation of both sides in making an electoral list that excluded ‘newcomers’ implied some form

of common interest or, however reluctantly, mutual recognition. Locally born Europeans make up perhaps 10 percent of total population (Fisher, 2013, p. 31, p. 109). *Caldoche* parties have co-operated with Kanaks in government, but have also taken part in unsuccessful moves to obtain a one sided settlement from a succession of French governments. These have included Laflueur's consorting with Chirac on the 1987 referendum, his moves to head-off a referendum in 1998 (Fisher, 2013, p. 69) and Frogier's bid to prevent referenda in 2020 or 2022. The common ground is further fractured by the long-term memory of colonial exploitation such as the *code de l'indigenat*.

Resident Europeans are able to provide business and professional experience and knowledge of modern statecraft or law essential to maintaining the islands' economy – although those could be expatriates rather than permanently ensconced *Caldoches*. A Kanak response is that this is part of a level exchange, as expressed by Andre Qaeze Ihnim, speaking for the FLNKS: 'We have provided the country, the land. French people have brought technology and expertise, and we must cooperate' (Duffield, 2018). The practice of French law that endorses customary rights of Kanaks to land should help arguments that ownership inheres in original occupation of the islands (Berginaud in Duffield, 2018).

The Kanak movement interprets the Accords process as a preparation for independence. It is concerned that continuing with the status quo could bring lasting alienation of a large proportion of the populace. Andre Qaeze Ihnim presents the overall Kanak position as being adamant on achieving independence and refusing to concede the country or become 'extinct'. (Chappell, 2003, p. 122). With sporadic disturbances even after the electoral calm of 2018 (Duffield, 2018d), there is a drive to prevent a revival of violence:

We talk to our young people. Some people say we want the French to go home, and we ask them, if you would do it like that, then what would you do? They are not angry for nothing, they may give expression to anger in their hearts and are always asked what would they do otherwise. (Duffield, 2018c)

He avers that *indépendentists* have demonstrated a will to achieve their objectives through productive dialogue:

We have been following the route laid out when our leaders signed the documents in 1988, as a kind of guideline to go on to sovereignty and independence. We recognised the differences between ideology and reality, and have spent 30 years getting experience in managing the country—and showing that now we are ready. That is our understanding of what our leaders signed on to. We would want to manage through consultation and a kind of negotiation, and would say (to the French), if you want to stay in the country, for it to be managed like this, then come and stay ... We

are not against them. We just ask that now we can ... share and manage it together (Duffield, 2018).

That resolution on finding future accord is echoed on all sides, including French President Emmanuel Macron who said: 'The only way to go now is through dialogue.' (Duffield, 2018d). There have been ameliorating gestures like the support from Frogier for flying the two flags together; or from the anti-independence, former President of New Caledonia Philippe *Gomès*, who said: 'When there was no dialogue there was violence; when there was dialogue it enabled keeping the peace (Duffield, 2018c).'

The prospectus bodes for a certain reversal of status common in the history of decolonisation generally. *Caldoche* interests would benefit from and might always feel the need for full legitimacy in the country if wanting to continue there and in positions of leadership. The Kanak population has an indelible status of original ownership, deep and continuous cultural tradition in place, their ancient *chefferies* marking out the land, and the fact of never having surrendered sovereignty. Settlers, unless hailing from some privileged lineage in France, might base a claim on forebears arriving in the 19th century, not always something to be proud of in the present era. Noting the adage of sociology that a status is achieved when the aspirant is accepted by holders of that elusive status, it is ultimately for Kanaks to finally make *Calédoniennes* of the *Caldoches*. It is theirs to confer, perhaps by far their strongest hand in coming encounters.

New Caledonia has almost arrived at the *lendemain*, the day after the final vote. The November 2018 referendum demonstrated the existence of a relatively even divide within the society, and another referendum is to be scheduled under law for two years' time. The situation on the ground is characterised by the existence of the two main communities, Kanak and French, in an uneasy intentional harmony, but there are also indications of the possibility of an as-yet uncharted multi-culturalism.

Other facts to consider include the high stakes element of the rich economy based on nickel and prospective additional resources under the sea; immigration, especially when linked to the nickel industry which has been weakening the position of the indigenous Kanaks; and the traditional strategic interest of the French state in maintaining its foothold in the South Pacific. That interest contradicts, complicates, and renders suspect the role of France as a broker in the independence debate. History has found New Caledonia's future being determined by alternating left-wing and right-wing French governments, the former interested in organising pathways to independence, the latter often trying to stop the process. Relationships among all these interests continue unresolved, but the peaceful interregnum since the Matignon Accord was signed in 1988, and the will for dialogue, are a positive omen for the future.

Notes

1. A break-down of community numbers in the New Caledonia population drawing on census figures is given in Fisher, 2013, p. 107
2. Influential families including Ballande, Barrau, Bernheim, Higginson, Marchand, Lafleur, Pentecost (Fisher, 2013, p. 29)

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SPECIAL REPORT

Independence for Kanaky

A media and political stalemate or a 'three strikes' Frexit challenge?

Abstract: The French-ruled territory of New Caledonia, or Kanaky, as Indigenous pro-independence campaigners call their cigar-shaped islands, voted on their political future on 4 November 2018 amid controversy and tension. This was an historic vote on independence in a 'three-strikes' scenario in the territory ruled by France since 1853, originally as a penal colony for convicts and political dissidents. In the end, the vote was remarkably close, reflecting the success of the pro-independence Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) in mobilising voters, particularly the youth. The referendum choice was simple and stark. Voters simply had to respond 'yes' or 'no' to the question: 'Do you want New Caledonia to attain full sovereignty and become independent?' In spite of prophecies of an overwhelming negative vote, the 'no' response slipped to a 56.4 percent vote while the 'yes' vote wrested a credible 43.6 percent share with a record turnout of almost 81 percent. New Caledonia is expected to face two further votes on the independence question in 2020 and 2022. The author of this article reported as a journalist on an uprising against French rule in the 1980s, known by the euphemism '*les Évènements*' ('*the Events*'). He returned there three decades later as an academic to bear witness to the vote and examine the role of digital media and youth. This article reflects on his impressions of the result, democracy and the future.

Keywords: decolonisation, history, media freedom, New Caledonia, Pacific journalism, Pacific media, referendum, reflections, South Pacific studies

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Introduction: Painful memories

A PHOTOGRAPHER little known outside her native New Caledonia died on 16 February 2019 and her passing barely raised a ripple across the Pacific. She was 75. Yet Louise Takamatsu was a heroine. She took one of the most iconic political photos of the 20th century decolonisation struggles in the South Pacific. On 18 November 1984, Takamatsu, then a 34-year-old secretary working in the Maire (town hall) of Canala and a stringer for the



Figure 1: Referendum posters outside the Hotel de Ville, Nouméa, in November 2018.

French territory’s only daily newspaper, *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes*, scored a scoop. On her trusty Canon, she captured an extraordinary image of Kanak pro-independence leader Éloi Machoro splitting a ballot box in half with an axe in the township on the East Coast of La Grand Terre island in protest against French territorial elections widely regarded as a sham by the indigenous Kanak people. This photo and others of Machoro supporters burning ballot papers in the opening salvo of an ‘active boycott’ of the elections were published around the world (Louise Takamatsu, 2019; Robie, 1988, 1989a).

I was in New Caledonia at the time bearing witness and although I missed the actual moment of the axing of the urn, I took photos of Machoro and his axe shortly before and also of the burning of the ballot papers. These photos of protest became symbolic around the world for the Kanak claim to self-determination and sovereignty along with my own pictures of the ballot box embers featuring on the cover of the regional *Islands Business* news magazine (Robie, 1984, 1989a, p. 117).

The following month, on 5 December 1984, 10 unarmed Kanak activists were brutally murdered by mixed-race settlers in an ambush as they drove home through the forest from



Figure 2: The iconic image of Éloi Machoro axing the ballot box at Canala, New Caledonia, 18 November 1984.

Hienghène to the village of Tiendanite. I was present at the village funeral three days later, one of the most harrowing moments of my life (Robie, 1989b). The victims, most of the village's menfolk, were buried in a single line with their 'caskets draped in blood-red, blue and green bands and [the] golden orb of the Kanaky flag, and frangipani and hibiscus blooms' (1989b, p. 110). Their justice was denied—a clan of six *métis* was arrested, charged with murder and then freed after the charges were dropped two years later on spurious 'self-defence' grounds (Chanter, 1998, p. 15; Maume, 2018a).

Ten graves in Tiendanite's cemetery today remind the villagers of the night a massacre cut down most of their menfolk—and their denial of justice. At Wan'yaat ... the ambushed trucks are mounted in concrete as a memorial to their sacrifice. Among the billowing strips of traditional cloth tied to the rusting vehicles is a simple, marble slab inscribed with the epitaph:

*Give your blood. Gve your life. For the beloved land.
Your brothers. Your widows. Your young children weep.
In a supreme gesture, you were offered in a holocaust
And cried liberty.
You have gone. Keep in your memory
That the conquest of Kanaky.
Is written in letters of blood forever* (cited in Robie, 1989b, p. 115)



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Figure 3: Kanak 'security' Éloi Machoro leader during the 1984 election active boycott. His action with the axe in splitting open a ballot box at Canala led to a series of events culminating in his assassination by French security forces in 1985.

Machoro was assassinated by members of the French police tactical unit, *Le Groupe d'intervention del la Gendarmerie Nationale* (GIGN) security forces on 12 January 1985.

Later that year, I was on board the *Rainbow Warrior* for more than 10 weeks on a humanitarian voyage to the Marshall Islands to help Rongelap islanders suffering from the legacy of US nuclear testing. The ship was bombed by French secret agents on 10 July 1985, killing Portuguese-Dutch photojournalist Fernando Pereira (Robie, 1986). Back in New Caledonia, clashes and tension worsened over the next three years. On 22 April 1988, a group of young Kanak militants led by student activist Alphonse Dianou nervously killed four *gendarmes* while taking 27 others hostage on the Loyalty island of Ouvéa.

A cave siege followed at Gossanah with security forces storming the hideout on 5 May 1988 and killing all the hostage-takers in what is known as the Ouvéa massacre (Robie, 1989a, p. 277; Uechtritz, 2018). The political brinkmanship and cynical exploitation of the standoff by the presidential candidates, the incumbent François Mitterrand and challenger Jacques Chirac, is told chillingly in the 2011 feature film, *L'ordre et la morale* (titled *Rebellion* for the English language version), a docudrama by Mathieu Kassovitz. The peace negotiations after the Ouvéa tragedy led to the Matignon Accord signed by anti-independence leader Jacques Lafleur and *Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste* (FLNKS) president Jean-Marie Tjibaou in the initial framework that led to the historic independence referendum in New Caledonia on 4 November 2018. However, cultural philosopher and visionary Tjibaou and his deputy Yeiwéne Yeiwéne were in turn assassinated by Djubelly Wea in a further tragedy a year later on 4 May 1989. I had shared a hotel room with the assassin at a conference in Manila, Philippines, just a five months earlier when both of us participated in the 1988-9 International Peace Brigade following the ousting of dictator Ferdinand Marcos (Leadbeater, 2009; Peace Brigades International, n.d.).

Returning to New Caledonia for this historic vote nearly three decades later, my earlier experiences—outlined in two of my books *Blood On Their Banner* (Robie, 1989a) and *Don't Spoil My Beautiful Face: Media,*



Figure 4: The January 1985 cover of *Islands Business* magazine (Fiji) after the Hienghène massacre.

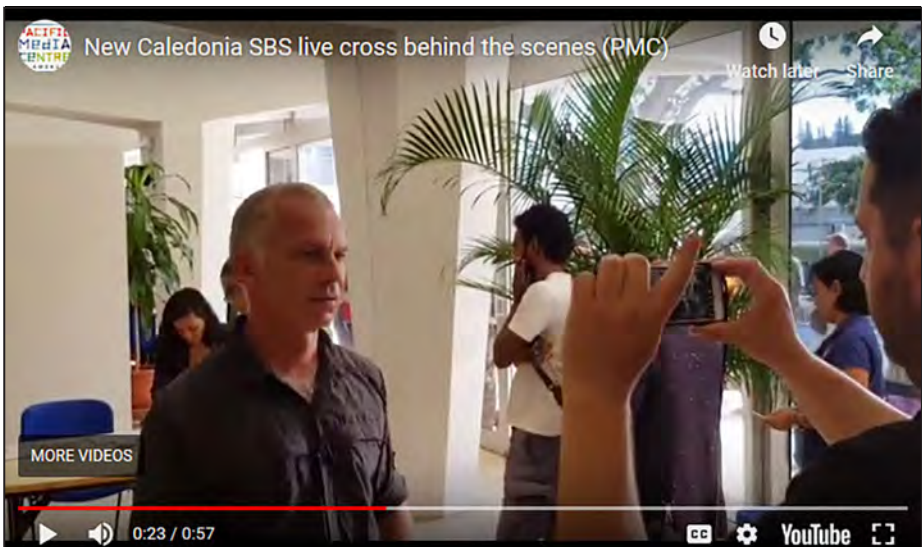
Mayhem and Human Rights in the Pacific (Robie, 2014)—gave me slight feelings of unease. There had been three decades of relative peace and social justice had definitely improved during that time—even if nowhere enough for the Indigenous Kanak people—and there had been significant progress in terms of self-government and economic development. However, what would happen if this vote on 4 November 2018 proved negative and the growing aspirations of the Kanaks for a new nation of Kanaky New Caledonia were again denied? It appeared impossible for independence to triumph given the demographic realities and policies from Paris designed to strengthen local autonomy, but weaken aspirations for independence. Rioting and barricades on the main road near the tribal area of St Louis on the outskirts of Nouméa the day after the referendum reinforced fears of what frustrated youth might do had it spiralled out of control (Robie, 2018). (See the page 90 panel on history).

While some local journalists on the ground were cautious, predicting that the referendum was hard to call with probably a 50/50 or 60/40 outcome, some anti-independence leaders had been brazenly declaring the election a done deal



Figure 5: The special identity card for voters registered for the referendum.

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Figure 6: SBS Pacific reporter Stefan Armbruster (left) and SBS French executive producer Christophe Mallet preparing a live news feed from the Nouméa's Hotel de Ville. Source: Freeze frame from Café Pacific video

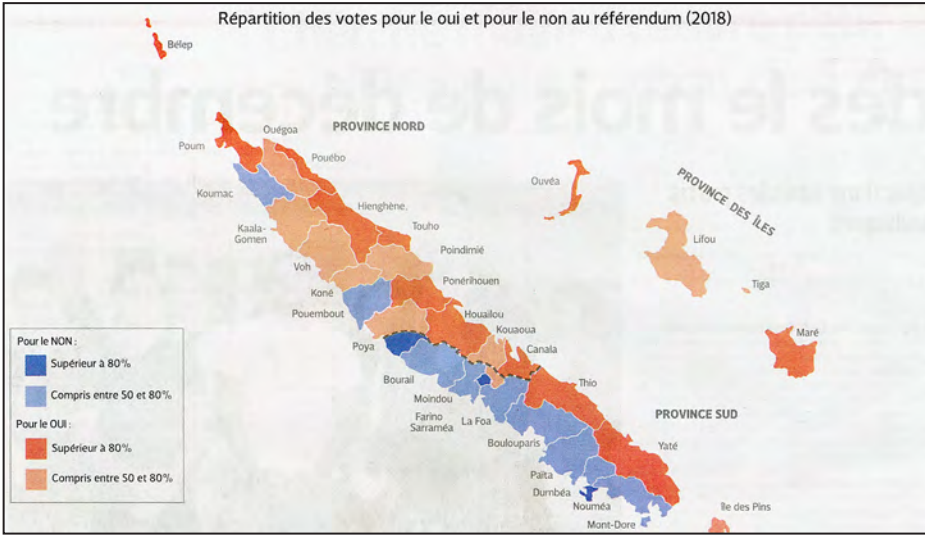


Figure 7: How they voted: Map showing the results and the breakdown of ‘oui’ (shades of red) and ‘non’ (blue) votes in the 35 communes of New Caledonia.
 Source: Official French High Commission results, 4 November 2018

with a crushing 70/30 outcome against independence likely (Duffield, 2018; Kanaks have already lost, 2018; Lyons, 2018; Maclellan, 2018; New Caledonia referendum; Zweifel, 2018). The conservative politicians ended up seriously embarrassed. The pro-independence FLNKS did a superb job in mobilising their supporters, especially the young (New Caledonia rejects, 2018). Final results confounded the pundits. The ‘non’ vote slipped to a 56.4 percent while the ‘oui’ vote wrested a credible 43.6 percent share of the vote with a record 80.6 percent turnout.

A closer analysis of the figures produced some interesting statistics. The cleavage of the territory into the ‘white’ Southern” province and Nouméa, and the ‘brown’ Northern and Loyalty Islands provinces remained, but the stark divisions of the past appeared to be blurring in some places, reflecting an emerging common ground across ethnic divides. The white Southern Province with the bulk of the European population and the core of the territory’s wealth, polled a 73.7 percent no vote with a 26.29 percent yes vote, revealing signs of a growing pro-independence movement.

In contrast, in the Northern Province where the FLNKS-ruled local government has consolidated its position, there was a 75.83 percent yes vote and 24.17 percent against. In the Loyalty Islands, the vote was 82.18 percent yes and 17.82 percent no.

In Canala, where Machoro smashed open the ballot box, the vote was 94.27 percent yes and in Hienghène, where the Tjibaou massacre happened (the leader lost two of his own brothers in that Tiendanite ambush), the yes vote was marginally higher at 94.75 percent. However, the highest yes vote was in the Belep



Figure 8: Kanak voters in the ‘white’ stronghold of Nouméa vote at the Hôtel de Ville—the city hall—polling centre.

islands off the northern tip of Grande Terre Island. With barely 920 eligible voters, there was almost a 95 percent yes vote.

‘Liberty, equality and fraternity for all’

French President Emmanuel Macron welcomed the vote by New Caledonians to remain French, pledging that the republic would ensure ‘liberty, equality and fraternity’ for all. ‘The only loser is the temptation of contempt, division, violence and fear; the only winner is the process of peace and the spirit of dialogue,’ Macron said in a state television address from Paris (Macron hails, 2018).

French Prime Minister Édouard Philippe flew to Nouméa from Vietnam on November 5, the morning after the vote, for a day of meetings with political leaders, customary chiefs and voting commission officials to take stock of the referendum. After meeting a range of leaders during the day and flying to Koné to meet President Paul Néaoutyine of the Northern province, a pro-independence stronghold, Philippe made a televised address from *Première* (the local affiliate of France TV) to the territory that night. Praising the people of New Caledonia for the peaceful conduct of the referendum, he called for a ‘meeting of the signatories’ in December to consider the next step. Prime Minister Philippe indicated that a fresh approach was now needed with a greater emphasis on social and economic development than political structures and to address ‘inequalities’. The Prime Minister had lunch with students at the University of New Caledonia. Following his TV address and an evening ‘pool’ interview with media, he flew back to Paris later that night.

‘Édouard Philippe was here to listen to us,’ said FLNKS president Roch Wamytan. ‘Despite the opposition crowing that they were going to dominate



Figure 9: SBS French executive producer Christophe Mallet (left) and Pacific reporter Stefan Armbruster interview voters at Nouméa’s Hôtel de Ville.

Source: Freeze frame from Café Pacific video.

70/30, we have spoken of dialogue and negotiation.’ Anti-independence *Rassemblement* leader Pierre Frogier said the referendum result ‘anchors New Caledonia in France’ and there was no need for further votes.

On referendum day, I travelled around with the SBS television crew from Australia, Pacific affairs reporter Stefan Armbruster and executive producer Christophe Mallet of SBS French radio. I was keen to get a sense of the reportage and I have the utmost respect for Armbruster’s reporting, particularly from a ‘diversity’ perspective. They endeavoured to get a ‘balanced’ view of the voting mood by starting off at Nouméa’s Hotel de Ville in the heartland of ‘white’ New Caledonia. They interviewed the first voter and also spoke to a range of people casting their votes with different stories to tell. I was also impressed with their live crosses for both television and radio absorbing a sense of atmosphere and colour. Leaving the town hall, we visited a new



Figure 10: A Kanak voter wearing a ‘Kanak New Caledonia’ flag tee shirt at the Loyalty Islands special polling booth in Vallee du Tir, Nouméa.

‘decentralised’ polling station for the Loyalty Island voters with a remarkably long queue for Lifou voters.

Referendum law change

A law change was required in France in March 2018 to enable the Nouméa-based islanders to vote without having to pay expensive airfares to get to their home islands (Electoral law change approved, 2018). ‘This is an incredible privilege for us to be here [for the referendum],’ said French-born Mallet, who has lived in Australia for 16 years. One voter, Boris Ajapuhnya, told Mallet in an SBS French interview this was their ‘golden chance’, for the Kanak people to express their wish in an historic vote. He added: ‘The moment is right now.’

While the *indépendantistes* might have lost this vote, they did much better than expected. With up to two more referenda to come in 2020 and 2022, they are in a healthy negotiating position with an encouraging prospect of winning independence in the end, a ‘three strikes’ chance of achieving their ‘Frexit’.

The three anti-independence parties, *Les Republicains* led by Sonia Backès, regarded by many as New Caledonia’s version of Marine le Pen; *Rassemblement*; and *Caledonie Ensemble*; insist that the people have spoken and there is now no need for any further referendum. They were shocked that the *indépendantistes* did so well given that they had already written off the ‘declining’ demand for independence and were confidently predicting a crushing 70/30 vote against independence (Zweifel, 2018).

In the end, the vote was remarkably close, reflecting the success of the FLNKS in reaching out to the youth. The smaller *Parti travailliste* (PT), with a radical pro-independence platform, chose a strategy of non-active participation given the flawed nature of the ballot—it declined to call the action a ‘boycott’ (New Caledonia Labour Party opts out, 2018). The party is backed by the *Union syndicale des travailleurs kanaks et des exploités* (USTKE) trade union. The referendum choice was simple and stark. The 174,154 registered voters simply



Figure 11: The final result of the November 4, 2018, referendum on independence in New Caledonia. Source: www.electionguide.org

New Caledonia's timeline of injustice to independence?

1774: James Cook “discovers” Grande Terre Island for Europe and renames it New Caledonia because the landscapes remind him of Scotland.

1853: Admiral Febvrier-Despointes plants the French tricolour at Balade on the east coast of Grande Terre and takes possession of the island for Emperor Napoleon III to establish a penal colony.

1864: France despatches some 21,630 prisoners between 1864 and 1897. The convicts include 4250 ‘communard’ revolutionaries from Paris.



Figure 12: An engraving of Grand Chief Ataï published in French magazine, *Le Voleur*, on 4 October 1878.

1874: Exploitation of the nickel reserves begins after being discovered by engineer Jules Garnier a decade earlier.

1878: Grand Chief Ataï leads the first Kanak rebellion against colonisation, with a death toll of about 1200 Kanaks and 200 Europeans. Chief Ataï is beheaded and his skull is sent to the Anthropology Society in Paris for further study.

1917: When the First World War breaks out in Europe, the colonial administration tries to pressure Kanaks into enlisting (they are not yet full citizens of the republic). Following another revolt, three Kanak leaders are guillotined.

1931: Authorities take 111 Kanaks to a colonial exhibition in Paris as “authentic cannibals”. The same year the penal colony is finally closed.

1946: The Kanaks, deprived of rights under the *Code Indigénat* since 1887, which makes all French-governed indigenous peoples second class citizens, gain full citizenship.

1984: The FLNKS (*Front de libération nationale kanak et socialiste*) is created and organises a Kanak boycott of the territorial elections. The islands are on the edge of insurrection. On December 5, near Hienghène, 10 unarmed Kanak activists are assassinated in an ambush by mixed-race *Caldoche* (settlers).

1987: On September 13, the people of New Caledonia vote in a referendum on independence that is boycotted by the FLNKS and other pro-independence groups. The vote against independence is 98.3 percent with just 1.7 percent voting yes.

1988: On Ouvéa Island, four gendarmes are killed by FLNKS militants during the kidnap of a local police garrison. On May 5, French security forces storm the Gossanah cave where 27 gendarmes are being held hostage. Nineteen Kanaks and two soldiers are killed. On June 26, the Matignon Accord is signed by Jean-Marie Tjibaou, president of the FLNKS; Jacques Lafleur, leader of the anti-independence Rassemblement pour la Caledonie dans la republique (RPCR); and Prime Minister Michel Rocard. The accord envisages self-determination in 10 years.

1989: On May 4, Jean-Marie Tjibaou and Yeiwéne Yeiwéne, his FLNKS deputy, are assassinated on Ouvéa by Djubelly Wéa, a Kanak indépendantiste opposed to the Matignon Accord.

1998: The Nouméa Accord is signed by French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, Jacques Lafleur and Roch Wamytan, the new president of the FLNKS. This accord envisages progressive 'emancipation' for New Caledonia. A referendum shows 72 percent in favour of the accord.

2004: Bitterly divided for 15 years, the Tjibaou, Yeiwéne and Wéa families meet at the Tjibaou *tribu* village of Tiendanite for a custom 'forgiveness' ceremony.

2010: Prime Minister François Fillon makes official the flying of both the French and Kanak flags on official buildings and at events. Jacques Lafleur dies on December 4.

2014: The Museum of Natural History in Paris returns the skull of Chief Ataï to his descendants, 136 years after the death of the revolutionary chief.

2018: On November 4, the eligible voters of New Caledonia vote on independence with 56.4 percent rejecting independence and 43.6 percent voting in favour. Up to two further votes on independence are provided for in the Nouméa Accord for 2020 and 2022.

2020: And next ...?

(Maume, 2018b)

including Muslim rebels fighting against colonisation in Algeria, and dissidents from the 1870 Paris commune. Later migrants included Japanese, Javanese and Tonkinese (North Vietnamese) labourers working the nickel mines.

In the previous independence vote in 1987, boycotted by the FLNKS and other pro-independence groups faced with an unfavourable franchise, *indépendantistes* argued that only the indigenous people should vote on the territory's independence. The vote against independence was 98.3 percent while just 1.7 percent voted yes. However, the turnout was only 59 percent (1987 New Caledonian independence referendum, n.d.).

Of the 174,154 registered referendum voters in the 2018 referendum (voters could register right up until polling day), 80,120 were Kanak and 94,034 on the common civil role were also entitled to vote. A total of 141,099 people cast a vote. Forty percent of the New Caledonian population are Melanesian Kanaks, 29 percent European, and 9 percent are Polynesians from Wallis and Futuna Islands. The rest are a mixture of Asian and Pacific communities, such as Tahitian.

Controversy surrounded the policy preventing so-called *Zoreilles*, recent arrivals from metropolitan France or other French territories, from participating in the vote, whereas New Caledonian-born *Caldoche* were allowed. However, the pro-independence groups maintained that only indigenous people should be allowed to vote. The referendum voters were restricted under the Nouméa accord to those eligible under the following criteria (Référendum de 2018, n.d.):

1. Registration on the special electoral roll for the 1998 New Caledonian Nouméa Accord referendum (or fulfilled its requirements but not registered) (Nouméa Accord, n.d.)
2. Born in New Caledonia and registered in the special electoral list for the provinces (LESP)
3. Residence in New Caledonia for a continuous period of 20 years
4. Born before 1 January 1989 and lived in New Caledonia from 1988 to 1998
5. Born after 1 January 1989 with a parent who was on the special electoral roll for the 1998 Nouméa Accord referendum (or who fulfilled its requirements but was not registered)
6. Born in New Caledonia with three years' continuous residence (prior to 31 August 2018).

The encouraging mobilisation of youth voters, a significant change since the



Figure 15: Pro-independence FLNKS president Roch Wamytan: 'The struggle isn't over until we are decolonised.'

2014 provincial elections, and the emergence of a growing cadre of young multi-ethnic voters who are more open to a shared future than some of their conservative parents augurs well for the *indépendantistes*. ‘This referendum was a victory for the youth. The loyalists’ predictions were thwarted,’ said FLNKS president Roch Wamytan, adding:

This vote was a big leap forward. We will continue on our pathway, we will prepare the people in New Caledonia for independence. The struggle isn’t over until we are decolonised. One winner in the vote was fear. Over the past six months, we have tried to allay fears about retirement provisions, security and education. We clearly didn’t do enough. We will work harder on this for the next ballot. (Cited by Robie, 2018d)

FLNKS official Alosio Sako said: ‘We’re a short step from victory, and there are still two more ballots to come.’

Independence inevitable

Some who voted against independence are resigned to the belief that one day New Caledonia will become independent anyway. On my flight back to Auckland, a conversation with Sammy, a Lebanese-born New Caledonian with a French passport, and his *Caldoche* wife, who were heading to Hanmer Springs for a holiday in ‘*très jolie*’ New Zealand, gave me some interesting insights. Ironically, Sammy migrated to New Caledonia after “*les évènements*” in the 1980s to escape the civil war in Lebanon. He said:

Independence is inevitable. I only wish they would get on with it and not have votes, delaying things. Build for the future instead of yet another vote. In spite of the vote against independence, it is the way it is going. One day New Caledonia will be independent so it is best to restart our future now. We have a chance to build something really new.

“The *indépendantistes* are very determined. (Interview with Robie, 2018d)

He seemed to be reflecting the view of Prime Minister Édouard Philippe, who hinted at some



Figure 16: Independent Caledonia TV ... making waves and telling the stories of all ethnicities.

key policy changes to deal with social conditions and ‘balancing’ the economic cleavage in the nickel-rich and tourism booming territory. France subsidises the territory budget by €1.3 billion (NZ\$5.1 billion) a year.

What made Sammy choose New Caledonia? It is so far away from Lebanon—‘it was just like Syria is today’—and he had read an article about New Caledonia in the French magazine *Geo*. In fact, *Geo* had just published a cover story in October 2018 about New Caledonia headed ‘New Caledonia: So near, so far’, a 43-page spread dedicated to the beauty, culture, environment and flora and fauna of this ‘marvellous archipelago’. It would entice anyone.

The magazine quoted linguist and poet Emmanuel Tjibaou, one of six sons of the assassinated Kanak leader Jean-Marie Tjibaou, who has been director since 2012 of the impressive Tjibaou Centre, a cultural memorial to his father.

‘Being “Kanak”, or a “man”, isn’t a question of skin colour,’ he said. ‘The centre introduces Melanesian culture to Western eyes that are not accustomed to it. Kanak traditions are oral, like elsewhere in Oceania. We live our culture—we discover it through singing, or dancing; we speak, or we weep.’

Another example of an emerging ‘new wave’ institution is a small startup digital television channel based at Koné. Funded largely by the Kanak-governed Northern province, it is an inspirational initiative compared with the dominant Premiere television, which is part of the state-run network with six channels that look to Paris, and *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes*, which has been very hostile to independence in the past. However, the newspaper is less virulent these days.

Caledonia TV making mark

Caledonia TV is already making its mark as an independent channel that is ‘telling our own stories’ about Kanak culture, music and traditions and exploring all ethnicities in New Caledonia. It played an important role in the referendum by setting up TV studios in the University of New Caledonia and providing balanced coverage and ready access for grassroots people to engage in a dialogue about their future.



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Figure 17: Caledonia TV reporter Duke Menango: telling stories with a difference.

I interviewed one of the journalists involved in referendum coverage in the campus studios, Duke Menango, who had completed part of his early training as a journalist at Aoraki Polytechnic journalism school in Dunedin on a New Zealand aid scholarship. He said:

Caledonia TV started off as a web-based channel in 2012 and then became a fully fledged TV station the following year.

It was important to give people a choice. Previously television was dominated by the state media monopoly with only one direction and one point of view. I don't think we were being well represented as Kanaks and as Kanak reporters.

With us, we are going out to the people—the grassroots, and we are giving them a voice. A voice for the different tribes. And it isn't just the tribes, we are telling the stories of all ethnicities.

We're giving everybody a voice. (Interview with Robie, 2018d)

Opposition from mainstream media

However, Caledonia TV faces a stiff challenge from the 'mainstream' media, which is generally not sympathetic to independence. On the weekend of the referendum, *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* devoted a full page to an editorial denouncing independence. 'France or the unknown?' warned editor-in-chief Olivier Poisson, who derided the FLNKS, claiming that it was presenting an unclear, even 'confusing' platform, with contradictory objectives.

In contrast, it's a fact that we know New Caledonia is already independent. For sure, it isn't a question of full sovereignty, but whether the country already decides its economic orientation, imposes its own taxes, leads education, runs health, and is able to enter into international accords and partnerships. (Poisson, 2018)

Finally, his message was: 'It's too risky to take on powers that are too great for so little to gain.' In a separate interview published by a website in English the day before the vote, Poisson warned of a new 'cold war' with China in the Pacific. About his own personal view towards independence, he remarked:

Since I myself have come here only in 2014, I am not allowed to participate in the referendum. If I could, I think I would vote no. The danger is too great than an independent New Caledonia could lose much of its standard of living. And the protection France gives us. (Archy news, 2018).

His message irked many *indépendantistes*, and drew criticism that the newspaper was illegally breaching the political blackout prior to the referendum

'What kind of bullshit is that again?' asked Magalie Tingal Lémé, a former

news editor of the pro-independence Radio Djiido commenting about his editorial. ‘The editor-in-chief is not supposed to make any comments since the official campaign is over since last night. Some journalists should start being real journalists in this country.’ Tingal Lémé was elected to the Northern Province assembly as an FLNKS candidate.

EARLY in 2019, both the pro-independence and the ‘anti’ movements launched their advocacy campaigns and coordinated efforts to prepare for the territorial elections due in May, which both sides see as the next big test of independence. *Indépendantistes* declared that the result of the referendum was a reminder of the obligation of France that it needed to ‘accompany New Caledonia to full independence’. However, when French Overseas Territories Minister Annick Girardin, during a television interview on 7 January 2019, floated the notion of New Caledonia becoming independent ‘in association’ with France, invoking the Cook Islands model with New Zealand, she was greeted with anger by conservative opponents (Girardin comment causes outrage, 2019). In February, three anti-independence parties, including *Rassemblement pour une Calédonie dans la République*, joined forces in a desperate attempt to forge a ‘future with confidence’ campaign against Kanaky (New Caledonia independence parties join forces, 2019).

While Sonia Backès and her new *l’Avenir en Confiance* (Future with Confidence) coalition did indeed shake up New Caledonian politics and cement the hardening divisions during the provincial elections, it was the emergence of a new party, the Wallis and Futunan community-backed *L’Éveil Océanien* (Oceania Awakening), that surprisingly seized the balance of power (Menango, 2019). The three Oceania lawmakers elected to the new territorial Congress gave them considerable negotiating power with 26 pro-independence members and 25 anti-independence members in the 54-seat chamber. Remarkably, the Wallisian party sided with the *indépendantistes* to elect Roch Wamytan as Congress president (Zweifel, 2019). The strategic stakes are, according to analyst Denise Fisher, ‘high for France, as it seeks to oversee fair votes, aware that outcomes in New Caledonia will have knock-on effects on French Polynesia and its other territories’ (Fisher, 2019). France has now joined both Australia and the United States in ‘sharpening rhetoric’ as a counterbalance to China in the Pacific.

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The dichotomy of China Global Television Network's news coverage

Abstract: Although much is made of the universalisation of 'US-style' journalism around the world and Chinese journalists' shared professional values with counterparts in liberal-democratic countries (Zhang, 2009), the effect of these trends on journalism in China is yet to be fully explored. Using the 2015 Tianjin blasts as a case study, this article investigates China Global Television Network (CGTN) and CNN International's coverage of the disaster. The empirical study finds that despite their overlapping news values, the two networks' opposing ideological objectives contributed to different framings of the Tianjin blasts. Although CGTN, as a symbol of Chinese media's presence on the world stage, has clearly travelled far from its past era of party-line journalism, it still hesitates to apportion responsibility to those in power. The authors argue that CGTN is increasingly torn by its dichotomous role as a credible media competing for audience attention on the world stage, and a vital government propaganda organ domestically.

Keywords: Asia-Pacific, China, CGTN, CNN, comparative journalism, disaster communication, framing analysis, media convergence, propaganda, satellite news, soft power, television, Tianjin, watchdog

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COMMUNICATION scholars recognise the mass media's capability to serve as a key channel for disseminating information about disasters (Lowrey et al., 2007; Tulloch & Zinn, 2011). Media audiences expect accurate, timely, and trustworthy information to make considered decisions about their personal safety. In contrast, inaccurate, incomplete, or sensational news coverage can contribute to the public's misunderstanding of risks (Lowrey et al., 2007). In an interconnected world, the proliferation of 24-hour satellite news channels has given viewers unprecedented choice in terms of where they

get their news. Different journalism styles characterised by broader political perspectives are collectively reshaping the global news agenda (Lavelle, 2014). Spearheading this shift is China, where significant investment has expanded its international media operations in contrast to the downsizing occurring in many Western countries (Cai, 2016, p. 109).

China's national broadcaster, China Central Television (CCTV), launched its English-language satellite news channel CCTV International in May 2004 (Jirik, 2016). In April 2010, the channel was rebranded as CCTV News and expanded to include affiliates CCTV America and CCTV Africa (CCTV, 2010). Its most recent relaunch occurred on 31 December 2016, when CCTV News was rebranded as China Global Television Network (CGTN) to consolidate its worldwide reach (Associated Press, 2016) and 'cope with the global trend in media convergence' (CGTN, 2017). CGTN has a complex dual mission: to become a globally credible media organisation, while sustaining its role as a vital government propaganda organ (Associated Press, 2016).

CGTN is an instrument of 'soft power' used by the Communist Party of China (CPC) to advance state-led public diplomacy (Bandurski, 2017). Nye (2004) says 'soft power' is a country's ability to influence others through intangible resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions. He has argued that, at times, 'soft power' is more important than 'hard power' (i.e. economic and military prowess) in postmodern international relations. However, doubts have been raised over the effectiveness of Chinese media organisations as vehicles of 'soft power'. In studying Chinese media's impact in South Africa, Wasserman (2016, p. 18) notes such organisations have struggled to win 'hearts and minds' of local audiences because state controls undermine their journalistic credibility. Foreign journalists have also expressed distrust and criticism toward Chinese counterparts, noting their reports are useful for an 'inside view' but mostly 'inconsistent with the reality in China' (Wasserman, 2016, p. 17).

On the one hand, the rise of CGTN is seen as the realisation of former propaganda chief Li Changchun's vision in 2003 to create 'China's CNN' (Jirik, 2009, p. 10). To this end, CGTN has succeeded in terms of optics; it shares international norms of satellite news production including a catchy promotional slogan ('see the difference'), seemingly impartial content, and a team of reputable foreign newscasters (Dunbar, 2017). On the other hand, CGTN's 'soft-power' influence is limited by its news content that prioritises party interests (Ide, 2012). CGTN staff have noted the channel must 'work harder than other networks' to build credibility (Powell, 2015). However, media observers argue CGTN remains ideologically unchanged from its predecessor CCTV News as demonstrated by its continued adherence to party press principles (Lopez, 2017) that reflect the 'correct political direction' and 'correct guidance of public opinion' (Bandurski, 2017).

Nevertheless, Chinese media remains a diverse and dynamic entity. As of July

2012, there were 1,918 newspapers and 2,185 television stations (Zhou, 2015, p. 59). Globalisation of Chinese television has diversified news content and formats, reflected by CGTN's programming and digital expansion. Professional norms have diversified, too, causing tension between market orientation and control by the party-state (Hong & Liu, 2015, p. 443) as more Chinese journalists base their reporting on 'social responsibility' and 'revealing truth' principles (Tong, 2014, p. 133). It is in this context we use a comparative content analysis of a breaking/disaster news story in China to examine CCTV's domestic news coverage and analyse the impact of internationalisation of the Chinese television network on its domestic performance where it competes with both national and international media such as CNN International. We argue that CGTN is increasingly torn by its dichotomous role as a 'watchdog' in society and as a 'guard dog' of the party-state, which is intensified by its global expansion.

Reporting disasters

Disasters present significant challenges for Chinese journalists. Their responsibility to promote national unity after a disaster is a legacy of Maoist disaster management that continues today (Paltemaa, 2016, p. 189). Tianjin is considered one of the country's most rapidly advancing areas for industrial and financial activity, with about 285 *Fortune* Global 500 companies operating in the city's Binhai region where the blasts occurred (Marinelli, 2015). About midnight on 12 August 2015, two explosions ripped through a hazardous chemical storage facility in Tianjin, a port city in northern China. The final death toll of the disaster was listed at 173, including more than 100 police officers and firefighters (Associated Press, 2015). The blasts were an international media event that caused political and social debate in China. The private company that owned the destroyed facility, Ruihai International Logistics, was subsequently found to have used its political connections to circumvent safety regulations. According to an official investigation, the blasts were caused by the ignition of hazardous materials improperly or illegally stored at the warehouse (Xinhua, 2016). The company's chairman, Yu Xuewei, was given a suspended death sentence for his role in the disaster, while 25 officials and 11 people employed by a company that issued fake licences to the company were jailed (Connor, 2016).

Following the Tianjin blasts on 12 August 2015, the Chinese government continued its pattern of controlling information on traditional and social media (Dou, 2015). This research explores ways in which CGTN facilitated nation-building and yet adhered to traditional journalistic values of accuracy, objectivity and public accountability (*The Rundown* 2012). Using a content analysis of two weeks' news coverage after the event (13 to 27 August, 2015), this research identifies similarities and differences in CGTN and CNN International's coverage of the disaster. It also explores how both channels' shared news values were used

to uphold contradictory perspectives of journalists' role in disaster reporting. This research compares CGTN and CNN International's coverage of the disaster to examine their framing strategies. News frame analysis is a broad theoretical approach used in communication studies, particularly the study of news and journalism (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). By comparing the two channels' coverage of the blasts, this study identifies discrepancies in terms of sources used, dominant frames employed, and attribution of responsibility.

Analysing CGTN and CNN International's coverage of the Tianjin blasts allows us to understand how the media interprets a disaster. Considering the power of news framing in shaping public opinion (De Vreese, 2005), exploring the frames used by both channels can provide broader analysis into the different perspectives of Chinese and Western media, their roles as instruments of 'soft power', and the prospects of Beijing loosening press controls during events that affect many people.

Understanding contemporary Chinese media

Modern efforts to categorise national press systems have been guided by the *Four Theories of the Press* (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956), which provides a theoretical framework for studying the mass media system in a country based on the authoritarian, libertarian, Soviet-communist, and social responsibility models. For the past 60 years, the Four Theories have dominated discourse in Western journalism education and research despite scholars drawing attention to their limitations in characterising Asian media systems, given the continent's unrivalled audience scale and continuous transformation of their media's professional and structural traits (Yin, 2008; Ostini & Fung, 2002). China's media system was traditionally associated with the Soviet-communist model under the Four Theories, where the press is subordinate to the interests and functions of the state. Unlike liberal-democratic media systems, China's media has historically been used to communicate official versions of reality (Tay & Turner, 2015, p. 30) to preserve national unity and protect the nation from internal and external threats (Yu, 2009). Since the Communist Party of China (CPC) established its rule in 1949, there has been no concept of people's 'right to know' in the context of China's media system (Yu, 2009, p. 9).

Since 2004, journalists at CCTV's English-language news channel (now known as CGTN), like their colleagues at CCTV's Chinese-language news channels, have tried to practice their watchdog function to a permissible degree while fulfilling their traditional duty to cooperate with authorities (Zhu, 2012, p. 185). The need for greater openness by holding the government to account during disasters became clear after a state media blackout during the 2003 SARS outbreak resulted in Chinese citizens turning to overseas media (Zhang, 2007). Since then, CCTV's style of disaster reporting has been characterised by greater

openness. Its coverage (in English and Chinese) of the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake earned praise from the government, which observed media credibility supports party legitimacy through providing ‘a window into the workings of the powerful central leadership’ (Zhang, 2011).

Social media has rewritten disaster communication patterns in China (Dwyer & Xu, 2015) thus challenging traditional media to be more competitive in this new innovative, strategic space. A similar trend is noted by Steinhardt (2015, p. 119) in his study of Chinese media coverage of recent domestic protests that found the central authorities have gradually shifted their propaganda policy from a suppressive to a more proactive approach. This move has allowed internet users and investigative journalists to reconfigure public discourse towards protester-sympathetic accounts.

Watchdog journalism in modern China has been characterised ‘by gradual movement towards the market without seriously violating traditional norms of propaganda’ (Yu et al., 2000, p. 75). Despite a shift in journalism education in China from a Marxist theoretical foundation to a role of a ‘watchdog’ in society, Yu et al. (2000, p. 75) observe there is still a ‘disconnection between classroom teaching and real-world needs’; while ideas about investigative journalism can be discussed in class, its application in a practical sense is limited. This observation has been supported by Zhou (2000) who found partial implementation of investigative journalism in newsrooms, and by Chan (2016) who determined investigative journalism ‘struggles but survives’ under party-state controls. It is within this setting that we identify the problematic dichotomy of CGTN, specifically whether they are ‘watchdogs’ or ‘guard dogs’ of the party-state. The ‘watchdog’ function involves critical scrutiny of the powerful by journalists undertaken on behalf of the citizenry (McNair, 2008, p. 239), while the ‘guard dog’ suggests journalists act as ‘sentries’ for those in power, especially ‘when external forces present a threat to local leadership’ (Donohue et al., 1995, p. 116).

Categorising China’s media system using the *Four Theories of the Press* is problematic due to the daily reality of journalism and broader national conditions. Moreover, the Four Theories were proposed during the Cold War era with a pro-capitalist bias. This has led to a simplified, overtly negative characterisation of the Soviet-communist model. There are significant political and economic differences between contemporary China and the Soviet Union, most notably China’s reform and opening-up from 1978 and the influence of globalisation on the domestic mass media. The Four Theories discourse also overlooks problems with the libertarian model, such as concentration of media ownership. On the other hand, Chinese media has itself undergone significant market-driven transformations that have created a multitude of contradictions. Looking at CGTN, for example, it is operationally autonomous yet politically dependent; top-down state control has significantly diminished yet self-censorship at lower

levels remain; journalists are more professional and better qualified than in the past, yet they are beholden to the state (Zhu, 2012, p. 118). In this context, this research explores how CGTN has a significant role in bridging the gap between being a global media organisation and being a representative of China's domestic political system.

Research methodology

This empirical study compared news coverage of the 2015 Tianjin blasts by CGTN (then CCTV News) and CNN International. CGTN's mission is to create 'a better understanding of international events across the world, bridging continents, and bringing a more balanced view to global news through 'neutral, objective reporting' (CGTN, 2017). Following its launch, President Xi urged CGTN to 'make use of abundant information, with a distinct Chinese perspective and global vision, to tell the stories of China' (*Chinese President sends congratulations on founding of CGTN*, 2016). Its 'mobile-first' strategy (CGTN, 2017) targets overseas audiences, who are most active on social media platforms (YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter) that are blocked in China (Associated Press, 2016). By the end of 2016, CGTN content had been accessed by 400 million users worldwide (Xinhua, 2017). Although CGTN's ratings are not available, its forerunner, CCTV News, claimed to reach 85 million homes in more than 100 countries and regions (Nelson, 2013).

CNN was established in 1980 as the first 24-hour news network in the US, launching CNN International in 1985 (CNN, 2011). In addition to its television broadcasts that reach more than 293 million households worldwide, its website, CNN.com, is one of the most visited news websites in the world (CNN, 2011). CNN has a chequered history in China, however, where any of its stories deemed sensitive to authorities are routinely 'blacked out' (CNN, 2008). In 2009, the anti-CNN.com website founded by a Chinese student attracted broad support from nationalist sympathisers in response to perceived bias in the coverage of CNN and other Western media outlets of riots in Tibet the previous year (Xinhua, 2008).

It is useful to examine discrepancies in how the Tianjin blasts were framed by CGTN and CNN International, which despite their different cultural and political backgrounds purport to uphold similar journalistic ethics. CGTN America's director-general, Ma Jing, has emphasised the importance of 'traditional journalistic values' including 'accuracy, objectivity, truthfulness, and public accountability' (*The Rundown*, 2012), while CNN president Jeff Zucker has described his network as 'truly fair and balanced' compared to its competitors (Setoodeh, 2016). Despite these common idealist values, the reality for the media in China is more complicated. Since President Xi assumed power in 2012, his vision for state media to be 'powerful, influential, and credible' (Li, 2017) has resulted in combining propaganda with news reporting. On the other hand, there is a trend

towards a journalism model that is underpinned by social responsibility, giving rise to smaller, state-owned media organisations such as SixthTone.com and ThePaper.cn, which cover contentious issues including government corruption and environmental problems (Tatlow, 2016). Despite the constraints of party-directed and self-censorship, journalists in state media are nonetheless adept at ‘testing the line and seizing the small window of opportunity’ to uphold their watchdog role (Luqiu, 2017).

In their coverage of the 2015 Tianjin blasts, CGTN and CNN International adopted different approaches to news production shaped by cultural, political, and social influences.

The two operational research questions for this study were:

1. How did CGTN frame the Tianjin blasts?
2. How did CNN International frame the Tianjin blasts?

To answer these research questions, three propositions are made:

1. The Tianjin blasts were framed differently in news stories by CGTN and CNN International.
2. The use of sources by CGTN and CNN International differed in their coverage of the Tianjin blasts.
3. CGTN and CNN International held different valences towards the national government in their coverage of the Tianjin blasts.

A mixed methodology comprising framing and content analysis was used to evaluate selected news stories. A quantitative content analysis was used to determine frames and sources used by CGTN and CNN International in their coverage, while a qualitative framing analysis was used to determine the valence. Valence in this article refers to how the media content reflects the government’s post-disaster response using the categories of positive, neutral, or negative. By combining these two methods, this study aims to answer the research questions about how news about the blasts was framed by CGTN and CNN International.

Previous scholarship into news framing by Chinese media has identified a handful of frames commonly used in crisis and disaster communication. Feng et al. (2012) used framing theory to present a comparative analysis of how the Associated Press and Xinhua covered the 2008 melamine baby formula scandal in China. The Associated Press focused predominantly on the causes and effects of contamination including links to other safety issues in China, while Xinhua concentrated more on the government’s response to the crisis to portray authorities in a positive light. Analysing six Chinese newspapers’ coverage of the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake, Fu et al. (2012) found the mass media in China tend to be ‘more cooperative’ with authorities after disasters allowing for greater coordination in official announcements, but noted this partnership undermines the media’s ability to serve as a ‘fourth estate’ (p. 83). Yuan (2013) used a framing and discourse analysis of media coverage of a 2010 Shanghai residential building fire, identifying the need to reconfigure the

traditional news paradigm to make room for a new participatory journalist model. These past studies tell us that in the event of a national crisis, China's state media invariably places national interests above the public's right to know. Its coverage tends to support the government's version of events to suppress panic and dissent, while also highlighting positive aspects of the Chinese government's post-disaster response. In this research, we have specifically focused on CGTN's coverage, keeping in mind its mission as a global media channel that strives 'to create a better understanding of international events across the world' (CGTN, 2017).

Data categorisation and collection

The research data from both networks was accessed via their websites, with stories sourced by using the keyword 'Tianjin' and airing dates corresponding to the study period (August 13, 2015 to August 27, 2015). CNN International's system for archiving online stories was beneficial for the coding process, with each story unique thus making sampling easier. By contrast, searches at CGTN's website at the time (english.cctv.com) yielded multiple entries of the same news stories aired in different bulletins. Nevertheless, only unique stories were used in the sampling process to avoid repetition and ensure greater research accuracy. In total, 50 CGTN and 25 CNN International stories were analysed for this research.

This research uses the framing theory of mass communication, which refers to 'the process through which individuals or groups make sense of their external environment' (Boettcher, 2004, p. 332). In the process of newsgathering, editors and journalists use framing to reduce the complexity of the story and render meaning to audiences. According to Scheufele (1999, p. 107), audiences interpret and process information based on the tone of the news story. In this article, the 'tone' is measured by the 'valence' each story holds toward the government's response to the Tianjin blasts. Framing has been explored by various scholars and defined in various ways. Chong and Druckman (2007) note that individual attitudes, beliefs, and values have a major influence on our interpretation of events as media consumers. In addition to attitude, selection and salience are categorised within framing. The framing analysis is interpreted from an audience perspective. Chattopadhyay's (2012) framing techniques informed this research, where close attention is paid to keywords, sources, and visual techniques used in news stories to assert particular frames. The framing analysis is guided by use of adjectives (positive, neutral, and negative) that provide indications of attitudes in addition to the credibility of sources.

Frames

The first proposition held that CGTN and CNN International would frame the Tianjin blasts differently in their news coverage. Based on guiding questions in

Table 1: Distribution of news frames

	CNN International	Percentage share	CGTN	Percentage share
Loss	19	35%	28	29%
Responsibility	9	16%	4	4%
Cause	5	9%	7	8%
Solution	5	9%	40	42%
Threat	16	29%	10	11%
Others	1	2%	6	6%
Total	55	100%	95	100%

the code book, different frames were identified in both networks' stories during the two weeks' coverage. The 'loss' frame emphasised the loss of property and lives to the disaster. Although it was most dominant for CGTN and CNN International in the first week of the study, by the second week there was a clear divergence as each network focused on different aspects of the Chinese government's post-disaster response. Table 1 shows that the 'loss' frame was dominant in CNN International's coverage, while the 'solution' frame was most common for CGTN. The second most used frame was the 'threat' frame for CNN International and the 'loss' frame for CGTN, which both accounted for 29 per cent. In the first week after the blasts, the strong focus by both channels on the death toll and number of missing people contributed to the prevalence of the 'loss' frame. In the second week, the 'solution' and 'responsibility' frames became more common on CGTN and CNN International respectively. There were noticeable discrepancies in CGTN and CNN International's coverage of certain aspects of the Chinese government's post-disaster response. For example, the issue of compensation for residents whose homes were destroyed was reported using in-studio graphics on CGTN. In contrast, CNN International used dramatic vision of protesting residents chanting slogans outside the Tianjin municipality government headquarters. Moreover, one of its stories on 17 August 2015 focused on relatives of missing firefighters storming a government press conference, which was not covered by CGTN.

Sound and visual effects enhanced the presence of certain frames. CNN International frequently used grim stills of the blast zone, including burnt out cars and shattered glass inside homes, when introducing stories to reinforce the 'loss' frame. In its stories about the 'heroic' firefighters, CGTN used close-ups of faces and, on occasion, an emotive soundtrack to enhance the 'human-interest' frame. These examples demonstrate how both networks used human emotions and the appeal of ordinary people affected by the disaster to assert certain frames in their news stories. This is an established pattern for CGTN and CNN International in

disaster reporting: CGTN focused on ‘heroes’ and ‘outstanding citizens’ of the Yushu earthquake (CCTV, 2010), while CNN’s coverage of Hurricane Katrina ‘engaged in the emotional human aspect’ (Lynch, 2007, p. 38) to highlight the helplessness of victims. Categorized in ‘others’, the ‘human-interest’ frame was employed in several CGTN stories about Zhou Ti, a 19-year-old firefighter rescued from the rubble two days after the blasts. It was also identified in stories about volunteers distributing water and food to displaced residents.

The ‘cause’ frame was found to be low (less than 10 percent) in both networks’ coverage of the blasts, reflecting ambiguity and tight information control about what sparked the disaster. The ‘threat’ frame was less common on CGTN (11 per cent) compared to CNN International (29 percent), with the former emphasising government claims that air and water quality was within safe levels. By contrast, CNN International featured multiple stories about rain reacting with chemicals following the blast and cyanide levels being ‘356 times the safe limit’ at the blast site.

The ‘responsibility’ frame marked another key point of divergence between CGTN (4 per cent) and CNN International (16 percent). In the instances it was used by CGTN, responsibility was attributed to warehouse managers in the industrial zone who had illegally stored hazardous chemicals. The State Council, China’s highest administrative body, led the investigation, and President Xi was quoted in CGTN reports saying those responsible would be ‘severely handled’. CNN International’s use of the ‘responsibility’ frame, however, primarily involved holding the government to account. Its stories were accompanied by headlines and graphics including ‘Chinese citizens demand accountability’ and ‘Residents demand compensation’. The ‘solution’ frame was overwhelmingly the most common frame for CGTN, accounting for 42 per cent of the total compared to just 9 percent for CNN International. For CGTN, this frame was evident in coverage of relief efforts, treatment for hospitalised victims, containment and clean-up of chemicals, establishment of temporary offices for affected companies, and extra buses for workers to minimise commercial losses. The ‘solution’ frame identified in CNN International stories was in relation to the authorities’ efforts to clean up sodium cyanide, but often focused on the challenges and included grim commentary. The results above show that CNN International covered the Tianjin blasts predominantly through the ‘loss’ and ‘threat’ frames compared to CGTN, which at first used the ‘loss’ frame before focusing on the ‘solution’ frame. The first proposition is thus supported by the results, though only partially due to both networks’ use of the ‘loss’ frame.

Sources

The second proposition held that the use of sources would be different on CGTN and CNN International. The five categories of primary and secondary sources and their use within news stories devoted to the Tianjin blasts is outlined in

Tables 2 and 3 respectively. Each source was coded to only one category: military/emergency services personnel (i.e. soldiers, firefighters, medical staff); political actors (i.e. officials from the municipal and central governments); local residents/witnesses (i.e. people in Tianjin); experts (i.e. scientists, political/social/media commentators), and others (i.e. any source outside these categories). The total number of primary sources identified in news stories on CNN International was 14 compared to 39 on CGTN. While CNN International relied on state media reports for key information, such as the tolls of those missing and killed, sources in this article refer to people who contribute to news stories either through interviews, studio discussions, or press briefings.

Overall CGTN used more sources in its coverage. Political actors accounted for the majority, appearing in 39 per cent of CGTN stories. Most sources in this category were local party officials who participated in daily press briefings. None were featured in CNN International news stories, which instead relied on local residents/witnesses (57 percent) far more than CGTN (5 percent). The high presence of local residents/witnesses in CNN International stories supports the dominant 'loss' frame in its coverage, with many stories focusing on witness accounts in the immediate aftermath of the disaster and then displaced residents' bid for compensation for their destroyed homes. CNN International's lack of access to local party officials also contributed to this framing.

The use of military/emergency services personnel as primary and secondary sources was significantly higher for CGTN (both 26 percent) compared to CNN International (14 percent and 0 percent). As China's national broadcaster, CGTN has a well-established relationship with the military in post-disaster reporting facilitated by positive coverage of relief efforts. As a foreign news channel criticised in the past for 'China bashing' (Williams, 2008; Miller, 2011) and censored within China (Fung, 2014), CNN International's reputation and perceived bias manifests mistrust with authorities. This was evident when CNN International's crew was confronted by a firefighter who pushed correspondent Will Ripley and attempted to disassemble his camera during a live broadcast on 15 August 2015.

Among sources listed as 'others' who appeared in CGTN stories were a warehouse manager, factory worker, volunteer relief assistant, and company employee. On CNN International, experts included chemical scientists, health professionals, finance analysts, and a Chinese journalist who discussed social media communication patterns and censorship. It can be concluded from these findings that the prominence of authorities (both military and government officials) as sources on CGTN highlighted the positive aspects of the Chinese government's post-disaster response, while CNN International's reliance on local residents highlighted their personal grievances and demands for compensation.

Table 2: Distribution of primary sources

	CNN International	Percentage of total sources	CCTV News	Percentage of total sources
Military/emergency services personnel	2	14%	10	26%
Political actors	0	0%	15	39%
Local residents/witnesses	8	57%	2	5%
Experts	4	29%	8	20%
Others	0	0%	4	10%
Total	14	100%	39	100%

Table 3: Distribution of secondary sources

	CNN International	Percentage of total sources	CCTV News	Percentage of total sources
Military/emergency services personnel	0	0%	6	26%
Political actors	1	25%	9	38%
Local residents/witnesses	3	75%	2	9%
Experts	0	0%	4	18%
Others	0	0%	2	9%
Total	4	100%	23	100%

Valence

Proposition 3 predicted that different valences toward the Chinese government's post-disaster response would be conveyed in stories on CGTN and CNN International. Data from Table 4 supports this proposition, with nearly half of news stories on CNN International having a negative valence (48 percent) compared to a positive valence (52 percent) on CGTN. However, both networks also had similarly significant proportion of stories with a neutral valence: CNN International had 44 percent compared to 42 percent for CGTN.

There were some exceptions in both networks' dominant valences. Two news stories by CNN International had a positive valence. On 17 August, 2015,

Table 3: Distribution of valence

	Positive	Percent	Negative	Percent	Neutral	Percent	Total
CNN International	2	8%	12	48%	11	44%	25
CCTV News	26	52%	3	6%	21	42%	50

Note: Chinese government's post-disaster response.

a story was aired about a firefighter's survival and the efforts of his comrade, while two days earlier another story emphasised the swift, organised response by authorities to rescue people. Notably, CGTN America featured stories that highlighted the toxic threat of chemicals following rain and cost of losses. However, negative elements of these stories were either minimised or neglected entirely in broadcasts from Beijing. CNN International drew attention to the censorship and lack of transparency from officials in disclosing information to the public following the disaster, which contributed to the negative valence in some stories. Proposition 3 is thus supported by this study's results.

Discussion

The purpose of this article was to examine the similarities and differences in frame usage by two satellite television networks, China's state-run CGTN and US-based CNN International, in covering the Tianjin blasts in the two weeks after the disaster (13 to 27 August, 2015). Contrary to some public discourse that suggests there is inherent bias for or against China by CGTN and CNN International, a key finding of this study was the prevailing 'neutral' valence exhibited by both networks in their coverage of the disaster: 42 percent for CGTN and 44 percent for CNN International. Both networks also shared similar framing patterns in the first week after the blasts, concentrating on the loss of lives and property before focusing on other elements, such as solutions to the disaster (CGTN) and, threats and responsibility (CNN International). The use of sources in stories significantly influenced these frames. CGTN continued its established pattern of relying on military and party officials to communicate information after a disaster.

There is a dominant perception of Chinese media as a repressed entity in which constraints on journalists are greater under Xi. Proponents of this view point to China's lowly press freedom ranking (Reporters Without Borders, 2017), wider crackdown on civil society, and exodus of young journalists from their profession (Phillips, 2016). In contrast, the 'US-style' journalism, characterised by CNN, has reaffirmed its importance supporting the function of democracy, particularly in reaction to attempts under the Trump administration to delegitimise it as 'fake news' (Jones, 2017). However, the reality is not as black-and-white as indicated by CGTN and CNN International's reporting of the Tianjin blasts. Amid its newest stage of transition, CGTN is groping for a fine balance between fulfilling traditional party objectives and achieving recognition for objective reporting. In their study of CGTN's operations in Africa, Gagliardone & Pál observed the pursuit of 'freer' reporting by journalists across the continent to match the standards of competitors including BBC and Al Jazeera regarded as standbearers of 'quality journalism' (p. 1055, 2017). Although this trend has not yet been replicated by Chinese media at the domestic market, dismissing

such a prospect offhandedly neglects the political and professional complexities at CGTN shaping its current direction.

In examining popular protests in China under President Hu Jintao (2003-13), Steinhardt (2015, p. 124) found that the central government calibrated its propaganda controls by signalling sympathy with aggrieved citizens and openly criticising local officials. The central government also pushed for 'the development of new and more proactive propaganda tools' (Steinhardt, 2015, p. 123) during this period. In the words of President Hu, this strategy aimed to 'turn the party-state into the primary definer [of reality] in a media world where simple suppression no longer works' (Zhao, 2008, p. 39). In analysing CGTN's coverage of the Tianjin blasts, we can see how it fulfilled a 'guard-dog' function by facilitating the party-state's definition of 'reality' after the disaster. Despite censorship of the social media (Dou, 2015) and explicit directives that only 'authoritative information' from state media be used in reporting (Han, 2015), the central government engaged in what Brady (2015) describes as 'positive propaganda' in line with President Xi's new-type media strategy. In signalling sympathy, Premier Li Keqiang consoled blast victims' families and urged a transparent investigation (Shepherd, 2015) in remarks after the blasts.

Theoretically, this article suggests that contemporary Chinese media, particularly CGTN, are balancing multiple priorities and objectives. As the global arm of CCTV, CGTN imitates the characteristics of counterparts functioning in more liberal media environments, yet it remains constrained by development-oriented media goals where national interest is paramount. Disasters inevitably create a conflict for Chinese media in managing public and party interests. For CGTN, the 2015 Tianjin blasts presented challenges in giving a voice to those affected while adhering to the 'correct political direction'. Economic reforms over the past 40 years have driven commercialisation of China's media system, which today is influenced both by the party-state and the market system (Meng & Rantanen, 2015). CGTN's global outreach means it has the additional responsibility of maintaining credibility in the eyes of its international audiences while satisfying government's demands and Chinese viewers' expectations at home.

Conclusion

This article aimed to contribute a nuanced perspective in understanding the modernisation of China's media through the lens of disaster reporting. As an organ of the state, CGTN supports national interests as determined by the government. Its capacity to serve as 'watchdog' in society inevitably comes second to its duties as a 'guard dog' for the party-state, especially following a disaster when threats to social order and stability are heightened.

CGTN understands that it needs to be taken seriously to effectively compete with progressive, 'unbiased' international networks. This realisation has allowed

excellent journalism to flourish in patches, recognised through award-winning news features and documentaries. Despite its overall terse reports after the 2015 Tianjin blasts, CGTN's coverage of the disaster included well-informed analysis that explored angles neglected by CNN International and other Western media. It is easy to attribute this deeper coverage to the advantages CGTN has in covering a domestic crisis, where the network is reporting on home soil free of obstacles that normally hinder foreign media; it has a monopoly on and unrivalled access to official sources; and it has superior resources (four journalists can cover far more than one).

While no reliable data is available on Chinese viewers' satisfaction level with CGTN, studies have found the government enjoys high levels of popular support from Chinese citizens (Laiwani & Winter-Levy, 2016). We can only assume that a majority of Chinese audiences of CGTN are reasonably content with the channel's current journalism style and its function in society. Jirik (2008) laments that whenever a piece of research about media in China is presented, the implied norm against which that medium is measured and usually found wanting is the Western press model. This article attempts to challenge this norm by drawing attention to the ideological objectives of the Western press model and highlighting the constructive and complex role CGTN strives to fulfil as a nation-builder; as a 'soft-power' instrument, and as an alternative news source trying to fulfil often contradictory functions as a 'watchdog' and 'guard dog'.

In exploring a new paradigm of press theories, Yin (2008) argues that Confucianism, especially the idea that the government is supposed to take care of people (p. 45), was more influential on China's mass media than principles in the Four Theories' Soviet-communist model. As an international instrument of 'soft power' with growing influence, CGTN occupies a unique space in the spectrum of Chinese media. It targets a global audience and has led the Chinese media's push to be a 'digital-first' news source, yet at the same time its reporting operates within strict boundaries. Its ability to set the agenda, as demonstrated by its coverage of the Tianjin blasts, reflects its growing influence domestically and internationally. Further, the dichotomy of Marxist press principles and journalistic values, such as balance and objectivity, does not imply that there are no overlapping areas between the Chinese and Western media models. During disasters, there is an expectation from the public for exceptional journalism to help people understand what is happening (Steffens, 2012, p. 8), and both the government and media share a common goal to mitigate societal damage (Vultee & Wilkins, 2012, p. 12).

The 2015 Tianjin blasts highlighted that disaster communication is not a zero-sum game for the Chinese government. Through its reporting, CGTN successfully served as the agenda setters of the government's emergency response. It fulfilled its mission to 'report news from a Chinese perspective' (CGTN, 2017) by serving

its traditional mouthpiece role and adhering to party press principles. It remains questionable, however, if its commitment to ‘neutral, objective reporting’ (CGTN, 2017) stands up to scrutiny in the eyes of international audiences. Despite both CGTN and CNN International registering more than 40 percent of stories with a ‘neutral’ valence, CGTN’s reluctance to focus on aggrieved residents or apportion responsibility to the government undermined its ability to meaningfully bring ‘a more balanced view to global news reporting’ (CGTN, 2017).

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Framing and sources

News on environmental justice in Bangladesh

Abstract: With the rapid economic development and growing population, Bangladesh is one of the most environmentally vulnerable countries in the world. In this country, news reporting of environmental issues is vibrant and vigorous, although it attracts scant scholarly attention. In fact, environmental journalism in this South Asian country is one of the least studied topics in the area of journalism research. The current study attends to this country and examines news sources in two newspapers in Bangladesh, focusing on their coverage of river systems and climate change in 2009 and 2015. This study explores various sources, such as politicians, bureaucrats, activists, and citizens, and the patterns of emphasis in the news by using these sources to understand the framing of river degradation and climate change. The aim here is to illustrate the journalists' influence in defining these environmental problems against various news sources and social actors. The qualitative analysis reveals an emphasis on political and bureaucratic sources in 2009 and on expert and citizen sources in 2015. Additionally, the analysis also demonstrates that the journalists—as actors in defining the reality—have exerted 'influence' on accentuating environmental concerns by shifting their source emphasis over time from politicians and bureaucrats to experts and citizens. Through this emphasis, they uphold the discourse of environmental justice in varied contexts.

Keywords: Bangladesh, climate change, environment, environmental justice, framing, journalists, sources

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Introduction

NEW MEDIA play a crucial role in environmental politics by negotiating access to news spaces and shaping the meaning of news content (Hansen, 2010). Negotiating access and shaping meaning are essential parts of the power dynamic between news media and other social institutions. In the world of environmental politics, this 'crucial' role of the news media has become particularly prominent since the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro. Since Rio, the

environmental issues have crept upward on the news agenda, and the environment has become a ‘beat’ of major concern that overlaps with those of politics and economics in many developed and developing countries. In recent years, increased industrialisation in the developing countries has caused many people to become concerned about environmental sustainability issues (Lewis, 2015). Bangladesh, as an emerging economy, is one of the most vulnerable to changes in climate and sea level due to so much flat, deltaic land (IPCC, 2007; Dastagir, 2015). These features make Bangladesh a good choice for exploring how news media exert influence on the debates surrounding environmental issues. This study explores how environmental issues are discussed in Bangladesh’s newspapers and how the access allowed to—and meaning produced by—journalists are ingrained in the dynamic of influence between the country’s news media and other social institutions.

Media scholarship has produced a large body of literature on environmental issues (e.g., Brossard et al., 2004; Neuzil, 2008; Shanahan & McComas, 1997). However, these studies are mainly Western-centric, which is consistent with the overall trend in the broad area of communication scholarship (Joseph, 2005). Some recent studies have addressed this gap by focusing on environmental journalism in the Global South. For example, Pham & Nash (2017) and Biswas & Kim (2016) have explored issues in South Asia while Takahashi (2011), Guedes (2000), and Waisbord & Peruzzotti (2009) have done so for Latin America. The findings of these studies indicate journalistic preference for episodic and comfortable political framing undermines the potential for journalists to cover multiple aspects of environmental issues, rather than simply the political aspects (Waisbord & Peruzzotti, 2009; Hall et al., 1978; Boykoff, 2011). These multiple aspects include authoritative statements of scientific confidence in observed and expected physical impacts of climate change, published in a series of reports by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Bangladesh features in the IPCC’s Working Group 2 reports (vulnerability and adaptation) as being particularly vulnerable to climate and sea level changes.

The extant literature on the news production (Cook, 2005; Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2009) has emphasised the significance of politicians as crucial actors in the construction of news. However, the contemporary escalation of public discussion surrounding scientific and environmental issues, such as climate change, has presumably raised questions about this conventional wisdom of politicians’ pre-eminence and made it necessary to explore whether journalists solicit the help of other actors, e.g. scientific climate change experts as one group of sources.

The context: Sources and framing

Scholars have already indicated an association between the process of framing in the news and various claim-makers, including sources and journalists. While

the sources attempt to command or exercise their power through selective release of information or restricting news media's access to key individuals, the journalists can present the claim-makers in a certain light or evaluate their claims (Entman, 1993; Anderson, 2014; Hansen, 2010; Pham & Nash, 2017). Equipped with these powers, sources and journalists vie against each other as they try to define the world according to their preferred standpoints.

Drawing on political communication perspectives, a few comparative studies on election issues in Europe and the US (e.g. Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2009) have explored the pattern of dominance of the news sources and confirmed the pre-eminence of officials in the news. A few other studies have focused explicitly on the sources used in environmental coverage. For example, Burch and Harry (2004) analysed the coverage of pesticide use in four Californian newspapers and found that journalists widely used anti-pesticide sources to invoke counter-hegemonic and environmental justice themes, despite the fact that large newspapers themselves were part of the ruling hegemony. In contrast, Liebler and Bendix (1996), in their examination of television news coverage of old growth forests in the US, concluded that the reporters had supported the hegemonic position by using loggers or mill workers as those individuals predominantly reflected pro-cut frames over pro-save frames. Takahashi (2011) looked beyond the pro and anti-environmental frames and found that in the coverage of the Fifth Latin American, Caribbean and the European Union Summit in Peru, journalists relied heavily on political sources and provided limited access to other voices, such as environmentalists. Although Takahashi's study confirmed the journalists' reliance on 'primary definers' (Hall et al., 1978), a complex scenario emerged when the number of lay sources was considered. This complexity brings to the fore Ericson and co-authors' argument (Ericson et al., 1989) that the key to negotiations between journalists and source organisations is not the dominance of certain authoritative sources, but rather the use of sources by the journalists. This usage of sources relates to, among other things, the maintenance of the quality of news content, which is an instrument with which journalists establish or enhance their power relative to other definers of reality (see also Pham & Nash, 2017). From these source-specific studies, one can infer two different outcomes. In the cases of the old growth forest controversy and the climate change conference, the coverage was influenced by the socio-political interests of the time. However, in the reporting of pesticide use, the journalists invoked environmental justice and supported the conservationist position. So, journalists prefer hegemonic or counter-hegemonic views depending on the context.

The above studies set the context for the use of sources in environmental news from both developed and developing countries (i.e. US and Peru), but there is a room for closer scrutiny of journalistic processes and rationales for source selection and use. The current study contributes to this area by analysing the use of sources in the

coverage of two interconnected environmental issues in Bangladesh which attracts public attention from diverse political contestations. A focus on these contestations surrounding environmental issue enables this study to offer robust scrutiny of how journalists use sources of crucial information in their coverage and how it invokes discourses of environmental justice. Considering the varied practical and political contexts (i.e. national and international) it can be argued that ‘environmental justice should be seen more as a discourse, embedded in social movement, always provisional and contested and reflecting interests’ (Scandrett, 2007, p.1).

In this study, the political contestations between various interest groups are represented by the journalists will be examined. It is assumed that one aspect of journalists’ influence is the quality of their news content. The use of a large number of relevant sources in an article indicates a more in-depth exploration of the subject matter and higher quality of the content. The journalists maintain this quality in two main ways: First, they attribute responsibility for specific issues to individuals, groups or institutions (e.g. government). This attribution is critical to the exercise of civic control and is a key ingredient of all social knowledge (Iyengar, 1991). Second, they select sources to frame the issues in a particular way. In some cases, the selection is aimed at promoting a preferred perspective; in others, the choice of particular sources works as a counter to a perspective opposed by the journalist or news organisation. The attribution of responsibility and the selection of sources are interdependent. In controversial or highly technical matters, the questions of source selection, citation, and framing are of vital professional importance. By discussing framing in relation to sources, this study scrutinises whether this selection and use of sources is utilised by the news organisations to justify certain positions on environmental policy debates in Bangladesh and to delegitimise other positions.

In academic literature examining the media, the widely discussed notion of framing has produced a number of perspectives; for example, framing as ‘an individual psychological process’, an ‘organisational process’, and ‘a political strategic tool’ (Entman et al., 2009; Ettema, 2010). Many of these perspectives assume ‘frames simply as content features that produce media effects’ (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 215). This study intends to overcome the confines of this assumption and focus on how various actors (including sources and journalists) engage in promoting certain frames with the resources available to them. However, because journalists consider themselves the principal driving force of the public sphere (Habermas, 2006), it is essential to look at not only the ‘authorised knowers’ or ‘primary definers’ but also the whole gamut of sources present in an article. In this respect, the idea of ‘competitive definers’ (Anderson, 2017) may be helpful; this idea sees everyone as competitors in the public sphere regardless of the sources’ positions in the hierarchy of social power. This idea allows monitoring of those who possess social power as well as those who do not (Cottle, 2000; Schlesinger,

1990). As critics note, the imbalance of power among the providers of information to journalists has always been the crux of the study of news sources (Bell, 1994; Mann, 2000; Franklin et al., 2010), although some argue that the influence of digital and social media has challenged the authoritative position of the primary definers (Anderson, 2017). To understand the influence of journalists on the news production process, this study looks at the selection and citation of sources that enables journalists and news organisations to support and endorse—as well as to challenge and undermine—certain claim makers’ policy positions.

Data collection method

In this study, framing was scrutinised at content level through inferences by the journalist (e.g., problem identification, problem definition, attribution of responsibility, or solution). For this purpose, a combination of quantitative and qualitative content analysis was adopted; while the numbers provided details about the source composition (i.e. types of sources; prominence of sources), the quotes made the inferences (for example, frames implied) and underlying assumptions (i.e., the perception of responsibility) evident. News and feature articles about river systems and climate change were collected manually from the web archives of the *Prothom Alo* (PA) (<http://archive.prothom-alo.com>) and *The Daily Star* (DS) (<http://www.thedailystar.net/newspaper>), two prominent Bangladeshi newspapers. A manual search was conducted because the content was not available in any well-known databases. Both the dailies are based in Dhaka and owned by leading media companies. In general, many Bangladeshi newspapers including the two selected here follow an editorial middle ground in politics, both supporting and criticising the government of the day. The data collection period was July to December in 2009 and 2015 to cover the UN Climate Summits in Copenhagen (COP15) and Paris (COP21), respectively. The following search terms were used: ‘Shitalakhya’, ‘Buriganga’, ‘Turag’, ‘Dhaleswari’ [river names], ‘pollution’, ‘climate change’, ‘Copenhagen’, and ‘Paris’.

The search produced a total of 602 news and feature articles that contained 956 sources (Table 1). Based on these numbers and attributes of the articles, and drawing on some previous studies of framing (i.e. Bell, 1994; Schneider, 2011), a procedure of coding and analysis was followed. In the quantitative phase, all the articles were analysed to identify the types of sources used. However, since the number of articles in 2015 was significantly low, it warranted a qualitative approach to obtain a deeper and more authentic understanding of the news frames (Miller & Riechert, 1999; Metag, 2016). So, in the qualitative phase, a total of 27 articles were selected from both the 2009 and 2015 periods, which were dominated by different sources where information provided by the sources was contested. These articles were then analysed qualitatively to identify two frames ascertained as predominant in some other frame studies (Semetko & Valkenburg,

Table 1: Overview of coding for frames

Frames	Definition	Examples
Action	When the excerpts in the article suggest call for measures, demonstrate strong determination to solve the problem surrounding river systems and climate change with utmost importance (or as national priority)	‘We must save our rivers which have been seriously polluted and partly grabbed. Influential people, whoever they are, cannot be any barrier to the justified demands of common people,’ said Speaker of the Parliament Abdul Hamid, who addressed the function as chief guest.
Conflict	When the excerpts in the article demonstrate contestation between various stakeholders (e.g. activist, citizen, experts, bureaucrats, politicians) and attribute responsibilities to certain entities (e.g. government, economic exploitation, high consumption of rich countries)	Kamaluddin Ahmed, the Environment and Forest Secretary of Bangladesh, defended the government’s decision by stating that ‘the Power Board has conducted extensive research and review in order to build this plant by using a very up-to-date technology ... If they [the protesters] are still not happy, we have nothing to do about that’.

2000; Nisbet, 2010; Dimitrova & Störmbäck, 2012). These frames were: the action frame and the conflict frame (see Table 1). Many critics have defined the conflict frame as a matter of contestation between two or more forces in a social context, whereas the action frame emphasises an act intended to solve an urgent problem or address a critical issue. While in the conflict frame, contesting groups or entities may remain distant, in the action frame, they would perhaps align their interests for the sake of resolving the problem or issue (Benford & Snow, 2000).

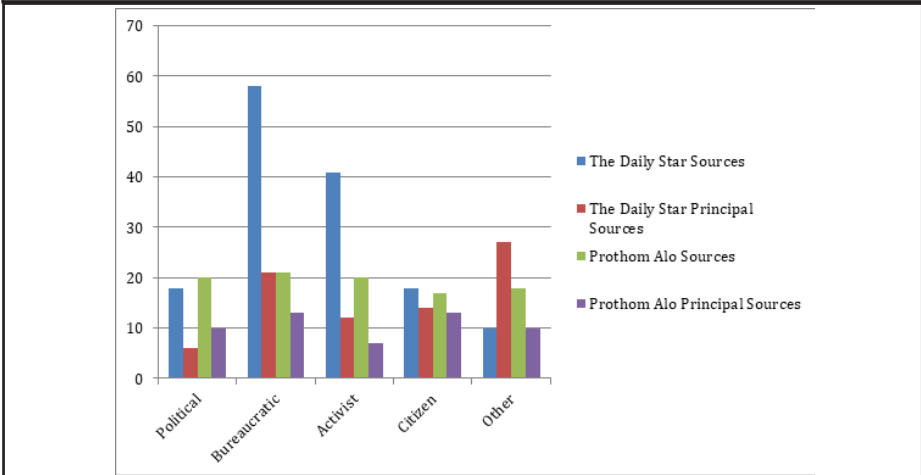
To identify the action frame in an article, the following matters were assessed: a) Did the article contain any call for measures to save river systems or reduce the catastrophic impact of climate change? b) Did the article demonstrate a strong determination to solve the problems surrounding the rivers and climate change? c) Did the article address the issue of climate change or river systems as a national priority? In the case of the conflict frame, the questions included the following: a) Did the article attribute responsibilities to some entities (e.g., economic exploitations by vested interests with regard to the degradation of the rivers’ health and Western countries’ high consumptions habits with regard to climate change)? b) Did the article contain two opposing sides? c) Did the article attribute responsibility to any government for failing to take adequate action in addressing climate change or river problems?

Findings

Sources

Altogether, five categories of important sources were identified through the examination of all direct and indirect quotes in the selected news and feature articles. These sources included politicians, bureaucrats, experts, activists from non-governmental organisations and alleged perpetrators or victims of environmental problems. These perpetrators or victims were identified as citizens or lay sources. In 2009, news coverage of the four rivers surrounding Dhaka was heavily dominated by the bureaucratic sources, who were followed by the activist, political, and citizen sources. On the other hand, the coverage of the climate change issue was dominated by the political sources, followed by the bureaucratic, expert and activist sources.

Graph 1: Sources in river systems, 2009



River Systems in 2009

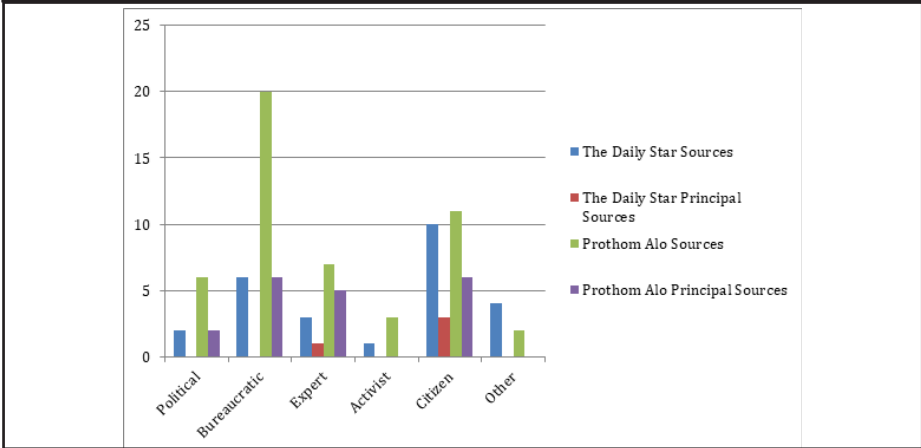
Although there were fewer citizen sources, the way they were positioned to dispute the official versions of river degradation made them symbolically more powerful and visible at times compared to other sources (Graph 1). For example, an article titled ‘Sand lifters back in rivers’ (*The Daily Star*, 2009, August 8) described the return of sand extractors to a spot in the river Buriganga despite an official ban on such activity. In this report, one of the panicked residents, who lived in a locality that was seriously affected by indiscriminate sand extraction a few years ago, was quoted as saying that the [original] permission for extracting sand from this riverbed could not be justified because the river route was properly dredged a few years ago for a legitimate purpose. ‘The deal to sell sand ... at the cost of their homes, land and river must be investigated,’ demanded the resident.

Compared to this strong comment, the official reactions were weak. The Chairman of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) claimed that he had ‘no clue’ about the continuous extraction of sand from the spot. When pressed, he suggested to the journalist: ‘You [had] better inform the law enforcement agencies of the matter’ (*The Daily Star*, 2009, August 8). Here, the pitching of a lay source against the official sources, who were essentially ignoring the damage being done to the river, could also be interpreted as a journalistic exertion of influence over the authority-order. In this instance, the journalist apparently used the lay source to ensure the comprehensiveness of the report (using all sides of a controversy). The 423-word news article was also highly engaged with the issue, as it used three very relevant sources from two official bodies and the affected resident to provide a comprehensive picture of the new development. By pitching the resident against the officials, the journalist put this issue in a conflict frame. Additionally, attribution of responsibility to officials and purposeful source selection (the resident with a compelling quote) are both evident. The report’s quality is at the crux of the journalistic exertion of influence which is exercised by creating a strong impression against the authorities via the use of a lay source.

From this example, it is evident that the positioning or pitching of sources, not their raw numbers, is an influential factor in sourcing practice (i.e. Ericson et al., 1989). This view becomes even more evident when another article in the action frame is analysed. This article, titled ‘Lawmakers pledge to save the rivers’ (*The Daily Star*, 2009, June 2), reported on the inauguration of a campaign to save the country’s rivers from pollution. The article used representatives from the legislative body, businesses and activist organisations to express concerns about the polluting industries, such as dyeing and textiles. The journalist cited nine sources, including six politicians, one businessman, and two activists who expressed their determination ‘to take every measure necessary to stop illegal grabbing and pollution of the rivers’. The sources expressed strong resolve and promised full cooperation with the campaigners to address the problems. One campaigner, the editor of a newspaper, attempted to speak with some bite when he referred to the polluting industries and focused on the priority of sustainability over immediate economic interests. He said: ‘They [the industries] contribute to our economy but that should not be at the cost of our rivers.’

However, despite a large number of diverse sources and ample news space (1,278 words and a large photograph), the article does not give the impression of a journalistic upper hand over others in defining the environmental reality of rivers in the country. It can be inferred that activists with a high level of access to news media can provide instant information, but that access does not always enhance journalists’ influence. On the other hand, a lay source with a low level of access can offer immediate and useful insights that can make journalistic content more powerful.

Graph 2: Sources in river systems, 2015



River systems in 2015

As the analysis below demonstrates, the action frame was not as emphasised in 2015 as it was in 2009. Statements from expert, lay and, to a lesser extent, bureaucratic sources pointed to the continuation of endemic degradation of river systems surrounding the capital Dhaka. These statements also underscored the lackadaisical approach of the government in taking actions against the perpetrators, as it was revealed that the local ruling party members were involved in encroaching on river banks, where they built unauthorised structures. In 2009, the journalists used predominantly political sources to frame the river issues, indicating a firm determination to protect the river from the encroachers. In 2015 (Graph 2), there was more use of expert sources in the conflict frame, attributing the responsibility for economic exploitation of the rivers to the government. Both the expert and lay sources highlighted the extent of the contamination of river water by various industries.

For example, in an article titled ‘Save rivers, Save Bangladesh’ (*The Daily Star*, 2015, December 31), water resources expert Professor Ainun Nishat stated that the degradation was not confined to the rivers surrounding Dhaka but extended across the country. He even accused the state of being ‘... a big polluter’ because of its ‘business as usual’ approach to water management and a lack of political commitment to stopping the river polluters and encroachers, who are ‘... politically powerful’.

The government’s lack of political commitment was also evident in a case related to an allegation of contamination against two industrial units. In an article titled ‘Pollution increases in Shitalakhya’ (*Prothom Alo*, 2015, June 14), an anonymous source was cited as saying ‘... a large export garment’s dyeing unit and another chemical factory have been indiscriminately dumping their poisonous

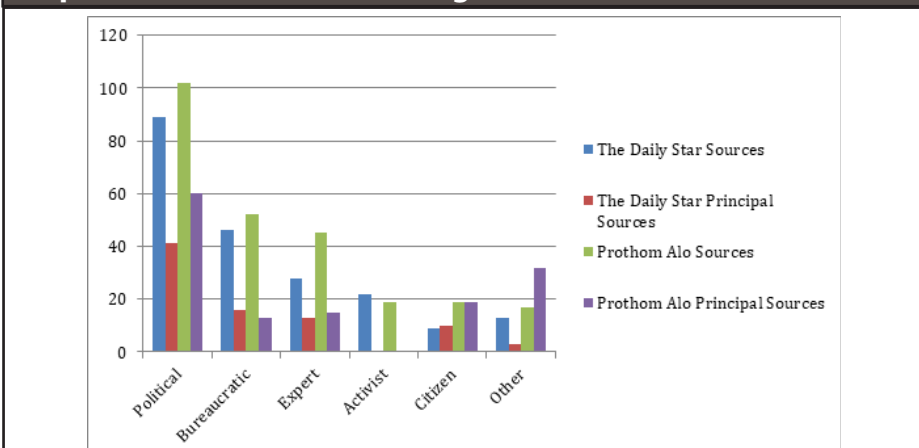
liquid effluent into the rivers despite owning Effluent Treatment Plants (ETP)'. The source claimed that these factories preferred not to use the plants in order to save on costs. An official from the Directorate of the Environment had confirmed the allegation. By using quotes from the business and government sources, the journalist effectively identified two sides as responsible for the pollution: directly, the industrial units discharging the pollutants into the water; and indirectly, the government, for condoning this behaviour and not taking any action against those responsible. However, the article did not use any sources from the accused industrial units.

Overall, news coverage can be seen as part of the monitoring activity, which provides a platform or battleground for various interests and sources to compete in 'larger definitional struggles over the scale, degree and urgency of environmental risks' (Allan et al., 1999, p. 16). In this 2015 coverage, the 'experts' can be seen as 'self-evidently authoritative', in the process which seek to 'denaturalise' issues related to rivers (for example, through the use of expert sources, journalists identified the state as a big polluter). Simultaneously, the use of some oppositional voices (e.g. the BIWTA official in the above article) can be seen as lacking credibility (Allan et al., 1999, p. 16) since apparently, they do not have control of the situation surrounding illegal structures. Additionally, the use of pithy quotes from lay sources is noticeable. In the news coverage of the river system, then, the strategic use of lay sources, needs to be recognised as the journalists' weapon of discursive struggle and as a manifestation of journalists' exertion of influence.

Climate change in 2009

So far, the coverage of river issues demonstrated risks of environmental degradation in Bangladesh whereas the climate change presented as an issue of environmental justice. The coverage of river problems also emphasised the risks of environmental

Graph 3: Sources in climate change, 2009



degradation (Graph 3). Here, the contention was against the Western developed nations, responsible for producing the lion's share of greenhouse gas emissions and forcing developing countries, including Bangladesh, to pay the high cost of those emissions. In the articles about climate change, expert sources were prominently in support of the political establishment; whereas in the case of many river systems articles, they were at loggerheads with the political sources.

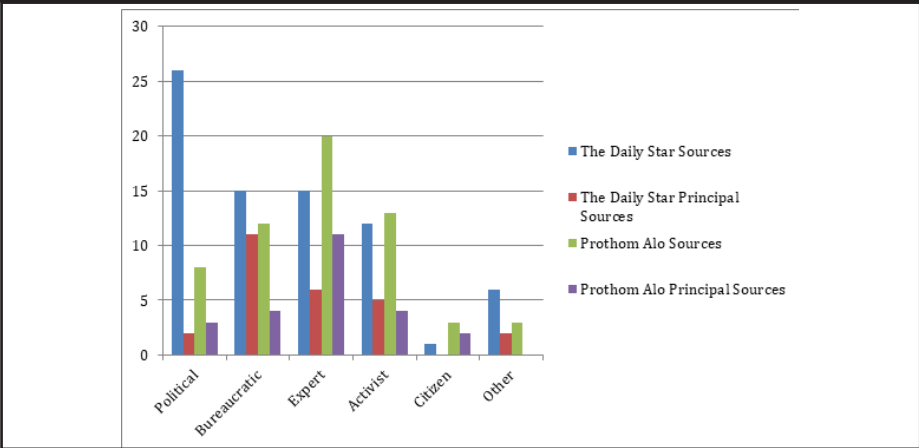
With regard to climate change, the coverage was dominated by political sources (n=191) who, along with the expert sources (n=73), were used in the conflict frame. Excerpts from political sources demonstrated that most of the developing countries' politicians held 'other countries' responsible for the consequences of climate change in their countries, and they sought climate assistance from the developed countries.

Quotes from the political and expert sources revealed serious concerns about the outcomes of the Copenhagen conference and expressed frustration at the slow progress of the meeting's final stage. In an article, Dr Saleemul Huq, director of the London-based International Institute of Environment and Development, said the conference outcome was entirely 'inadequate' for Bangladesh (*The Daily Star*, 2009, December 19). In the same article, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also pronounced the outcomes as inadequate and called for the inclusion of 'climate refugees' in the climate change agreement. This clause would obligate the developed countries to accept Bangladeshi citizens as 'refugees' on the grounds of their vulnerability due to extreme exposure to climate change. Overall, it showed that the journalists positioned both experts and politicians in a synchronised, mutually reinforcing way.

Climate change in 2015

Unlike the coverage of climate change in 2009, the coverage in 2015 emphasised

Graph 4: Sources in climate change, 2015



expert and political sources in the action frame. This coverage highlighted the country's willingness to tackle the issue of climate change internationally (i.e. commitment to Intended Nationally Determined Contribution, or INDC). While politicians were the most used sources in 2009, in 2015, experts were important in the international negotiations on behalf of Bangladesh during COP21. Although the politicians were used as sources, they were also held responsible for not taking adequate actions to mitigate climate change locally. The experts' importance in 2015 was evident in an article titled 'Bangladesh to reduce carbon emission by 20 percent' (Mahmud, 2015, November 28), in which Professor Ainun Nishat referred to the country's emissions reduction commitment in its INDC and claimed: 'Despite the fact that Bangladesh has no role in global climate change, the country is committed to emissions reduction. Bangladesh should be an example for the rest of the world.' By using this expert opinion, the article clearly invoked the action frame and highlighted the country's precariousness—despite its strong emissions reduction commitment—resulting from the inaction of rich countries.

The coverage (Graph 4) also raised concerns about the removal of the compensation clause from the Paris Treaty, which meant rich countries would ask poor countries to contribute to the Green Climate Fund (GCF). In an article titled 'G77 & LDC protest: Rich ask developing and underdeveloped to pay' (Mahmud, 2015, December 5), one expert said: 'Bangladesh has already spent 400 million dollars of its fund in tackling climate change. However, adaptation to climate change fund needed to be provided by the industrialised countries'. This position was strongly supported by a number of activist groups as well.

These quotes demonstrate that despite a strong mitigation initiative from the affected countries, there was a lack of adequate action from the rich countries to tackle the imminent risks of climate change. This portrayal clearly reinforced the 'north-south' divide (Chapman et al., 1997). While the affected countries' mitigation initiatives were established through the use of expert sources, there was a lack of international political or official sources in discussing the rich countries' inaction. This gap can be explained by a lack of resources and lack of access to international sources in the developing countries (Shanahan, 2006). Furthermore, the climate change coverage was often aligned with the political position of the government and purposefully displayed 'various strands of advocacy' (Eide & Kulenius, 2012, p.16). Here, the frequent use of expert sources allowed journalists to purposefully reaffirm the vulnerability of Bangladesh as a climate victim.

However, the emphasis on activist sources in the conflict frame was marked by the competing views of the activists on both the global and local fronts. The environmental activists did not accept the Treaty as the outcome of the Paris Conference; they were also critical of a Bangladesh government plan to construct a coal-fired electricity plant near the Sundarbans mangrove forest (Mahmud, 2015, December 8). The official sources added that the proposed site of the power plant

was approximately 14 kilometres from the outer boundary of the Sundarbans and 65 kilometres from the world heritage site. The quotes from the official sources demonstrated denial of the threat posed by the proposed plant. Furthermore, while the government supported global attempts to reduce emissions in its INDC statement, it did not engage with concerns about risks to local Bangladesh environment.

In their questioning of the official sources, the journalists seemed to have privileged the activists' viewpoints. However, through the positioning of expert sources in the action frame and activist sources in the conflict frame, the newspapers demonstrated that the journalists stood by environmental causes without being tendentious (Mann, 2000). In both events, the use of the citizen and (politically marginal) activist sources was indicative of the newspapers' inclination to use sources in the frame-building process and enhance their influence to define environmental reality. In the qualitatively assessed articles about climate change, the journalists used citizens as well as activists to challenge the authorities, albeit in a less effective manner compared to their coverage of the river system.

Discussion and conclusion

The above comparison of sources has established several patterns. Overall, there was a shift in the use of sources in river news: from the action frame in 2009 to the conflict frame in 2015. In the action frame, the journalists identified the causes of river degradation and called upon the ruling politicians to address these problems. The politicians, as predominant sources, also expressed their determination to solve the river degradation and encroachments. However, in 2015, the frame was shifted to conflict, and the journalists explicitly mentioned political corruptions linked to the economic exploitation of rivers. Additionally, instead of seeking redress from the ruling politicians, the journalists directly held the government responsible for using inadequate measures to protect the water bodies. The presence of political sources was significantly reduced in 2015 as the journalists used more eyewitnesses' accounts or spot reports that employed both the citizen and activist sources.

During both study periods, the coverage of climate change showed the presence of two sides: Bangladesh as the climate victim and Western countries as the nations responsible for climate change. However, there is a twist here: in 2009, the coverage used mostly politicians, experts, and lay sources to demonstrate the vulnerability of deltaic Bangladesh as well as to demonstrate the responsibilities of other countries for climate change. Nevertheless, in 2015, the journalists turned to the Bangladesh government as well and criticised those activities that were perceived as detrimental to addressing climate change (e.g. the Rampal power plant) albeit without linking explicitly to global climate change.

The cross-temporal analysis demonstrated that, in the case of the river issues, the journalists exploited every opportunity to challenge the government;

but, in climate change, this heightened level of scrutiny was not explicitly evident. These findings are consistent with the notion of ‘unity of purpose’ (Pham & Nash, 2017) which argues that when there is a consensus within dominant sources (e.g. government), journalists tend to follow the line of these sources. As with the Vietnamese media, journalists in Bangladesh highlighted the government policy positions on climate change i.e. Bangladesh is the victim of climate change, and the Western countries should accept ‘climate refugee’ clause in any climate change agreement.

Overall, it may be asserted that while the news articles about river problems showed an advanced level of engagement with the subject matter through their selection and use of sources, the articles about climate change somewhat lacked this engagement despite using a relatively higher number of sources. Whether these varied levels of engagements could be equated with a higher or lower quality of news content is still an open question, but the analysis in this study showed that there was room to interpret the quality of some of the articles according to this equation. Moreover, this study revealed that the news framing was an ongoing process that shifted its trajectory according to the journalists’ inclinations. These inclinations, however, were not based on absolute free will but were contingent on a number of factors (Miller & Riechert, 1999), including the journalists’ or newspapers’ immediate positions on an issue (e.g. advocacy for saving rivers) and the availability of required information (e.g., pointed quotes from lay sources in the river news) or access (e.g. to politicians from the developed countries in climate change news) or lack thereof. With their positions and access, journalists in Bangladesh have attempted to influence discourses on environmental justice in varied practical contexts in these cases of river problems and climate change.

This study has established a difference between Bangladeshi news coverage of the two issues. In the climate change coverage, there was little conflict between experts and politicians. However, the coverage of river problems was framed as a matter of contestations between experts, citizens and politicians. With this difference, it can be argued that the journalists aligned with various sources to uphold the discourse of environmental justice. Here, the study identifies an interesting difference between global problems impacting the Bangladeshi situation and local problems where there is more contestation between actors. This could inform future necessary action as global climate change definitely impacts on local river systems in Bangladesh.

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Iwi radio in the era of media convergence

The opportunities and challenges of becoming 'more than radio'

Abstract: Operating for the past 30 years, New Zealand's 'iwi radio' stations broadcast a mixture of te reo Māori and English language programming throughout the country. The 21 stations that presently operate were established as a strategy to improve upon the severe decline in the indigenous language. As radio stations, each initiative also affords individual Māori groups some autonomy in the mediated protection and promotion of indigenous identity. Collectively represented by Te Whakaruruhau o Ngā Reo Irirangi Māori, the iwi stations stand apart from the highly-consolidated mainstream commercial and public service sectors, but are now similarly confronted with the challenge of a rapidly changing media landscape. Utilising convergence as a prominent, albeit contentious, descriptor of media transformation, this article analyses the response of the iwi radio sector to convergence processes. Initiatives that include the integration of web and social media and the establishment of a networked switching platform to share iwi content highlight parallel opportunities and challenges for the iwi radio stations as they strive to become 'more than radio' on limited resourcing. This discussion highlights the experiences of radio practitioners tasked with the preservation and progress of indigenous voices in an era of convergence, providing further contextual insight into contemporary accounts of media transformation, radio and Māori media.

Keywords: broadcasting, indigenous media, Māori media, media convergence, New Zealand, radio, te reo Māori

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Introduction

IN OCTOBER 2018, Nanaia Mahuta, the New Zealand government's Minister for Māori Development, announced a sector-wide review of publicly-funded Māori media, driven by the need to 'ensure that Māori broadcasting is future proofed and fit for purpose as we move further into the digital age' (Mahuta, 2018). Included in the scope of the review is Te Whakaruruhau o Ngā Reo

Irirangi Māori and the network iwi radio stations it represents. The 21 iwi radio stations have collectively been in operation for over 30 years and represent an important breakthrough in establishing independent Māori broadcasting. This article details the findings of a research project that was conducted immediately prior to the review announcement in early 2018, concerned with similarly understanding how iwi radio stations and the sector as a whole are navigating contemporary processes of media transformation; identified herein as an era of media convergence.

The findings presented here are organised into key themes that highlight instances in which iwi radio stations are utilising digital technologies, negotiating the constraints of limited resourcing, exploring the prospects of networked rationalisation and grappling with their identity as radio organisations in an evolving media environment. These themes are not entirely distinct from one another, and aspects of these contemporary issues are in fact symptomatic of the difficult conditions in which these indigenous media were established. Ultimately, the insights of station managers and other stakeholders offer a first-hand account of the opportunities and challenges confronting the iwi radio sector as they sustain their commitment to revitalising Te Reo Māori and engaging their community audiences while at the same time becoming ‘more than radio’ (J. Taituha-Ngawaka, personal communication, May 3, 2018).

Radio in the era of convergence

The motivation for studying contemporary iwi radio in relation to media convergence began with a previous study that asked similar questions of the three largest organisations in New Zealand radio broadcasting: MediaWorks, NZME and Radio New Zealand (McEwan, 2016). The central aim of that study was to evaluate theories of media transformation against actual lived experiences in the context of the New Zealand radio industry. To this end, the concept of convergence was selected for both its mobility and endurance as a contested theory of media transformation, evidenced in recent policy initiatives in countries such as Australia (Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 2012) and New Zealand (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2015).

As Meikle and Young (2012) explain, convergence, as a complex process of media transformation, is largely a site of contestation that manifests in both the development and impact of convergent technologies, as well as how these processes are understood and measured by various actors. This contest extends to scholarship: the disruptive promise of digital, networked and computing technologies touted by Negroponte (1995) and Rheingold (2000) was just as readily dismissed as technologically determinist rhetoric by critics who identified a tendency for these developments to entrench, rather than challenge, powerful capitalist institutions (McChesney, 1999; Murdock & Golding, 2002; Mansell, 2004; Mosco, 2004).

More recently, scholars such as Benkler (2006), Bruns (2008) and, most famously Jenkins (2006), continued to explore the democratising potential of convergent technologies. Jenkins goes so far as to suggest a cultural shift in the relationship between media producers and audiences, while critical accounts of media convergence have instead emphasised the perpetuation of neoliberal ideologies that favour ‘networked individualism’ at the expense of the ‘society-making’ tendencies of traditional mass media (Dwyer, 2010, p. 118). This research suggests that, as the sum of these various considerations of technology, industry and organisational structures, media practices and culture, convergence provides a meaningful prompt from which the complex experiences of media transformation can be located in unique contexts.

In the context of radio, the analysis of increasingly digitised practices such as contemporary broadcasting (Hendy, 2000; Cordeiro, 2012) and podcasting as a form of audio storytelling (Berry, 2006; Markman, 2012), has fostered renewed optimism for the future of the medium. As Lindgren and Phillips (2014) argue, ‘rather than diminishing in popularity, radio, always the most versatile of media, has reinvented itself to take most advantage of what digital technology has to offer’ (p. 5). This statement is made in relation to strong listener data in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia, showing that radio listening still appeals to the majority of those populations. In New Zealand, audience research returns similar results. A 2018 audience survey, commissioned by New Zealand On Air, found that 78 percent of New Zealanders listened to live broadcast radio, positioning it as the second most widely used media platform in the country, while an additional 18 percent of New Zealanders listen to domestic radio online (NZ On Air, 2018). However, in many cases, it is radio’s ability to adapt to new media developments that has inspired its description as ‘resilient’ (Oliveira, Stachyra, & Starkey, 2014).

For radio scholars such as Dubber (2013), Hilmes (2013) and Lacey (2018), the consideration of these adaptations and changes also provokes new philosophical questions regarding the very definition of radio. As Lacey (2018) suggests, ‘this single word, radio, is called upon to describe any number of different things—material, virtual, institutional, aesthetic, experiential. And, in turn, each of these meanings unfolds over time and in different contexts to reveal anything and everything’ (p. 110). The answer to this question is inconclusive, but it reveals that contemporary radio, like convergence, is a site of contested meaning that warrants further investigation.

Inspired by these questions, the author’s previous study of New Zealand radio found that accounts of convergence often favour a broad determinist logic of technology-driven media change that needs to also account for pervasive neoliberalism, government policy, consolidated media power and audience composition. Cognisant of the relative stability of their industry when compared

with other media sectors, New Zealand radio industry professionals indicated that technology-centred initiatives were more typically a response to a *perceived* need to change, rather than any significant loss of audience or revenue. Building on these findings, this study seeks to further understand how notions of convergence and radio are represented in New Zealand radio, by exploring the experiences of radio organisations that operate outside of the highly-centralised commercial and public service sectors.

Māori radio and the iwi network

The establishment of the iwi radio stations in Aotearoa New Zealand is historically important for a number of reasons. As Matamua explains, prior to the 1980s, Māori had been almost excluded entirely from broadcasting: ‘For the seemingly endless hours of non-Māori broadcasting that had occurred from 1921 onwards, including music, culture and programmes from around the world, Māori were given what were in effect only brief moments’ (Matamua, 2006, p. 48). The case for Māori-led broadcasting began to emerge in the 1970s as an extension of the wider case to save and revitalise te reo Māori (Mill, 2005; Mane, 2014) and later on the legal basis of Treaty of Waitangi obligations. The Te Reo Māori Claim (WAI11) presented to the Waitangi Tribunal, resulted in recognition of the Māori language as a ‘taonga’ in 1986² and broadcasting was subsequently identified as ‘vital in the fostering of the Māori language’ (Matamua, 2014, p. 336; Beatson, 1996). Government action in support of the recommendations pertaining to Māori broadcasting would take some time to eventuate, but through the 1980s the first of the present-day Māori radio stations, including Te Ūpoko o Te Ika and Radio Ngāti Porou, began broadcasting.

As Joyce (2008) explains, the *Radiocommunications Act 1989*, which would reposition radio spectrum as a leasable commodity to be administered by the New Zealand government, was similarly addressed by Māori through the channels of the Waitangi Tribunal. In addition to the basis of the language claims, a claim lodged in 1990 (WAI150) was concerned with the allocation of spectrum and centred on an apparent breach of Treaty principles relating to ‘rangatiratanga’ (sovereignty) over radio spectrum as an economic and cultural resource. Resistance to the government sale of frequency licenses were pursued as far as the Privy Council and although ultimately unsuccessful, Joyce (2008) argues that the subsequent ‘commitment to Maori language broadcasting enacted by the establishment of Te Māngai Pāho in 1993 was a productive cultural outcome of the discourses mobilised by the 1990 claim to radio spectrum’ (p. 131). As Mill (2005) explains, by 1993, 21 iwi radio stations had been established, and Matamua (2014) suggests that the *Broadcasting Amendment Act* of the same year, which established Te Reo Whakapuaki Irirangi (known as Te Māngai Pāho), was a significant step towards the realisation of independent Māori broadcasting: ‘The

Broadcasting Amendment Act stated that the nature and scope of Te Māngai Pāho would be to fund programming for broadcast on radio and television, which is produced for, and about, Māori interests” (p. 341).

References to iwi radio in this article, and elsewhere, will often point to the current 21 radio stations funded by Te Māngai Pāho. However Mane (2014) notes the various models that have operated since the inception of Māori-led broadcasting. Comparison is drawn between: ‘pan-tribal, whānau, hapū and iwi’ based stations that prioritise Māori language and culture, while resisting commercial imperatives and ‘iwi driven, commercially’ based stations that sought to establish an economically-favourable platform for iwi and stations that maintain a firm commitment to Te Reo Māori and their communities while also exploring the potential for commercial broadcasting to support the overall operation. The stations discussed in this article represent various aspects of these models, although their stated kaupapa and formal obligations to Te Māngai Pāho ensure that each station is committed to the revitalisation of te reo Māori.

To meet this objective, the 21 iwi stations are each allocated operational funding of \$500,000 per year to meet a daily quota of 10.5 hours of Māori language content (Te Māngai Pāho, 2018).³ Examples of additional funding include the Radio Waatea national Māori news bulletin and a contribution to Te Whakaruruhau o Ngā Reo Irirangi Māori, the administrative body that represents the collective interests of most stations. Te Māngai Pāho’s latest annual report states that iwi radio stations are meeting their objectives. Recent audience research also indicates that 30 percent of the Māori general population listen to iwi radio, with 15 percent listening regularly during the week. Listenership has also grown significantly with Māori youth seemingly outperforming the general population (39 percent and 18 percent respectively) (Te Māngai Pāho, 2017b). Despite these relative successes, later sections of this article will highlight the sense of urgency shared by iwi radio stations to simultaneously fulfil language objectives and produce engaging radio in a changing media environment. This challenge can have a direct influence on the way that stations organise and operate, drawing comparison with the extended questions regarding contemporary radio forms and practice as discussed above.

Research approach

As this study sought to extend the scope and generalisability of the previous project concerned with New Zealand radio, it utilised a similar research method of semi-structured interviews with individual iwi station managers identified as representative experts in their field. In total, one-off interviews were conducted with nine station managers, representing over 40 percent of the iwi stations. Additional interviews were conducted with a representative of Te Māngai Pāho, providing clarification on funding strategies and insight into some of the digital platforms

used to connect and monitor the stations and with the former Chair of Te Whakaruruhau o Ngā Reo Irirangi Māori, providing further historical context.

Limitations on the number of interviews that could be conducted were seen as a consequence of feasibility, rather than the willingness of station managers to participate. In the previous study of commercial and public service radio sectors of New Zealand, it was posited that three organisations account for the vast majority of radio listening in New Zealand. As such, the feasibility of that study was supported by the centralised structure of networked radio in which most operations were based in the major centres of Auckland and Wellington. Iwi radio presents almost the opposite situation; the vast majority of iwi stations are widely dispersed throughout New Zealand and each station represents a semi-autonomous radio practice that is unlikely to mirror any other station in the network.

The importance of ‘kanohi-ki-te-kanohi’ (face-to-face) (O’Carroll, 2013) in communicating with Māori participants became immediately apparent, and significant travel was required to conduct interviews. This had the immediate benefit of situating the researcher, albeit briefly, in the lived contexts of iwi radio stations. The researcher was warmly invited into the communities of the stations visited and there was a strong sense of affinity established between both the researcher and the participants in most cases. However, as a non-indigenous researcher, there is some lingering dissatisfaction with the decision to transfer an existing research approach to an indigenous case study and future research will instead seek to build upon the principles of Māori research and partnership. However, where possible efforts were made to maintain channels of communication with participants for the purposes of feedback and consultation. The researcher also met with the executive members of Te Whakaruruhau o Ngā Reo Irirangi Māori to share research findings and consult with the network in the interests of partnership and their response to the Māori Media review.

Connecting with audiences and examining the PungaNet

Across the network, the individual station managers that contributed to this study expressed a firm commitment to implementing newer convergent practices into their overall operation as contemporary radio stations tasked with contributing to the promotion and revitalisation of te reo Māori. Erana Keelan-Reedy, station manager for Radio Ngāti Porou, recalled a network meeting five years ago, with former Te Māngai Pāho CEO John Bishara, as a key moment in the push towards digital technologies and platforms (Personal communication, April 26, 2018). Elsewhere, Bishara was similarly quoted as calling for stations to modernise and utilise the technological potential offered by practices such as podcasts to ‘improve the effectiveness of Te Māngai Pāho’s spending’ (McLachlan, 2016). Whereas these statements may indicate that digital technologies have the potential to supplant the conventions of radio broadcasting, at the ground level station managers were often

using online streaming, video and social media platforms to instead extend their radio operation and audience reach.

As Keelan-Reedy suggests, the potential for Radio Ngāti Porou's online presence is to act as a portal or 'one-stop shop' for Ngāti Porou content (Personal communication, April 26, 2018). Rather than communicate outwardly with other Māori or non-Māori audiences, most stations prioritise serving the iwi and hapū they are affiliated with and the region they originate from. In the context of their own research project with Tautoko FM (an iwi station affiliated with the Ngāpuhi iwi, based in the Northland region of New Zealand), de Bruin and Mane (2018) suggest that by recognising pre-colonial iwi and hapū as independent indigenous nations, the digital activities of Tautoko FM via Irirangi.net, the station's own website, or Facebook, support the simultaneous facilitation of national (tribal), international (inter-tribal) and transnational (diasporic) audiences. Consistent with de Bruin and Mane's (2018) account of Tautoko FM, this function is necessary for Radio Ngāti Porou (and other stations mentioned in this study), due to the wide migration of Māori that identify as, or are affiliated with, Ngāti Porou, away from the broadcast region. The 2013 census reports that, '71,049 people, or 10.6 percent of the total population of Māori descent, [are] affiliated with Ngāti Porou' (Stats NZ, 2013, p. 2), however as Keelan-Reedy explains, there are only 4,000 Ngāti Porou living in Ruatōria and approximately 11,000 in the wider region of Gisborne and the East Coast: 'the bulk of our people don't live at home. But they relate to how we talk, how we talk to each other, the whānau connections, our connections to the marae, our connections to our rugby clubs—fiercely passionate stuff!' (Personal communication, April 26, 2018).

Outside broadcasts of local club rugby games were just one example of the manner in which iwi radio organisations were merging the conventions of radio broadcasting⁴ and digital platforms to extend their audience, and Keelan-Reedy states that at the height of the local rugby season, the metrics for an online 'pick the score' competition revealed audience reach and engagement well in excess of the potential listener audience. Live video-streaming was similarly popular:

I filmed the club final last year, and for the first 12 minutes my image was sideways. It was the first time I had gone live on my phone and I didn't know how to read the comments as they were coming in. But I read them later and it was, 'Aunty! Turn your camera around!' Then someone saying, 'You can still watch it, just watch it [gestures sideways] this way.' It was quite hilarious! But a couple thousand people watched it, sideways, for 12 minutes, and they loved it! (E. Keelan-Reedy, personal communication, April 26, 2018)

In one sense, the integration of live video-streaming into radio practice represents the evolving consideration of radio as a 'screen medium' (Hilmes, 2013; Genders,

2018; Berry, 2013), where the material access to radio via screen-based devices is acknowledged and visualisation is used to extend and enhance radio content. This can be further identified in other iwi radio initiatives such as a segment called ‘Tiripapā Rap Battles’, recorded and filmed in studio at Tuwhāretoa FM, and distributed online via the station’s Facebook page. However, the extent to which the live video-streaming of a club rugby game can continue to be understood as *radio* is somewhat complicated by the primacy of video at the expense of audio content. Instead, this anecdote alludes to the value of iwi radio that persists in spite of the increasing complexity of defining the contemporary medium: ‘We’re the conduit to home for our people that don’t live here. For those who want a connection home—we’re it’ (E. Keelan-Reedy, personal communication, April 26, 2018).

Peter-Lucas Jones, the general manager of Te Hiku Media in the Far-North, presents a similar account when he explains that his organisation no longer self-identifies as a radio station, instead describing Te Hiku as an ‘iwi media hub’ (Personal communication, April 13, 2018). Although Te Hiku still operates radio stations on analogue broadcast frequencies, the preferred convergent description accounts for the diverse range of content and activity Te Hiku has used to ‘adapt and survive’ in a changing media environment, including digitised archives of historical content, multi-camera live-streaming of important events such as kapa haka competitions and short video content distributed on a digital platform. Recognised as one of the leading stations to embrace and invest in newer digital initiatives by other station managers, Te Hiku is an exception in that they are the only iwi station to hold a regional television license, but as Jones explains:

85 percent of our people do not live at home. They are not going to listen to the radio station, because the broadcast cannot reach them. Does that mean that they hold any less importance or we value them differently? Wherever they are in the world, our kaupapa is to provide access to ‘te reo o te kāinga’, and the way we do that now is through, what we call, our marae in the sky—our digital platform. (Personal communication, April 13, 2018)

The digital strategies that individual stations employ can vary, from new ways to capture and share community events via social media platforms, to the larger development of digital hubs for iwi content; however the sense of individual autonomy and responsibility to members of affiliated iwi as an audience drives most initiatives throughout the network of stations. As Bernie O’Donnell, general manager of Radio Waatea, explains, the ability to provide a ‘portal’ to Māori communities is a key strength of the iwi stations (Personal communication, March 26, 2018).

The community portal function of the iwi stations has also inspired and later challenged one of the key initiatives in Māori broadcasting: the PungaNet.

O'Donnell attributes the development of the PungaNet to former iwi station manager and government MP, Hone Harawira, who wanted the capacity to remotely communicate and share content among all stations in the network: 'The idea was about sharing our stories, that were uniquely Māori stories... that was the original intention of the PungaNet' (B. O'Donnell, personal communication, March 26, 2018). Following a government tender process, the PungaNet was developed for the iwi network by AVC and launched in March of 2009 (Zukina, 2010). Rawiri Waru, general manager of Te Reo Irirangi O Te Arawa and the current chair of Te Whakaruruhau, states that as a technological solution the PungaNet was the 'first of its kind' and an example of radio innovation emerging from the iwi network (Personal communication, April 27, 2018).

In theory, the PungaNet could ease some of the capacity challenges individual iwi stations face, by making relevant content from other stations available for the overall mix of programming. It is also utilised to distribute the shared news service contracted to Radio Waatea. Jaqui Taituha-Ngawaka, station manager at Maniapoto FM, suggested that the idea of the iwi stations functioning as a 'network' largely begins with the establishment of the PungaNet (Personal communication, May 3, 2018). However, across the network, station managers were also critical of the ongoing role of the PungaNet. Both O'Donnell and Waru explained that increasing emphasis on local content by the stations' funder, Te Māngai Pāho, was counterintuitive to the intended function of the PungaNet. In practice, the commitment of station managers to local stories (as highlighted above) and the preservation of local dialects—often referred to as 'mita'—also contributed to the under-utilisation of the platform.

In addition to working against the local priorities of iwi stations, the general sense of frustration that station managers had with the PungaNet was not directed at the platform concept or the idea of collaboration amongst stations—collaboration was often touted as an ongoing opportunity for the immediate future—but rather the burden that it placed on the limited resources that stations had access to. Taituha-Ngawaka explained that she had been openly critical of the lack of support and training received to make use of the platform as well as a lack of choice as to whether they subscribed to the service; overall, station managers identified that there must be a simpler and more cost effective way to connect with other stations using widely available infrastructure. Te Māngai Pāho Chief Executive Larry Parr similarly stated that funding for the PungaNet could be better distributed elsewhere, due to its present lack of utilisation. Annual reports for Te Māngai Pāho show that the ongoing maintenance costs for the PungaNet are just over \$830,000 per year—this is in comparison to the standard funding of each individual station at \$500,000 per year (Te Māngai Pāho, 2017, 2018). Parr's suggestion was that the same funding might be better utilised as a source of contestable funding for iwi radio content: 'that content might be a better driver

of connectivity’ (Personal communication, April 23, 2018).

The extent to which iwi stations are embracing newer convergent forms of radio practice and are therefore representative of media transformation, can be immediately located in both the independent, day-to-day integration of digital tools like social media and video streaming and the larger infrastructural initiative of the PungaNet. As was the case with the other sectors of New Zealand radio, accounted for in previous research (McEwan, 2016), the response to new media platforms is largely driven by the perceived need to keep pace with changing audiences. However, there was a greater willingness overall, in the context of iwi radio, to engage with what this meant for individual operations. Whereas mainstream commercial broadcasters were either unfamiliar with the notion of convergence or had moved on from it, focussing on the reflexive need of their commercial operation, iwi station managers had contemplated the concept at length and considered its impact on their objectives and operation. While some technological initiatives presented inherent opportunity for iwi radio, the PungaNet, recognised as technologically sophisticated, did not easily align with the priorities of individual stations.

Resourcing challenges and the prospect of rationalisation

The ongoing development of high-quality content that capitalised on web and social properties was recognised by most managers as a key priority for their stations, but the capacity to do so was also said to be constrained by the limitations of current funding. Karam Fletcher, station manager at Tūwharetoa FM, identified that he could make a significant difference with the additional resources of a part-time video editor and a modest amount of funding to invest in cameras that could consistently capture the activities of the radio station. This would enable the station to develop its presence online, in co-ordination with the on-air broadcast and possible on-demand podcasting. He stated that this would be ground-breaking in the context of iwi radio and bring his station closer to parity with the capabilities of mainstream commercial radio stations (Personal communication, April 20, 2018).

These individual aspirations to develop the capacity to produce new convergent content were explained by Waru as being a feature of iwi stations: ‘Because we are individual stations, it has allowed us to experiment—to a point’ (Personal communication, April 27, 2018). Waru further explains that when Te Whakarurhau was able to present to the Māori Affairs Select Committee for the first time in early 2018, the case they presented was, ‘to have that cushion, to be allowed to fail and then try again. We cannot afford to do that on what we get, and if you compare our funding to other [similar] kaupapa—it’s hard’ (Personal communication, April 27, 2018). For Waru, there was a disconnect between the level of funding allocated to iwi stations and the goals they were being asked to

pursue in the context of media transformation.

Stations that had been able to secure additional funding were subsequently developing new forms of content. For example, at the time that research was being conducted, Radio Tainui, based in Ngāruwāhia, was completing a web series consisting of 15 two-minute episodes using the station's announcers and staff as both the talent and producers of the video content. The series was majority funded by Te Mātāwai,⁵ and made available via the station website in addition to regular station content. While successful, Trina Koroheke, station manager for Radio Tainui, was also concerned with the sustainability of similar projects, recognising the expectation to continue to develop similar content, and the redirection of station staff that also had to operate a radio station. For Koroheke, the web series was likely to benefit the staff involved in its production, both in terms of extra compensation and in terms of the opportunity to grow their profile, but how the content would ultimately benefit the station remained an open question (Personal communication, May 3, 2018). In the context of commercial radio in Sweden, Stiernsedt (2014) similarly observed that the growing profile and importance of radio personalities has the potential to create 'new uncertainties and new possible tensions within production—between management and staff—as the demands for autonomy, self-determination, and profit shares among the latter become increasingly hard to ignore' (p.304). For the iwi radio stations included in this study, the larger concern was the retention of staff on a constrained budget; Māori Television in particular, could offer higher compensation and had attracted much of the industry's young talent away from radio.

One possible response to the challenge of strained resources being discussed by the members of Te Whakaruruhau was the prospect of rationalisation. There was some recognition that iwi stations could consolidate their efforts into wider tribal regions as defined by Te Mātāwai and the 2016 Māori Language Act (L. Parr, personal communication, April 23, 2018). An example of such a grouping might be the four iwi stations that are affiliated with Tainui iwi and by extension the Tainui waka⁶—Radio Tainui, Maniapoto FM, Raukawa FM and Ngā Iwi FM. Taituha-Ngawaka, the station manager for Maniapoto FM, understood the rationale of consolidating some costs such as administration and human resourcing, but also identified that the current 21 individual stations helped to preserve local stories and dialect, and maintain differences that were vital to the revitalisation of te reo (Personal communication, May 3, 2018).

Government MP, former broadcaster and former Chair of Te Whakaruruhau, Willie Jackson, explained that when iwi radio was first established he did not agree with the strategy of independent, iwi-affiliated stations: 'I was like Derek Fox. I said let's have one big Māori national radio... let us just have one big station so we can put all our channels and resourcing into one setup' (Personal communication, March 23, 2018). Beyond regional reconfigurations that

reflected waka or the new Māori language strategy, the prospect of a national network was also discussed as possible network rationalisation. In the context of prioritising high-quality local content, Parr suggested that if such a network were to operate, individual iwi could have dedicated programming allocations to ensure sustained representation. Yet the nature of radio programming is such that certain time-slots in the broadcast schedule can expect to command a larger or more desirable audience, and how individual programming would establish and maintain parity remained to be seen. As Jackson explains, his view on the structure of the network changed after he became involved with Radio Waatea and his role as Chair of Te Whakaruruhau: ‘our statutory obligation was just to look after advancing the reo, but the iwi stations took on more than that. They became, in some areas like Kaitaia or Ruatōria, the centre of everything. In terms of community action, conduits for the community... So I became an advocate for them, because I admired the work our people were doing’ (Personal communication, March 23, 2018).

As indicated in earlier examples, iwi radio is uniquely positioned to provide a conduit or portal to individual Māori communities and any rationalisation would require compromises in leadership and direction. However, as Taituha-Ngawaka explains in relation to misgivings with the PungaNet—strong connections between the stations exist because of whakapapa, not technology. Therefore, the prospect of rationalisation, while not favoured, could still be seen as feasible: ‘As long as we feel we have control over our stories and how they are told... we believe we are here to protect, preserve, enhance te reo Maniapoto. As long as we feel safe in that, we’re open to change’ (J. Taituha-Ngawaka, personal communication, May 3, 2018). The preservation and promotion of local dialects, protection and restoration of content archives and being supported to tell their own stories (and not have their stories told by others) remained key concerns for station managers. This common response highlights the simultaneously shared and individual priorities that manifest when station managers are presented with the prospect of organisational or network convergences along lines of rationalisation and cost-efficiency. Whereas a larger organisation, such as the nationally-organised television broadcaster, has the resourcing to attract and retain emerging talent, it would likely undermine the iwi and/or community role of each individual station.

Problematizing radio in the context of iwi stations

As the individual stations re-evaluate their role as sources of community content and grapple with challenges of resourcing and rationalisation, most station managers state that they would continue to operate as radio stations, or at least maintain the broadcast of radio content in coordination with other forms of media practice, for some time. There is, however, contrasting emphasis on

the value of identifying as a radio operation, rather than considering a more convergent approach in light of new priorities. Some station managers refer to the resilience of radio, having not succumbed to successive challenges from television and the internet. Waru, however, suggests that radio is more than a platform and instead a mode of practice that places emphasis on content, immediacy and accessibility. The previous comment from Jones, specifying that Te Hiku Media no longer identifies solely as a radio station, also reflects a growing emphasis among station managers to re-position as media centres or communication hubs for their affiliated iwi.⁷ Taituha-Ngawaka stated that Maniapoto FM had seen themselves as ‘more than radio’ for the nine years that she had been working there (Personal communication, May 3, 2018). Radio was recognised as the centre or hub of the organisation, but Taituha-Ngawaka added, ‘we know that we are not going to actually achieve the bigger purpose of connecting with our people if we just focus on radio’ (Personal communication, May 3, 2018).

Unlike the commercial sectors of the New Zealand industry that generally viewed broadcast radio as their primary asset (McEwan, 2016), there was an indication from the iwi stations that key characteristics of a radio operation present their own unique challenges. In addition to the resourcing concerns of recruiting and retaining staff, the cost of maintaining broadcast transmission was a significant burden for many of the stations. For example, Keelan-Reedy explains that Radio Ngāti Porou operates seven transmitters at costs into the tens of thousands of dollars to maintain their broadcast. Fletcher, from Tūwharetoa FM, likewise suggested that maintaining transmission sites was a challenge to all stations (Personal communication, April 20, 2018). Both Keelan-Reedy and Fletcher stated that they were in the advantageous position of being supported by their iwi or hapū to meet these costs (this was not guaranteed for all stations), however in the context of maintaining a radio operation the essential costs of analogue broadcasting were as much a challenge as they were an asset.

The act of producing radio also presented a unique challenge in that the practices and conventions that have worked favourably for mainstream stations in New Zealand’s commercial radio sector were difficult to negotiate in the iwi context. In her analysis of Māori Television, Smith (2016) recognises the many challenges of bringing the indigenous practices of te ao Māori, te reo Māori and tikanga into the non-indigenous institutions of broadcast media. For Smith (2016), challenges may include programming decisions that reflect the ‘industry norm of privileging a camera-ready personality over that of a fluent speaker of te reo’ (p. 54). Although iwi radio and Māori television are structurally different, they are broadly tasked with the same objectives, and Smith (2016) suggests that: ‘The struggle to balance tikanga with the embedded norms of media storytelling is one faced by all state-funded Māori media makers’ (p. 56). Most iwi radio stations operate as charitable trusts, meaning that they do not generate private profit

or revenue, but they are also able to provide commercial services to supplement their allocated funding. As Waru explains, commercial radio strategy typically involves the targetting of niche audience demographics, that can be catered for in station format and content (Personal communication, April 27, 2018). Iwi stations, have the broad objective of promoting Māori language and tikanga for all Māori in their broadcast region, irrespective of age demographics. In practice, the priority of growing listenership among rangatahi (young people) would need to also be evaluated against station appeal to older listeners, complicating the strategic approach for each radio station.

The challenge of catering to a diverse audience also extended to debates over best practice for meeting the objective of promoting te reo Māori and tikanga. Since inception, iwi stations had demonstrated various approaches to programming that included a complete focus on Māori language and alternative approaches that sought to utilise bilingualism. Station managers that advocated for a bilingual approach explained it in the context of extending audience appeal to listeners that are not already fluent in the language. O'Donnell from Radio Waatea suggested that a bilingual approach had a greater role in the developing context of Māori language 'normalisation' and the ongoing challenge for station managers was to identify the 'winning matrix where the language meets commercial objectives' while also clarifying that, 'speaking English should never be about commercialism, it should be about how you grow a language' (Personal communication, March 26, 2018). There was subsequent frustration from some station managers with the content quota system that seemingly worked against fluid or responsive approaches to programming. This was also recognised by Parr, who suggested that future strategies may require less hours of te reo Māori content with a greater emphasis on quality local programming (Personal communication, April 23, 2018).

Contrary to being challenged by radio, one station manager that had experience in both mainstream commercial radio and the iwi sector explained that he saw government funding as unpredictable, whilst commercial advertising enabled his stations 'to determine their own future' (J. Dodd, personal communication, May 4, 2018). In Whakatāne, Jarrod Dodd was operating two individual stations, Sun FM and Tumeke FM, to simultaneously develop normalisation and cater to fluent speakers. While Tumeke FM could fulfil the statutory obligations of its public funding, in coordination with Sun FM, the two stations could deliver community engagement in a way that mainstream commercial radio organised from Auckland could not. For Dodd, this was about recognising the inherent value of Māori radio content and Māori radio audiences as local communities. Dodd emphasised this point by explaining that the distribution of commercial revenue between both stations was almost equal, and pākehā businesses were showing significant interest in advertising in te reo Māori. It was his view, that

embracing the conventions of radio, in regards to station promotion or visibility, as well as belief in the value of te reo Māori, was essential to the success of his organisation and the potential for success in other stations throughout the network.

Conclusion

The review of the Māori media sector announced in 2018 may yet prove to be a critical juncture for the iwi radio stations. It presents an opportunity to support station managers and their staff as they continue to explore contemporary radio practices and seek to develop their position as language advocates and storytellers for their communities. Conversely, at a policy level, any movement away from the support of iwi radio has the potential to disrupt the present establishment of iwi-based, community-centred media. These suggestions are speculative, but previous research (McEwan, 2017) and public statements from New Zealand On Air and Te Māngai Pāho (Barclay, 2016; Manhire, 2016) indicate that media policy renewal in the era of media convergence tends to coincide with a ‘platform-agnostic’ approach to media funding. Recognising that convergence, as one theory of media transformation, is still contentious, also reveals the ideological challenges in deciding a universally beneficial response to ongoing media developments.

As this article has demonstrated through the expertise and experiences of iwi radio stations, radio organisations are not fixed in their practices, nor is radio a technologically-bound concept that can be simply equated to a platform. The iwi stations function both as a collective, tasked with the revitalisation of te reo Māori, and individual operations that serve the requirements of their communities. The stated commitments of iwi stations to developing newer, convergent practices highlights a willingness to reexamine their role as contemporary radio stations and work towards the objective of becoming iwi media hubs that serve their local and diasporic communities beyond radio. Furthermore, the specific methods through which they achieve this objective is often decided locally, in the context of the individual station. Unlike previous research which found that other sectors of New Zealand radio celebrated their industry identity and the competitive advantages of ‘radio’ in the larger composition of New Zealand media. In the context of iwi stations, the challenges of limited resources, both in terms of funding and the consequent impact it has on staffing, seemingly constrains initiative when counted against the ongoing costs of maintaining an independent radio station. This is also in contrast to New Zealand’s commercial radio sector, that has used the conventions of radio networking and centralisation to rationalise costs and streamline operations—hence, the consideration of similar strategies for iwi radio going forward.

Thus, contemporary changes in iwi radio that respond to the pressures of media convergence, are not clearly defined by any essential features of radio as

exhibited elsewhere—in fact, radio is at times a challenge in and of itself. Yet, despite the apparent challenges associated with radio, it persists as a common marker for publically funded, community-operated Māori media, that has no apparent equivalent in New Zealand. Therefore, how the iwi radio stations will be assessed in the context of the present review, and future considerations of Māori media in the era of media convergence, may ultimately hinge upon the way that ‘radio’ is both interpreted and valued in the context of the contemporary Māori media sector. This article has argued that any such consideration needs to similarly identify the complexity and nuance of media transformation as it relates to radio. In contrast to New Zealand’s predominantly centralised media industries, the iwi radio stations represent an important exception that goes some way towards guaranteeing media autonomy that sustains iwi and community identity. This should be recognised irrespective of the marker of radio, while also recognising what iwi radio has represented for more than 30 years and whether these key aspects of the sector can be sustained *without* radio.

Notes

1. Often described as treasure or prized possession, taonga in this context can refer to both tangible and intangible goods, hence its application to te reo Māori.
2. Iwi stations have been funded at this rate since the 2014-15 financial year, having previously been allocated \$384,100 annually to produce a minimum eight hours of daily Māori language content (Te Māngai Pāho, 2014).
3. Outside broadcasts (commonly referred to as ‘OBs’), in which radio stations provide live coverage of local events, are a cornerstone of local radio practice and a key feature for the majority of iwi stations discussed in this study.
4. Te Mātāwai was established under the 2016 Māori Language Act as an ‘independent statutory entity’ tasked with protecting and promoting the Māori language (Te Puni Kōkiri, n.d.)
5. Waka in this context refers to the common ancestry of these tribes ‘back to the voyagers on the Tainui waka (canoe)’ (Swarbrick, 2015).
6. A recommendation that iwi radio stations begin to reposition themselves as iwi media centres can also be traced back to a feasibility study conducted by Te Māngai Pāho in 2014/15 (Te Māngai Pāho, 2015).

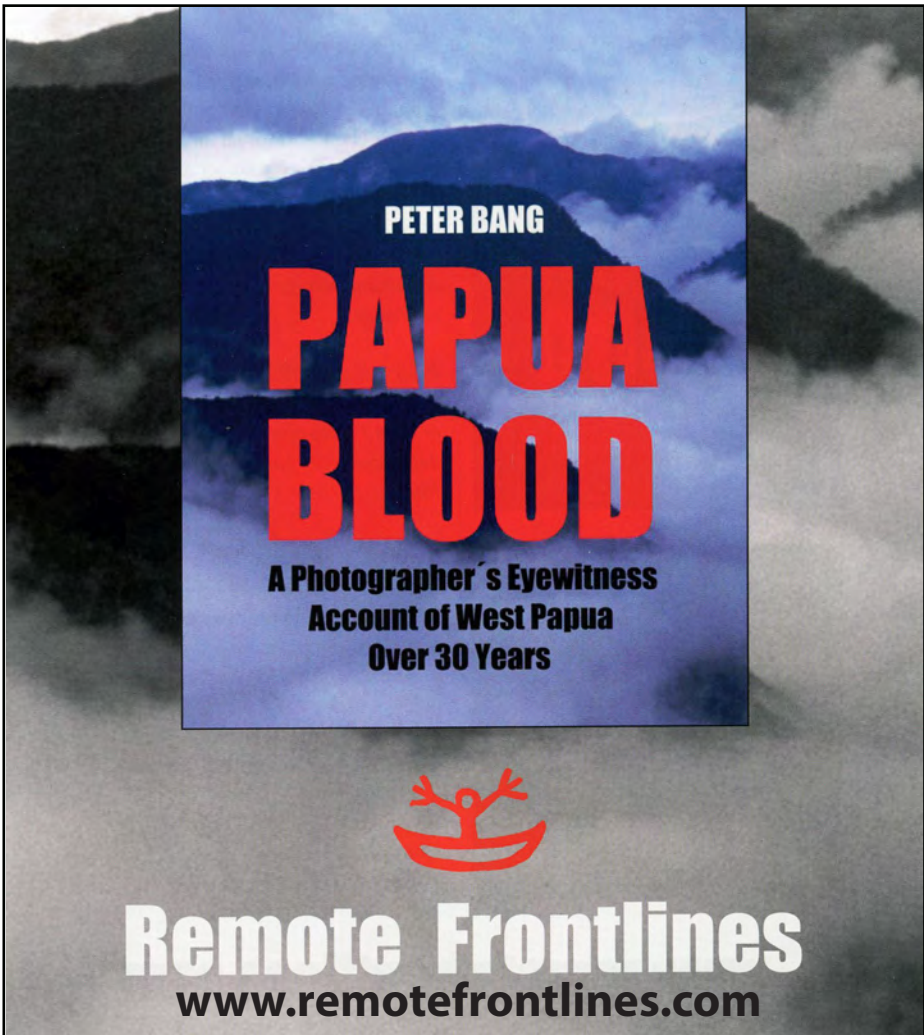
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Gazing over the horizon

Will an equitable Green Climate Fund allocation policy be significant for the Pacific post-2020?

Abstract: The establishment of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) has increased expectations and optimism among developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to climate change. The GCF aims to channel a significant portion of global funds for climate change response, with a goal of reaching US\$100 billion per year by 2020. Its broad allocation policy increases the possibility that particularly vulnerable countries which have struggled to access international climate finance will continue to face such challenges. Adopting an equitable/fair principle of allocation, this article highlights a number of scenarios on the possible impact of the post-2020 climate financing environment on particularly vulnerable countries with a special focus on the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS). This study argues that PSIDS are extremely sensitive to GCF allocation mechanisms. While the study supports the notion of balanced allocation as currently advanced by the GCF, the precarious situation of PSIDS necessitates a re-think of how the GCF finance is to be allocated in the future.

Keywords: climate change, climate finance, Green Climate Fund, Pacific Small Island Developing States

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THE ESTABLISHMENT of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in 2010 to mobilise climate finance to developing countries received a lot of fanfare and positive accolades from the world media and world leaders (Rowling, 2012, Azevedo, 2017). The GCF has been referred to as unique (Kumar 2017), a ‘game changer’ (Countries pledge \$9.3bn, 2014), the world’s largest (Arkin, 2018) and premium multilateral climate fund (Friends of the Earth, 2014), and the primary channel which will deliver a significant portion of the 2020, US\$100 billion global climate finance goal to developing countries. The GCF’s purpose is to not only support country-owned, ambitious and innovative climate actions that will limit global emissions and enhance resilience of developing countries (GCF, 2018a; UNDP, 2018), but also to correct the ‘inequality of

climate finance distributions' that many developing countries have been arguing as being unfair (Harvey, 2014).

Donors have pledged an ambitious US\$10.2 billion to the GCF by 2018 and additional contributions are expected through the GCF to reach US\$100 billion by 2020. The GCF has also been used as a platform by donor countries to showcase their global commitment to the fight against climate change, attracting showers of praise from developing countries and the media alike. Because of the ambitious cause that it advances and its promise of big money, the GCF has been portrayed and viewed by developing countries, especially the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) as a 'timely saviour' for their climate finance needs (GCF, 2017). The GCF has to a larger extent been presented to developing countries as the solution to their climate change problem; an infinite source of climate finance. The GCF has become synonymous with the term climate finance.

However, a critical evaluation of the current GCF allocation policy has highlighted that such a portrayal does not withstand close inspection. While the resources directed to the GCF are substantial, there is concern that its current allocation policy, which advances a geographically balanced approach (GCF, 2014) may seriously disadvantage particularly vulnerable countries. Under the GCF, particularly vulnerable countries consist of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Africa. Such open-ended allocation policies can further marginalise particularly vulnerable countries which have struggled to access predictable finance from multilateral climate funds. It does little to solve the current problem of the ad hoc, inadequate and donor-driven flow of climate finance into such countries. Sporadic inflows of finance further exacerbate countries' vulnerability and reduce their resilience to climate change (MacLellan, 2011). Effectively addressing climate change impacts will require long-term support, but such support cannot be planned or implemented without a degree of certainty about funding availability (Müller, 2013).

The need to bring the GCF allocation policies to the fore in public discourse stems from the race for accreditation¹ that is underway among developing countries (Samuwai & Hills, 2018). The perception of future big money flowing into the GCF has prompted developing countries to mobilise significant national resources to strengthen their institutional capacities so that they can gain accreditation with the GCF and directly access its resources by 2020 and beyond.

The uncertainty of the availability of funding underlines the importance for the GCF to start considering how well/best to allocate its funding in the future so that all developing countries will benefit and that no one will be left behind. The GCF is facing uncertainties in terms of its replenishment. At the current rate of projects approval (as of September 2018), the GCF is very close to triggering its first replenishment cycle but its 'chaotic' governance performance has been criticised by many donors as a potential hindrance to the scaling up of their future

pledges. This uncertainty is exacerbated further by the withdrawal of the United States, a major global donor, from the Paris Agreement.

The uncertainties of GCF funding should be a major concern for particularly vulnerable countries which are actively seeking direct access to the GCF as the process of accessing the GCF is also challenging and complex (GCF, 2018b; Samuwai & Hills, 2018). The recent independent review of the GCF readiness program has indicated that the programme has so far shown least effect to the particular vulnerable countries and also that direct access, despite being prioritised for such countries, has been limited (GCF, 2018b).

The challenges surrounding particularly vulnerable countries accessing the GCF funding is further complicated by the recent findings of the special report on global warming of 1.5°C by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The special report is clear that the consequences of 1.5°C warming (and over) would be extreme and existential for particularly vulnerable countries (IPCC, 2018). A 10 year window has been estimated before warming reaches the 1.5°C threshold (IPCC, 2018). Thus, in light of these alarming findings, facilitating ease of access to adequate and predictable climate finance from sources (including the GCF) for particular developing countries has never been greater.

The Pacific situation

Scattered over the largest ocean in the world, the PSIDS are at the front line of climate change (Robie & Chand 2017), but their voice is absent from mainstream climate finance literature (Dreher & Voyer 2015, Wing, 2017). Existing academic climate finance studies tend to aggregate the PSIDS' unique situations with those of the larger Asian countries in the Asia-Pacific region, resulting in the drowning of PSIDS voices (Maclellan, 2011). Without discounting the climate change realities of other particularly vulnerable countries, fair attention to the PSIDS climate finance needs is warranted because some PSIDS are now facing threats to their existence.

A total of 15 PSIDS—Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu—have signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Accessing predictable and adequate adaptation finance is the priority of PSIDS, due to their topography. The amount of adaptation climate finance channelled to the PSIDS is relatively modest compared with that allocated to other developing countries and is largely ad hoc in nature (Durand, Schalatek et al., 2015, Atteridge & Canales, 2017). Of the US\$1.3 billion allocated for the Asia-Pacific region, only 4.6 percent was channelled to PSIDS (Barnard, Nakhooda et al., 2015). Bilateral agencies are the main sources of finance in the region. Accessing quality and predictable finance from multilateral climate funds is a

constant challenge for the PSIDS due to their chronic capacity constraints. In addition, the total climate finance received is diluted as a significant portion of the amount (~8 percent to 20 percent) is deducted as management fees by international accredited entities such as the UNDP, World Bank and Asia Development Bank which accessed these funds on the PSIDS' behalf (Atteridge & Canales, 2017).

Due to their very small population, PSIDS are regarded as the highest recipient of climate finance on a per capita basis. However, critics have argued that this fact can be misleading as it does not reflect PSIDS realities (Dirix, Peeters et al. 2012). PSIDS are scattered across 15 percent of the globe's surface and are some of the remotest countries from major global markets, making the mobilisation of climate finance challenging and very costly (The World Bank, 2017). PSIDS have not been able to access their fair share of climate finance, which has exacerbated their already extreme vulnerability (MacLellan, 2011a).

For its part, the GCF has ramped up its effort to mobilise climate finance to the PSIDS and is co-financing nine major projects in the Pacific, accounting for US\$296 million, which accounts for 8 percent of the GCF funding portfolio. However, it is still highly uncertain how the PSIDS will fare in future GCF disbursement cycles under a geographical balance allocation policy. There is great uncertainty as to whether PSIDS can continue to secure significant financing from the GCF in light of other developing countries' growing climate change needs. So far, only the Cook Islands, Fiji and Federated States of Micronesia are the PSIDS which have been accredited by the GCF for direct access.

The high degree of uncertainty over future funding access to the GCF should motivate the PSIDS to engage the GCF to initiate constructive discussions on the need for a concrete yet fair allocation policy to ensure predictable funding. In light of PSIDS circumstances, the ideal GCF allocation criteria would be one that resulted in predictable finance to meet the PSIDS' immediate and long-term needs (MacLellan & Meads, 2016).

Justification for equitable/fair allocation of adaptation finance

According to the seminal work of John Rawls, fairness is synonymous with the concept of equity (Rawls, 1958). Thus, the push for equity as the basis of adaptation finance allocation is driven by the idea of 'restitution'—an obligation that needs to be settled as inferred by the polluter pay principle of the UNFCCC (Eisenack & Stecker 2012). The absence of a robust allocation policy that takes care of special case countries like the PSIDS has resulted in the marginalisation of particularly vulnerable countries, underlying the importance of equitable processes within the financial mechanisms of the UNFCCC (Müller, 2013). The role of equity in climate finance allocation is critical, as noted by (Sokona & Denton 2001), to 'assure that vulnerable people in the remotest outposts of the world do

not become imprisoned in perennial cycles of destitution and impoverishment at the mercy of climate events' (p. 120). While equity might be a broad and politically sensitive concept, it is perceived as relevant in the policy discourse around the allocation of adaptation climate finance (Persson & Remling 2014).

Equity has four general principles: 1) equality, 2) prioritarianism, 3) sufficientarianism and 4) the leximin principle (Persson & Remling 2014). All equity principles have merits in the allocation of adaptation finance (Grasso, 2010), but this study identified only two as currently being operationalised by multilateral climate funds. These are: 1) the equality principle, which demands funds be equally distributed to all countries despite their different circumstances (Paavola & Adger 2006), and 2) the prioritarianism principles, which prioritises funding for those that are worse affected by climate change; the most vulnerable (Wolff 1998, Stadelmann, Persson et al., 2014).

These two equity principles are prevalent in the allocation of adaptation finance and can be attributed to the different rationale of equity between developed (donors) and developing countries (recipients) (Maggioni, 2010). Maggioni (2010) argues that the equality principle reflects the argument of developed countries that there is a limit to resources that can be provided and thus, for fairness sake, all eligible countries should get an equal share. Müller (2013) provided further support, arguing that treating all eligible countries as equal, despite their circumstances, is politically justifiable as it ensures that funding is available to all.

The prioritarianism principle, on the other hand, champions developing countries' preference for channelling adaptation finance to those who really need it (Maggioni, 2010). Stadelmann, Persson et al. (2014) supported such a stance, stressing that a vulnerable country's needs should be prioritised and that they should be given the bulk of finance (Paavola & Adger, 2006). These rationales are based on the unequal vulnerabilities and responsibilities of countries in terms of their contributions and sensitivity to climate change (Grasso, 2010).

Allocating finance on the basis of vulnerability has been strongly criticised as it is a political construct (Klein & Möhner 2011, Füssel, Hallegate et al., 2012), is difficult to measure and compare (Stadelmann, Persson et al., 2014), and is subjective (Barnett, Lambert et al., 2008). Füssel, Hallegate et al., (2012), Müller (2013) and Ferreira (2017) have proposed various modified forms of 'vulnerability' as the basis for allocating adaptation finance. These studies have argued that poverty indicators are the best indicators of vulnerability and should be taken into account when designing an equitable climate finance allocation framework (Ferreira, 2017).

The method

To illustrate the potential implication of an equity driven GCF allocation policy on the PSIDS, this article focuses specifically on the ring fenced provision of the GCF adaptation finance. The GCF allocates 50 percent of GCF finance to

adaptation and then splits that into two equal portions: LDCs, SIDS and African States, and the remaining developing countries (of UNFCCC non-Annex I) creating an impression of special treatment for particularly vulnerable countries.

Using the equality and the prioritarianism principle as the basis for allocation, this study then formulates relevant allocation indicators to highlight the possible futures of GCF adaptation finance for PSIDS post-2020, when the GCF is intending to be mobilised towards US\$100 billion per annum. This paper recognises that allocation decisions are complex, value laden and have a political dimension (Barr, Frankhauser et al., 2010), thus its aim is to merely highlight how equity-based GCF allocation decisions for adaptation finance could be significant (or not) in relation to the PSIDS precarious situation.

- The analysis was conducted assuming five important caveats:
- The US\$100 billion goal each year by 2020 has been achieved;
- The GCF is the primary vehicle of shifting these finances;
- The ring-fenced US\$25 billion is ready to be allocated post-2020;
- All countries are able to submit GCF-compliant applications greater than the overall GCF limit requiring GCF to determine allocation;
- A total of 97 countries are eligible to access the special funding provision of the GCF.³

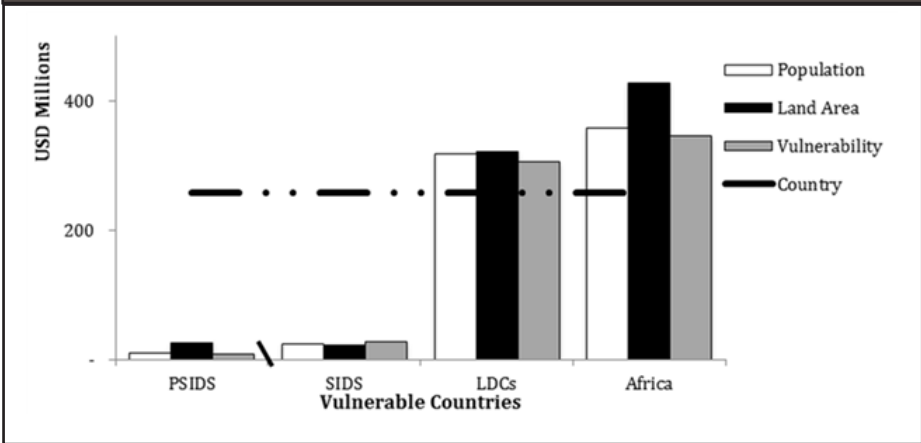
Results

Pacific Small Island Developing States' experience can be compared with other identified ring-fenced groups in relation to the four allocation criteria (Figure 1). It is also important to note that this study by no means proposes that the PSIDS should actually receive the amount derived from these allocation scenarios; it rather wants to highlight the unpredictability of flows in light of no concrete and clear allocation principles.

From the onset (Figure 1), it is clear that the four allocation bases will significantly affect the PSIDS and the wider SIDS. While the allocation amount due to the LDCs and the African states also varies, the amount that these countries would receive under the four allocation basis ranges well above the US\$257 million mark (i.e. the amount a country can receive if a per country criteria is used). This seems to suggest that LDCs and African states are relatively better off compared with PSIDS and SIDS irrespective of the allocation basis used, as the possibilities of large scale and predictable finance is highly certain in these countries.

When compared to the wider SIDSs grouping, the sensitivity of the PSIDS to the allocation criteria is quite evident. The wider SIDS grouping receives an average of US\$26 million if allocation were to be made on the basis of population, land area and weighted vulnerability. On the other hand the PSIDS exhibit

Figure 1: Average allocations by vulnerable country grouping



a significant degree of variation in the finance flows when allocation is done on the same three bases. The PSIDS average allocation land area is US\$24 million. This amount decreases by 57 percent if allocation is done on the basis of population and 65 percent if allocation is done on the basis of weighted vulnerability. It is important to also note that the PSIDS overall data is heavily skewed by Papua New Guinea.

The ratio of finances when using the three allocation bases increases significantly for PSIDS and the wider SIDS grouping if allocation is done on a per country basis. For SIDS, the per country allocation amount is on average 10 times higher if allocation is made on the basis of population, total land area and weighted vulnerability. On the other hand, the range of increase varies significantly for PSIDS with the per country basis allocation being 23 times more when compared to the amount of the population criteria, 10 times more when compared with the total land area criteria and 29 times more when compared with weighted vulnerability.

At the regional level, the impact of the four allocation criteria within the PSIDS is also quite significant across countries and allocation criteria (Figure 2). Within the PSIDS, if the GCF allocations were made on the basis of population, those PSIDS categorised as Pacific Smaller Island States (PSIS)⁴ would be the most disadvantaged as they only account for 0.03 percent of the Pacific's population. Niue would be most deprived PSIDS if allocations were to be done on a population basis, because its total population is less than 2000. Timor-Leste, Fiji, Solomon and, to some extent, Vanuatu would experience small but significant climate finance flow due to their high population. PNG, the most populous PSIDS (~64 percent of Pacific population), stands to gain the most adaptation finance in the region.

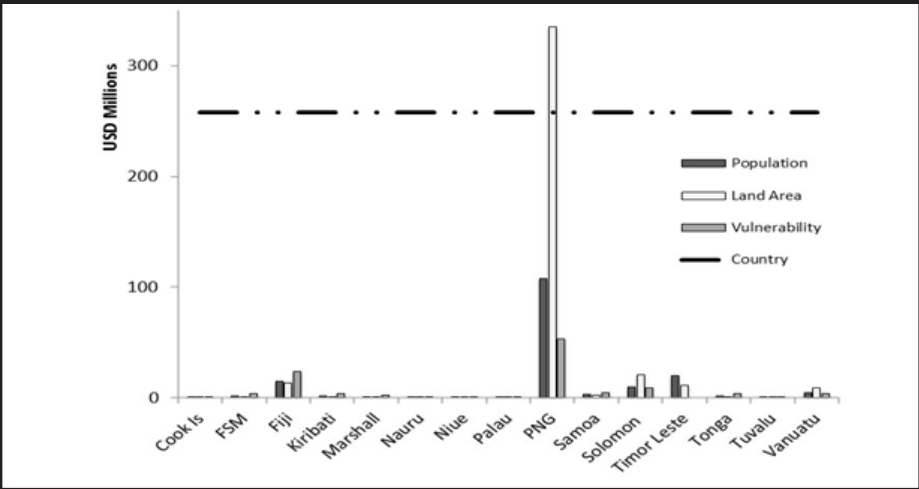
Papua New Guinea would also benefit the most should the GCF decide to allocate adaptation finance on the basis of land area as it accounts for more than 85 percent of the total land area in the Pacific. While other larger PSIDS such as

Timor-Leste, Fiji, Solomon and Vanuatu, might also receive significant inflows of adaptation finance, the difference in the ratio between the amounts they receive with that of PNG under such allocation is quite significant (~ 25 times). The PSIS whose combined land area only accounts for 0.01 percent of the total land area in the Pacific would be the most penalised under this allocation criterion. Moreover, the ratio of the aggregated allocation amount of PSIS when compared to that of other bigger PSIDS is also quite substantial. Larger PSIDS could receive up to 28 times more adaptation finance under such allocations when compared with PSIS. This difference increases exponentially when compared with that of PNG’s allocations.

The impact of a possible allocation based on weighted vulnerability significantly varies among PSIDS when compared against their possible allocations under the population and total land area criterion. Under these terms, Fiji, FSM, Samoa and Kiribati would each stand to receive an increase of about 200 percent in adaptation finance when compared with the amount they could possibly receive from the population and land area allocation criteria, while the magnitude of the increase in Tonga would be 0.7 percent.

For the remaining PSIDS, allocation using weighted vulnerability would be less when compared with the population and the land area allocations. The most notable PSIDS where the weighted vulnerability allocation might result in reduced adaptation flows would be PNG, Solomon and Vanuatu (Figure 2). PNG seems to be the most sensitive PSIDS under this allocation criterion as its adaptation finance could be reduced by 84 percent when compared against the total land area and a 50 percent reduction when compared against the population allocation criteria. However, PNG’s position would still be relatively better off under the weighted vulnerability criterion when compared across the wider PSIDS.

Figure 2: PSIDS share if GCF ring-fenced



Note: Allocation by population, land area, weighted vulnerability and per country basis.

The per country allocation criteria would be a definite game-changer for all the PSIDS. When compared with the other three allocation criteria, all the PSIDS stand to gain significant flow of climate finance with an allocation of US\$257 million per country. With the exception of the land area allocation to PNG, the difference between the per country allocation to that of population and weighted vulnerability would be quite significant across PSIDS. For example, Fiji (the second best positioned country behind PNG) would gain 17 times the amount of climate finance if allocations were to be done by a per country basis rather than population, 19 times when compared with allocation by land area and 10 times when compared to weighted vulnerability allocations. These ratios are much higher for the remaining PSIDS, especially for PSIS.

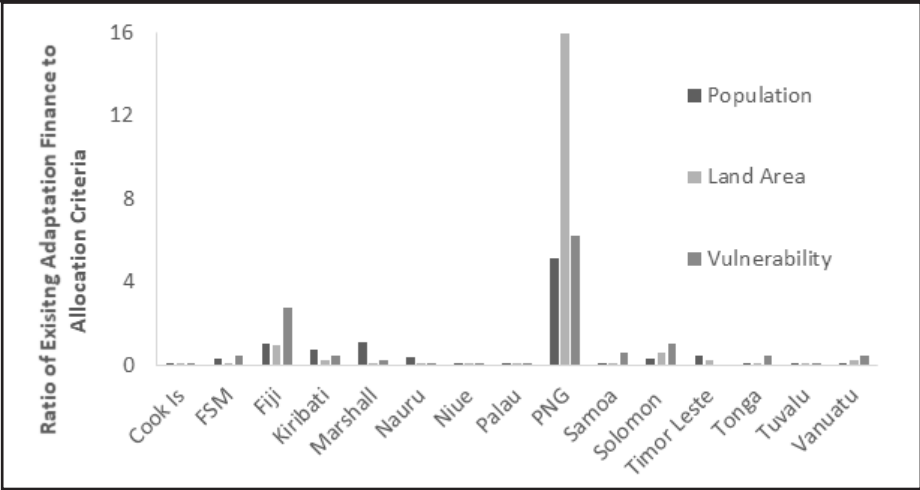
Figure 2 clearly depicts a high degree of climate finance flow variation to each PSIDS under each allocation criteria. It indicates the high sensitivity level of the PSIDS to the possible allocation criteria, which are done on the basis of population, land-area, weighted vulnerability and a per country basis. While PNG, Fiji, Solomon, Timor-Lester and Vanuatu are in a much better position to leverage these allocation criteria, the amount they could receive however, varies significantly depending on the allocation criteria used. Allocations to PSIS are significantly less when compared to other PSIDS, but they could receive large and predictable scale finance if allocation were done on a per country basis.

The effect of GCF finances on existing finance flows

The impact of the GCF on the existing scale of PSIDS adaptation finance flows was also examined using the 2016 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) data. The OECD database comprehensively tracked the climate finance flow to all developing countries. In computing the effect, the OECD adaptation flow was calculated as a ratio of the finance figure derived from this study's post-2020 allocation criteria. Ratios $1 >$ indicate that the GCF allocations will have an impact on current level of financing. While the 2016 flows are not fully comparable with the GCF 2020 flow prediction, the aim is to try and identify the significance of the GCF instrument compared with existing climate finance targeted at adaptation, rather than making any precise comparisons.

If the GCF allocation is done by population, the existing adaptation for 80 percent of PSIDS does not surpass the ratio of 1, suggesting that the level of finance that these PSIDS will receive, might be no greater than what they already received as adaptation finance in 2016 (Figure 3). Only three PSIDS—PNG, Fiji and the Marshall Islands—are poised to experience an increase of more than 100 percent in existing finance. PNG stands to gain more than five times its existing adaptation finance if allocation is done on the basis of population. Existing adaptation finance for PNG would increase 16 times if allocation is done on a total land area basis.

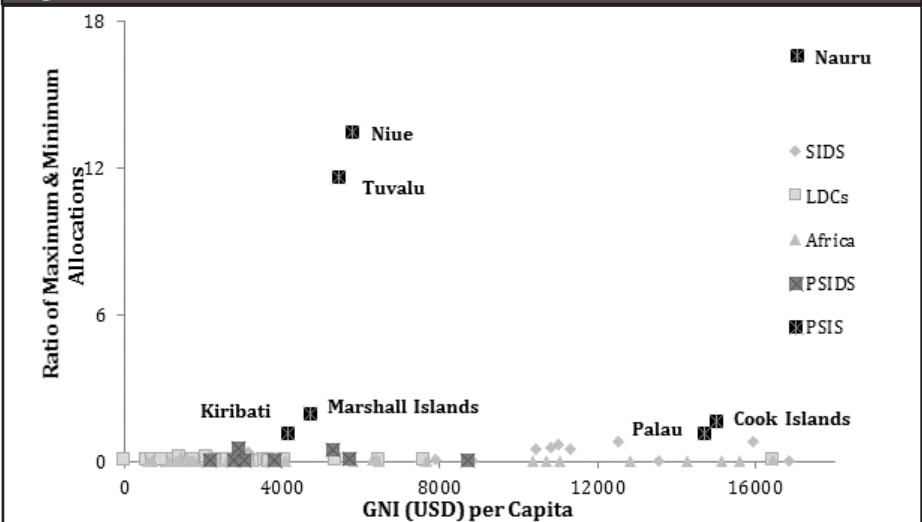
Figure 3: GCF ring-fenced allocation as PICs ratio



Note: A ratio of the PICs existing adaptation flow.

In terms of weighted vulnerability criteria, PNG, Fiji and Solomon Islands’ existing adaptation finance increases by more than 100 percent. PNG will benefit the most among the PSIDS as its existing adaptation finance increases more than six times. FSM, Samoa, Marshall, Kiribati, Tonga and Vanuatu are likely to also experience an increase in their adaptation finance. The PSIDS did not experience a significant increase in their existing adaptation finance, which could be largely attributed to the minimal amount of adaptation finance they have been receiving and their small population base.

Figure 4: Ratio of maximum, minimum allocations



Note: Allocations across the GNI of vulnerable countries.

On a per country allocation, the existing adaptation finance across most of the PSIDS increases significantly. The PSIS existing climate finances would increase significantly under this allocation criteria; for Nauru this increase is projected to be 600 times greater. For non PSIS, the degree of funding increase would also be significant 'as on average' the existing climate finance would increase 10 times on a per country basis.

The effects of the proposed allocation criteria for particularly vulnerable countries' development are summarised in (Figure 4). To highlight the sensitivity of the four allocation criteria to a country's development status, this study calculated the maximum as well as the minimum allocation across the allocation criteria and then computed the ratio. The ratio was then graphed against the country's 2016 gross national income (GNI) provided by the World Bank. The potential financial flows (Figure 4) are more stable across the LDCs and the African States. This seems to suggest that, even though LDCs and most of the African States are fairly poor, the potential amount that they stood to gain from any potential GCF allocation criteria would be more *predictable* compared to the SIDS. The data also suggest that PSIDS are *more sensitive* to any GCF allocation criteria despite their relatively affluent economies. PSIS are *most sensitive* to potential allocation criteria of the GCF. PSIDS high reliance on external support suggests that the GCF allocation criteria really matter in their development context and this dependence is even more critical in the context of PSIS. The potential of the GCF to support adaptation endeavours is thus much more uncertain for PSIS.

Discussion

As the GCF mobilises towards 2020, once countries have established access channels and become conversant in the access process, the GCF is likely to be oversubscribed and will need to address allocation issues. The analyses highlighted above are some key indicative scenarios, based on the equity principle to help elaborate the significance of potential future GCF adaptation flows to PSIDS.

For the GCF, finding equitable and fair criteria by which to allocate adaptation finance in a manner that will satisfy all the particularly vulnerable countries will be difficult. At the international level, equitable criteria based on the prioritarianism principle will favour larger, populous LDCs and African States relative to the SIDS. This trend is also reflected at the regional level, where the finance allocations are also skewed towards more populous and bigger PSIDS. Only the equality principle seems to guarantee that predictable adaptation finance will flow to all PSIDS.

The analyses also identify PSIDS as being very sensitive to any allocation criteria by the GCF, which increases the uncertainty of predictable climate finance flow. Depending on the allocation criteria adopted by the GCF, the existing

climate finance flow to PSIDS can be significantly scaled-up, or can remain largely unchanged; this is likely to have serious implications on their resilience development pathways.

Accessing the GCF ring-fenced adaptation fund is further complicated because the 15 PSIDS will still have to compete with 84 other countries. In a competitive funding environment, PSIDS are more likely to be under-funded because the existing process of the GCF emphasises the need for ‘paradigm shift-oriented projects’ (GCF, 2018a). This means that the GCF will prioritise the quality of the funding proposal over a country’s special circumstances. With chronic shortages of local specialists who are competent in writing and designing quality funding proposals, PSIDS will struggle to compete for GCF funding.

Conclusion

This study supports the growing voice of concern that the GCF needs to do more for developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to climate change. The critical question this study raises is in relation to post-2020 funding allocation of the GCF, which has received very little attention in the public discourse. There is a critical need to initiate frank and open discussion on the future allocation policy of the GCF, as many developing countries are currently prioritising national accreditation, but paying little attention to post-2020 allocation.

The Pacific Small Island Developing States stand out as being extremely sensitive to potential shifts in GCF post-2020 allocation. Apart from the equality principle, any equitable allocation criterion that promotes the prioritarianism principle seems to indicate that the access to predictable finance promises of the GCF is highly uncertain. While strengthening institutional capacities will benefit PSIDS in pursuing direct access to the GCF, the broad allocation policy of the GCF and its competitive funding-oriented criteria raise legitimate questions about whether pursuing national accreditation is worthwhile for PSIDS, especially the PSIS.

To reduce the uncertainty associated with the post-2020 GCF climate finance flows, this article suggests that the GCF needs to consider a uniform funding floor per country within the GCF ring-fenced provision, in order to ensure a predictable resourcing pathway for the small and the particularly vulnerable countries.

To conclude, there is an urgent need for the media community in the Pacific to advocate more effectively for climate change issues in the region, in particular in relation to climate finance. The Pacific media must do more to provoke discussions in all aspects of climate change, especially those future issues that can have long term implications. As Robie argues:

We are running out of time... [and] news media itself is not terribly good when it comes to long-term issues. It tends to respond to immediate issues and consequences. It lacks the attention span for longer term challenges. (Asia Pacific media must ‘empower people’, 2018)

The GCF future allocation policy is a critical long term issue that is imperative to discuss publicly because further delays will only increase the probability that the urgent needs of some PSIDS will be ignored.

Notes

1. Accreditation refers to the evaluation process that international, regional, and national institutions have to go through if they want to directly access the GCF. To be accredited, an institution has to meet the robust standards required by the GCF.
2. From 2020 to 2025, the goal is to mobilise US\$100 billion of climate finance each year. A new climate finance goal is expected to be determined in 2025.
3. Ninety seven developing countries who are parties to the UNFCCC fit the requirements of the special ring-fenced portion of the GCF adaptation finance.
4. This grouping is exclusive to six Pacific Smaller Island States (PSIS)—Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu. These islands are made up of low-lying atolls.

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Malaysia's Anti-Fake News Act

A cog in an arsenal of anti-free speech laws and a bold promise of reforms

Abstract: Malaysia's surprising fourteenth general election result in May 2018 was widely hailed as the advent of a seismic shift for press freedom in the country. The country's draconian media control armoury was often wantonly and oppressively applied over six decades under previous rule. Key actors from that era are now presiding over bold reforms that have been promised by the new government. In keeping with its election promises, the new government sought to repeal the hastily and badly drafted *Anti-Fake News Act 2018* (AFNA). The Attorney-General Tommy Thomas wrote scathingly before the Act was passed and before taking office as the new A-G:

The draconian effect of the entire bill renders it unconstitutional... This is a disgraceful piece of legislation drafted by a desperate government determined to crush dissent and silence critics. The bill is so hastily and poorly drafted that it cannot under any circumstances be improved by amendment. Instead, it must be rejected outright. (Thomas, 2018)

The repeal effort, however, failed and the Act remains technically on the books. This article examines the Act against a backdrop of global responses to the 'fake news' phenomenon; provides an overview of Malaysia's draconian armoury of laws that impinge on freedom of expression; discusses the fading optimism for proper media regulation reform in Malaysia; and concludes that meaningful media regulation reform must go beyond repealing AFNA.

Keywords: Anti-Fake News Act, censorship, fake news, free speech, freedom of expression, law reform, Malaysia, media law, media regulation.

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Introduction

A COALITION of somewhat unlikely partners teamed up to topple the ruling government and with it the new government became bound by lofty election promises, including those concerning the restoration of rights, freedoms and liberties. Pakatan Harapan (Alliance of Hope/PH), led by

former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, defied the odds in ousting the Barisan Nasional (National Front/BN) government, led by Najib Razak. The general response to PH's victory was predictably effusive—'historic', 'shocking', 'stunning', , 'a tsunami', dawn of a 'golden era'. Hardly anyone saw the upset coming (Tan & Preece, 2018a). The BN had ruled under one banner or another since the country secured independence from Britain in 1957. Mahathir, who previously served 22 years as prime minister, became the world's oldest prime minister at the age of 92. His nominated successor, Anwar Ibrahim, was serving a prison term at the time of the election victory, for what was widely seen as trumped up charges for sodomy. He received a royal pardon following the election victory. Academic observers and survey forecasters had generally predicted a BN win (Bernama, 2018; Tan & Preece, 2018b). Their predictions were grounded in fears of electoral malpractice, gerrymandering, voter reticence towards change and other reservations. As events turned out the power transition was initially smooth. However, fissions seem to be surfacing in the coalition's unity as the new government comes to grips with governing under a coalition made up of a motley group of political parties.

National responses to 'fake news'

The meaning of the term 'fake news', despite its rampant usage in recent years, remains unsettled. This presents a big challenge in trying to assess national responses to the phenomenon because the term itself is sometimes not directly employed when initiatives apparently directed at tackling 'fake news' are taken. Those who engage in a serious consideration of subjects in which 'fake news' features tend to concede the definitional difficulty. A current UNESCO handbook for journalists, for instance, declares that it 'avoids assuming that the term "fake news" has a straightforward or commonly understood meaning' (Ireton & Posetti, 2018, p. 7). A similar approach can be seen elsewhere, for example, in a report prepared by a European Commission grouping which expressed a preference for the term "disinformation" over "fake news" (European Commission Report, 2018c, p. 3). The term has ancient origins although it is widely associated with US President Donald Trump who frequently referred to it in his attacks on the media since the run-up to the 2016 US presidential election. On becoming president he said the 'fake news media is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the People!' (Trump, 2017). The term 'first appeared in the US in the latter part of the 19th century' (Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2018, p. 7). Even much earlier historical origins can be traced to the days of ancient Rome when Antony met Cleopatra (Posetti & Matthews, 2018, p. 1). While the present work is concerned with Malaysia's *Anti-Fake News Act*, it is worth noting that many countries have introduced laws or are considering their responses to the 'fake news' phenomenon (Funke, 2018a). The following discussion provides a

backdrop of global regulatory responses to the phenomenon.

One count indicates that more than two dozen countries have taken steps to deal with misinformation, ranging from criminalising ‘fake news’ to promoting digital literacy (Funke & Mantzarlis, 2018). In Germany a law “counteracting hate speech and fake news on the internet”, called *Netzwerkdurchsetzungsgesetz* has been in force since 1 January 2018 (Zlotowski, 2018). Human Rights Watch viewed the law as ‘vague, overbroad, and turns private companies into overzealous censors...leaving users with no judicial oversight or right to appeal’ (Human Rights Watch, 2018). In Singapore, a parliamentary committee made 22 recommendations after a five-month inquiry, and called on the government to enact laws to check the spread of ‘fake news’ (Sim, 2018). The committee examined, among other things, the actors behind online falsehoods and these actors’ objectives, the use of digital technologies to spread online falsehoods, the impact of such falsehoods on national security, public institutions, individuals and businesses, and the difficulties in combatting the problem (Select Committee on Deliberate Online Falsehoods, 2018, p. 5). The committee preferred the term ‘falsehoods’, which it noted ‘are capable of being defined’ and which the law has historically done (*supra*, p. 117). The government accepted the recommendations in principle and said it would introduce legislative and other measures to: nurture an informed public; reinforce social cohesion and trust; promote fact-checking; disrupt online falsehoods; and deal with threats to national security and sovereignty (Ministry of Communications and Information/Ministry of Law, 2018). At the time of this writing the *Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Bill* was introduced in the Singapore Parliament. The purpose of the law, as set out in section 5, includes “to prevent the communication of false statements of fact in Singapore and to enable measures to be taken to counteract the effects of such communication”. It is beyond the scope of this work to examine this Bill. Some early reactions to the Bill suggest that the Bill would give the government sweeping new powers to “crack down on so-called ‘fake news’ and hit Facebook and other social media companies with big fines if they don’t comply with censorship orders” (Griffiths, 2019).

In the Philippines, the idea of a ‘fake news’ law to penalise the malicious distribution of false news and other related violations was broached in June 2017 (Senate of the Philippines, 2017). The law has not materialised and the country’s president—otherwise noted for his open hostility towards the media—dismissed prospects of its passage on the grounds that it would violate the country’s constitutional protection for freedom of expression (Andolong & Guzman, 2017). In India ‘guidelines’ said to be aimed at curtailing ‘fake news’ was hastily withdrawn without explanation one day after its introduction. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting introduced the rule through a Press Release on 2 April 2018 (2018b). The rule was withdrawn the following day through another

Press Release (Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, 2018a). The rule was formulated as follows in the first Press Release:

Noticing the increasing instances of fake news in various mediums including print and electronic media, the Government has amended the Guidelines for Accreditation of Journalists. Now on receiving any complaints of such instances of fake news, the same would get referred to the Press Council of India (PCI) if it pertains to print media & to News Broadcasters Association (NBA) if it relates to electronic media, for determination of the news item being fake or not. (Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, 2018b)

There was ‘just one problem: The circular didn’t address misinformation at all. It targeted mainstream reporters’ (Funke, 2018b). The Prime Minister Narendra Modi reportedly intervened to cancel the order (Khalid, 2018). In the European Union the European Commission adopted a report and announced that online platforms and the advertising industry had agreed on a Code of Practice to increase transparency ahead of the European elections in 2019 and increase efforts to create ‘a network of fact-checkers to strengthen capabilities to detect and debunk false narratives’ (European Commission, 2018a). The initial approach pursues the adoption of the practice code, which will be assessed after 12 months, and if the results prove unsatisfactory, the Commission may propose further actions ‘including of a regulatory nature’ (European Commission, 2018b).

In France, parliament introduced a law to prevent the spread of false information during election campaigns, by enabling parties or candidates to seek a court injunction to prevent the publication of ‘false information’ during the three months leading up to a national election and the main target, according to the Culture Minister, is stories spread by ‘fake news’ bots that are ‘manifestly false and shared in a deliberate, mass and artificial way’ (Agence France-Presse, 2018a). The law gives France’s broadcast authority power to take any network ‘controlled by, or under the influence of a foreign power’ off the air if it ‘deliberately spreads false information that could alter the integrity of the election’ (ibid.). The move is seen as Western Europe’s ‘first attempt to officially ban false material’ (Fiorentino, 2018).

In Australia, the problem of ‘fake news’, propaganda and public disinformation was one of the terms of reference in a federal Senate inquiry that examined the future of public interest journalism. The committee, however, ‘only received a limited amount of information directly addressing the role fake news and misinformation has had on democratic processes’ but it noted that the matter was viewed with seriousness overseas (Senate Select Committee on the Future of Public Interest Journalism, 2018, para 2.70). Australia has not introduced specific anti-fake news law although recently-introduced legislation was designed to address an unprecedented threat from espionage and foreign interference in Australia (Horne, 2018).

In the UK, a government committee which considered the subject in detail published an interim report in 2018 and the final report in 2019 (Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2018 and 2019b, respectively). The very first statement in the Interim Report's 'conclusions and recommendations' section states: 'The term "fake news" is bandied about with no clear indication of what it means, or agreed definition' (Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2018, p. 64). In its final report, the committee observed that '[w]e have always experienced propaganda and politically-aligned bias, which purports to be news' but that this activity had taken on new forms and that people are now able to give credence to information that reinforces their views, no matter how distorted or inaccurate, while dismissing content with which they do not agree as 'fake news', which creates a 'polarising effect and reduces the common ground on which reasoned debate, based on objective facts, can take place' (Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2019b, p. 5). The committee, in noting that the spread of propaganda and politically-aligned bias is unlikely to change, said what does need to change is the enforcement of greater transparency in the digital sphere, to ensure that we know the source of what we are reading, who has paid for it and why the information has been sent to us (ibid.). A specialist government unit, called the Rapid Response Unit, was set up in April 2018 to build a rapid response social media capability to support the reclaiming of a fact-based public debate (Government Communication Service, 2018). The unit comprises specialists including analyst-editors, data scientists, and media and digital experts, and it monitors news and information engaged with online to identify emerging issues quickly, accurately and with integrity. The unit is represented as being "neither a 'rebuttal' unit, nor is it a 'fake news' unit" (ibid). It seeks to ensure that those using search terms that indicate bias are 'presented with factual information on the UK's response' (ibid). The unit is set to continue operating after the government deemed its pilot phase a success (Tobitt, 2019). At the time of this writing a further initiative was launched. A new body called the Sub-Committee on Disinformation will become Parliament's 'institutional home' for matters concerning disinformation and data privacy to bring together those seeking to examine threats to democracy (Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2019a).

The above account shows a variety of governmental responses to the perceived 'fake news' dilemma, reflecting two extremes. At the one end lies a discernible effort to define the problem, and formulate a considered course of action through formal inquiries and consultation with stakeholders, before recommending or embarking on a regulatory course of action. At the other end lies ill-considered responses, as it happened in India. A key concern with the introduction of laws purporting to regulate 'fake news' is the potential for government overreach, and "scary" responses to the spread of misinformation and disinformation (Funke

& Mantzarlis, 2018). The ‘fake news’ phenomenon motivated governments to respond and the responses were in some cases a genuine attempt at seeking resolution and in other cases, as Reporters Without Borders put it, an excuse for the predators of press freedom to seize the opportunity ‘to muzzle the media on the pretext of fighting false information’ (2017).

Malaysia’s Anti-Fake News Act 2018

Even as countries struggle to address the ‘fake news’ problem Malaysia boldly pronounced an answer. It introduced the *Anti-Fake News Act* in April 2018. Opposition MPs at the time claimed the law was being ‘bulldozed through by the Barisan Government to clamp down on them’ before the general elections (Sivanandam et al, 2018). As one fearless journalist Clare Rewcastle-Brown, who for years doggedly pursued largescale corruption in Malaysia, said ‘[i]t was a draconian attempt at open intimidation of government critics and indeed the entire population’ (Rewcastle-Brown, 2018, p. 523). The Act was introduced notwithstanding then prime minister Najib’s previous hailing of media personnel as unsung heroes in his speech at the inaugural ‘national journalists’ day’ event (Sivanandam, 2018). Najib said the government decided that the event, labelled *Hawana*, would “acknowledge the role of journalists who have helped shape the minds of the public” (ibid). Najib’s accolade for journalists jarred against Malaysia’s notorious freedom of expression record. The country has consistently languished in global press freedom indices. For example, in 2018 it was No 145 out of 180 countries in the *Reporters Without Borders 2018 World Press Freedom Index* (Reporters Without Borders, 2018).

Najib’s exaltation of journalists coincided with another of his government’s legislative body blow to journalists through the introduction of the *Anti-Fake News Act 2018*. The Act introduced fresh restrictions on freedom of speech with hefty jail terms and fines for anyone found to have spread ‘fake news’. Zaid Ibrahim, a former Malaysian Minister in charge of legal affairs said at the time of law’s introduction: ‘This law is necessary for Najib, but not the country. He needs to put fear in people, that they can go to jail if they criticise him’ (Cooper, 2018). The Act attracted a constitutional challenge from *Malaysiakini*, the country’s foremost online news platform and pioneer of independent online news delivery, itself a longstanding magnet for government wrath. The platform’s editor-in-chief and founder Steven Gan said: ‘We are not short of laws to control the media. The Act is aimed at spooking people’ (Gan, Interview, 2018). Gan’s news platform distinguished itself from the government-controlled mainstream media and endured longstanding battering from oppressive Malaysian laws impacting on freedom of speech. Four months after the Act’s introduction, Najib’s successor government attempted to repeal the Act to honour a pre-election promise but struck a hurdle. The repeal was passed by the Lower House in mid-August and

was greeted as making it ‘the first country in the world to roll back such legislation’ (Ellis-Petersen, 2018). The repeal attempt was, however, blocked by the Senate, leaving the exercise in limbo for a year as prescribed under the Federal Constitution (Ho, Tan & Kanagaraju, 2018). The Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department in his winding up speech in the Lower House stated that there were sufficient laws to deal with ‘fake news’ (Sivanandam et al, 2018). The Bill to repeal AFNA was passed in the Lower House by a narrow vote (Chima & Singh, 2018). The move was, however, blocked in the Senate on the grounds that the law was still relevant and should be improved rather than abolished (Ho, Tan & Kanagaraju, 2018). At the time of this writing, the Act remained on the books. The PH Attorney-General expressed his conundrum thus, if the police were to initiate action:

But it puts us in a difficult position because unfortunately it is still a law on the statute books. So it still forms part of the laws of Malaysia, and one has to respect our laws. Hence, an unsatisfactory position! (Ho, Tan & Kanagaraju, 2018)

Under AFNA’s section 4(1) anyone who, by any means, maliciously creates, offers, publishes or disseminates any ‘fake news’ is liable to a RM500,000 fine or to six years imprisonment or to both. On top of that the court can order the offender to apologise to the offended party and failure to obey the order attracts punishment for contempt of court. Under section 2, unless the context otherwise requires, ‘fake news’ includes any news, information, data and reports that are whole or partly false. The Act offers eight illustrations of ‘fake news’ with scenarios indicating when liability arises. Among these illustrations—none of them stand out as new phenomenon needing a special legislative response—are: *B* publishes false information from *A* not knowing the information is false (*A* is liable, *B* is not); *A* publishes fabricated information that *Z* offered bribes to obtain a business contract (*A* is liable); and if *B* publishes that information knowing it was fabricated *B* is also liable. One curious example refers to *A* publishing via social media that a food product sold by *Z*’s company contains harmful ingredients, when in fact the food product—that *once* contained harmful ingredients—is no longer available (*A* is liable). Stiff penalties face those who fail to remove material containing ‘fake news’ (section 6). The Act permits a person affected by a publication containing ‘fake news’ to seek an *ex parte order*—that is, with no opportunity for the other side to be heard at the time the order is sought—to have the publication removed (section 7(1)). While a party that is subject to the order can apply to have the order set aside (section 8(1)) such a recourse does not exist if an order obtained by the government relating to ‘fake news’ that is “prejudicial or likely to be prejudicial to public order or

national security” (section 8(3)). The above example that catches news that was *once* true but no longer is should ring alarm bells given the ‘shopping spree’ saga below.

Other events reported in the Malaysian media indicate how AFNA’s hydra-like reach might catch offenders. The first case to be investigated under the Act involved an alleged defamation of the Crown Prince of the Johor State Tunku Ismail Sultan Ibrahim (Isa, 2018). The alleged defamation occurred through the spreading of false rumours that Ismail would be treating people to a big shopping spree similar to the one he actually did earlier, where he gave unsuspecting shoppers a treat to the tune of a total RM1 million worth of shopping at a supermarket. Shortly afterwards a man was jailed under the new law. In the first case punished under the Act, a Danish national was sentenced to one week’s jail, and fined RM10,000 or in default to one month’s jail, after he pleaded guilty spreading ‘fake news’ involving his social media post and a YouTube video claiming that police were slow to respond to distress calls in an event described as the assassination of a Palestinian academic working in the country (Yatim, 2018).

Another instance, one that confirmed the critics’ fears that the Act was ‘intended to stifle free speech’ ahead of the general elections, involves the investigation of Mahathir himself, for spreading ‘fake news’ (Agence France-Presse, 2018b). In this instance, Mahathir had claimed he was the victim of a sabotage when the plane he had chartered for travel to register his candidacy in the general elections became unavailable at the last minute. Malaysia’s civil aviation authority and the charter company rejected the accusation saying a technical issue with the plane was to blame. A group said to be Najib supporters reportedly lodged the complaint under AFNA. Another instance demonstrates the Act’s utility for the political masters. The Opposition had circulated a video showing a candidate in the general elections distributing packets believed to contain cash at a residential area. The candidate, an incumbent Senator, claimed she was using her ‘allocation as a senator’ to help the underprivileged (Hilmy, 2018). She accused the Opposition of ‘trying to tarnish her name’ (ibid.). So, she was not denying that she distributed the cash. According to her: ‘This is why the Anti-Fake News law was approved, to counter all kinds of fake news *like this*’ (ibid, emphasis added). The early examples of AFNA’s actual and threatened application reinforce AFNA opponents’ concerns. Nurul Izzah, daughter of the prospective Malaysian prime minister Anwar Ibrahim, observed ‘we have a ministry of truth being created’ (Beech, 2018). The country’s foremost grouping of the legal profession, the Malaysian Bar Council said before the Act became law that it was ‘deeply troubled’ by it. Among its long list of concerns was that the provisions enable the ‘intimidation of the media and [of] honest practitioners of freedom of expression, who must now be 100 per cent correct in their reporting, postings or statements, or else stand accused of being “partially false”’ (Malaysian Bar Council, 2018).

Malaysia's armoury of draconian laws impacting on freedom of expression

Pakatan Harapan's manifesto contained promises of unprecedented breadth in so far as the removal of oppressive laws was concerned (Pakatan Harapan Manifesto). Promise 27, one of sixty promises, said Malaysia's legal system was 'frequently abused' by the country's leaders to achieve their political interests. Two groups of laws were identified: the first for outright revocation; and the second for revocation of 'draconian provisions'. The following were listed for revocation: *Sedition Act 1948*; *Prevention of Crime Act 1959*; *University and University Colleges Act 1971*; *Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984*; *National Security Council Act 2016*; and mandatory death by hanging in all Acts. The following were identified as containing draconian provisions that would be abolished: *Penal Code 1997*, especially on peaceful assembly and activities harmful to democracy; *Communications and Multimedia Act 1998*; *Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (Sosma)*, the successor to the *Internal Security Act 1960 (ISA)*; *Peaceful Assembly Act 2012*; and *Prevention of Terrorism Act 2015 (Pota)*. Promise 27 included an undertaking to revoke all clauses that prevent the Court from reviewing government decisions and laws, and the following broad commitment:

The Pakatan Harapan Government will ensure that media has the freedom to check and balance our administration. We will review all laws and regulations related to the media so that media freedom is guaranteed.

AFNA was not addressed in the manifesto because the Act was introduced after the manifesto was released. Before the elections, however, PH promised to also repeal AFNA (Tan, T., 2018). Oddly, the manifesto omitted another frequently used oppressive law—defamation—where claims for damages run into tens of millions of dollars and were wantonly deployed against the media with crippling effect. There was also no reference to another draconian law whose impact is difficult to quantify—the *Official Secrets Act 1972 (OSA)*. The Act contains sweeping definitions of 'official secret' and reverses the burden of proof. It also provides for a minimum jail term of one year for breaches of the Act (s8). The Act's language is imprecise and it creates arbitrary powers to classify information as secret. The Act also fails to comply with standards of international law and is a major impediment to freedom of speech, expression and information:

It has consistently impeded the public's right to know, and consistently demonstrated the present government's aversion to openness and transparency. The government has time and again used this law to prevent public disclosure of matters that are of major national or local concern. (Suara Rakyat Malaysia, 2013, pp. 33–34)

Among the most egregious invocations of the OSA was the Najib government's classification of the auditor-general's report on the multi-billion dollar *1Malaysia Development Berhad* (or 1MDB) scandal as secret (Straits Times, 2018). Najib is facing criminal charges. The Malaysian Attorney-General Tommy Thomas said in his opening address at Najib's first criminal trial, this is the 'first of many kleptocracy-1MDB-linked prosecutions' (Thomas, 2019). Upon taking office Mahathir advocated retention of the OSA (Straits Times, 2018). It is beyond the scope of this work to provide a comprehensive inventory of how the Malaysian legal armoury was deployed oppressively over the years. Some examples would suffice. In 1996 *Malaysiakini's* Gan spent five days in jail and was named a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. He and *Malaysiakini* have faced various charges and civil defamation actions. In one instance the platform, which comprises four websites, received a take-down order involving a news item featuring a press conference where an anti-corruption crusader referred to the country's then Attorney-General as *haprak* (Malay for an insult that means a useless, good for nothing, untrustworthy person). Acting on a complaint the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission ordered the removal of the article under a sweeping provision that outlaws the publication of any matter that is 'obscene, indecent, false, menacing or offensive in character with intent to annoy, abuse, threaten or harass another person' (section 233(1)). According to Gan:

When we asked which part they wanted taken down, they said 'the whole thing'. I only agreed to remove the word *haprak* and put the edited version up. Despite removing the word *haprak* from our video, both *Malaysiakini's* chief executive officer Premesh Chandran and I were charged under the *Communications and Multimedia Act 1998* and we were facing up to one year in jail. (Interview, 2018)

In Gan's view the *Communications and Multimedia Act* could not achieve the take-down result but AFNA allows for it. Gan and Chandran were acquitted in September 2018. Another example of Malaysia's attacks on freedom of expression involved prominent Malaysian cartoonist Zunar who sustained 12 years of intimidation and harassment in the form of arrest, book bans, raids on his office, and long legal battles under the previous regime (Toh, 2018). He faced 43 years in prison on sedition charges. The charges were dropped when PH came to power. His cartoons constantly featured themes of corruption and abuse of power at high levels. Over the years a long list of individuals faced action under the sedition law (Yunus, 2015). Police claimed the breach would 'threaten public order' (ibid). The most significant example of the onslaught against dissent under the previous government occurred during an exercise code-named Operation Lalang (*Operasi Lalang*—literally 'weeding operation') in October 1987, during Mahathir's prime ministership. It resulted in the arrests of 106

people including opposition politicians, academics, religious extremists, trade unionists, and activists from NGOs. Alongside this action the government revoked the publishing licences of two daily newspapers and two weeklies. The operation drew on laws such as the dreaded and now-repealed ISA referred to above, which permitted lengthy detention without trial, the printing presses law and other instruments. A former opposition MP Dr Kua Kia Soong was held for 445 days without trial and wrote that torture under the ISA is not hearsay (Kua, 2002, p. 7); and himself underwent torture for 15 months after being detained under during *Operasi Lalang* (Kua, 1999, p. xvii).

The inventory of abuse of power in Malaysia is long and distressing and literature chronicling the abuses are abundant. Mahathir presided over a considerable portion of the abuse of power during his previous reign. As Roger Tan, a senior lawyer and former law academic wrote in the aftermath of Pakatan Harapan's election victory, it is ironic that the reforms are 'being pursued at great pace by the new Prime Minister... who was also the old Prime Minister who had pursued Machiavellian policies and undermined some of the institutions during his previous rule' (Tan, R., 2018). In his view, however, Mahathir is best suited to undertake the restoration (ibid). Mahathir came to the helm this time with an early avowal to pass the baton on to Anwar, who himself suffered at Mahathir's hands and served prison time during Mahathir's and Najib's rule in prosecution actions that the current Attorney-General observed long before taking this office as being 'all about politics, and nothing but politics' (Thomas, 2012). Anwar's previous criminal records are now erased and as Anwar stated: '[T]he King accepted that my pardon was complete, unconditional, and due to a miscarriage of justice' (Hodge, 2018). More recently scepticism has arisen as to whether the prime ministerial succession from Mahathir to Anwar would occur as initially suggested (Jaipragas, 2019). If Anwar succeeds Mahathir he would, in theory, be more committed to demonstrating a greater appreciation of rights and liberties by virtue of his own bitter experiences at the hands of oppressors. As Anwar observed: 'When you are incarcerated, you realise what is the meaning and significance of freedom' (Denyer, 2018). He said: 'I am 71 years old, and I have been to hell and back and hell and back again' (Haidar, 2019). Anwar is viewed as the 'standard-bearer of Malaysia's reform movement' (Denyer, 2018). In a media interview coinciding with his release from prison Anwar reaffirmed a commitment 'to the reform agenda, beginning with the judiciary, media and the entire apparatus' (ABC News, 2018); and to 'independence of the judiciary, rule of law, free media and proper separation of powers' (Massola, 2018). These aspirations look good on paper. The real test lies in converting aspirations to reality.

The aspirations and promises Mahathir's coalition declared in entering the general elections were by any measure justified and overdue. The hopes for meaningful media reforms cannot be divorced from reforms that are needed in

other sectors, for example, in the judiciary. Anwar himself alluded to his political misfortunes and convictions as being the product of the courts being ‘stacked against us’ (Haidar, 2019). More recently a Malaysian Court of Appeal judge lodged a 63-page affidavit, described by Malaysia’s national news agency, as containing ‘explosive and detailed information in relation to numerous incidences of judicial interference within the Malaysian judiciary’ (Bernama, 2019; Affidavit, 2019). The judiciary has lodged a police report in response to the grave allegations in the affidavit (Bernama, 2019). The head of the Malaysian Bar Council called for the establishment of a royal commission to investigate the grave allegations of judicial misconduct (Varughese, 2019). An independent judiciary is the last bastion of protection and a critical vanguard of rights and freedoms and without such a bastion the media’s hopes for meaningful reforms will remain elusive.

Fading hopes for meaningful media regulation reform

The euphoria from PH’s general election victory and, in particular, hopes for meaningful relaxation of media controls has waned. It might be argued that it is in the very nature of politics and electioneering that there are always gaping chasms between election promises and the honouring of such promises. Election campaigns by their very nature produce ‘a fusion of puffery, rhetoric and credible undertakings’ and too often the latter escapes critical examination and voters discover too late that the fine print provides escape routes for the promisor (Fernandez, 2013). Pre-PH governments consistently deemed the freedom of expression protection in Article 10 of Malaysia’s Constitution dispensable. On taking office in 2009 Najib promised reforms aimed at lifting freedom-stifling laws. When he announced plans in 2011 to repeal the dreaded *Internal Security Act* and abolish annual printing licences for newspapers the media hailed the announcement in his 2011 national day speech as ‘a significant Malaysia Day present in the form of greater civil liberties and democratic reforms’ (Fernandez, 2011). As it turned out, the situation deteriorated steadily.

The current government’s record faces the danger of proceeding down a similar path. In one ominous sign during the current government’s rule, in November 2018 the PH government withdrew the moratorium, or brake, on certain restrictive laws including the Sedition Act to deal with situations that involve ‘national security, public order and race relations’ (Dzulkifly, 2018). The government’s claim that these laws would only be used in exceptional cases has attracted scepticism from those who are familiar with such justifications the previous government routinely invoked (Sreenevasan, 2018). The PH cabinet decided in 2018 to abolish the Sedition Act and to suspend prosecutions under the Act (Paddock, 2018). Instead, in the first fortnight of 2019, four persons were detained under the Act (Mering, 2019). Three of the individuals were arrested for allegedly insulting a Malaysian sultan on social media even though the alleged

breach appears not to fall under any of the limited circumstances PH claimed to have imposed on the law's use (Jayamanogaran, 2019). A recent survey by an international journalism group covering 92 Malaysian media workers indicated that a third of respondents thought the overall "media situation" has improved over the year. Notably, almost as many saw no significant improvement (International Federation of Journalists—South East Asia Journalists Unions, 2018, p. 24). In the view of the country's Youth and Sports Minister the new administration has 'enabled media freedom' (Kaur & Augustin, 2019).

PH's pledges on freedoms reforms 'appear to have been put on the backburner' (International Federation of Journalists—South East Asia Journalists Unions, 2018, p. 27). Even the PH coalition appears to be afflicted by internal political machinations. As Anwar himself observed there are fears 'that Pakatan's spirit would be eroded' (Wong, 2018); and there is 'growing disenchantment' in his party (Haidar, 2019). And as Professor James Chin, a leading commentator on Malaysian politics, observed the Mahathir administration 'faces many political challenges' (Chin, 2019). The media's reform wish list is reflected in PH's election manifesto—and it calls for the urgent abolition of restrictive laws and regulations; reform of defamation law; allowing journalists to form and join unions; the swift establishment of a Media/Press Council to oversee complaints arising from a recognised journalists' code of ethics; strong protection for whistleblowers and for investigative journalism; the introduction of freedom of information law; and tightly drawn national security laws that provide public interest exceptions (International Federation of Journalists, 2018). While moves are afoot to set up the media/press council the media has expressed concerns about the lack of consultation with journalists (International Federation of Journalists, 2019). The sceptics doubt whether Mahathir will deliver on promises pertaining to rights and freedoms when, as prime minister previously, "he sadly chose to use [state apparatus] autocratically and brutally with devastating long-term consequences" and posed 'the biggest obstacle to democratic opposition's development that Malaysia has ever seen' (Slater, 2018). Mahathir himself was previously a part of the problem (Aris, 2018); and Anwar's daughter Nurul Izzah, an elected representative in the new government, courted controversy with her view that it was not easy to work with Mahathir 'a former dictator who wreaked so much damage' (Kaur & Augustin, 2019). Early indications are that the PH government is 'struggling to live up to their campaign vows' (Denness, 2018).

Conclusion

AFNA is a small cog in a large wheel of Malaysia's laws that impinge on freedom of expression and media freedom. The prevailing arsenal of oppressive laws have long been predicated on the public interest in maintaining racial harmony, economic stability and national security. These laws have a long history of being

oppressively and arbitrarily applied against a backdrop of entrenched autocratic attitudes and official corruption. The discussion above has shown the following difficulties presented by AFNA: the Act was ill-conceived; the lawmakers rushed in headlong to pass legislation purporting to address ‘fake news’, a term itself widely recognised as being contentious; the Act was introduced without proper deliberation and without consulting key stakeholders; it was badly drafted; it is afflicted by serious questions about its constitutionality; and the early examples of the Act’s use illustrate the Act’s dubious objectives and application flaws. The Act’s passage was an opportunistic attempt at further constraining freedom of expression. A genuine quest for media regulation reform in Malaysia must grapple with the debilitating framework of existing laws, extending well beyond AFNA. In spite of its convincing general elections victory, the new government is facing challenges on various fronts including those concerning unity within the coalition. The PH election manifesto contained the promise, as set out above, to ensure ‘that media freedom is guaranteed’. Viewed in a strictly Malaysian context it was a bold promise. Viewed in the context of countries that purport to subscribe to democratic principles that promise is less remarkable. The PH government bears the onus of honouring its media control reform promises and ensuring that its declared commitment to ease up on media control does not itself turn out to be—to reluctantly use the term—‘fake news’.

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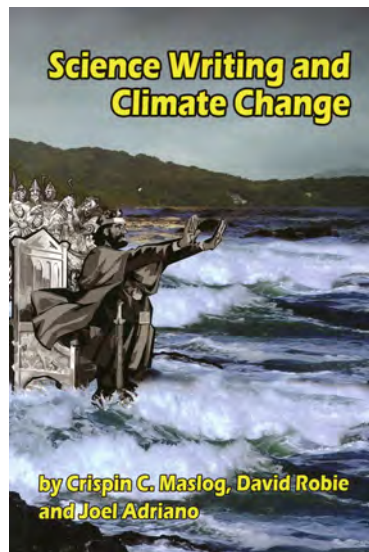
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Mostly 'men in suits'

The ASEAN summit and integration as news in Southeast Asia

Abstract: This article is a preliminary examination of how Southeast Asian media frame the regional integration of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a news topic. Without grassroots engagement, the ASEAN integration will inevitably fall short of its grand objectives, and crucial to building grassroots engagement is media coverage capable of building audience interest and appreciation. Based on articles published during the major ASEAN summit events in 2018, the authors identified resonant themes in the reportage and discussed these vis-à-vis the documented character of the different media environments in the region. It was found that the axis of the reportage is the declarations and actions of the heads of state, with very few human interest and context-building stories that would have built audience engagement in what is otherwise an affair revolving around 'men in suits'. Moreover, the journalistic emphasis on consensus and state initiatives reflects continuing adherence to the tenets of the development journalism framework, but this can also be interpreted as the dominance of 'prominence' as a news value (i.e. stories are framed according to the gestures of prominent individuals). These findings call attention to the need for re-thinking reportage on potentially high-stake phenomena such as the ASEAN integration.

Keywords: ASEAN, Asian values, content analysis, development journalism, media studies, Southeast Asia

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Introduction

THE SUCCESS and relevance of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) integration is a subject of a winding debate (Chanco, 2018; Desker, 2015; Doody, 2018; Heydarian, 2015; Menon & Melendez, 2016; Nair, 2018). On one hand, this integration of the 10 states in Southeast Asia (for instance, through development of economic policies harmonious with those

of other member states, if not shared by all of them) is momentous because of its capacity to generate game-changing reforms in broad political and economic spheres (ASEAN, 2013; Kesavapany, 2015). On the other, it has been described as ‘hollow regionalism’ (Heydarian, 2015), as some authors cast doubt on its relevance to the greater population (Desker, 2015; Heydarian, 2015). For scholars like Desker (2015), ASEAN integration remains an ‘illusion’ with ‘little impact on the lives of most people in its 10 member states [that] have diverse political, economic and legal systems and are at different levels of economic development’. What is crucial to examining the regional integration is robust media coverage, one that will allow the audience to fully grasp how this translates to their everyday lives. This begs the question: how does the media in Southeast Asian countries treat ASEAN integration as a news topic?

The debate on ASEAN relevance and progress

The regional formation, created through a declaration dated 1967, is comprised of 10 member states (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam). It is originally a ‘political bloc and security pact’ established shortly after the Vietnam War, but has evolved to focus on an “ambitious” economic agenda (Melon & Melendez, 2016, p. 681). Although the 1967 declaration gave a sense of unified vision and community, the heads of state and other policy makers felt the need to organise ASEAN into a more ‘politically cohesive’ and ‘economically integrated’ community (ASEAN Secretariat, 2017b, p. 2). The ASEAN leaders in 1997 formalised this initiative through the declaration of ‘ASEAN Vision 2020’, which emphasises the formation of the “ASEAN Community” as a culminating goal. In 2015, five years before the target year, the ASEAN leaders formally launched the ASEAN Community, which is still in the process of integration.

The integration initiative is guided by the Economic, Political-Security and Socio-Cultural Blueprints (‘three pillars’ of integration), and the objective now is to meet critical targets by 2025. The ASEAN policy-makers ‘envision’ a ‘rules-based’ and ‘cohesive’ community of ‘shared values and norms’ (ASEAN Secretariat, 2009, p. 2), with narrowed development gap, and characterised by ‘free movement of goods, services, and investments as well as freer flow of capital and skills’ (ASEAN Secretariat, 2013). Another core element of a fully established ASEAN community (therefore another goal in the list) is ‘[integration] into the global economy’, not just within itself (ASEAN, 2017b, p.3).

In the latest monitoring report published by ASEAN (ASEAN Community Progress Monitoring System), the integration initiative appears to be meeting its targets based on select indicators (see ASEAN Secretariat, 2017a). The ASEAN Secretariat (2017a) reported that ‘the region has undergone significant economic activities with improved trade in goods and services, increased foreign direct

investments (both intra-ASEAN inward and from the rest of the world), heightened innovation, enhanced [information and communication technology] and transport connectivity’ (p. 10). However, ‘more policy attention’ is required in other areas such as employment and ‘building resilience to external risks’ (p. xiv).

For some authors, there is a need to take these progress reports with a grain of salt (Das, 2012; Menon & Melendez, 2016). For instance, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) ‘Scorecard’, which the ASEAN uses as its own measurement tool, relies heavily on ‘self-assessment’ against the means (priority actions and milestones) rather than the end of the AEC (Menon & Melendez, 2016, p. 684). Furthermore, little is known about how other regions in individual countries are faring against AEC goals, as the measurement tool is ‘glossing over significant challenges to implementation’ in the individual countries (Menon & Melendez, 2016, p. 683).

Other authors have expressed their scepticism to these ‘accomplishment reports’ more strongly (Dosch, 2015; Desker, 2015; Kurlantzick, 2014). Dosch (2015) asserted that the ‘current approach to monitoring and disseminating data on regional economic integration is largely driven by political motives and incentives’, specifically the need to show the public that ‘substantial progress’ is being made (p.3). Desker (2015) went as far as to say that there is ‘hardly any ASEAN mindset’ among the ASEAN population, meaning there is a lack of consciousness as ASEAN citizens rather than just citizens of their respective nations (even a lack of awareness of the ASEAN integration).

Desker’s assertion is not without rebuttal. Kesavapany (2015) wrote that ASEAN integration is not merely an illusion—it is a ‘work in progress’. He explained that it is incorrect to describe the integration as a failure because some milestones cannot be simply dismissed, an example of which is the fact that ‘the region has lived in peace in the last five decades’ and that countries with previously ‘little economic significance in the region’ developed a more robust economy after joining the formation.

But the relevance of the ASEAN integration cannot be decided simply by clashes in scholarly perceptions—it is decided by the perceptions of the primary stakeholders: the 600-million ASEAN population. An important question to ask, therefore: What are the prevalent content themes in the media coverage on ASEAN integration in Southeast Asia, and is there substantial content that provides the necessary context for the layman? Is there substantial human interest themes in the stories that could help build audience engagement and appreciation?

The ASEAN beat and the lack of empirical research on ASEAN newsmaking

Son (2017a) wrote that ASEAN news, although in many ways ‘Southeast Asia’s biggest running story’, ranks ‘low in the priority list’ of newsrooms across Southeast Asia. She added that quite a number of news managers and editors believe that ASEAN news does not engage the audience as much as other top-

ics do, she added, and this is problematic because ‘if the ASEAN Community’s arrival is widening the space where ASEAN affects its constituency’s lives, the scope that media gives to dissecting this...needs to expand as well’. Chongkittavorn (2015) also observed that the media is still ‘disconnected from the ASEAN Community’, and like Son, he believes that the media carries the burden of building active engagement among the over 600 million ASEAN citizens.

Indeed, it appears that much work has yet to be done on increasing awareness on ASEAN affairs based on available figures. In a 2012 survey commissioned by the ASEAN secretariat, 81 percent of respondents said they are ‘familiar’ with the general concept of ASEAN, but 76 percent ‘lack a basic understanding’ of its objectives. The respondents include 261 business leaders and 2200 from other sectors. Up-to-date data on ASEAN awareness is highly lacking in many member countries.

Son (2017b) suggested ways of taking ASEAN news closer to the wider audience—apart from business and political leaders and others at the helm of the integration initiatives—such as new story-telling techniques that could build human interest. Chongkittavorn (2015) believes in the same idea: ‘ASEAN journalists must focus on the aspirations of common folk...media communities in ASEAN must create among their citizens a sense of ownership of this Community’.

But Son’s (2017) and Chongkittavorn’s (2015) observations on media coverage have yet to be validated by empirical means. This is the research deficit that we aim to address. How exactly does the media in Southeast Asian countries portray ASEAN affairs? What are the recurring themes in journalistic content and which content is given emphasis?

The character of journalism in Southeast Asia

In attempting to empirically determine news values in the coverage on ASEAN integration, it is necessary to be familiar with the literature trends on the ‘identity’—so to speak—of journalism in Southeast Asia. Three resonant trends in related studies are: 1. the ‘global anomaly’ that is the tightly-controlled media environments existing alongside market-driven economic growth and ‘authoritarianism’ (or elements of it) as in the case of Singapore and Malaysia (George, 2003, p. 251); 2. ‘development journalism’ as the dominant model in these countries as well as in the low to middle income closed systems, like Vietnam and Cambodia (Wong, 2004, p. 26) and 3. the ethical and quality issues arising from commercialisation of media in partly free systems.

The ‘global anomaly’ that is development journalism in an advanced economy
George (2003) debunked the idea that a tightly controlled media system is only a transient phase and that it will eventually gravitate toward the liberal framework once the economy becomes highly developed. According to George,

many have underestimated ‘the power of ideology, and especially economic incentives, as tools of cooptation and control’ (p. 25). The government of Singapore, for example, was able to use its media system in furthering its economic agenda through what George (2003) called ‘calibrated coercion’. The repertoire of regulation of the Singaporean government moves away from ‘flamboyant punishments such as imprisoning journalists and banning publications, towards more behind-the-scenes controls that create the conditions for self-censorship’ (George, 2003, p. 94).

George (2003) explained that on one hand, media plays an indispensable role in market growth: ‘markets require efficient media, in terms of both the information that they circulate as well as the technological means for circulating information’ (p. 251). On the other, media assumes a role in the ‘political and ideological imperatives’ of the state and acts as a ‘[tool] for maintaining political stability’ (p. 251). The government’s approach is ‘narrowly tailored’: it treats political expression as a ‘special category requiring special management’, while other activities of the media are given more leeway ‘to respond to market signals’ (p. 251).

Stockmann’s (2014) and George’s (2003) books, on the state-media relations in China and Singapore respectively, illustrated how market forces have helped bolster regime stability, contrary to the assumption that commercialisation of media can lead to its democratisation. In the ‘marketisation’ of media, even market forces have established their own means of control. Consequently, media freedom in semi-authoritarian or electoral-authoritarian advanced economies are threatened by both market interests and political imperatives.

The governments of Singapore and Malaysia are also the ‘most outspoken proponents’ of development journalism (Wong, 2004, p.26), which has earned traction among regimes in Southeast Asia. The premise, according to Wong, is ‘to have journalism play a central role in disseminating governmental or national policies to inform and educate the masses as well as mobilise them for the concerted effort at bringing about economic development’ (2004 p. 26).

The debate on development journalism

Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia were among the ‘well-known practitioners’ of development journalism by the mid-1990s (Wong, 2004), although the journalists of Indonesia, by mid-2000s, are starting to see themselves ‘objective disseminators of the news and not as political actors or agents of development’ (Hanitzsch, 2005, p. 1). Generalist media in the Philippines, however, has long been operating largely in a liberal-adversarial style of journalism even before the 1990s. This is ironic given that the development journalism paradigm originated in the Philippines, where a group of academics established a development-centered communication programme as they ‘found the Western liberal media too much driven by sensationalism and commercialism at the expense of socially

important news about community projects, rural developments, efforts to address poverty, etc.’ (Wong, 2004, p. 26).

The discussion on development journalism, or what Loo labeled as ‘compliant journalism’ (p. 14) cannot be divorced from the idea of so-called ‘Asian values’ (see Hsiung, 1985; Tay & George, 1996; Wong, 2004), the elements of which include ‘family above self, community above individual, constructive engagement as opposed to confrontation’, and which rests on the ‘consensus-seeking instinct’ (Wong, 2004, p.27). The governments in Southeast Asia that embrace the development journalism approach are, not surprisingly, also the ones that espouse the value of consensus as the core of national ideology.

These values of harmony and supportiveness supposedly legitimise the goal of the development journalism model: promote ‘political stability’ and state agenda for national development (Latif, 1996). This is in fact codified in the ASEAN model of journalism, which underscores preservation of regional harmony, national identity and support for government initiatives (Menon, 1998; Pak, 1997).

The journalistic emphasis on these Asian values is strongest in Southeast Asian newspapers, according to Massey and Chang’s (2002) study on ‘hard’ news stories in select online newspapers in Asia. The authors found that the Asian values of ‘supportiveness’ and ‘harmony’ were most visible in Singaporean, Bruneian and Malaysian newspapers, and they also made an interesting conclusion: these Asian values are ‘not uniformly Southeast Asian journalistic norms’ but a ‘phenomenon of closely controlled national press systems’ (p. 999).

This emerging universal set of news values was also discussed in a more recent content analysis on Singaporean news (see Cenite, Chong, Han, Lim, & Tan, 2008). In this study, the authors found that Singaporean press coverage during the 2006 elections operated within the development journalism model as it did for decades, but only partly. More emphasis was given on ‘game frames’ (competition among candidates and parties) rather than ‘issue frames’, which the researchers attributed to the need to maximise revenues. Game-framed coverage contains the elements of conflict and novelty that could sustain reader interest (Benoit, Stein, & Hansen, 2005; Cenite et al., 2008; Hahn & Iyengar, 2002). In other words, this is a unique result of commercial imperatives that news firms cannot ignore despite operating within tight government control. However, the coverage was still heavily lopsided in favour of the ruling political party, which the authors interpreted as a gesture rooted in Singapore’s ‘perpetual’ development journalism model (p.280).

As an outcome, the watchdog function that is a normative feature of journalism in the West becomes subordinate to the promotion of unity and state agenda (or is ultimately omitted). For this reason, the development journalism model has been heavily criticised in journalism discourse. Some critics described it as merely ‘government say-so journalism’ (Lent, 1978, p. 1), as it relies mostly on

government sources. Ali (1996) wrote that it gives authorities the opportunity to ‘hijack’ it under the pretext that developing nations cannot afford free and critical press (p.148).

Some authors wrote that this paradigm generates self-censorship and ‘overly cautious journalism’, as texts deemed as a threat to national interest or contradictory to state ideologies and policies were omitted or ‘blacked out somewhere along the news production chain’ (Loo, 2013, p.13; Wong, 2004). Loo (2013) explained that the self-restraint in journalism is not just borne out of professional ideology but is also a consequence of acts of violence against them: ‘history of defamation suits by politicians, unexplained sackings for challenging the status quo, and closure of news organisations under media laws’ (p. 50). This self-censorship is also observed even in countries with media systems that are not tightly controlled, as in the case of Philippines, where a sample of journalists reported a degree of self-censorship due to internal and external pressures (Estrella, 2018). This documented media situation in Southeast Asia should explain the rankings of almost all of its countries in the World Press Freedom Index, prepared by non-government organisation Reporters Without Borders (2018), in the past few years: consistently at the bottom third of the scale.

Some scholars pointed out that development journalism cannot be simply reduced to one-sided reportage and offered “more benign” interpretations (Kalyango et al., 2016, p.3). At its core, this practice highlights news that would allow people to understand and participate in development initiatives down to the grassroots level (Anand, 2014; Aggarwala, 1979; Richstad, 2000; Shah, 1988). Hence, as Kalyango et al. (2016) noted, it is ‘interventionist, developmental, and educational’ (p.3)—reporters are socialised as agents of change or contributors to societal progress. For Richstad (2000), development journalism is a cooperation between the government and the Fourth Estate, not necessarily the media being subsumed as the propaganda arm of the state. Other proponents of development journalism believed that this approach gives ample room to issues that are often ignored by mainstream generalist media simply because they do not ‘sell’ to the general public.

The profit motive and ethical lapses

The heads of state in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian systems have attempted to justify tight media regulation by tendencies to focus on triviality and to sensationalise news as dictated by profit motive (Karppinen, 2015; Loo, 2013; Wong, 2004). Related literature has shown this to be true to some extent.

In Indonesia, for instance, ‘excessive commercialism’ was said to have spawned media corruption and other forms of ethical issues (Loeqman, 2003, as cited in Triputra, 2017; Marzuki, 2013). According to Marzuki (2013), the Indonesian industry has turned into a ‘free-for-all overnight profit-making media market’, as some journalists have left the outlets due to conflicts with media owners (p. 145). This is congruent with the findings of Tapsell (2012), whose study is

based on 80 interviews with Indonesian journalists. The respondents admitted having varying degrees of ‘self-censorship’ and their publications were ‘being used to promote their owners’ interests’ (Tapsell, 2013, p. 241).

Research questions and scope of the study

This research looks into the coverage on the recently concluded ASEAN special summit in Australia and the annual summit in Singapore, which were held March and April 2018, respectively. We analysed all articles published online from March to May last year by select news firms from three countries in Southeast Asia: Philippines, Cambodia and Singapore.

The countries were chosen as representative environments of Southeast Asia largely based on dimensions proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2004): role of the state (or media-state dynamics), prevalent role perception of journalists and structure of media markets, balanced by a consideration of other dimensions such as national income and income distribution and recent political developments that call attention to the media landscape in the country (e.g. number of journalist killings and harassment cases). The choice of countries also provides representatives for each of the three broad categories of media environments as identified in several works such as that of Loo’s (2013): tightly controlled under authoritarian/ Communist or Socialist political systems (Cambodia); tightly or partly controlled under authoritarian/semi-authoritarian systems (Singapore) and free or partly free systems (Philippines).

Another factor considered in the choice of countries is the presence of news media that publish in English (to avoid possible loss of meaning in translation) and which have a significant, if not the largest, circulation and user engagement levels. The primary research question is obviously:

 RQ1: What content themes were recurrent or given emphasis in the coverage on the ASEAN special summit in Australia (March) and the annual summit in Singapore (April)?

We also included all articles related to ASEAN published within the months of March to May, including those that were presumably published as build-up or follow-stories (but not accounts of ASEAN summit events). It has to be noted that the study covers only stories on the most recent ASEAN summits held March and April, as well as all the other stories published within that time period. Other ASEAN stories outside the timeframe are excluded. As this is also a comparative study, another question that we aim to address is:

 RQ2: How does the coverage on the ASEAN summits vary across the news sites vis-à-vis the character of the media systems in which they belong?

Given what was discussed on the types of media systems in related literature, it is important to determine whether or not specific paradigms as documented in existing studies still figure in ASEAN coverage, thus the following research questions:

RQ3: How does the development journalism model manifest its character in the ASEAN coverage of Singaporean and Cambodian news firms (if it does)?

RQ4: What content themes are prominent in news content published by firms in a partly free media system (Philippines)?

Methodology

The websites of mainstream news firms with significant reach and user engagement in three Southeast Asian countries served as the loci of this study: *ABS CBN News* and *GMA News Online* (Philippines), *Phnom Penh Post* and *Khmer Times* (Cambodia), and *The Straits Times* and *Today* (Singapore).

Philippines' ABS CBN has a 46 percent average audience share as of February 2018, while GMA has 34 percent (Kantar Media, 2018, as cited in ABS CBN News, 2018). *Phnom Penh Post* and *Khmer Times*, meanwhile, are Cambodia's leading English dailies, with the former having a circulation rate of over 21,500 circulation copies per day and the latter 6000-8000 copies per day, according to the most recent circulation figures available (Media Ownership Monitor Cambodia, 2015). In Singapore, *The Straits Times* leads the roster of dailies, with a readership of 1.23 million per day as of 2016, followed by *Today* with 548,000 (Nielsen Singapore, 2016, as cited in *Today*, 2016).

A total of 112 articles were analysed in this study, including hard news stories, features and opinion pieces based on the following criteria:

1. Must be published between March to April 2018, the months in which the ASEAN Summit 2018 and the special summit in Australia were held, and
2. Must be part of the coverage on ASEAN Summit 2018 and Special Summit in Australia, or at least related to ASEAN affairs (e.g. build-up stories prior to the summit).

Those that were not written in English and offered no equivalent translation were excluded. We obtained data online using the digital archive services of each media outlet. The collected articles were then coded and tabulated using Atlas.ti software. We used the coding analysis scheme proposed by Saldanha (2009). A code, according to Saldanha (2009), is 'a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data'.

We also used Strauss and Corbin's (1998, as cited in Gray, 2004) simple coding process in this study. The study employed open, axial and thematic coding process

in disaggregating the data and analysing the result. The essence and attribute of the data were given premium in choosing and assigning the codes.

Though some of the codes were taken in vivo, all primary codes were treated as open codes and were fractured and re-fractured into units until the underlying patterns emerged. Based on their similarities and relationships, these aggregated components were grouped into categories. The results were then fused to produce the major themes and sub-themes. It should be said that these codes inevitably overlap with each other (as meanings overlap in texts), so each unit, for example, can contain multiple codes.

Findings

A total of 28 codes were generated. These are composed of five major themes and 23 subthemes. Some of the codes are present in the sampled articles in vivo (i.e. migration, war on drugs, resiliency, trade wars etc.) while others were taken from the existing related literature (i.e. consensus and harmony, economics, conflict etc.).

Mostly about 'men in suits': The lack of human interest angle

The 'Heads of State' (the activities, quotes, and background of and other related information on the ASEAN leaders) is the most recurring theme in the stories published by the select news websites. More than 40 percent of the content in all articles are about the affairs of the heads of state, their statements and mentions of them. The breakdown of the major themes can be seen on Table 1.

In many of the stories, the news angle, as defined primarily in the lead paragraph and headline, is what was said and what was done by what Son (2017) calls as 'men in suits'. The primary agent is the head of state (or his or her minister) and the emphasis is on what he or she said or did. For instance, many articles published by the Singaporean news firms (*The Straits Times* and *Today*) are speech stories anchored on the statements of the Singaporean prime minister or the minister for finance. The Philippine media in this study also framed the majority of their articles according to the actions and statements of the Philippine president (e.g. the headlines 'Duterte leaves for Singapore to attend ASEAN summit', 'Duterte in India for ASEAN commemorative summit', 'Duterte eyes stronger PH-India military ties', among others) at a rate higher than those of Cambodian and Singaporean media. Cambodian news firms were no different in their emphasis on the heads of state, but the news outlet *Phnom Penh Post* framed their stories in a manner vastly different from *Khmer Times* did (to be discussed later in this section). Table 2 compares the distribution of content across countries based on the selected news firms.

The dominance of the 'Heads of State' theme is consistent across countries, but the framing of ASEAN leaders varies from one news firm to another. For example, Philippine coverage presented heads of state mostly as problem-solvers—ASEAN

Table 1: Story themes and subthemes published March-April 2018

Major themes	Theme percentage	Subthemes	Subtheme percentage
Heads of State	42.76%	HoS as economics	.11%
		HoS as oppressors	2.05%
		HoS as problem solvers	2.78%
		HoS as vanguards of security	1.30%
		Mentions and other quotes	36.52%
Economics	22.06%	Connectivity and mobility	2.74%
		Economic challenges	1.37%
		Economic opportunities	17.56%
		Innovation in business and finance	.40%
Consensus	17.30%	Consensus-seeking and harmony	17.30%
Conflict and external threat	13.7%	Cyber attacks	1.08%
		Crisis in Myanmar	1.51%
		Political crackdown	2.99%
		South China Sea dispute	2.99%
		Threat of extremism	.76%
		Trade wars	1.51%
		Transnational environmental challenges	.29%
		War on drugs	.36%
		Dissent	2.20%
Others	4.18%	Brief background about ASEAN	1.44%
		Migration	.79%
		Resilience	1.95%
Total	100%	Total	100%

leaders working toward resolving conflict situations and averting possible trade wars, negotiating with the Chinese government over territorial disputes, increasing ‘coordination to shield countries from cyber-attacks’ (ABS-CBN, 2018) and who, in light of transnational crimes, ‘have already completed a model for the [ASEAN-wide extradition] treaty’ (ABS-CBN, 2018). Singaporean news outlets, on the other hand, emphasised what the head of state says about economic growth and policy (“HoS on economy”), something that is almost invisible in the coverage of Philippine and Cambodian firms. This variance in journalistic emphasis among the frames under the major theme of ‘Heads of State’ is shown in Table 3.

Table 2: Cross-country comparison for selected SE Asian news firms

	Distribution of journalistic content (in percentages)		
Major themes	Cambodian news firms (<i>Phnom Penh Post</i> and <i>Khmer Times</i>)	Philippines news firms (<i>ABS CBN News</i> and <i>GMA News Online</i>)	Singaporean news firms (<i>The Straits Times</i> and <i>Today</i>)
Heads of State	37.32%	58.88%	37.38%
Economics	17.75%	10.42%	27%
Consensus and harmony	17.75%	15.64%	17.66%
Conflict	28.36%	6.76%	12.03%
Others	1.81%	8.30%	5.93%

In the case of Cambodia, there is a massive difference in content-framing between *Phnom Penh Post* articles and those of *Khmer Times*. *Phnom Penh Post* presented the heads of state, particularly the Cambodian prime minister, as ‘oppressors’, directly associating them with political crackdown, closure of the independent press and their deliberate dismissal of matters relevant to the common folk. However, this is omitted in *Khmer Times*, which forwarded the heads of state as problem-solvers. Hence, the framing among Cambodian news sites contains extremes: one framing the heads of state as oppressors (5.07 percent), the other framing them as problem-solvers (3.08 percent). This finding is congruent with the reputation of *Phnom Penh Post* as a publication that is critical of the Cambodian political regime (Massola, 2018).

Yet, across the pool of articles, the heads of state were mostly presented as problem-solvers and vanguards of security in the region, positively depicted as protectors and leaders working for a change in progress. Interestingly, in a majority of the texts (except those of *Phnom Penh Post*), little space is given to alternative or critical assertions, or even opinion from non-government entities. The content theme ‘Dissent’ protests—against human rights violations and other forms of political crackdown—accounts for only 2.20 percent of the total content, with Philippine media not including this type of content. Only Cambodia’s *Phnom Penh Post* has a substantial amount of content coded under ‘Dissent’ (balanced out by the lack of it in the *Khmer Times*) at 8.70 percent.

Some may argue that the journalistic emphasis on the heads of state is nothing less than expected given that the ASEAN summits are a gathering of the heads of the state and therefore the coverage should revolve around their affairs shortly before, during and after the event. However, for the common folk to evaluate—let alone be interested in—something as high-profile as a gathering of state leaders or regional integration, the reportage on these events should be balanced by attempts to translate these into terms the audience can understand

Table 3: The different frames for 'Head of State' content

Subthemes under 'Heads of State' (41.39% of the total content)	Distribution of journalistic content (in percentages)		
	Cambodian news firms (<i>Phnom Penh Post</i> and <i>Khmer Times</i>)	Philippines news firms (<i>ABS CBN News</i> and <i>GMA News Online</i>)	Singaporean news firms (<i>The Straits Times</i> and <i>Today</i>)
HoS on economy	-	-	.18%
HoS as oppressors	5.07%	-	1.70%
HoS as problem solvers	3.08%	6.76%	1.47%
HoS as vanguards of security	0.72%	-	1.88%
HoS mentions and quotes	28.44%	52.12%	32.16%

(Chongkittavorn, 2015; Son, 2017a). For instance, in online platforms, these stories can be interactive narratives discussing the implications of ASEAN resolutions to sectors like workers, women and students, among others.

Son (2017a) explained that 'while summit-shaped stories that look into how declarations are decided, what language was changed, pushed or objected to, say a lot, the story is not complete because the impact of ASEAN's decisions are to be seen and felt outside the airconditioned summit venues'. But what is sorely lacking in the coverage is the 'soft news' and human interest stories that could have discussed the impact of the ASEAN summit proclamations and affairs on everyday lives. As Son (2017b) suggested, it may help if a journalist frames 'a story by asking what our audiences need to know and investigate from there, instead of getting stuck only in what the heads of state and ministers said', a consequence of which is the reportage without the '[voices of] citizens affected by ASEAN's policies or decisions'.

ASEAN and the economic agenda

Another dominant theme identified in the content analysis is 'Economics' (22.06 percent), encompassing content on the rejection of protectionism in Southeast Asia; free trade among member states and with allies; building infrastructures for mobility and connectivity and innovation in business and finance. Table 4 provides a comparison of content distribution under 'Economics'.

This journalistic emphasis on economic opportunities stemming from ASEAN integration and other affairs is most pronounced in Singaporean texts (27 percent of the content published by *The Straits Times* and *Today*), a finding that is consistent with the observations in related studies (see Lehmann-Jacobsen, 2017; Massey & Chang, 2006).

Table 4: The different frames for 'Economics' content

	Distribution of journalistic content (in percentages)		
Subthemes under 'Economics' (22.06% of the total content) and 'Consensus and harmony' (17.30%)	Cambodian news firms (<i>Phnom Penh Post</i> and <i>Khmer Times</i>)	Philippines news firms (<i>ABS CBN News</i> and <i>GMA News Online</i>)	Singaporean news firms (<i>The Straits Times</i> and <i>Today</i>)
Economic challenges	2.17%	—	1.53%%
Economic opportunities	8.51%	10.42%	22.65%
Innovation in business and finance	0.72%	—	0.41%
Consensus and harmony	17.75%	15.64%	17.66%

The emphasis on economic growth and state proclamations among Singaporean news firms reflects its journalism paradigm as discussed in the literature review section: development journalism. Albeit there are lengthy informative stories on ASEAN initiatives and economic opportunities, these concepts were explained largely through quotes from official sources in Singapore. This is one of the tendencies that characterise the development journalism framework: the media acts a partner of the state in disseminating the government agenda for economic progress. The focus of the Singaporean news firms on economic matters in the reportage also suggests how the Singaporean government views ASEAN affairs and integration: an opportunity to effectuate commercial exchanges and investment relations, to reject protectionism within the ASEAN bloc and to expand business value chains.

The Philippine news firms, meanwhile, did not discuss these economic opportunities and business innovation in the same length as Singaporean firms did. The economic opportunities as reported by *ABS CBN News* and *GMA News Online* come in the form of 'business deals' and 'investment pledge' that the head of state—the Philippine president—secured during the summits. However, these economic opportunities were reported as outcomes of the affairs or actions of the head of state—they are newsworthy because they are associated with the prominent figure in the Philippine context.

Content on economic challenges, meanwhile, is significantly less than that on economic opportunities. Cambodian firms reported on these at a slightly higher rate than Singaporean outlets did (2.17 percent versus 1.53 percent), while Philippine outlets did not cover them at all. Therefore, ASEAN integration was generally presented as an enabler of positive developments in economy.

Continuing adherence to the ‘Asian value’ of consensus

The economic opportunities were associated with consensus and cooperation, especially in the texts published by the Singaporean news outlets. Possible conflict among member states or between non-ASEAN superpowers, such as trade wars and territorial disputes, were presented as impediments to economic growth, while consensus is presented as its prerequisite. The theme ‘Consensus and harmony’, in fact, is one of the strongest across all news firms in this study, with 17.30 percent of the total content coded under it. The Singaporean news firms, for example, published several stories revolving around unity in resolutions and ‘reaffirmation’ of pledges (e.g. *The Straits Times* stories headlined ‘ASEAN military chiefs reaffirm security pledge’ and ‘ASEAN+3 finance, bank chiefs vow to resist protectionism’ and *Today’s* headline ‘Not easy to finalise South China Sea code of conduct, but talks can prevent tensions: PM Lee’). Philippines’ *GMA News Online* also published articles highlighting cooperation between member states (e.g. ‘Duterte, Widodo vow to further strengthen cooperation on security, sustainable development’).

Furthermore, challenges and conflict (e.g. security threats and South China Sea territorial dispute) were reported as ‘work in progress’ more than predicaments within the ASEAN bloc.

This prevalence of consensus and its related concepts is reminiscent of Massey and Chang’s (2006) finding that the values of harmony and supportiveness are strongest in Southeast Asian reportage, the ‘Asian values’ central to the development journalism paradigm and peddled by Southeast Asian regimes as a guide for nation-building.

Comparing the character of reportage

The findings in our content analysis provide a glimpse on the character of ASEAN reportage across and in each of the three countries chosen to represent the media environments of Southeast Asia. The news websites in this study—selected primarily because of their significant circulation rate and audience engagement (and thus huge potential as opinion-shapers)—give journalistic emphasis to 1) what is said and done by the heads of state, 2) economic opportunities and innovation stemming from ASEAN affairs and 3) consensus, unity or cooperation. The figure below is a graphic representation of the dominant themes in each country:

The axis of reportage is the affairs and opinion of the heads of state, such that many of the stories were framed according to what they did in the summits and what they think of ASEAN and related matters. It appears that the news value of ‘Prominence’—newsworthiness by association with high-profile individuals or groups—played as a determinant in story choices, particularly in Philippine media, which for the most part treated ASEAN summits as events attended by

Figure 1: Resonant themes in the ASEAN media coverage 2018



Note: Cambodian news firms (brown), Philippine firms (blue), and Singaporean firms (red). Data visualization was done using Tableau trial version.

the Philippine president and the focus is on his words and actions (‘Duterte in ASEAN’). While the Philippines stands as the representative of a partly free media system in this study (with the documented tendency to operate within libertarian press ideals), the reportage on ASEAN affairs centered on what the Philippine president and his team gained in the summit as well as his other declarations. Comprised mostly of short hard news articles, it lacks the discursive stories that could have given more context on ASEAN integration.

Cambodian news firms, meanwhile, also focused on these men in suits, but *Phnom Penh Post*, in stark contrast with *Khmer Times*, framed most of their stories on criticisms against the Cambodian prime minister. It also provided the most space for dissenting opinion or opposition. Like Philippine media, however, they also lack the texts that provide more context on ASEAN integration and that give answers to the relevant questions: What does it mean for the common folk? Where is it heading? Where does it stand now?

Phnom Penh Post, despite its large circulation, can be considered an outlier in the Cambodian media system in the sense that it has a track record of publishing articles critical of the Cambodian government. However, as mentioned in the previous section, it has recently been sold to a new publisher, Sivakumar Ganapathy, whose public relations firm, Asia PR, had ‘links to the increasingly authoritarian government of Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen’ (Meixler, 2018), prompting several editors to resign.

The Khmer Times, on the other hand, published several opinion pieces written by third-party political analysts, and some of these explain possible directions and the dynamics of the member states. However, unlike *Phnom Penh Post*, *Khmer Times* barely mentioned the criticisms against the political crackdown allegedly committed by the Cambodian regime, and similar to the Singaporean and Philippine firms, the hard news stories were anchored on the quotes and affairs of official sources.

Singaporean firms in this study included feature stories and opinion pieces that discuss some ASEAN initiatives (e.g. *Today's* 'What does the ASEAN smart cities network mean for Singapore?'). However, ASEAN affairs were viewed through the lens of government sources (heads of state or other policy-makers) and alternative views were omitted in the coverage. Thus, in the topic of ASEAN integration, the selected Singaporean news outlets served as an extension of government information dissemination, adhering to its supposed role in the framework of development journalism which has long been observed in related studies.

The focus on the actions and affairs of the high-profile individuals, and the insufficient number of contextualising articles answering the most basic question 'What exactly does it mean for the majority of ASEAN population?' could have repercussions on the level of awareness among the 600 million ASEAN citizens. How will the ASEAN initiatives formed at the top be translated to the grassroots level if the citizens were not fully informed (a prerequisite of which is a reportage that engages them and invites dialogue)?

The prevalence of content on economic opportunities and business innovation and the celebration of consensus and cooperation in the ASEAN summit reportage of this year follows the ASEAN model of journalism as discussed in the literature review: a model that describes as a standard the journalism that preserves regional harmony and promotes state initiatives, a framework rooted on the ideals of development journalism.

Conclusion

This preliminary study provides a glimpse on how Southeast Asian news firms treat ASEAN summits—and in effect the ASEAN integration initiative—as a news topic based on a limited sample. Future research can expand the scope by including more news firms that will represent the different media environments in the region.

Our limited sample can also be expanded to include not just the coverage on ASEAN summits, but also all other ASEAN-related stories. Findings in the content analysis of recent articles can be compared with those on older articles about ASEAN, allowing the researcher to track the evolution (or lack thereof) of reportage.

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Press coverage of HIV and other health issues in PNG's Post-Courier: 2007-2017

Abstract: The aim of this research article was to discover, using the Factiva database, how frequently Papua New Guinea's *Post-Courier*, one of the largest selling newspapers in the Pacific, covered prominent health issues namely HIV, malaria and diabetes between 2007 and 2017. Also, it tries to determine if there was a discernible pattern in the number of articles and content with previous studies on health coverage, in this case HIV, from 1987-2007. As Factiva did not hold any archives for PNG's other major newspaper—*The National*—it was excluded from this analysis. While there are marked similarities with earlier studies, the dramatic decline of health stories from 2013 onwards is a cause for concern.

Keywords: content analysis, diabetes, health journalism, HIV/AIDS, malaria, newspapers, Papua New Guinea, *Post-Courier*

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Common health issues in PNG

THREE common and high profile diseases found in Papua New Guinea (PNG) were selected for this study—HIV/AIDS, malaria and diabetes. It is evident that PNG, a country with a population of more than eight million people, faces a significant public health crisis. The country has the highest incidence and prevalence of HIV in the Pacific. The latest figures show that 46,000 people live with HIV (UNAIDS, 2017). The largest group affected are sex workers, and they account for 18 percent of all infections. On the positive side, PNG has experienced a significant improvement in the roll-out of treatment services, with more than 24,000 people living with HIV accessing antiretroviral therapy, which slows the spread of the disease. Also, since 2010, HIV infections have decreased by 34 percent and AIDS-related deaths have decreased by four percent. However, the country's health system is facing difficulties in keeping people on life-long treatment, especially among key populations and in the country's remote and often hard-to-reach communities. Globally, from 2010-2016, there was a 32 percent decrease in AIDS related deaths and

a 16 percent decrease in HIV infections. However, despite vast improvements in prevention and access to treatment, the disease remains a global health issue with 1.8 million new HIV infections in 2016 and 37 million people still living with the virus (UNAIDS, 2017).

With the introduction of more than seven million mosquito nets, PNG has slashed the incidences of malaria since 2004, from 400 cases per 100,000 people to 200. Between 2009 and 2015, the incidence of malaria admissions to public health facilities dropped by 83 percent, and malaria death rates in health facilities fell by 76 percent. But malaria still accounts for eight percent of deaths in PNG (WHO, 2018).

The latest data from the World Health Organisation (WHO) show that the number of people living with diabetes in PNG rose from five percent in 1980 to 18 percent in 2016, and deaths from the disease accounted for six percent of all deaths in PNG in 2016. It is reported as a disease on the rise. It is influenced by several factors that include insufficient physical exercise, unhealthy diets, cultural values and low education. Government strategies and initiatives have not been effective in educating and motivating the public (WHO, 2016).

In this paper, the acronym HIV is used to include people living with HIV, and also those living with AIDS, which is the next stage of the disease when the human immune system breaks down. The term ‘media’ refers primarily to the print journalists.

Coverage of health in PNG

The first studies of press coverage of health issues in PNG appeared in the late 1980s and they focused on specific topics like HIV rather than comparative analyses with other diseases. The first content analysis of newspaper coverage of HIV in PNG from 1987-1999 was conducted by Cullen (2000) who focused on PNG because, at that stage, it had more than 90 percent of all HIV cases in the southern Pacific region, and the largest number of media outlets. Cullen’s research opted for a quantitative analysis of all HIV stories in PNG’s two daily newspapers, *The National* and the *PNG Post-Courier* from 1987, when the first HIV case was discovered, to 1999 when the first act of Parliament concerning HIV was introduced. Findings from the study showed disproportionate emphasis on reporting infection rates, international funding and regional workshops, with little in-depth analysis of the disease or educational content. And while the language and tone of HIV stories showed more sensitivity to people living with the disease, the focus of coverage was narrow with only a few references to the medical, political, social, economic, cultural, religious and relationship factors that influence health outcomes.

A comparison of press coverage of HIV in PNG in 2000 and 2005 revealed that there were no feature articles in daily newspaper, and that the scope and

focus of press coverage did not change. In the 2005 study, workshops, the latest figures for HIV and 'harms' had the largest number of stories. None of the news stories contained direct educational messages about ways to avoid infection. This matched the results from Cullen's previous study (Cullen, 2005, p. 148).

Another study of content analysis of all HIV news stories in the *Post-Courier* in 2010 revealed some significant changes in comparison to the 2000 and 2005 studies. First, there were far more stories in the 2010 study and this pointed to the fact that the disease was still considered newsworthy, more than 20 years after it was first detected in PNG in 1987. There was also a shift towards the inclusion of educational content in feature stories, recognising that both information and educational content are an essential part of reporting the story regardless of their impact on reducing the rate of HIV infections. Other significant developments included the inclusion of information about how to avoid infection, and nearly all the feature articles revealed a much greater acceptance of people living with HIV, including transgender and gay people. Stories allocated to people living with HIV increased, while stories about funding and workshops decreased in the 2010 study.

The trend to widen coverage began some years earlier. Another content analysis by Cullen of press coverage of HIV in PNG in 2007 analysed all online news items on HIV from the websites of the *Post-Courier* and *The National* during a three-month period from September to November 2007. Surprisingly, while stories on HIV were similar in content to Cullen's 2000 and 2005 study, there was a new focus on domestic violence with both daily newspapers including 10 news stories each on the topic. *The National* ran four editorials, three front-page stories and three new stories while the *Post-Courier* included two editorials, one front-page story, one in-depth feature and six news stories. Domestic violence is a major social problem in PNG, and an issue closely linked to HIV because it undermines the ability of PNG women to negotiate safe sexual practices. In November 2007, the *Post-Courier* wrote two editorials calling for an end to domestic violence and three news stories about a woman who suffered major burns after her husband set her alight. *The National* included three news items on the same incident and three news items on the rising number of rape cases in the country. While there is insufficient research on press coverage of domestic violence in PNG, it could be argued that coverage of domestic violence in September, October and November 2007 in both newspapers represented a change in the reporting of HIV in PNG, and suggested journalists had started to link HIV with the wider social and cultural context of the disease.

In summary, findings from the content analysis on the reporting of HIV in PNG's two national newspapers, *The National* and *Post-Courier*, in 2000, 2005, 2007 and 2010 tried to answer two questions: did coverage of the disease decrease or increase over the years, and did the topics change and or remain the

same? Although the data was limited, there was enough to provide some answers to these questions. First, figures reveal that there was a significant increase in news stories in all four studies. There were more in-depth educational feature articles, and the tone revealed a change in attitude among PNG journalists to report the disease with greater sensitivity towards people living with the disease and to include information about how to avoid infection. Overall, there was still a strong emphasis on reporting harms, infection rates and regional workshops. Journalists in PNG, however, did begin to widen coverage of the disease and report HIV as a development story with political, social, economic, cultural, religious and relationship aspects (Cullen, 2010, p. 157). Indeed, former editors and journalists from *the Post-Courier* and *The National* newspapers should be highly commended for consistently tracking and reporting the spread of the disease.

The aim of this new research is to broaden the focus of previous studies which focused solely on coverage of HIV, and to discover, using the Factiva database, how frequently PNG's *Post-Courier* covered health issues, namely HIV/AIDS, malaria and diabetes, from 2007 to 2017. Also, the research aims to determine if there was a discernible pattern in the types and content of health stories compared to previous studies, and if there were any significant changes. As Factiva did not hold any archives for PNG's other national newspaper, *The National*, it was excluded from this analysis.

Method

In health research, the methodology used to document media coverage and representations of diseases is generally a quantitative approach. So this study opted for both a quantitative and content analysis of all HIV, malaria and diabetes stories in PNG's *Post-Courier* newspaper. The *Post-Courier* was selected for this research as it is the largest selling daily newspaper in the Pacific, and in PNG, with a daily circulation of 41,000 copies. Founded in 1969, it is majority owned by Rupert Murdoch's *News Corp* and serves a mainly urban readership who are considered to be influential in the community.

This research tabulated, graphed and compared the number of health stories (both web and print versions) between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2017. The Factiva database search query parameters were set as follows: 'HIV OR human immunodeficiency virus OR AIDS OR acquired immune deficiency syndrome OR diabetes OR malaria.' The search for these free-text terms was conducted in the full articles. One major reason for the focus on press reports rather than a wider study on media coverage of the disease is due, in a large part, to more effective access to archival print data. Data collection involved identifying various story formats for each newspaper article. These included: a news story (less than 450 words) or a feature (more than 750 words); an editorial, or a front-page story; an international or local story. In the variable section, 'International' refers to news

stories about health in foreign countries while ‘local’ refers to news stories on health within PNG. ‘Harmful effects’ refers to a news story that describes the consequences of contracting a disease, namely sickness, stigma and possibly death. ‘Offering solutions’ refers to health stories that contain information about how to prevent infection. ‘Determinants of health’ refers to health stories that include social, economic, political, cultural, environmental or religious factors that influence health outcomes. Both the story format and content variable sections were used by Cullen when he analysed press coverage of HIV (Cullen, 2000, 2005, 2010), and they provide the basis for comparison with the results from this wider study that includes HIV but also diabetes and malaria.

Results and analysis

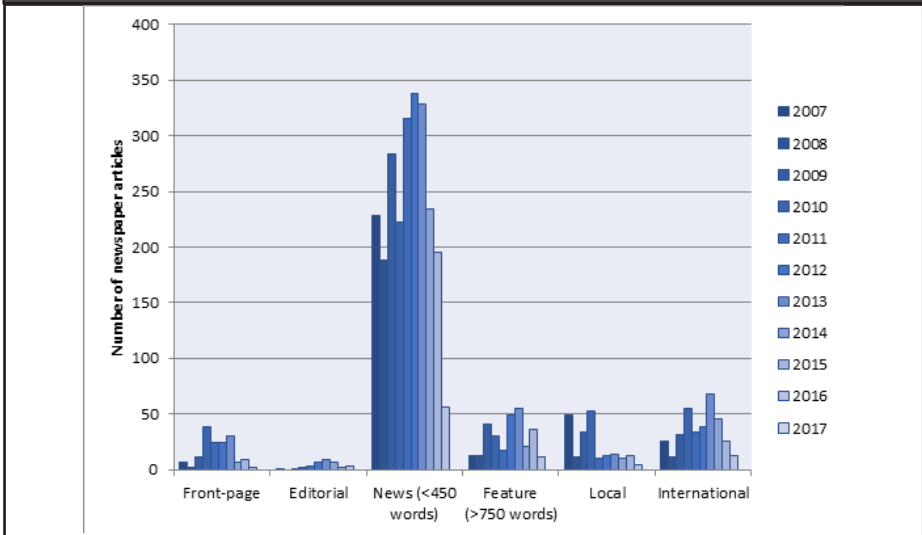
A total of 3416 newspaper articles relevant to the reporting of health issues (namely HIV/AIDS, malaria and diabetes) between 2007 and 2017 were reviewed from PNG’s *Post-Courier*. Table 1 shows the findings for the number of news stories, according to the various format categories and content variables, along with the statistical mean and rank. Note that *Factiva* did not return any data for the 2017 search. The statistical mean refers to the central tendency of the data. It is determined by adding all the data points and then dividing the total by the number of points. The mean was calculated by adding all the data between 2007 and 2017 for each story type and content variable, and then dividing by 11, as this was the number of years between 2007 and 2017, which gives an annual mean or ‘average’ number. The rankings are according to mean,

Table 1: *Post-Courier* health issue coverage, 2007-2017

		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Mean	Rank
Story type	Front page	7	2	11	38	24	24	30	6	9	2	0	14	5
	Editorial	1	0	1	2	3	7	9	6	2	3	0	3	6
	News (450 words)	228	188	284	222	316	338	329	234	195	56	0	217	1
	Feature (750 words)	12	13	41	30	17	49	55	21	36	11	0	26	3
	Local	49	11	34	52	10	13	14	10	12	4	0	19	4
	International	26	11	31	55	34	38	68	45	25	12	0	31	2
Content variable	Figures & Statistics	15	19	30	37	31	32	49	43	29	9	0	27	4
	Educational work-shops	46	29	38	27	13	6	16	12	7	4	0	18	5
	Harmful effects	78	43	134	136	243	363	327	190	167	40	0	156	1
	Determinants of health	102	84	109	80	41	19	30	18	26	18	0	48	3
	Offering solutions	82	50	91	119	76	49	83	59	50	17	0	61	2
	Total	323	225	402	399	404	469	505	322	279	88	0	311	

Note: Indicating story formats and content variables in coverage of HIV, malaria and diabetes.

Table 2: Post-Courier health issue coverage, 2007-2017: Formats



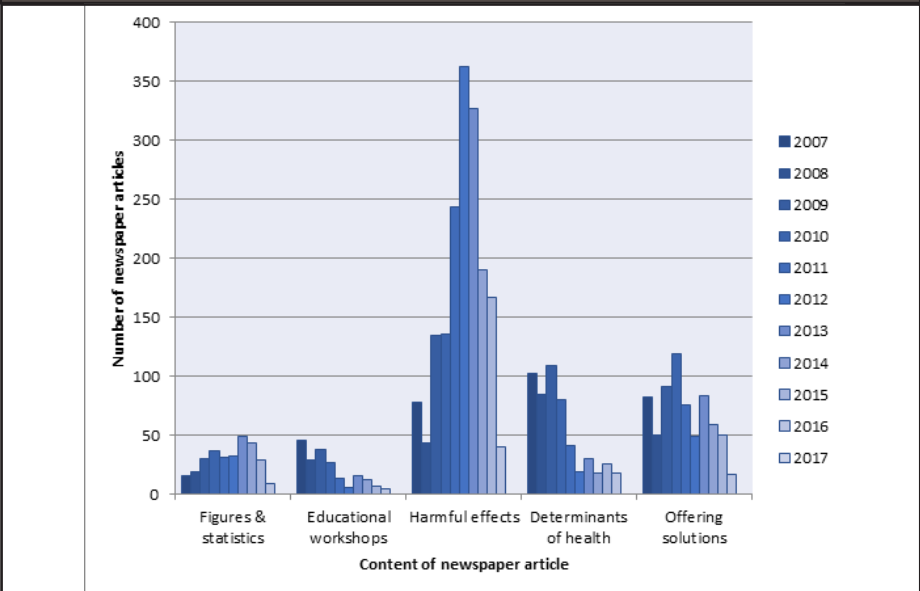
Note: Indicating story formats in coverage of HIV, malaria and diabetes.

and also match the rankings according to total (as they should, statistically). Table 2 shows that the findings from the various content variables followed a similar pattern to previous studies on coverage of HIV, namely that news stories topped the list (2390). Judging by the number of news stories on health, it is evident that health was considered newsworthy until 2016 when a dramatic decline began. However, international stories (345) overtook local stories (209) which reversed the findings seen in previous studies on health stories, namely on HIV. Feature (285) front page (153) and editorial (34) followed a similar pattern in ranking to studies of HIV by Cullen in 2000, 2005, 2007; Cullen & Callaghan, 2010.

Table 3 reveals that the category ‘harmful effects’ had the highest number of references (1721), followed by ‘offering solutions’ (676) and the ‘determinants of health’ (527). Figures and statistics (294) were still an important category in health stories together with workshops (198), although they finished well below the other categories. This was an encouraging result because in previous studies on health coverage, namely HIV, these two categories were top of the list. Another positive development was the continual rise of solutions and determinants in health stories, although the prominence of harmful effects reflects a similar pattern to Cullen’s previous studies in terms of its ranking, and indicates that health stories were frequently framed to reflect negative aspects of health.

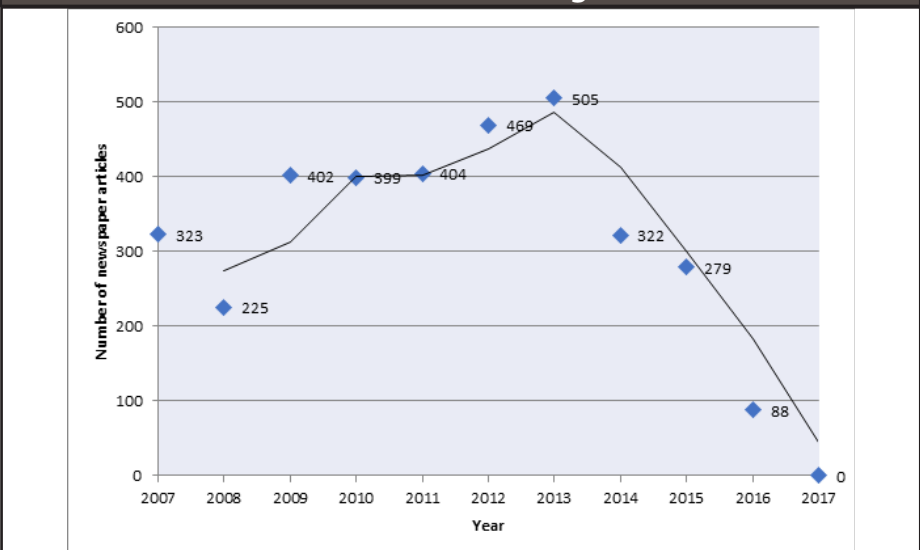
Table 4 shows the trend in the total number of news stories per year. A two-period moving average trend line was deemed to be the most fitting way to represent this data, that is the average of the first two data points was used as the

Table 3: Post-Courier health issue coverage, 2007-2017: Content



Note: Indicating content variables in coverage of HIV, malaria and diabetes.

Table 4: Post-Courier health issues coverage, 2007-2017: Overall



Note: Indicating content variables in coverage of HIV, malaria and diabetes, overall trend.

first point in the moving average trend line. It reveals a steady increase in health issue coverage between 2007 and 2010, then a plateau until 2011, followed by a steady increase until 2013, after which coverage took a steady decline. Note

that the zero against 2017 is due to a lack of data in Factiva rather than a lack of health coverage in the *PNG Post-Courier*. The author investigated the omission by Factiva of data for 2017 but was unable to obtain an adequate reason. Nevertheless, there has been a clear downward trend in health coverage in recent years. It is recommended that, if possible, further data be sought to overcome Factiva's limitations. As Factiva did not hold any archives for PNG's second largest selling newspaper, *The National*, it was excluded from this analysis. The overall findings in Table 4 reveal that while health was considered newsworthy with peaks in the number of news stories in 2010 and 2013, there was also a worrying development—that coverage of health stories in the *Post-Courier* fell sharply—from a peak of 505 stories in 2013 to only 88 in 2016. So what are possible factors behind such a dramatic decline?

Challenges for journalists

Based on previous studies and interviews with editors and journalists (Cullen, 2000, 2010), health stories present a real challenge for journalists in PNG, especially in trying to find an appropriate response while working with organisational constraints. The reality in the newsroom is that coverage of health has to compete with many other issues. Editors, on their part, fear that their papers may be seen as merely relaying public health information. Also, there are only a few trained health journalists. Most importantly, there is also a feeling that 'health fatigue' has set in, where readers may already be saturated with what seems to be the usual narratives of infection, suffering and death surrounding diseases in the newspaper. Health is seen as a worthy but dull topic. Health journalism is a practice in which strategy follows structure—and media logic will likely never accommodate certain types of health realities because of issues of media funding, ownership and audience capital (Hinnant, Subramanian, & Jenkins, 2018, p. 32).

Yet health stories are important. Swain (2005) argues the media, particularly journalists, exercise a significant influence in moulding public opinions and attitudes. Walsh-Childers and Braddock (2013) support this claim and argue that the media can set the public agenda, frame issues and influence knowledge, attitudes and behaviours (2016). But Swain (2005) goes further and argues that much of society's understanding of disease, including who it affects and its future possibilities, comes from the media (Swain, 2005, p. 258). Admittedly, some would disagree with this statement and stress that the role of the media in reporting health is still unclear and limited, and that better information and education on health equals improved health outcomes is problematic. Also, the press is not always regarded as the most reliable source for such information.

The debate continues.

In terms of the content of health stories, social scientists have come to realize

in recent years that socio-cultural factors influence complex health behaviors. Social determinants, such as socioeconomic status, shape ‘life conditions that, in turn, influence health’ (Adler & Rehkopf, 2008, p. 241). Nonetheless, individual risk factors are the subject of most research and media coverage. Yet, beyond an individual’s own social network, there are larger structural and environment determinants that affect health outcomes, such as living conditions related to one’s employment.

While it is encouraging to see that many health stories in the *Post-Courier* from 2007 onwards included the determinants of health, their inclusion developed slowly. An understanding of some health communication theories could help broaden the current scope and content of health reporting in PNG. One theory in particular—Social Change Communication (SCC)—challenges the media to extend coverage of health from primarily a human interest story to one that is linked to social, economic, cultural and political factors. In contrast, Behaviour Change Communication theory (BCC) was found to be less effective because it was limited mainly to promoting the knowledge and skills of individuals without taking into account the wider social and economic contexts. It still however continues to dominate both the clinical and social sciences, and this is where journalists often seek expert views. Both SCC and BCC theories nevertheless challenge journalists to rethink their approach when reporting on health, although SCC can be difficult to implement in socially repressive environments where such stories could threaten the privilege of the status quo.

Papua New Guinean journalist and academic Kingston Namun (2015) analysed the framing of health stories in both the *Post-Courier* and *The National* in January, March and May 2014. He concluded that health stories were framed too narrowly with two main frames—the positive improvement of health services or statements from members of Parliament. He argued that newspapers in PNG need to increase their thematic frames and use wider network of sources when reporting on health issues (Namun, 2015, p. 63).

Many questions, however, remain and a deeper consideration needs to be given to the role of journalism in health promotion/development contexts. For example, how does the media address extremely complex questions like gender inequality and the connections between rising health costs and ecological sustainable development? Also, what are the arguments around news values, styles of media reporting, audience expectation, newsroom practices and newsroom hierarchies that mitigate against this type of reporting? While the media have a significant role to play in informing the public and holding governments to account, a more immediate problem is health fatigue: how can journalists report effectively on diseases that have been around for more than 30 years? After all, readers have been saturated with narratives of infection, suffering and death over several decades. Maybe the decline in health stories in the *Post-Courier* from

2013 onwards is to be expected and follows the pattern American research Anthony Downs identified as the ‘issue-attention cycle’ of interest, peak and decline in media coverage of long-term illnesses such as cancer (Downs, 1972, p. 38).

For now, the most challenging aspect for editors and journalists in PNG and elsewhere, especially where HIV, malaria and diabetes are serious public health threats, is to realise the complexity and interconnectedness of the web of issues linked to these diseases. These connections have important implications for political and financial reporters, editorial page writers, television producers and radio journalists, especially if they want to engage in meaningful coverage of health and its broad ramifications. The author acknowledges that there have been significant improvements in PNG, in the last 30 years, in the coverage and content of health stories.

Conclusion

The aim of this research was to discover, using the Factiva database, how frequently PNG’s *Post-Courier*, the largest selling newspaper in the Pacific, covered prominent health issues namely HIV, malaria and diabetes between 2007 and 2017, and to determine if there was a discernible pattern in the number of articles and content with previous studies on health coverage, namely HIV, from 1987-2007. The findings show there were significant similarities with earlier studies, especially the large number of health stories from 2007-2013, and the consistent emphasis on ‘harmful effects’. This was the top content variable in this study. This could be viewed as placing too much emphasis on the negative aspects of the three diseases— HIV, malaria and diabetes. Yet, a positive development was the inclusion of stories that offered solutions and included the determinants of health. These were ranked second and third in Table 1. There were only glimpses of these two categories in previous studies on health stories, namely HIV, in 2000, 2005, 2007 and 2010. However, there was a significant decline in the number of health stories that peaked in 2013, and then declined steadily.

The author relied on previous interviews with PNG editors and journalists in 2000 and 2005 to determine possible reasons for the gradual decline of coverage. These included the lack of trained health journalists, competing news stories and organisational restraints. Further research should include face-to-face interviews with both PNG editors and journalists to understand, more fully, the reasons for the rise, peak and decline of health stories. While the exact role of the media in reporting health remains unclear—should it be purely informational or include educational elements—much of society’s understanding of these three diseases in a country like PNG and other Pacific countries, comes from the media.

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Mapping the communicative ecology of Latin American migrant women in New Zealand

Abstract: This article is based on a study that focused on the narratives of Latin American migrant women (LAMW) in New Zealand and the role *formal* and *informal communication networks* play in their migration experiences. These networks were both *online* and *offline* and supported by the ethnic media. Informed by a feminist theoretical framework, this qualitative investigation employed the oral history and communicative ecology approaches. This study demonstrated the existing complexity and interrelationship between the communication networks, the feminisation of migration and migrant women's empowerment.

Keywords: communication networks, gender, Latinas, migration, New Zealand

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TODAY women comprise almost half of the world migrant population. However, they are the majority of migrants in Europe, the Americas and Oceania (International Migration Report, 2013). Although migration can be an empowering tool for women, visible and invisible challenges persist including migrant women facing employment opportunities segregated by gender, working below their qualifications and earning lower wages than locals and men.

Communication networks serve as social capital in migration processes, which means wider access to resources and benefits in the micro and macro structures of the sending and host society. Migration networks include 'family and friendship, community practices such as festivals, membership in associations and as "intermediaries" such as labour recruiters, immigration consultants, travel agents, smugglers and other forms' (Boyd, 1989, p. 639).

The goal of this study was to explore what role communication networks play in the migration experience of Latin American migrant women in New Zealand. To answer this, we analysed the narratives of ten migrant women. Communication networks in this case included formal channels like culture and language maintenance groups and informal and personal connections. These networks were both online and offline and supported by the ethnic media.

The study was a qualitative investigation, conducted under the oral history (Sypher, Hummert, & Williams, 2013) and communicative ecology (Hearn & Foth, 2007) approaches and informed by a feminist theoretical framework (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 2010). This meant respectively the collection of their narratives with shared authority and the use of migrant women's voices to understand their self-development in a gendered and multiethnic society. Communicative ecology mapping involved identifying the use of various communication channels and environments and flows of information these migrant women engaged with in New Zealand. In order to map their communicative ecology, methods of focus group discussions, oral history interviews and participatory photography were used.

The data was collected over a period of two months in 2015 in Auckland and the Waikato region and involved ten participants recruited first through organisations for Latin American Migrant Women in New Zealand: Grupo Mamãe Brasileira Aotearoa and Mujeres in Aotearoa. The intention was to recruit participants with different nationalities, social and cultural backgrounds.

Gender and migration

The feminisation of migration has become a significant global phenomenon (ILO, 2014). According to Kofman (2003, p. 2) 'female migrants have participated in a range of globalised movements: labour flows, family reunification, marriage migration, asylum and refugees, and students'. Gender increases the challenge women face as migrants (Kawar, 2003). It also influences their status. The status of women is related to the level of gender equality within sending societies and their families, which includes social beliefs about gender behaviours, access to information and resources (Boyd & Grieco, 2003).

Migrant women's experiences and outcomes in the host country depend on the 'particularities of specific origin and destination countries or regions, their labour market structure, labour force composition and particular migrant groups' (Meares, Bell, & Peace, 2010, p. 70). The majority of the studies have placed Latin American migrant women at the margins of both sending and host societies, sometimes portraying them as 'submissive, subordinate and passive' (Rivera, Nash, & Trlin, 2000, p. 50). Although some Latinas are achieving positions of power and leadership, they can face isolation, emotional pain, self-doubt and non-acceptance among their colleagues (Vasquez & Gomas-Diaz, 2007).

Motherhood and migration can mean more gaps in terms of gender inequality,

as women leave behind their paid jobs and increase their dependency on their husbands or the welfare state (Wu, 2009). Research, however, about gender and ethnic migrant entrepreneurship (Verheijen, Nguyen, & Chin, 2014; Verdaguer, 2009) has shown that more migrant women are becoming business owners and overcoming discrimination and structural challenges in industrialised labour markets. In developed countries, migrant women entrepreneurship can represent autonomy, agency, professionalism and a form to break away from stereotypes of passivity and dependency.

Femininity was also found to be a tool for empowerment among migrant women as shown in Cvajner's study (2011) about hyper-feminine performances of women from the former USSR that worked as caregivers in Italy. The study also identified the importance of the solidarity among women that share the same goals in the recognition of their womanhood. Hyper-feminine attitudes can be linked to third wave feminists' notion that women are diverse and their identities are expressed through 'many colors, ethnicities, nationalities, religions, and cultural backgrounds' (Tong, 2009, p. 285).

In the 2013 New Zealand census, the Latin American residents comprised almost 15,000 people (Statistics New Zealand, 2014).⁽¹⁾ New Zealand has a long history of gendered migration that affects the overall gender balance in the population (Badkar, Callister, Krishnan, Didham, & Bedford, 2007). By 2013, the percentage of female migrants (51.3 percent) made up a little more than male migrants (48.7 percent) (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). However, male migrants continue to have higher rates of employment, work in a skilled job or skill shortage area and earn more from wages and salaries.

New Zealand has a high level of gender equality (United Nations Development Programme, 2015). Thus, as migration influences women's notions of identity, relationships and gender perspectives, migrating to New Zealand can contribute to women having a better understanding of gender equality and work-life balance (Verheijen et al., 2014). This is mainly due to more freedom of lifestyle and welfare security for women (Wei, 2007).

Communication networks and migrant women

Communication networks as social capital are influenced by gender, ethnicity, educational qualifications and personal and professional aspirations (Côté, Jensen, Roth, & Way, 2015). Migrant women's networks serve as tools for learning and developing employment opportunities as well as for individual and collective agency. Embedded in feminist principles of collaboration, nurturance, empowerment, agency and autonomy (Lott, 2007), they also represent social change as women can reformulate and create new paths for gender behaviours in the receiving society. This includes female ethnic role models that inspire other migrant women's self-evaluation and motivation (Kwong, Thompson, Jones-Evans, & Brooksbank, 2009).

The ethnic media a more formal network—contribute to migrants’ achievements in the host society and play an important role, whether maintaining cultural identities or hybridising them, as well as helping in socio-cultural separation or integration in the host country (Noronha and Papoutsaki, 2014). The participation of migrant women in the ethnic media has been growing, taking them to high levels of responsibility and allowing them to change gender representation and portray migrant women as active and subjects of their own stories (Rigoni, 2012).

New technology also enables the maintenance of virtual transnational networks as well as ties within the host country (Nedelcu, 2012). Distant networks of family and friends as well as with co-ethnics in the receiving country can create a sense of solidarity and influence assimilation and integration processes. The internet under feminist lenses (Consalvo & Paasonen, 2002) has shown that women can connect themselves in a more democratic, gender egalitarian and new form of public space, where they promote agency and renegotiate their identities.

Findings and discussion

Five of the participants were Hispanic-Latinas and five Brazilian-Latinas (2)² from six different countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru). They lived in Auckland and Waikato region and were between 21 and 60 years old. Nine of them spoke fluent English and one, intermediate English. Their levels of education varied between level 3 (one), level 7 (seven) and level 8 (two) (NZQA). In terms of occupation, five participants had paid work; four had unpaid or domestic work; and three were students. A brief description of each participant and their respective pseudonym is presented in Figure 1.

The communication networks of the LAMW

The communication networks used by the LAMW who participated in this study were categorised as follows: Formal Networks; Informal Networks; Online and Social Media; Ethnic/Migrant Media. The formal networks represented an organisational or associative structure or served as professional and emotional support. They were divided to Women’s Associations; Organisations or Professionals for Migrant Support; Culture and Language Maintenance; Child Caring and Education; and Business Associations. The informal networks were related to the participants’ connections with their families, friends and community.

The role of the communication networks was found to be related with the capacity of the participants to renegotiate gender values, roles and status as well as to deal with acculturation and maintain their culture and language within their gender perspectives. The role of their communication networks frequently overlapped among each other.

Online (websites) and social media were used by the participants to promote their interests and business, communicate with their family and friends overseas

Figure 1: Participant profiles of Latina women, 2015

<p>Ana</p> <p>Ana is a psychologist from Brazil and has been living in New Zealand since 2009. She is a business owner and married to a South African man. They have one daughter.</p>	<p>Coral</p> <p>Coral is a translator with an MBA from Brazil and has been living in New Zealand since 2002. She is divorced and has three young adults. At the time of this study, Coral worked as Senior Contracts Administrator.</p>
<p>Diana</p> <p>Diana is from Columbia and has been living in New Zealand since 2010. At the time of this study, she was single and worked as student registrar.</p>	<p>Gloria</p> <p>Gloria is a physiotherapist from Chile and moved to New Zealand in 2012. She is married to a New Zealander. They have one daughter.</p>
<p>Julia</p> <p>Julia is from Brazil and has been living in New Zealand for more than 10 years. She is married to a New Zealander, has three children and is involved in parenting and child development.</p>	<p>Lorena</p> <p>Lorena is from Mexico and has been living in New Zealand since 1998. She is divorced and has four children. Lorena works in the community sector.</p>
<p>Mercedes</p> <p>Mercedes is from Columbia and moved to New Zealand as a refugee in 2012. At the time of this study, she had a Chilean partner and one son.</p>	<p>Rosa</p> <p>Rosa is an accountant from Argentina and has been living in New Zealand since 2006. Her husband, a New Zealander, works as a sharemilker on a dairy farm. They have two daughters.</p>
<p>Roxana</p> <p>Roxana is from Peru and moved to New Zealand in 2010. At the time of this study, she was single and worked in the shipping industry. She has a postgraduate diploma.</p>	<p>Vitoria</p> <p>Vitoria is from Brazil and has been living in New Zealand since 2005. She is married to a New Zealander and has two sons. She is the founder of an online Brazilian magazine and organises playgroups in Portuguese.</p>

Source: Luciana Nunes Hoffman and Evangelia Papoutsaki

and connect with the Latin American community or people from other nationalities in New Zealand. The use of ethnic media was relevant mainly for the Brazilian community through its online magazine (*Mundo Brasileiro Aotearoa*). An online newsletter (*Informativo*) was mentioned to be produced by the Spanish cultural group (*Grupo Cultural Hispano-Latino Waikato*).

Renegotiating gender values, roles and status

In this study, a complex interaction was observed between communication networks and the phenomenon of the feminisation of migration, as well as how these networks empowered the participants, leading them to break away from established gender roles. This can be related to their active or passive engagement within their networks; the solidarity of womanhood; their leadership positions

within their ethnic communities and the importance of family and the role of children in their lives as migrant women in New Zealand.

The women in this study commented on their challenges in their pre- and post-migration stages. Some of them mentioned they left behind a life or an unsafe society they were not happy with. Economic migration was not the main cause for the majority of the participants to migrate. Their reasons were mainly related to an increase in the quality of life for themselves and their families.

We decided that we wanted to give our three kids the opportunity to understand that their life could be different. That the values in life and in a society can be different to those they were familiar with in Brazil (Coral).

The feminisation of migration was observed among the participants whose migration was a personal initiative in search of better lives, qualifications and job opportunities. According to Kofman's (2003) definition of globalised movements, some of the participants—Ana, Diana and Vitoria—integrated the labour and study flows of migration. Others were part of the marriage flow (Gloria, Julia, Lorena and Rosa). Roxana integrated the family reunification flow as she migrated to New Zealand to join her mother and sister. Mercedes migrated as a refugee; Coral chose New Zealand for considering this country safer than Brazil. In Ana's case, she was a psychologist that got divorced, quit her job and went to New Zealand to study and find a better job.

On one hand, the findings indicated that the phenomenon of the feminisation of migration was strengthened by ties the participants developed in their migration processes. This meant that friends, women's group or migrant organisations helped them to overcome psychological distress and get a job. On the other hand, the need to establish communication networks in the host society is also a characteristic of gendered patterns in international migration (Curran & Rivero-Fuentes, 2003). Migrant women are more likely to settle permanently because they have more comprehensive networks that provide information and contacts to overcome economic and social barriers (Curran & Rivero-Fuentes, 2003).

This study showed that, even though they are highly skilled, most of the participants faced hardships in entering the New Zealand job market as a result of the lack of English proficiency and local work experience, apart from the limitations imposed by family and parenting tasks. They spoke of how they felt discriminated against and devalued for being migrant and female, and indicated a sense of low self-esteem which led them to positions of underemployment or unemployment at the beginning of their migration process.

The informal networks established by the participants in order to migrate and achieve success in New Zealand were usually linked to people from the same cultural background and those who had similar migration experiences. However, formal networks such as job mentors and programmes offered by migrants'

organisations such as the Waikato Migrant Resource Centre, and the defunct OMEGA (Opportunities for Migrant Employment in Greater Auckland) played the role of validating their professional careers, and that implied a change in their life situations (Ryan, 2007). These formal networks helped them with their curricula vitae and job interviews and created a bridge between those migrants and possible employers or people in a more privileged and established position within the New Zealand society. ‘Having someone in New Zealand who could vouch for me was what changed my situation because it’s always hard when you get your first job here’ (Ana).

It is noteworthy that participants’ professional development was also possible due to New Zealand’s favourable conditions and programmes and initiatives related to immigration, which enabled migrant women to personally and economically thrive in this country.

These findings correlated with the gender and ethnic migrant entrepreneurship research (Verheijen et al., 2014; Verdaguer, 2009) which showed the increasing number of migrant women who became business owners as a way to overcome the discrimination and structural challenges in industrialised labour markets. While formal networks bridged the participants with the host society, their personal ties also helped them to achieve their entrepreneurship goals. Ana, who has a business that brings Latin American students to New Zealand, emphasised the importance of having a business partner from the same gender and ethnic background. She pointed out that their body of employees is basically composed of women from Brazil that were or are students they brought to New Zealand.

The participants found in New Zealand more grounded feminist values and gender equality (Rivera et al., 2000) than the male dominant countries they come from (Wei, 2007).

Because I have a girl, if she was born in Brazil I’d prefer she was a boy. Because when you’re a man in Brazil, you have a lot more options. You’re freer to decide where you go and what you want to do. (...) In New Zealand (...) [women] see themselves as strong as men (Ana).

Because New Zealand has higher levels of gender equality than their countries of origin (United Nations Development Programme, 2015) more mechanisms were available to the participants to defeat socially constructed female oppression and subordination.

Ana’s most significant contribution to migrant women’s empowerment and a break away from established gender roles was the creation of the Brazilian Business women’s meeting (*NZ Brasileiríssimas*) that promotes the businesses of those women and shares their successful histories with other Brazilian women. The experiences of well-settled migrant women have shown to some

participants that overcoming migration challenges can represent social mobility and subsequent renegotiation of their status within the host society (Curran & Rivero-Fuentes, 2003). They served as inspiration as well as enhancing their self-evaluation and motivations. Female ethnic role models (Kwong et al, 2009) had a great impact in this process as those women could resonate more with other women from the same cultural background.

Because they come from more collectivist societies than New Zealand (Hofstede, 2003), the migrant women in this study organised themselves to help, support and inspire each other to direct their professional careers and develop individual and collective agency in the host society. Although traditional male and female roles still persist within their private lives, the majority of the participants engaged, whether more actively or passively, in organisations or group of friends focused on women's issues and interests. New Zealand women are included in these groups, but the connection with women from the same or similar cultural background had the greater impact on their lives as stated above.

The participants expressed the opinion that the bond with their children is the most important one, and directs their networks. Thus, they looked for organisations in New Zealand (e.g. Plunket and Playcentre) that assisted them with their personal and parenting skills, helping them to achieve positive outcomes in their relationships with their children.

It was an eye-opening and I felt better as a mom. My family didn't praise me a lot. It's something they expect from you. I learnt 'awesome, you did it!', how to praise (...) and encourage them (Lorena).

In turn, they also made friendships which increased their sense of self-esteem and integration into the society. It was shown that the ability to make and sustain friendships outside their domestic environments was fundamental if the participants were to rely less on their partners and become more integrated within their communities (Ryan, 2007).

For some participants, ties with women from the same ethnic background meant filling the gap created by not having extended family in New Zealand. 'My friends are my adopted family in NZ. [They] have seen my kids grow so they play a big role in my kids' life' (Lorena). Also, these women share similar values and same language and want to raise their children as bilingual. Two main groups served for this purpose: the Brazilian mother's group (*Grupo Mamãe Brasileira Aotearoa*) and the Hispanic-Latin playgroup (*Manitas*).

Even if motherhood somehow de-skilled the participants in the sense that they left behind their professional careers, some of them found themselves developing other skills instead. Being a stay-at-home mother gave Vitoria the opportunity to become a leader within her ethnic community and to create a network (*Grupo*

Mamãe Brasileira Aotearoa) that supports and empowers mothers from the same ethnic background:

This whole womanhood (...) grew really strong in me after I had my kids. (...) My duty as woman is to understand you as woman and I know that we do have problems and we need to understand each other (Vitoria).

Her practice was shown to be effective in promoting social change by organising Brazilian mothers through the feminist principles of collaboration, nurturance, empowerment, agency and autonomy (Lott, 2007).

Gender and acculturation

In this study, it was found that communication networks influenced acculturation and gender perspectives. If in Latin America women are historically seen as submissive, subordinate and passive (Rivera et al., 2000), in New Zealand the participants encountered a society where they could resist and subvert those deep-rooted gendered power relations. Migrant and/or non-migrant social support networks represented an effective resource to help them with their psychological and socio-cultural adjustment (Berry, 1997).

Some of the women in this study seemed to cope more easily with acculturation and gender role conflicts as they engaged in organisations that gave them migration support and helped them with child care and developing friendships with locals or other migrants. The connection with organisations focused on their children's development represented one of their strategies for assimilation and integration into the host society. It also enabled them to renegotiate gender roles in their private lives by liberating themselves from busy domestic chores and making outside connections. These organisations also helped them to develop leadership skills and, in contrast with their culture of origin, discover more positive approaches for raising their children.

[You learn] how to respond to challenges underneath their learning processes. (...) When they are fighting instead of saying 'give it to him!' you say 'We only have one of this. What are we going to do? We take turns' (Rosa).

The women in this study have shown more agency and participation in both mainstream society and the Latina American community in New Zealand. Even with parenting tasks, some of them manage to study, work from home or organise women's meetings such as *NZ Brasileiríssimas* and *Grupo Mamãe Brasileira Aotearoa*.

On one hand, the informal ties some participants developed with non-Latin American female friends were considered 'an interesting cultural exchange' (Coral) and positive in terms of assimilating and integrating into the New Zealand

society. By comparing their groups of New Zealand and Latina female friends, Vitoria found a stronger sense of sisterhood in New Zealand than in Brazil.

On the other hand, other participants found in ethnic networks the support to overcome migration challenges and acculturative distress and transcend isolation and alienation (Aizpurúa, 2008). Some women said they feel more comfortable joining Latin American-oriented playgroups (*Manitas* and *Mums and Bubs*). The sense of feeling at home in New Zealand facilitated their integration and increased their self-esteem in the host society because of the contact with their native language, traditions and shared understanding about where they come from. However, by only reinforcing ties to their places of origin, these networks seemed to limit opportunities for them to develop ties with the larger society (Curran & Saguy, 2001). 'I feel 100 percent Latin American and I don't feel very close to people from here. (...) Sometimes, I have that no really easy relationship with them' (Diana).

Gender and the relevance of culture and language maintenance

Culture and language maintenance was widely emphasised by the participants as they expressed how much they missed contact with Latin Americans. Sharing their traditions with their co-nationals represented a way to reinforce their sense of identity as well as a buffer to deal with external pressure and increase their self-esteem (Aizpurúa, 2008). One example is the Festival de la Primavera (Spring Festival) organised by the *Grupo Cultural Hispano-Latino* Waikato (GCHLW) of which Lorena is president.

The associations and groups that organise cultural meetings were the most significant in allowing the participants to deal with an identity that is always changing and becoming (Hall, 1994). 'It's not easy to live with a dual identity. You have to be very much in peace with your own identity and the reasons you left your homeland to come here and to adapt, to settle in and to be happy here' (Coral). Understanding and dealing with their 'dual identity' seemed to be a way to participate in the New Zealand society. They found their participation in churches, meet-ups and the community useful to deal with psychological adjustment. However, frequent contact with their family back in their home countries also helped them with any acculturative distress and identity issues they might have faced.

Motherhood and migration may generate greater gaps in gender equality, due to women's decreased participation in paid work and increased dependency on their husbands or the welfare state. However in this study, the participants actively and strategically used their non-dominant cultural resources to succeed in the host society and provide their children with access to various forms of cultural and social capital (Wu, 2009). Culture and language maintenance among the participants' children was found to be a way of empowering themselves as they joined organisations such as Playcentre and Plunket or created playgroups

to raise bilingual children. One example is the Spanish speaking *Manitas* play-group, which was started by Lorena and receives funding from the Ministry of Education.

You're pretty much on your own. Then, you start to connect with people from your own culture as well. That motivates you. You speak more Spanish to your children (Lorena).

It was mainly with their co-ethnic female friends that they developed a more protective and integrative relationship, sharing experiences and overcoming discrimination (Aizpurúa, 2008). Roxana seemed to feel more comfortable and secure going out with her group of Peruvian girlfriends as they all have passed through similar harassment episodes.

It was also proven that re-connection with Latinas after avoiding their ethnic group for a long period also helped them to reconnect with their femininity: 'I had too much of conservative Kiwi already on me. I started putting my big earrings back on, (...) some nice tights. (...). It gave me some confidence as a woman' (Julia). This agrees with the third wave of feminism that acknowledges that women claiming for and recognising their beauty can be a practice of self-expression and empowerment (Wissinger, 2011). This sense of femininity expressed by them seemed to have acquired a different meaning and been enhanced after migration and their communication networks such as women's associations and group of girlfriends. For example, some meetings and community networks would include dance, yoga classes or make up lessons.

As seen above, culture and language maintenance was strengthened through face-to-face or online relationships with friends, family, organisations, women's associations and ethnic community. By contrast, ethnic media seemed not to have a great importance for all of them in this regard. Some participants had heard about the existence of Latin American radio programmes, but did not listen to any. It was observed that ethnic media was more important for the Brazilian community. Using and creating content for the ethnic media was also a way to renegotiate gender roles through leadership within their ethnic community. It represented social activism and an attempt to achieve gender equality by portraying strong and positive images about ethnic women and communities (Rigoni, 2012).

As an extension of the *Grupo Mamãe Brasileira Aotearoa*, Vitoria created the online magazine *Mundo Brasileiro Aotearoa* that was first established to celebrate Brazilian mothers in New Zealand.

We all went through some really hard paths in our lives to be here today and (...) have something to tell. The first magazine we chose a Brazilian midwife. Everybody wanted to read because she's popular (Vitoria).

As the impact of the *Mundo Brasileiro Aotearoa* grew, Vitoria incorporated stories of successful Brazilians in New Zealand and engaged the wider Brazilian community. The magazine plays the role of a support network by preserving the Brazilian cultural identity and promoting Brazilian business in the country through articles and ads. Thus, it represents ethnic and social cohesion and connection. In other ways, the magazine also addresses how Brazilians are positively hybridising themselves and socio-culturally integrating within the mainstream society.

Latin American migrant women and the online and social media

In this study, online media was found to be a significant way for the participants to find or promote information about their interest. Websites served as tools to promote women's meeting, ethnic media and business (*Grupo Mamãe Brasileira Aotearoa*, *Mundo Brasileiro Aotearoa*, *NZBrasileirissimas*, *yepnz.com*). However, social media represented the most important tool for them to build and maintain their transnational networks as well as ties within the host country (Ryan, 2007; Nedelcu, 2012). For some participants, maintaining their emotional ties with their families and home countries proved to be essential in dealing with the physical separation from their familiar networks and to overcome a sense of not belonging to the host society.

Social networking such as Facebook, Twitter and Skype provided a new sense of transnationality among families in terms of emotional support and proximity (Dekker & Engebensen, 2010), as illustrated by Ana, 'It's not of course like being there. At least you're not so left out of their lives.' She even expressed the view that without social media to communicate with her family and friends, migration would be harder and she would feel a sensation of loneliness and isolation.

Transnational networks through social media facilitated and gave new meanings to the participants' migration experience and assimilation and integration processes (Dekker & Engebensen, 2010). They were found to be a way of maintaining their culture and language as well as their ethnic identities and emotional ties also through Latin American social media groups in New Zealand. One example is the Colombian Association NZ, mentioned by Diana that brings Colombians together through Facebook by posting news and organising events such as Sunday lunches in a Colombian Restaurant with traditional live music. Other groups (*Grupo Cultural Hispano Latino Waikato*, *Latinos in New Zealand*, *Peruanos en New Zealand*, *Brasileiros em Nova Zelândia*) also served to exchange practical information such as finding a place to live or buy and sell things.

In accordance with feminist studies about the internet (Consalvo & Paasonen, 2002), the use of online and social media enabled the participants to connect themselves in a more democratic, gender egalitarian and new form of public space. It also developed a sense of solidarity by promoting agency and renegotiating their

identities. By participating in Latin American online women's group (*Mulheres na Nova Zelândia, NZ Brasileiríssimas*), these migrant women found a tool for support and empowerment and a way to undermine gendered power relations (Falicov, 2007).

In women's Facebook groups, for example, the participants felt they can talk about any women's issue and have a voice that is not going to be censured or ridiculed. Some of the participants created groups for discussion and support and are helping other migrant women to settle in New Zealand. 'The Facebook group started because they wanted to know "where is a good place to do waxing?" or "where can I get my medicine?"' (Ana). Some groups are specifically developed for co-ethnic mothers as the *Colo de Mãe*, which is a platform to help and introduce Brazilian mothers and promote traditional events for their children.

Despite this, these women felt they can participate in the New Zealand society by engaging online with mainstreamers through organisations of migrant support or businesses, for example. Some of them still consume media and news from their home countries to keep up to date and feel a connection with their homelands (Nedelcu, 2012) as well as use social media to promote positive images of their ethnic groups. 'I share with my friends because when something is good about Brazil, you need to share' (Ana). Others prefer to be more aware of what is going on in New Zealand, indicating more assimilation and integration within the host society.

Because of their business, they also maintain online connections with their countries of origin, as in Ana's weekly YouTube hangouts with Brazilians about New Zealand and its education opportunities. These women have been creating a bridge between their homelands and the new land. "I believe that this is how things are now, we are in New Zealand but we are able to connect with people in Brazil. It means future, technology, connection" (Ana). Therefore, their agency and autonomy through online and social media are impacting their gender situations as migrant women in New Zealand.

Conclusion

Communication networks are key for migrant women to thrive in the host society. The most important insight from this study was how migrant women renegotiated their gender and migrant identities in New Zealand. By deciding to leave behind what no longer served them – a more patriarchal culture—and keep what is important for them—their femininity and family and collectivist values—the participants were able to organise their networks within a more gender egalitarian and multicultural society. This facilitated their own empowerment as well as the empowerment of other Latin American migrant women in New Zealand.

The feminisation of migration was evidenced as the women of this study

migrated for labour, study, matrimonial, family reunification and safety reasons and created gender based migrant networks to fulfil their needs as migrant women in the host country. This was a proactive and empowering process and led to their formal and informal networks as well as online and social media use. Those networks were meaningful for the participants and their roles frequently overlap. Thus, their communication networks served as emotional, professional and health support, job mentoring, the development of their leadership skills, to set up their own business and to make strong friendships. Also, they played the role of helping them with their parenting challenges as well as maintaining their culture and language within the host society and through contact with their homelands. Some women said that they left behind a sentiment of loneliness, isolation and homesickness for a situation where they are more settled and happier with a home-like feeling.

Notes

1. In the 2013 Census, Statistics New Zealand did not break down the number of Latin American migrants by gender or employment rates. This information was provided through email by the Statistics New Zealand advisor Kathy Kemp.
2. For the purpose of this study, the term Hispanic-Latinas refers to the Latin American women originally from Spanish speaking countries whereas Brazilian-Latinas refers to Latin American women originally from Brazil where they speak Brazilian Portuguese.

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Central Java's assault on media ethics

How the Governor turned watchdogs into pet poodles

Abstract: This study examines the coverage of Indonesia's main newspaper *Suara Merdeka* and *Radar Semarang* (Jawa Pos group) about the Governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo, in 2016, during his mid-term period in leading the province. It highlights how the Governor, who initially removed help for journalists, became a figure that journalists like. The qualitative content analysis of 20 articles that took part in the journalism competition for journalists held by the Public Relations Bureau Regional Secretary of Central Java Province showed that the news stopped at Ganjar Pranowo without trying to find deeper meaning from the field. The news frames used by the newspapers reflected that journalists who are members of the Press Club at the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province were reluctant to be critical toward Ganjar Pranowo. Ganjar Pranowo was portrayed solely in the context of his success in leading Central Java based on assumptions made by journalists. The newspaper is no longer a neutral agent, but is rather tendentious. Unlike in some other countries, in Indonesia's Central Java the press club is not beneficial for the development of democracy and the establishment of journalists.

Keywords: content analysis, democracy, Indonesia, journalists, journalism competition, news coverage, news frames, press clubs

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Introduction

GANJAR PRANOWO was appointed Governor of Central Java on 23 August 2013. Since then, he has shocked various parties. By implementing the principle of '*Mboten Korupsi-Mboten Ngapusi*' ('No Corruption-No Lie'), he broke the establishment of the Central Java Regional Government bureaucracy. He also stopped aid for journalists. Regarding this last move, Isdiyanto said:

Starting from the issue of termination for a number of journalist communities and journalist organisations, including the policy of eliminating 'envelopes' as transport coverage of Central Java Provincial Government

until the arrest of thousands of social assistance for educational and religious institutions also led to polemics. (2016, p. viii)

Of course, Ganjar Pranowo became unpopular. However, he did not care about his popularity. He continued to implement his policies, which he considered to be correct. When he had a chance to explain the reasons behind his attitude, Ganjar said he carried out his policies in order to create a 'clean government'. The reason as described by Isdiyanto was as follows:

The cessation of assistance to the journalist community and the elimination of envelopes was based on the notion that the tradition was not healthy for the professionalism of the press. The deferral of disbursement of social assistance grants is because, after being researched, many are fictitious, marked up, marked down, and deductible. (2016, p. viii)

Presumably Ganjar thought that the explanation could cool down the atmosphere. Apparently he was mistaken. The conflict between him and the journalists became even hotter, as Isdiyanto narrated:

Even hot conflicts and polemics between Ganjar as Governor and various parties are inevitable. There are still many elements that have not fully understood the background of the policy. (2016, p. viii)

However, Ganjar remains unshakeable. He still makes policies in accordance with the values that he believes to be true. Are the policies wrong? If he makes and carries out a wrong policy, it will certainly affect his credibility as governor. If his credibility decreases, actually he is not building his future as governor.

Actually, Ganjar Pranowo does not want to confront journalists. Instead, he wants to develop journalists' optimal potential. In this context, he has held a journalism competition for all journalists who were members of the Press Club of the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province. The competition has been held every year since 2013.

This competition actually co-opted journalists. Journalists no longer dare to criticise Ganjar. Press accountability is even handed over to Ganjar. This situation is happening a lot in Indonesia. Lessons from the case of the Press Club and the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province need to be heeded. From this case, it is possible to formulate how the relations between the press club and the provincial government should be established. If this formula cannot be adopted, the quality of the press will get worse and it will be abandoned by its readers.

This study examines the coverage of Indonesia's main newspaper *Suara Merdeka* and its web edition, *Radars Semarang* (Jawa Pos group), about the Governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo, in 2016, during his halfway period in leading the province.

Literature review

The history of the press club

Journalism history is one of an evolving, developing profession which is always pursuing collective autonomy. Dickinson and Memon argue that:

press clubs were initially conceived as associations in which journalists could establish and strengthen their sense of occupational group membership and assert their collective interests with regard to newspaper owners and publishers. (2012, p. 3)

One of the characteristics of an evolving occupation is the urge to create professional associations of various sorts, and the formation of journalism seems always to entail the establishment of occupational associations and/or trade unions. Krause notes how, by the late nineteenth century, US journalists had developed their own 'forms of sociality' in the shape of press clubs (2011, p. 84). According to Dickinson and Memon, journalists need to form a press club to accommodate their various needs, such as in the case of the Birmingham Press Club, which

having been established (as the Junior Pickwick Club) in 1865, claims to be the oldest in the world, and is a focus for local media award ceremonies, commemorative lunches, and a programme of invited speakers. (2012, p. 3)

In Asia, one of the largest press clubs is the Nippon Kisha Club (Japan National Press Club). It is a non-profit organisation that was established on 1 November 1969. Osamu Asano described the job of the press club as follows:

The club holds press luncheons, press conferences and study sessions on various subjects, inviting prominent foreign and Japanese important news sources figures. It has firmly established its positions and reputation as a site from which state guests, officials and other important visitors to Japan-heads of state, prime ministers and other Cabinet ministers-and their views to the Japanese people and worldwide audiences. (1996, p. 65)

This quote shows that the press club in Japan is autonomous and not on the side of the speaker who spoke. It does not even represent the interests of any political authority.

In Pakistan, the press club system helps journalists to pursue their self-interest. This is a reminder that, to understand news production and journalism and how they are performed and accomplished, it must be acknowledged that they are forms of social organisation that are historically, culturally and socially situated (Dickinson & Memon, 2012).

The press club in Indonesia

The idea of establishing a press club in Indonesia emerged after the New Order era. Regardless of agreeing or not with the idea, President Suharto encouraged and stimulated each ministry to establish a press club. In this case, each ministry assigns a public relations department to prepare various facilities for journalists, starting from offices, computers, fax, drinks and so on. So the reporter covering the ministry is based there every day. They just receive the information conveyed by public relations officers. They feel indebted. Therefore, they are no longer critical of the ministry.

This situation continued until the Reformation Era. Even though the atmosphere has changed, the press club position has been retained. This situation was replicated by all provinces in Indonesia.

With the presence of a press club, the government imagines that news about the results of development carried out by each ministry can immediately reach the public. The press has no difficulty in gathering information about development results. Apparently, there was a negative impact that the government had never imagined. These negative impacts, according to Kuga (2016) include: 1) the press club makes journalists cooperate with each other, even though they work at rival companies (encouraging the final feature) and 2) journalists from different companies sometimes have a brief meeting to check information together at the press club and come to a common understanding.

The reality that occurred at the Press Club of Central Java was not like this. The members of the press club wrote the same stories about Central Java Province, without critically engaging with their information. They framed the news that under the leadership of Ganjar Pranowo, everything was fine in the province of Central Java.

Ideally, the duty of a journalist is to be a watchdog for the community. He/she helps people to see phenomena in more detail. He/she chooses to provide uniform news in order to make the press club happy instead. He/she always puts the truth at the highest position. If this is the case, where is the ideal journalist? Then what is the ideal journalist? What is meant by a great journalist?

The great journalist

According to UNESCO the majority of journalists aim 'to serve society by informing the public, scrutinising the way power is exercised, stimulating democratic debate, and in those ways aiding political, economic, social, and cultural development' (2007, p. 7). In class, student journalists must follow some criteria that lead them to become a great journalist. Knowledge, experience, and skills are important in journalism education, but in practice attitude is also important (Ismail & Ismail, 2017). Ismail and Ismail pointed out that journalism was not only a skill. They stated as follows:

The understanding of journalism is not as a skill but as social, cultural, and philosophical expression, and general education is needed to cover the journalistic aspect of life. (2017, p. 148)

The criteria of a great journalist, according to Abrar, include: 1) being expert in applying the values and mission of journalism; 2) being skilled in writing news that is widely accepted by the public, both quantitatively and qualitatively; 3) having outstanding achievements and work abilities strikingly over a long period of time; 4) having noble ideals about his/her profession and try to achieve these goals; and 5) being proficient in being meaningful to the audience (1997, p. 59). This criteria indicates that the achievement of a great journalist is really because of hard work.

However, when a journalist participates in a journalism competition, there must be a desire to be a winner. A winner is already on the road to becoming a great journalist. The problem is, do the judges use universal criteria about good and true journalism?

Another question is: what are the criteria for universal good news? According to Azi, the universal criteria are the right news for audiences who deliberately choose the press (1992, p. i). That is why press has a target audience of up to three levels, such as the main target, the second goal and the third goal. When all target audiences are satisfied by the news broadcast or publication, it means the news is good.

Then how is the relationship between the media and officials reported? According to Lance Bennett (cited in Abrar, 1997) four criteria apply: 1) is there a tendency to concentrate on the news reported by the officials, not on the issues being reported; 2) is there an impression that the information reported was obtained by

Table 1: News quality assessment sheet

No.	Aspect	Comment	Writing in paragraphs
1	The tendency of the news to be concentrated on the government officials reported was not on the issue being reported.		
2	The impression that the information reported was obtained by journalists in a very easy way.		
3	News that is broadcast contains information that stands alone, not related to similar issues in the past and future.		
4	News coverage stops with officials as resource persons without trying to find a deeper meaning from the unofficial sources.		

journalists in a very simple way; 3) does the news broadcast/publication contain stand alone information; and 4) does the reporting only apply to officials as resource people without trying to find deeper meaning from unofficial sources (Bennett, as cited in Abrar, 1997, p. 23). If the answers to all the questions are yes, then the news broadcast/publication will prioritise the interests of the government official.

This fact teaches us that news is not just a report that was, is and will happen. There is something in the news. Sometimes even the implied meaning is more important than the actual news. That is why audiences are required not only to read the explicit news, but also the implicit writing. In the meantime, the obligation of the media to present news shows that the press must serve the public. As a public servant, the media needs to account for the 'servant'. It has accountability. The problem is how should it carry out its accountability?

According to Abrar, there are at least two things that need to be considered. First, the media need to have an awareness that they are using public space. The public space here should be interpreted as a free and neutral zone, where the dynamics of life take place personally and free from state, market and collectivism. Therefore the media, argues Ashadi Siregar (1985), must imagine the public as individuals who have autonomy and independence (cited in Abrar, 2011, p. xix). The media must not dictate to the public what they have to do. The media must provide a place for public discussion about various public issues. From an emerging consensus, audiences can make sense of their lives.

Second, the media can be a factor in the formation of the mind of the audience. The media can encourage audiences to have the power to respond to state power, especially state policies. The media can also be stimulated to be able to deal with the power of capitalism, especially the economic value it contains. The media can even have a strong position when dealing with the power of communalism (Abrar, 2011, pp. 12-13).

Methodology

Based on the above explanation, the concept of research was compiled consisting of the quality of news and accountability of the media. To assess the quality of the news, the author used the assessment in Table 1.

As for assessing press accountability, the author used the assessment in Table 2.

Referring to the characteristics of the news that supports the above narrative, the author conducted a content analysis of 20 news stories. The author defined the six special characteristics of the message. The author collected news that had been sent by the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province. The news was published between 1 July 2016 and 31 August 2016. The titles of the 20 news items analysed are listed in Table 3.

Actually, all of these news items were filed by participants of the 2016

Table 2: Press accountability assessment sheet

No.	Aspect	Comment	Writing in paragraphs
1	The press seems to have a public space, which is a free and neutral zone, where the dynamics of life take place personally and free from state power, markets and collectivism.		
2	The press can be seen as a factor in the formation of the mind.		

journalism competition held by the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province. The winner, according to *Biro Humas Provinsi Jawa Tengah*-Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province (2016b), can be seen in Figure 1 on page 250. This figure shows that the author is one of the judges in the journalism competition. As a jury, the author delivered the results of the author's assessment to the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province. This assessment (Abrar, 2016) can be seen in Figure 2 on page 251.

There is a striking difference between the contents of Figure 1 and the contents of Figure 2. In Figure 1, the first winner Lis Retno Wibowo, while in Figure 2 he only occupies fifth place. In Figure 1, the second winner is Joko Suroso, while in Figure 2 he occupies sixth place. In Figure 1, the third winner is Wisnu Adi Nugroho, while in Figure 2 he is not ranked. Why is there such a striking difference?

The answer can be seen through the results of the research below. The news theme is 'Half time of Ganjar-Heru leads Central Java'. However, 'participants could specify more specific sub-themes that support the main theme in accordance with the conditions in their respective coverage areas' (*Biro Humas Provinsi Jawa Tengah*-Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province, 2016b). With this kind of provision, news topics would be very diverse.

The concept of research compiled consists of the quality of news and accountability of the press. Articles that have been collected were then analysed by using two criteria: news quality and media accountability.

News quality criteria are: 1) The tendency of the news to be concentrated on the government officials reported was not on the issue being reported; 2) the impression that the information reported was obtained by journalists in a very easy way; 3) news that is broadcast contains information that stands alone; and 4) news coverage stops with officials as resource persons without trying to find a deeper meaning from unofficial sources.

Press accountability criteria are: 1) the media seems to have a public space, which is a free and neutral zone, where the dynamics of life take place personally and free from state power, markets and collectivism and 2) the media can be seen as a factor in the formation of the mind.

Table 3: Press accountability assessment sheet

No.	News title	Posted by
1	<i>Mimpi jalan mulus mulai terwujud</i> (The dream of a smooth street begins to realise)	Sugie Rusyono, <i>Suara Merdeka</i>
2	<i>Bunga hanya 7%, jadi solusi permodalan UMKM</i> (Interest only 7%, becomes a capital solution for MSME)	Andika Parabowo, <i>Koran Sindo Jateng</i>
3	<i>Pengentasan kemiskinan jadi taruhan</i> (Alleviating poverty becomes betting)	Amin Fauzi, <i>Koran Sindo Jateng</i>
4	<i>Sepuluh waktu Ganjar-Heru memimpin Jawa Tengah: menembus Ketidakwajaran</i> (Half-time of Ganjar-Heru leads Central Java: penetrating impropriety)	Joko Suroso, <i>Magelang Ekspres</i>
5	<i>Ciptakan daya tarik hindari kota mati</i> (Create attraction avoid dead cities)	Surya Yuli Purwariyanto, <i>Suara Merdeka</i>
6	<i>Nilai rapor Ganjar 75</i> (Value of Ganjar report card 75)	SN, <i>Wawasan</i>
7	<i>Gotong-royong, kurcurkan kredit murah</i> (Mutual cooperation, offer cheaper credit)	Lis Retno Wibowo, <i>Radarsamarang.com</i>
8	<i>Kartu tani, antara asa dan was-was</i> (Farmers cards, between hope and worry)	Hermiana E Effendi, <i>Antarajateng.com</i>
9	<i>Perlu kebersamaan dalam pengentasan kemiskinan</i> (Need to be together in poverty alleviation)	Wisnu Adhi Nugroho, <i>Antarajateng.com</i>
10	<i>Staf kebengungan saat Ganjar Pranowo memotret sampah</i> (Staff confused when Ganjar Pranowo photographed trash)	M. Nur Huda, <i>Tribun Jateng</i>
11	<i>Sepuluh perjalanan Ganjar-Heru manahkodai Jateng: Pahlawan demi mewujudkan mandiri energi</i> (Half time of Ganjar-Heru leads Central Java: Heroes for the sake of realising energy independent)	Arie Widiartu, <i>Suara Merdeka</i>
12	<i>Kredit mitra, bukti keberanian gubernur sediakan pinjaman murah pada masyarakat</i> (Partner credit, proof of courage governor provides cheap loans to the community)	LAU, <i>Metrojateng.com</i>
13	<i>"Jateng gayeng" wujud nyata resistensi Jawa Tengah</i> ("Central Java delights" the real form of Central Java resistance)	Bambang Isti, <i>Suara Merdeka</i>
14	<i>Kisruh pabrik semen menunggu kebijakan "sakti" Ganjar</i> (Chaotic cement factory awaits Ganjar's "magic" policy)	Nazar Nurdin, <i>Kompas.com</i>
15	<i>Mendongkrak produktivitas warga Karimunjawa</i> (Boosting productivity of Karimunjawa residents)	Zakki Amali, <i>Serat.id</i>
16	<i>Milyaran dana mangkrak di koperasi bermasalah korban terpuruk dan sengsara</i> (Billions of stalled funds in troubled cooperatives damaged and miserable victim)	Budiyono, <i>Kilas Fakta</i>
17	<i>Berharap Jawa Tengah makin gayeng</i> (Hoping Central Java to be more colorful)	Eko Susanto, <i>Sindo Jateng</i>
18	<i>Menggali potensi desa untuk mengentaskan kemiskinan</i> (Exploring the potential of villages to eradicate poverty)	Puji Purwanto, <i>SuaraMerdeka.com</i>
19	<i>Lepas dari jerat rentenir, kembali percaya pada Bank</i> (Free from creditor trap, back to trust in the Bank)	Ajie Mahendra, <i>Jawa Pos Radar Semarang</i>
20	<i>Lebih banyak introspeksi</i> (More introspection)	GPE, <i>Tribunjateng.com</i>

**Winners of 2016 Journalistic Competition of
Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province
Theme: Half time of Ganjar-Heru leads Central Java**

On this day, Monday, the third of October of 2016, a journalistic competition for written journalists (print and online) has been conducted, which was held by the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province, with the theme 'Half Time of Ganjar—Heru Leads Central Java', located in the Meeting Room of the Regional Secretariat of the Central Java Province, Building A 11th Floor, Office of the Governor of Central Java, with juries: (i) Amir Machmud, (ii) Ana Nadhya Abrar, and Sunaryo. The aspects assessed: (i) objectivity and balance, (ii) depth and completeness, (iii) accuracy, and (iv) how to deliver the news.

The juries agreed that there were three winners of the competition. They were: Lis Retno Wibowo from *Jawa Pos Radar Semarang* as the first winner, Joko Suroso from *Magelang Ekspres* as the second winner, and Wisnu Adhi Nugroho from *antarajateng.com* as the third winner

Figure 1: Winners of the Central Java PR journalism competition, 2016.

Results and discussion

Results:

1. News concentration:

The result shows that only 6 news items (30 percent) concentrated on the issue. While the rest (70 percent) concentrated on government officials. This shows that journalists are still focused on the speech of officials. They are not interested in reporting issues.

2. How to get facts:

Following the data on the concentration of the news above, it appeared that journalists got the facts easily, by interviewing government officials reported. The number of news included in this group reached 14 news items (70 percent). The rest, as many as 6 items (30 percent) obtained facts by conducting coverage in the field.

3. Position information in the news:

Most of the news (13 items—65 percent) contains stand-alone information. It is not related to similar issues in the past and present. Only seven news items (35 percent) contain information related to the past and present. This shows that journalists are not interested in delivering comprehensive information. What are the consequences? Audience is not helped to understand the current connection with past events. They also cannot imagine the present connection with

Reading news about Half time of Ganjar-Heru leads Central Java Province

Quantitatively, the author assessed 20 news items sent by 20 written journalists. From this assessment, he selected six journalists who became the top six, namely: Amin Fauzi (345), Mukhamad Nur Huda (340), Ari Widarto (335), Nazar Nurdin (335), Lis Retno Wibowo (335) and Joko Suroso (335). However, he doubts the judgment, because the format of the news is not the same. There are many hard news items. There are many soft news items. There are also many features. The difficulty level of writing each news item is different, even though he did not consider this level of difficulty.

The interest of the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province to hold a journalistic competition is certainly not just to excite journalists who are in the bureau to write news about Central Java, but also to educate them to write news in accordance with journalism obligations and rights. The first and foremost obligation of journalism, according to Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel in their book, *The Elements of Journalism*, is to serve the truth (2014, p. 12). Starting from this obligation, it emerged that one of the logics of journalism was to check and recheck. So check and recheck become a tool to convince us that the facts gathered are truth.

However, this truth is not included in the criteria that form the basis of the assessment set by the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province.

While the right of journalism is to broadcast/publish news in accordance with the news values that it adhere to. What are these values? First, news items must present facts that answer the 5W + 1H questions (what, who, where, when, why and how). If the facts presented do not answer these five questions, the news cannot be called news.

Second, a news item must fulfill the news values set by the media concerned. As a result, a media will not report news items that do not contain news values.

The fact criteria problem that answers the 5W + 1H question is already represented by depth and completeness. However, about the amount of news values, it has not been included in the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province as the basis for the assessment.

Starting from here, my assessment cannot fully be a picture of the true quality of news journalism about the journey of Half Time of Ganjar-Heru Leads Central Java Province. It can only be a proxy for the quality of journalism. The result, of course, is legal.

With this situation, I leave the final assessment to the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province about who will be the winner of this competition.

*Yogyakarta, 2 October 2016
Ana Nadhya Abra*

Figure 2: Reading the news about 'half time in Central Java', 2016.

the future. Even though this understanding will make it easier for people to put themselves in the changes that have occurred.

4. News coverage stopped at:

Most of the news (14 items—70 percent) stopped at officials as resource persons. The rest, six news items (30 percent) tried to find other sources who were not government officials. Most journalists did not want to find a deeper meaning from the events or ideas reported

5. Relation to free public sphere:

Most of the news (14 items—70 percent) did not include sources other than government officials, especially the Governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo, in the news investigated. Only 6 news items (30 percent) included the opinions of ordinary people in the news reported. This situation, caused by the media that broadcast/publish the news, did not encourage the creation of a free and neutral public space that could show the dynamics of a free life. The resource persons who were government officials dominated the dynamics of life reported.

6. Relation to the formation of rational minded people:

Most of the news (14 items—70 percent) broadcast information sourced from government officials, especially the Governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo. This information dominates the news. Even though there are six news items (30 percent), that broadcast the opinions of ordinary people, that opinion cannot defeat the opinions coming from government officials. When viewed as a whole, the audience still cannot form a rational mindset.

Discussion:

Journalism competition

The journalism competition for journalists who are members of the 2016 Press Club of Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province is the third such competition. The first competition, as documented in the book *Ganjar Controversy*, began in 2014. As a prize, the winning journalists were sent for a trip to Germany. The book then quotes the following Ganjar statement, ‘I have rewards for those who win the competition because they are part of the process of accelerating, motivating, and contributing to the development of Central Java’ (NS, 2016).

This quote shows that Ganjar, in his position as Governor of Central Java, was very appreciative of the role of journalists. For him, journalists helped him build Central Java. Naturally, he then sent journalists who won journalism competitions for a trip to Germany.

However, there are parties who object to Ganjar’s attitude. For example, the Independent Journalists Alliance (AJI) Semarang. NS in the book *Ganjar Controversy* documented this objection in the following:

AJI openly refused to send journalists to Germany. AJI suspects this step as a form of concession to some journalists who are considered to have helped. It is more unfortunate that the objections to Germany are suspected of using public funds. 'The provincial government is not a party that is obliged to provide journalist training, let alone use public funds to go to Germany,' said Rofiuddin, chair of AJI (2016, pp. 176-177).

The quotation above shows that AJI Semarang did not want journalists to be co-opted by the Central Java Provincial Government. AJI Semarang wanted journalists who are members of the Press Club in the Public Relations Bureau of the Central Java Province to remain free and independent. However, Ganjar was unmoved. He still dispatched journalists who were the winners of the journalism competition in the 2014 Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province to go to Germany. NS stated the explanations in Ganjar Controversy as follows:

Responding to the criticism and refusal, the PDI-P politician actually continued to disperse, but with a diplomatic tone he stated that everything was left to journalists. If all journalists declare that they have not departed, then this policy is canceled. (2016, p. 177).

This explanation shows that Ganjar did not care about what would happen to journalists. What is important for him was, all the programmes ran smoothly. Indeed, he never demanded that journalists be a member of the Press Club of the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province to help him build Central Java. However, every journalist in the Press Club tried to write the best news, according to the jury.

For Sunaryo, one of the judges in the journalism competition, holding a journalism contest is the way the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Provincial Government encourages journalists. 'To enlarge the spirit of the winners in covering news about Central Java,' added Sunaryo (Personal communication, October 2, 2016).

The effort to please the journalist was seen in the recognition of the winners of the journalism competition. The first winner, Lis Retno Wibowo, said that he was very happy to be the first winner. He highlighted the idea of openness practiced by Ganjar. He said Ganjar helped encourage information transparency in the Central Java regional government. In this case, Ganjar uses social media to obtain information from the public. Through social media, the community can interact with it. 'Regardless of whether the community complaints will be followed up later or not, the community is happy to be able to communicate with their leaders,' Lis added (Personal communication, March 29, 2019).

The second winner, Joko Suroso, has the same opinion as Lis Retno Wibowo. He said there were many changes in the leadership of Ganjar-Heru, especially the

complaints process that was so easy and fast, it could be through social media. All regional work units are asked to provide easy services, make social media for complaints or provide development information. ‘The people are increasingly facilitated to meet with their leaders. I am satisfied with Ganjar’s performance, Joko added (Personal communication, March 29, 2019).

The third winner, Wisnu Adi Nugroho, also had a similar opinion to the other two reporters above. He said that Ganjar and the ranks had even slept in people’s homes and held discussions to listen to their complaints. Ganjar also made a Whatsapp group and distributed numbers for discussions with the public and journalists. ‘So I am satisfied with the information disclosure that Ganjar has shown,’ Wisnu added (Personal communication, March 30, 2019).

The explanation above shows that the three winners of the journalism competition agreed with Ginanjar’s policy, encouraging information disclosure in Central Java Province. They did not see the results of this openness, whether or not they solved the problems faced by the community. They even feel satisfied with that openness. In this context, they actually praised Ginanjar. With this praise they get the reward—winning the journalism competition

Looking further, it seems not too excessive to state that the journalism competition held by the Central Java provincial public relations bureau has attempted to tame reporters. This conclusion makes sense, because there are conflicts between journalists and Ganjar. This conflict, has actually emerged since Ganjar Pranowo was appointed Governor of Central Java on 23 August 2013. Since then, he has shocked various parties. By implementing the principle of ‘*Mboten Korupsi-Mboten Ngapusi*’ (‘*No Corruption-No Lie*’), he has broken down the establishment of the Central Java Regional Government bureaucracy that he had been requested to serve. He also stopped aid for journalists. Regarding this last factor, Isdiyanto stated:

Starting from the issue of termination for a number of journalist communities and journalist organisations. This included the policy of eliminating ‘envelopes’ as transport coverage of the Central Java Provincial Government and thousands of government social assistance for educational and religious institutions also led to polemics. (Isdiyanto, 2016, p. viii)

The rhetoric of Ganjar

According to Ganjar, his own view is that since becoming Governor he has tried to respect journalists. One way is to remove the reporter’s envelope. He stopped giving out envelopes containing transport money coverage that had been provided by the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province. He decided on this after evaluating the structure, performance and budget execution of the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province. NS documented Ganjar’s comments

about this in the book *Ganjar Controversy*:

I have indeed heard information about giving money. At that time, I saw many journalists coming in and out of the public relations room, so I asked what was this? They answered, 'As usual, sir, take the money out of coverage'. 'Wow, is this true,' asked Ganjar at the time. (2016, p. 141)

Ganjar's comments are, of course, true. Ethically journalists are forbidden to accept bribes. This prohibition is officially written in Article 6 of the Journalism Code of Ethics: Indonesian journalists do not abuse the profession and do not accept bribes.

The interpretation of this article, as documented in the book by Abrar entitled *Governance of Political Journalism* is as follows:

- a. Abusing a profession is any action that takes personal advantage of information obtained while on duty before the information becomes general knowledge.
- b. Bribes are gifts in the form of money, objects or facilities from other parties that affect independence (Abrar, 2015, pp. 92-93)

However, Ganjar's attitude was considered as abuse of journalists. This assessment was recorded by NS in the book *Ganjar Controversy* as follows:

Mentioned, the Governor's statement that had admitted that removal of journalists' envelopes was a form of harassment of the journalist profession. Some accused Ganjar of being influenced by one of the journalist organisations which had been strongly voicing opposition to giving envelopes to journalists, while others suspected revenge by the removal of journalists who supporting one of the governor candidates. However, there are also those who expressed support for the steps that actually glorify the journalist profession (2016, p. 142)

By positioning the journalism competition as an arena to assess the performance of the relations between the Central Java provincial government and journalists, in fact there has been mismanagement. The Provincial Government of Central Java does not educate journalists to be independent and free, but promises prizes for journalists who are considered to be reporting on events or around Central Java that are good in terms of relations between the two parties. Without being directed, journalists will certainly broadcast good news. They will not be eager to broadcast bad news, although the news substance is criticising the government.

Then an absurd condition is created. The press, which has been the watchdog of the government, has been changed to obey the government. The press, said Ade Armando had lost an important political role (2005, p. xi).

In the political sphere, such relations between the press and government, according to Margaretha Selu Kushendrawati invites both things, namely: 1)

abuse of power by the government; and 2) the press is being used as a means to calm the public (2007, p. 86).

Ganjar is indeed consistent with his idea of journalism competitions. Until 2016, he continued to hold such competitions. If this competition continues to be carried out with improvements for the benefit of journalists, of course the results will be good. Ganjar will get high appreciation from journalists and the public.

However, in organising the 2016 journalism competition, important improvements in the elements of news assessment have not been carried out. The results of this research show that the truth and the amount of news values has not been included in the criteria that are the basis of the assessment set by the Public Relations Bureau of the Central Java Province. The main criterion of assessment is the relevance of the news with half time of Ganjar-Heru leads Central Java. Actually, behind this criterion there was the hope that journalists report news about the success of Ganjar-Heru leads Central Java.

It is not surprising if the journalist who is a member of the Press Club of the Public Relations Bureau of the Central Java Province has metamorphosed into a servant of the bureau. This attitude as a servant has been demonstrated by the results of this study.

From a cultural point of view, said Deddy Mulyana, a member of the Press Club of Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province did not want to criticise Ganjar because of the influence of the element of paternalism. 'In addition, the element of collectivism (prioritising groups rather than individuals and maintaining harmony) also plays an important role,' Deddy added (Personal communication, March 25, 2019).

So what does this have in relation to the lives of journalists? Journalists betray their position in society. The position of journalists in society, according to Siregar is to contribute to human civilisation. He said:

Journalism activities contain intellectual activities. They will maintain insights related to civilisation. Therefore, a journalist should be aware that his professional activities contribute more or less to the growth of his community's culture. (1985, p. 9)

Following this fact, it is not exaggerating if the author interprets that the mission of the Journalism Bureau of Public Relations of the Central Java Province is to establish Ganjar as the Governor of Central Java. This mission is reflected in most of the news that participated in the journalism competition. Indeed every news item, said Dahlan Iskan, must have a mission. However, the mission is not to establish government officials, but to educate and motivate the community for good (as cited in Intarto, 2013, p. 126).

Conclusion

It could be assumed that Ganjar Pranowo would be happy to read the news that followed the journalism competition in the 2016 Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province. However, the results of the above research showed that the Press Club had a bad atmosphere. Journalists as press professionals have pawned their freedom in writing news about the Central Java Provincial Government. This attitude hurts the reputation of journalists. Journalists handed over the accountability of news to Central Java provincial officials.

Indeed, the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province never directed journalists who were members of the Press Club to write favourably about the Central Java Provincial Government. However, the existence of a journalism competition which was created as a venue to assess the relationship performance with the Central Java provincial government meant journalists were unconsciously co-opted. The element of paternalism and collectivism also shape the attitude of journalists. They seem to be able to be winners if they write favourable news about Central Java Province. They then compete to write news that is liked by Central Java provincial officials, especially the governor.

Indeed journalists feel happy just following the journalism competition. They even feel that being a winner can actually be a step to please by the Public Relations Bureau of Central Java Province. However, they have actually been trapped making themselves no longer autonomous and free. As a result, the journalists are no longer watchdogs of the Central Java Provincial Government. They have turned into pet poodles.

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Framing statelessness and ‘belonging’

Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh’s *The Daily Star* newspaper

Abstract: Stripped of Myanmar citizenship in 1982 and persecuted for three decades, stateless Rohingya have long found precarious refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh. This study explores the framing of the Rohingya in Bangladesh’s largest circulating English language newspaper *The Daily Star*, to examine how one of the nation’s most prominent newspapers of record framed refugee migration into the country. Analysing two distinct random samples of news stories published on *The Daily Star* website between 1 December 2011–31 November 2012 and 1 August 2017–31 October 2017, this article argues that *The Daily Star*’s press identity, defined through a nationalist frame, failed to successfully deliver human rights-based journalism through a globalist Fourth Estate imperative.

Keywords: Bangladesh, conflict media, Fourth Estate, human rights journalism, Myanmar, refugees, Rohingya

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Introduction

THE ROHINGYA have long been persecuted in Myanmar. Stripped of citizenship in 1982 and discarded as recent interlopers from Chittagong during British colonial occupation, successive Burmese governments have dismissed their historical links to the region and relegated the Rohingya to a purgatory of statelessness.

Their precarious existence in Myanmar’s south-western state of Rakhine became even more tenuous after decades of simmering ethnic tension with government-backed Rakhini Buddhists escalated into communal violence in June 2012. In the past five years alone the Rohingya have faced two distinct waves of violence—the June 2012 clashes and the October 2012 resurgence of violence, sparked by false claims that a Rohingya man had raped and murdered a 27-year-old Rakhini Buddhist woman (International Crisis Group, 2016); and the spread of violence following the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army’s alleged

attack on Myanmar government forces on 9 October 2016 and 25 August 2017.

A large number of Rohingya refugees have migrated into Bangladesh as a direct result of these three decades of persecution. While the actual numbers remain uncertain, in October 2012 the UNHCR reported there were 28,000 Rohingya living in the Nayapara and Kutupalong refugee settlements in Cox's Bazaar, with more than 200,000 others living outside in a 'refugee-like situation' (UNHCR, 2012). Most of these outside refugees had migrated prior to the 2012 violence but had not benefited 'from legal status or documentation' since the Bangladeshi government suspended refugee registration in mid-1992, resulting in 'protection gaps and increased vulnerability'. In April 2013, Human Rights Watch wrote '... violence since June (2012 had) displaced at least 125,000 Rohingya and other Muslims, and a smaller number of Arakanese, to internally displaced person (IDP) camps,' (HRW, 2012, p 6) in Myanmar. Bangladesh's decision to close its border at that time meant few Rohingya were able to seek formal refuge inside Bangladesh.

In August 2018, the UNHCR claimed 723,000 Rohingya had fled to Bangladesh since August 25, 2017 adding to the 307,500 Rohingya refugees already living in Bangladesh (UNHCR, 2018). The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations October 2017 factsheet noted 'over 530,000 Rohingyas have fled across the border into Bangladesh', following the August 2017 violence, adding to 87,000 who had already fled in the initial resumption of violence in October 2016 (European Commission, 2017).

The persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar and their precarious refuge in Bangladesh is a product of socio-political *othering* that has reduced the Rohingya to one of the largest stateless communities in the world, not belonging to either Myanmar or Bangladesh. Their statelessness is best understood through a flawed historicity that views the border between the modern nation states of Bangladesh and Burma as historically enduring.

Based on an understanding of generations of human movement across porous and shifting borders, and the historical ebb-and-flow of religio-cultural identity among heterogeneous peoples of the region, this article posits that seeking refuge in Bangladesh is not only a fundamental human right, but one that is backed by a centuries-long historical precedence. This article also argues that the *othering* of Rohingya refugees frequently observed in Bangladesh's largest circulating English language newspaper *The Daily Star*, cannot be historically validated or defended through the normative rationale of a global Fourth Estate press.

This study looks at coverage of the Rohingya in a very specific space within the Bangladeshi press, namely the county's largest circulating English language newspaper, *The Daily Star*. Considering news media can simultaneously mould public opinion and be a reflection of public opinion, the narrow focus on just one publication is selected to explore how the English-educated elite may be both

influenced by its coverage and how they might otherwise view Rohingya refugees. In doing so, two other significant segments of the Bangladeshi news media are deliberately omitted in this study—the vernacular press, and a small number of Cox’s Bazaar and Rohingya-focused alternative media, such as *coxsbazarvision* and *Rohingya Vision*. While such omission reduces the generalisability of findings to the entirety of the Bangladeshi press, it presents an opportunity for an in-depth discussion of the narrowly defined media space at the core of this investigation.

This study also acknowledges the growing Buddhist-Muslim fault line, with the spread of chauvinistic religio-nationalism in the three Theravada Buddhist countries in the region: Sri Lanka, Thailand and Myanmar; and its coverage in respective local media. While acknowledging the need to further explore the mediatization of this fault-line, both within the respective national spheres and within the transnational space where news media and ideas are shared, such deliberations are also deemed to be beyond the scope of this study, which is positioned outside of the Myanmar news media space, and as such, the political sphere of its Buddhist-Muslim fault line.

Arakan: The people of the frontier state.

The othering of the Rohingya must be understood through the misrepresentation of the nation state as historically enduring sovereign land linked to an unchanging religio-cultural identity, when in fact identities change, boundaries shift and people move. The people and their identity in the Rakhine are no different. It was this understanding of identity as transitional that led to Krishna’s assertion for the ‘need to conceive South Asia as a space marked by highly decentralised nation-states with substantial degrees of provincial or regional autonomy and a pluralist sense of national identity’ (1999, p. xviii).

Separated from central Myanmar by the Arakan mountains, Rakhine, or Arakan as it was formerly known, has long remained the frontier between Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. Kyaw Minn Htin (2011) claims Buddhism had reached early Arakanese kingdoms, especially Dhaññavatī and Vesālī, as early as the fifth century, well before Theravada Buddhism was officially installed as the state religion of the Burmese court during the reign of King Anawrahta (pp. 1044-1077) of the Pagan Dynasty (Schober, 2006, pp. 75-76).

Eaton (1993) notes Islam reached Arakan through Turkic general Muhammad Bakhtiyar’s invasion of north-western Bengal in 1204, but Islamic jurisprudence written by Iranian jurists following the invasion had negotiated between state authority and theological power resulting in a quasi-separation of power—where political and administrative authority was decentralised among numerous regional chiefs, while the symbolic primacy of the caliph in Baghdad was preserved through perceived religious power which was wielded, in reality, by living Sufi ‘saints’. Such decentralisation of authority enabled a complex power dynamic

to form between Indo-Turkish rulers, Sufi saints and Bengali Hindu elite (Eaton, 1993, pp. 22-70) over the next two centuries.

Simultaneous to shifting religio-cultural identity, Pearn (1944) notes ‘politically and historically Arakan was at various times an independent kingdom of some extent and power prior to its conquest in 1784-85 by Bodawpaya, son of Alaungpaya, who founded the last dynasty of kings in Burma proper’. At the height of their power, Arakanese kings occupied parts of Bengal, including Chittagong from 1459 to 1666 (Farzana, 2011; Bhattacharya, 1927). Thus, geographically separated from Burma ‘proper’ by the Arakan mountains, the region developed somewhat separately from Burma—a buffer between ‘East Bengal’ and Burma proper (Krishna, 1999; Liang, 1990).

Such an understanding of history casts doubt over the historical accuracy of purported Burmese dominion over Arakan, especially considering the Burmese empire’s own hold on Arakan was short lived, with the region falling to British rule following the first Anglo-Burmese war (Grundy-Warr & Wong, 1997). The British eventually annexed all of Burma in 1886, when it became the Burma province of the British Indian Raj. However, in the modernist drawing of boundaries at the time of Indian and Burmese independence from the British, Arakan was handed over to Burma—its last invader.

Morshed (2001) notes ‘present-day Bangladesh and Burma have interacted over the centuries and there were well-established trade routes and free movement of peoples before the British era’. This historic process of human movement across the border was further relaxed following the British annexation of Burma, allowing uninterrupted migration from the Indian subcontinent into Burma from 1886 onwards, until Indian independence and partition in 1947, and Burmese independence the following year. Such migration has resulted in both a linguistic-cultural syncretism and the scattering of heterogeneous populations across the Bangladesh-Myanmar border.

What is also clear from this diverse and contested history of the region, and perhaps more germane to the core argument of this paper, is that Chittagong and Cox’s Bazar in present day Bangladesh have long been a safe haven for Arakanese refugees during times of Burmese invasions, and more controversially a place to mobilise counter-offensives against invading Burmese armies. The Cox’s Bazar District itself was named after Hiram Cox, a British officer who organised refuge for more than 200,000 mostly Muslim Arakanese who fled the region following the 1784 Burmese invasion (Haksar, 2009, pp110-111).

While Arakanese kingdoms should not be conflated with the claim of a Rohingya kingdom, nor the manifestations of Arakanese identity with Rohingya nationalist identity, or for that matter historical Arakanese refugees with that of present day Rohingya, it must certainly add credence to the legitimacy of the Rohingya to seek refugee status inside Bangladesh. This understanding

of historical ‘reality’ should then be reflected in the contemporary news media coverage of the Rohingya.

The theoretical underpinning: Agenda-setting and framing

The importance of the news media in interpreting reality is based on the notion of cognitive media effects—the argument that media coverage both influences and is influenced by public opinion. In the case of this research, such an understanding of cognitive media effects underscores how the mediated reality of legitimacy and belonging of Rohingya refugees is constructed by the Bangladeshi press and by extension the Bangladeshi community. The news media in this sense is seen both as a reflection of Bangladeshi social attitudes and a factor influencing future changes in attitude.

Gamson and Modigliani present media coverage and its impact on public opinion and attitude as a system in dynamic equilibrium where one informs and influences the other. They state ‘we do not... argue that changes in media discourse cause changes in public opinion. Each system interacts with the other: media discourse is part of the process by which individuals construct meaning, and public opinion is part of the process by which journalists and other cultural entrepreneurs develop and crystallise meaning in public discourse’ (1989, p. 2).

Theoretical work on agenda setting posits media consumers are more likely to recall news events that receive significant coverage—suggesting the media is able to influence what people think about by selecting some media agendas and not others (Baumgartner & Jones, 2010; McCombs, 1997; Zaller, 1992). McCombs and Shaw (1972) claim news media assigns importance through the processes of news selection, the relative positioning of news and the frequency of coverage provided. Seminal studies on media framing, suggest the news media not only tells “readers what to think about” as posited in agenda setting theory, but they do indeed frame news in such a way so as to influence how readers or their audience think.

Entman (1993) notes that frames are different from agendas, suggesting salience in frames is not achieved through mere repetition. He presents the concept of framing as an active process, arguing that framing essentially involves *selection* and *salience*. Entman notes ‘to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to’ *define problems, diagnose causes* that create the problem, make *moral judgements* by evaluating the causal agents, and *offer remedies* to the problem (Entman, 1993, p. 52). Gitlin notes media frames are ‘largely unspoken and unacknowledged, organise [*sic*] the world both for journalists who report it and, in some important degree, for us who rely on their reports’ (1980, p7). According to frame theory, news frames therefore play a crucial role in both the construction of media frames by news makers, and the subsequent unpacking and

interpreting of news frames by audiences through the application of individual frames (De Vreese, 2005; D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010).

Within that context, this paper focuses on how *The Daily Star*, Bangladesh's largest circulating English language newspaper, framed Rohingya refugees. Considering frames are observable along the entire communication process (de Vreese, 2005; D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010; Gamson & Modigliani, 1987; Scheufele 1999); and that they are socially constructed, (McQuail, 2010) this study attempts to isolate media frames found within the newspaper text to glean prevailing social perceptions of the Rohingya among both the journalists or opinion-writers who construct the news frames and the English-speaking Bangladeshi elite influenced by them.

The study analysed a random sample of 100 news stories published on *The Daily Star* website between 1 December 2011–31 November 2012; and a further 50 reports published between 1 August 2017–31 October 2017. The articles were selected through a site-specific Google search of *The Daily Star* website, and subjected to a detailed qualitative frame analysis to establish manifest and latent frames in the text. The analysis is qualitative and inductive, in that the study is aimed at identifying frames and not merely quantifying its prevalence. As de Ruyter and Scholl (1998) note 'qualitative research does not measure, it provides insight', thus arguing the importance of a qualitative frame analysis in producing insight, whereas a quantitative analysis focused on counting repetition would provide little insight in to the nuanced use of frames and their positioning within broader social-discourse.

While the observations of a single publication are not universal, it is argued *The Daily Star* as the largest circulating English daily newspaper is central in illuminating the politico-ideological perspectives of Bangladeshi elite. Within the same vein, the detailed inductive study of frames in a singular publication also provides a crucial benchmark for future longitudinal studies on multiple English and vernacular press reports.

Framing the Rohingya: Identity, legitimacy and belonging

On 5 December 2012, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina arrived in Myanmar on a three-day official visit—the first Bangladeshi Prime Minister to visit neighbouring Myanmar in eight years. The visit was an attempt to foster a relationship with the new Burmese government, and its reformist President Thein Sein, after decades of military rule and isolation. Notable on the agenda was the thorny issue of repatriating Burmese Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh. '...[R]epatriation of Rohingya refugees, energy cooperation, maritime dispute, trade and connectivity is high on the agenda,' *The Daily Star* reported.

During this optimistic era of renewed bilateral ties, *The Daily Star's* 'othering' of the Rohingya emerged through three fundamental frame sets:

// the Rohingya as an impediment to Bangladeshi prosperity

// Rohingya as victims

// intruders of Bangladeshi sovereignty

The Rohingya as an impediment to Bangladeshi prosperity

The Rohingya discourse in *The Daily Star* during the time period analysed, was framed within Bangladesh's renewed relations with the new Myanmar government, and the otherness of the Rohingya is manifest this coverage. The inductive analysis of the 'impediment to prosperity' frameset suggests the existence of three subsets;

// the Rohingya as an impediment to Bangladeshi prosperity

/// impediment to economic growth and undeserving of benefiting from it

Because:

///Rohingya as economic migrants

///charity as limited by availability of economic surplus

Impediment to economic growth and undeserving of benefiting from it: The framing of the Rohingya as an impediment to economic growth and undeserving of benefiting from such growth appears as two interrelated frames in the newspaper narrative.

'Bangladesh's future development hinges on some critical projects in Chittagong and the hill tracts areas, such as the Chittagong port, special economic zones and deep-sea ports, which are very close to Myanmar,' the newspaper wrote on 21 September 2017, citing a report produced by a Dhaka-based think-tank. It quoted the report as saying, 'A possible conflict with Myanmar can hamper Bangladesh's efforts for integration with Southeast Asian countries.' (*The Daily Star*; September 21, 2017). The narrative, while embracing regional co-operation, views the Rohingya as a barrier preventing Bangladeshi citizens from reaping economic benefits, which then justifies excluding Rohingya refugees from the benefits of growth.

Bangladesh-Myanmar relations are framed in a positive and optimistic light of regional co-operation, portraying a transition from military rule to civilian democracy, and with it and end to a 20-year isolationist policy. The transition is presented as positive in that it opens up the possibility of greater co-operation between Bangladesh and Myanmar, paving the way for 'energy cooperation... trade and connectivity' (*The Daily Star*, December 5, 2011, p. 1); and geographical connectivity though "direct road and air links between the two countries" (*The Daily Star*, December 3, 2011).

The Rohingya are framed as a 'problem' with a single solution—repatriation to Myanmar. The coverage however, is not explicit on how the Rohingya

act as an impediment to Bangladeshi prosperity, but it is implicit in presenting the Rohingya as undeserving of any potential bounty. Within the context of Entman's view of frames offering moral justification, this alienation is justified though another complementary frame that views them as economic migrants.

Rohingya as economic migrants: 'The Rakhine state of Myanmar, which borders Cox's Bazar, is a poverty-prone area of Myanmar. This fact forces the Rohingyas to migrate to Bangladesh for economic reasons. This continuous intrusion of Rohingyas has an alarming impact on socio-economic equilibrium of Cox's Bazar, but this fact is overlooked due to the longstanding issue of oppression on Rohingyas,' *The Daily Star* reported, paradoxically arguing that the Rohingya are both 'genuine' refugees and not (August 9, 2012).

The framing of the Rohingya as economic migrants draws from a higher order meta-frame that views 'economic migration' through a pejorative framework that pits them against more 'deserving refugees' (Samers & Collyer, 2017, p. 13). Such narratives ignore a growing body of literature that presents a cogent argument that views migration beyond a simple dichotomy of genuine refugees and economic migrants (Barcus & Halfacree, 2018). Newspaper frames in this regard tend to conceive economic prosperity through state demarcations and geographic confines. Such readings of the complex nature of migration suggests forced economic migration due to long term poverty, especially when viewed through political and economic marginalisation and persecution, are a valid form of refuge. However, the bifurcation between refugees and economic migrants, and the subsequent delineation of the two as legitimate and illegitimate, attaches a pejorative connotation to the 'economic migrant' label, which is then used to morally justify their mistreatment.

Charity as limited by availability of economic surplus: Framing humanitarian assistance through an economic narrative enables economic rationalisation of neglect and even persecution of refugees. It suggests refugees are entitled to basic needs only once the economic needs of the state and its citizens are fulfilled, thus positioning refugee needs not as a humanitarian need, but as an economic prerogative at the discretion of the state.

'Rohingyas settled in Teknaf and Ukhia *upazilas* (administrative regions), who now number over 600,000, are costing us more than US\$4 million daily to feed and shelter, not counting the other half a million who came earlier,' the newspaper wrote on 30 October 2017. The cost is not sourced and would suggest US\$2,433 per annum, in country with an annual per person GDP of \$1,538. The unsubstantiated figures notwithstanding, such an argument seems justifiable given the reality of Bangladesh's own poverty. Entman asserts one of the functions of frames is to *define problems* (Entman, 1993, p. 52), and this frame, at least on the face of it does exactly that. However, the inherent problem with such thinking is obvious when refugees are viewed as outsiders undeserving of

the economic benefits that are the sole entitlement of citizens. Such thinking is especially problematic considering the Rohingya are not merely foreign nationals seeking refuge in Bangladesh, they are stateless people moving from statelessness to refuge—as such they are entitled neither to Myanmar’s economic wealth nor Bangladesh’s.

A more logical frame in this instance would be to view wealth distribution as a regional issue—within the context of Krishna’s view of Southeast Asia as a ‘space marked by highly decentralised nation-states’ with a ‘pluralist sense of national identity’ (1999).

The Rohingya as victims

The analysis of victim frames was most notably identified by Van Gorp (2005), who presented them in connection with a victim-intruder frame couplet in his research on the coverage of asylum seekers in eight Belgian newspapers. As observed in Van Gorp’s study there was significant crossover between the two frame sets, more so in *The Daily Star* than in Van Gorp’s study.

While this article draws upon Van Gorp’s seminal work on the victim-intruder frame, it does not attempt to quantify the frame sets in *The Daily Star* coverage. Instead it focuses on presenting an inductive analysis of a sub-set of frames under the victim frame, to further understand how this family of frames *define problems and diagnose causes, make moral judgments and offer remedies.*

// Rohingya as victims

/// alleging victimisation

/// generalisation of victimisation to all Muslims

/// shifting victimisation solely to Myanmar

/// capacity for humanitarianism as finite

The sub-frames that *define problems and diagnose causes*, either alleged victimisation or shifted blame for victimisation squarely to Myanmar. They also generalised the persecution to all Muslims shifting the focus away from the Rohingya—which was a thornier issue for Bangladesh.

Alleging victimisation: In alleging victimisation, the framing allows for contestation of the Rohingya’s refugee status, which in turn allows Bangladesh to dismiss persecution as an internal matter for Myanmar. ‘To be eligible as a refugee, there must be “well-founded fear of persecution” by the state. The present unrest emanated from an allegedly criminal act on a Buddhist female by some Rohingyas and did not arise from persecution by the authorities. It is considered as a law and order issue for Myanmar,’ barrister Harun Ur Rashid wrote on 20 June 2012 (*The Daily Star*, June 20, 2012). This frame has mellowed over time, especially in the aftermath of the 2016-17 violence.

This is not to say the newspaper was impervious to the humanitarian drama

unfolding along the Bangladeshi border in 2012.

Generalisation of victimisation to all Muslims: Accounts such as those of Rohingya women Rashida Begum and Syeda Khatun were common in the coverage of refugee migration. The paper said the women ‘were found shocked and crying. They said Muslims were being tortured in their localities and they definitely did not want to go back’ (*The Daily Star*, June 12, 2012), suggesting the persecution of Muslims in general rather than explicitly identifying the victims as Rohingya. At times of intense crisis, the framing is clearly sympathetic, but *The Daily Star* generally fell short of its Fourth Estate mandate to scrutinise power by failing to question Bangladesh’s role in the humanitarian crisis though its policy of closing the border and the official channels of refuge in 2012.

Shifting victimisation solely to Myanmar: Shifting responsibility for victimisation also framed refugees as intruders—a population forced to intrude by the actions of the Myanmar regime. A *Daily Star* article on June 11, 2012 reported Bangladeshi police had arrested a number of wounded Myanmar citizens, one of whom told the newspaper’s correspondent he had come to Teknaf in Bangladesh on a fishing boat, after being shot by Myanmar’s border security, the Nasaka forces. The same article simultaneously gave voice to the Bangladeshi border commanders who bragged about the effectiveness of the tougher border security regime which was keeping intruders at bay.

Capacity for humanitarianism as finite: This frame exonerates Bangladesh for having done its best. In this context, there is little ambiguity over the party responsible for victimisation when presenting historic claims of persecution and subsequent refugee migration into Bangladesh. The exodus of more than 200,000 Rohingya in 1978 following the Myanmar army’s operation ‘Dragon King’, and further migration in 1991-1992 are presented without caveats, allowing the newspaper to frame the 2012 refugee crisis within a wider historic framework in which Bangladesh had already fulfilled its humanitarian obligations. The language in this frame included phrases such as ‘Bangladesh had been burdened with the Rohingya’ and ‘influx of Rohingya refugees’ (*The Daily Star*, December 17, 2011) strengthening claims that Bangladesh had carried the ‘burden’ of humanitarian assistance.

Intruders of Bangladeshi sovereignty

After a brief dalliance with a humanitarian frame, by mid-June 2012 *The Daily Star* again shifted to national security and territorial integrity frames, reporting Bangladeshi border guard efforts to barricade against Rohingya refugees. The border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Director General, Major General Anwar Hosain, was quoted saying, ‘The patrolling has been intensified and forces have been made alert... so that the violence in the neighbouring country does not affect border security’ (June 10, 2012).

Unambiguous intruder frames were also employed in the *The Daily Star*, in which Major Shafiqur Rahman, second-in-command of BGB 42 Battalion in Teknaf, said:

As per our informers, Rohingyas on 11 trawlers may attempt to intrude into Bangladesh through Shah Pori Island, Nila, Domdomia and others tonight. We have doubled our forces at these points.

We have already informed our higher authority and we are waiting for instructions on what we will do if such infiltration of Rohingyas occurs. (*The Daily Star*, June 11, 2012)

In using words such as ‘intrude’ and ‘infiltration’ Major Rahman justifies strengthening border security despite the humanitarian crisis. In doing so the newspaper harnesses a number of sub-frames that suggest border sovereignty and integrity is necessary to protect Bangladesh’s reputation and protect its citizens from the social contagion of Rohingya deviance and criminality.

The framing in this context *defines the problem* of striking a balance between strict border control and refugee migration, as one where the interests of the state take precedence over humanitarian obligation, and the moral justification of such a stance is through sub-frames that give precedence to state reputation. In protecting such state interest and reputation, to the exclusion of humanitarian needs the press fail to deliver on its Fourth Estate mandate of scrutiny and accountability.

// intruders of Bangladeshi sovereignty

/// reputational damage to Bangladeshi state identity

/// refugees as a social contagion

/// refugees as threat to law and order and national security

Reputational damage to Bangladeshi state identity: The ‘intrusion’ as a threat to Bangladeshi identity and reputation is manifest in news reports of the Rohingya obtaining fake identification papers including passports.

On 25 July 2012, *The Daily Star* reported ‘More than 6,000 machine readable passports’ had been stolen from the divisional passport office in Agargaon, Dhaka. ‘...Stolen passports might be used by those who were not legally eligible for a passport, such as Rohingya refugees, convicts and people with a criminal track record’. Reportage on fake passports continued over the next few months, often exaggerating Rohingya involvement. While presenting the Rohingya through a criminality frame, the Bangladeshi government trivialised the involvement of its own citizens. Home Minister Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir said the passport theft in Agargaon was due to ‘the negligence of duties of a section of officials’ and there was no reason ‘to be worried about it’ (*The Daily Star*, October 21, 2012).

Rohingya living in Bangladesh without official papers are indeed likely to pay

middlemen for fake documents, but it must be argued that the newspaper has the option of framing the Rohingya as outright criminals or as the desperate clientele of Bangladeshi criminals. The majority of Rohingya, even those recognised as legitimate refugees have no legal refugee documentation and are not eligible to obtain Bangladeshi passports. As stateless people *sans* passports they are unable to obtain travel documents, preventing them from seeking foreign employment abroad while simultaneously unable to secure legitimate employment in Bangladesh or Myanmar, effectively relegating them to continuing cycles of poverty in both countries.

Refugees as a social contagion: ‘The newly arrived Rohingyas are now mingling with the local populace, and unless we control this situation, it will become a serious problem for us in the future,’ *The Daily Star* editorial warned on 6 September 2017. This narrative frame is by no means new. ‘Rohingyas look similar to Bangladesh people living in the southeast and speak in a dialect which is close to that of Bangladesh people on the border. They can easily mingle with the local people,’ a similarly worded *Daily Star* opinion piece noted on 20 June 2012 (Ur Rashid, June 20, 2012).

In claiming ‘unregistered refugees’ are ‘mingling’ with locals, the reports infer such mingling is harmful to the local population, suggesting Bangladesh prefers refugees to be corralled and insulated from the native population. This is a softer framing of what Haynes, Devereux, & Breen (2004) define as a ‘social deviancy’ frame.

This social deviancy or social contagion frame adds a harder edge to stories that would traditionally be covered as ‘tug-at-the-heart-strings’ human-interest articles. In one such example, in a front-page report headlined ‘Illegal stay thru’ [*sic*] dubious means’, published on 10 July 2012, journalist Julfikar Ali Manik wrote;

A group of policemen last month came across a girl at the entrance to Nayapara Rohingya refugee camp... She wanted to enter the camp ‘to meet her sister’. She claimed to be a Bangladeshi, showing her birth certificate. Suspicious, the law enforcers challenged her claims. Faced with questioning, the girl finally admitted to being a Rohingya Muslim living in the area.

The report explores the issue of the Rohingya procuring false documentation including Bangladeshi birth registration for refugee children. The government official who had ‘unwittingly’ registered the aforementioned Rohingya girl’s birth claimed he’d simply made a mistake. Blaming oversight rather than the likelihood of corruption he stated, ‘We don’t know all those who come to us for birth certificates’. Presented as evidence of the Rohingya damaging Bangladesh’s social fabric, the report ignores the difficulties faced by long-term Rohingya refugee children in accessing education and healthcare.

The Rohingya are also disproportionately cited in connection with smuggling

the common Southeast Asian drug *yaba*—a methamphetamine and caffeine-based drug that became popular among the Dhaka elite (Thompson, 2017) around 2006. Yaba seizures by the Department of Narcotic Control have increased from about 810,000 tabs in 2010 to 29 million in 2016. Traditionally, the drug was imported across the border from Myanmar, but more recently as the demand for the drug has grown, a number of yaba factories have emerged in Teknaf, operated by ‘influential locals’ (Chowdhury, 2015). While the Rohingya have certainly been used as drug mules, it is a stretch to assume their migration caused drug smuggling, as the article suggest.

Refugees as a threat to law and order and national security: The front page of the 14 June paper reports on violence spilling into Cox’s Bazar from Myanmar, and includes an image of an armed border guard in military fatigues ‘reinforcing’ security at the Kutupalong Rohingya refugee camps within Cox’s Bazar—which clearly frames the Rohingya as aggressors and a threat to public law and order.

...local administration has beefed up security measures, tension prevails among the people of two Rakhine villages under the upazila and a locality under Teknaf Police Station as they are fearing attack by Rohingya refugees, who are also aggrieved at the loss of their relatives in Myanmar. (Barua, June 14, 2012)

Using Rohingya as scapegoats for wider unrest is most stark in the coverage of a series of protests and violent attacks that swept across the Muslim world in response to a YouTube trailer for a film called *Innocence of Muslims*. On 11 September 2012, members of the Bangladesh Khilafat Andolan group attempted a march on the US Embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh, marking the start of violent outbursts across the country over the following weeks. On 1 October 2012, in a *The Daily Star* report on violence in Ramu and Chittagong, Government Home Minister Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir was quoted as saying ‘The government is aware of the Rohingya link with the violence’. He said as result, law enforcement had been ordered to maintain vigilance in areas housing Rohingya refugee camps. The minister’s claim which conflated the Rohingya with militants, was without evidence, yet went unchallenged in the reportage.

While it is clear the Chittagong violence was a Bangladeshi offshoot of the global Muslim protests, the deliberate placement of blame on the Rohingya, is consistent with the wider narrative of Rohingya criminality and militancy which is at the heart of the newspaper’s coverage. However, it must be noted that a small number of news reports such as *The Daily Star*’s front-page article headlined ‘tearing out the soul’ by Inam Ahmed and Julfikar Ali Manik, from Cox’s Bazar, presented the violence in Ramu as a simple Buddhist-Muslim conflict, without any attempt to portion blame on the Rohingya (October 2, 2012).

Conclusion

There is little doubt the violence and simmering ethnic tension in Rakhine is a complex socio-historical issue with deep roots. But what is clear from the inductive frame analysis of *The Daily Star* coverage is that newspaper reportage steeped in nation-state thinking, where belonging is framed through citizenship, and the confines of that state are presented as undisputed, is ill-equipped at fulfilling its Fourth Estate responsibility to scrutinise power. The three framesets identified in this study—the Rohingya as an impediment to Bangladeshi prosperity; Rohingya as victims and the Rohingya as intruders of Bangladeshi sovereignty—and their parent meta-frame of nation-state dominance, demonstrates how the newspaper struggles to break away from socio-political frames set by the hegemony of the nation-state, thus offering little of the insight, scrutiny or pragmatic objectivity expected of a truly independent Fourth Estate. A Fourth Estate bound by such geographic confines clearly fails to represent the interests of the stateless who by definition fall outside of such a limited nation-centric remit.

The frame analysis of *The Daily Star* suggests the newspaper, at least when it comes to refugee migration, views the twin abstraction of ‘state’ and ‘public’ interest as homogeneous. Such a view is deeply problematic in a global world with a global public, moreso within the context of a global Fourth Estate. In popularising the term global village, Marshall McLuhan wrote ‘today... we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned’ (1964). Perhaps expecting such a shift in thinking from a state-based Fourth Estate to a global Fourth Estate may be somewhat ambitious, but a call for a broader, regional approach to its fourth-estate mandate is not only called for but essential in fulfilling fundamental obligations of the press in scrutinising power and animating democratic social conscience in and delivering a human-rights based journalism.

The limited remit of a nation-centric state-based media, is being countered to some extent by alternative media such as the Malaysian-based Rohingya satellite television channel *Rohingya Vision*. In many ways, the satellite television channel launched in April 2012 along with its online media stable has created a Fourth Estate media sphere dedicated to Rohingya interests outside of the traditional nation state structure. With the exception of a few exploratory studies (Downman & Ubayasiri, 2017; Ma, Pan, Yu, Shi, & Siu 2018) there is little research on the role of such media, offering much scope for future research in this space.

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PHOTOESSAY

Gangsters in Paradise

The Deportees of Tonga

Abstract: This photoessay is based around photographs taken during the making of the documentary *Gangsters in Paradise: The Deportees of Tonga*. As a documentary photographer with a tendency to focus on social issues and subcultures, the author was interested in documenting the lives of deportees in Tonga. Through the film, he hoped to highlight the various complexities of identity, belonging and adaptation in relation to the deportee community of Tonga. More importantly, he wanted to start a conversation in Tonga itself regarding how this growing community can be better supported and understood by the wider Tongan public.

Keywords: deportees, documentary, photojournalism, prison, reintegration, Tonga

TODD M. HENRY

Freelance photojournalist

I first became aware of Tonga's deportee community back in 2011 when I was visiting the islands with my Tongan wife and our one-year-old son. One morning, while at a café in central Nuku'alofa, the barista behind the coffee machine asked me in an American accent, 'where you from?' He had heard my own American accent and was curious as to why I was visiting Tonga. I could easily tell this guy was ethnically Tongan, but his thick West Coast accent, abundance of gang-style tattoos and American style of dress said otherwise. I told him I was originally from Pennsylvania; he introduced himself as 'Ila and told me he was from 'Salt Lake'. We had a quick chat in between his coffee orders and then made plans to meet up in town later.

I went out and eventually found 'Ila after sundown at one of Nuku'alofa's popular night spots that line the city's main street. It was a humid Friday evening and the nightclubs were loud and swollen with people. Over a couple of beers on the upstairs balcony of a bar 'Ila told me about how he was born in Tonga and relocated to Salt Lake City with his family as an infant, only to be deported to the islands as an adult. In the context of the vast United States, Salt Lake City, Utah and Oxford, Pennsylvania are worlds apart, but 'Ila and I formed a connection based on our shared American cultural heritage.

As a young ‘Ila grew up in Salt Lake City, any vague recollections of Tonga disappeared from his memory. ‘Ila and his family had been fully immersed in American society, but a variety of factors let him down and he eventually became involved in the criminal underbelly of Salt Lake City. It was only after he was convicted of a variety of violent crimes that ‘Ila learned of his non-citizen immigration status in the USA, which meant he faced permanent deportation to Tonga after serving his sentence. In his early 20s, ‘Ila found himself back in the now unfamiliar islands of his birth, unable to ever return to his fast-paced life in the United States.

On various other trips to Tonga over the years that followed my initial introduction to ‘Ila, I met several other members of Tonga’s 1000 strong deportee community and I was told some interesting stories of triumph and tragedy that were the results of deportation. For some returnees, Tonga represents a safe haven, a second chance and a lifestyle that would have never been attainable on the streets of Los Angeles, Auckland, or Sydney. For others, the stigma they face as deportees makes life in the islands nothing but an extension of an already-served prison sentence. Being a documentary photographer with a tendency to focus on social issues and subcultures, I was naturally interested in visually recording details of what life is like for deportees in Tonga from an insider’s perspective.

In 2016, I began shooting photos for *Vice New Zealand* on a freelance basis and, as my relationship with them strengthened, I started pitching ideas for stories and features. One of my proposals was to travel to Tonga with a *Vice* journalist to produce a photo essay and written piece about the deportee community for *Vice*’s online platform. Not long after making the initial proposal I received a phone call from Ursula Williams, *Vice*’s head of documentary films, asking if I would approve of my concept being used as the basis for the next *Zealandia* series film. I agreed, and before I knew it, we had secured a crew, equipment, NZ On Air funding, and plane tickets to Tonga. The project would be titled *Gangsters in Paradise—The Deportees of Tonga*.

Once the *Vice* team arrived in Tonga, we began by filming ‘Ila, who opened up with some very confronting and personal elements of his past life in the United States as well as his current life in Tonga since deportation. We also filmed Sione Ngaue—an older, smooth-talking American returnee who resides on the west side of Tongatapu. Both of the Americans were comfortably outspoken and confident in front of the cameras and crew, but filming the Kiwi deportees proved to be a different experience altogether. Talia’uli Prescott was visibly nervous during his first time in front of the cameras and he made some statements that the crew felt did not reflect his true character. The following night I invited Talia’uli to a kava session where he and I had a casual conversation with no cameras present. Through kava we formed a close connection that allowed him to be more at ease the next time we filmed, and he went on to make a great contribution to the

documentary. Sione Moli, who was also deported from New Zealand six years ago had a similar natural tendency to show restraint during our initial filming sessions. However, as he grew more comfortable with our crew, it became apparent that he is a deep thinker who spoke on his personal experiences in a way that was almost poetic.'

The men that were featured in the film are all Tongan citizens, but their behaviours and worldviews have been strongly moulded by the countries from which they were deported. The Americans are clearly more outgoing, while the New Zealanders often display reservation, which is reflective of the general cultural values in those respective countries. Most returnees that I have met over the years cite their primary source of identity as coming from the culture of the host country they were expelled from, but they now have no choice but to adapt to a life in Tonga—a place that is supposed to be home. Some boldly accept their circumstances, while others seem to hold on to an impossible dream of one day getting out.

Through this film, I hoped to highlight the various complexities of identity, belonging, and adaptation in relation to the deportee community of Tonga. More importantly, I wanted to start a conversation in Tonga itself regarding how this growing community could be better supported and understood by the wider Tongan public. Tongan citizens who have lived abroad for many years continue to be deported back into Tonga all the time and unless they are supported properly there will continue to be difficulties, along with the potential for them to turn to crime out of desperation or necessity.

There have been calls in Tonga for the establishment of a deportee reintegration programme to help assist new arrivals in learning the Tongan language, culture, and other intricacies of life in the islands. Many returnees speak fluent English and possess advanced skills in various trades that could help improve economic prosperity in the country, but they must first be fully accepted back into the community as equals. Comprehensive social support and public acceptance will be beneficial not only for those who were deported back to Tonga, but for all of Tongan society.

Note

1. All of the photos and portraits submitted with this article were shot on location during filming for the *Deportees of Tonga: Gangsters in Paradise* film in October 2018. Since its release, the film has been watched by more than five million people on YouTube. It is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72u5q-0R48A>

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- Deportees of Tonga: Gangsters in Paradise*. (2018). Vice Zealandia [Documentary: Producer Ursula Grace, Associate producer Todd Henry, researcher: James Borrowdale]. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72u5q-0R48A>

Todd Henry is a documentary photographer, photojournalist and visual storyteller. He is interested in capturing visual content that examines various aspects of society often taken for granted. In his approach to photography, Henry has a strong focus on the accuracy of the visual representations he creates of individuals, communities, and places. He aims to convey his perspective of the world and appreciation of culture through the lens of his camera and on to those who view his photographs. Henry would like to thank the entire Vice New Zealand crew, NZ On Air and Anau Mesui-Henry.

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TODD M. HENRY



Figure 1. Alimoni, deported from San Francisco, USA. Now living in Nukunuku, Tongatapu.



TODD M. HENRY

Figure 2. Reverend Fili Lilo, Secretary of the National Forum of Church Leaders. While Tonga lacks a comprehensive deportee re-integration and education programme, Reverend Lilo's organisation has been delegated by the Tongan government to provide support for newly arrived returnees.



Figure 3. Sione Falemanu, ex-commissioner of Tonga Prisons. In the film he says he wants western countries to take more responsibility for the people they deport and stop treating Tonga—and Samoa and Fiji—as dumping grounds for people they regard as rubbish. They are, he reminds us, human beings.



TODD M. HENRY

Figure 4. Sione Moli, deported from Christchurch, New Zealand to Tonga in 2013. He now resides in Nukunuku, Tongatapu.



Figure 5. Sione Ngaue, deported from Texas, USA, to Tonga more than a decade ago. He now resides on family land in the village of Nukunuku, Tongatapu.



Figure 6. Tony, deported back to Tonga from San Francisco USA. He now lives in central Nuku'alofa.



Figure 7. 'Ila Mo'unga. He was deported from Salt Lake City for violent crimes related to gang activities.



Figure 8. 'Ila takes a break from tending his garden outside of his home in Kolonga, Tongatapu



Figure 9. Talia'uli Prescott takes a moment to reflect on time he spent in New Zealand's prison system at his makeshift home in Ma'ufanga, Tongatapu.



TODD M. HENRY

Figure 10. 'Aisi', a methamphetamine dealer in Tonga, showcases what he considers to be a high-grade form of methamphetamine that is popular in Tonga. Aisi claims that he can make TP\$5000 selling meth to approximately 200 users on any given Sunday.



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REVIEWS

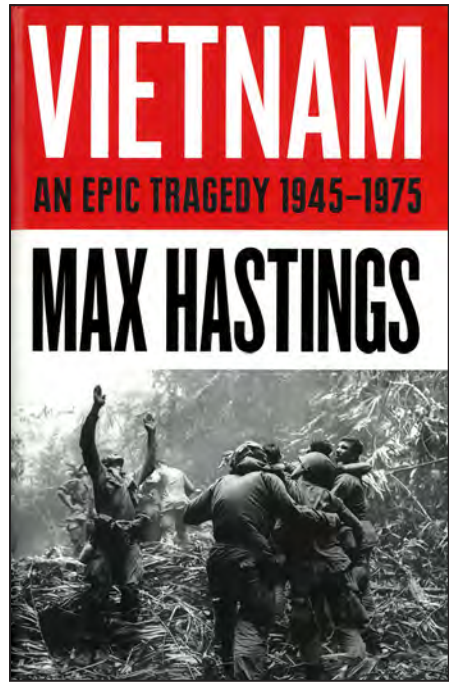
PHILIP CASS is reviews editor of Pacific Journalism Review.

Vietnam War history places correspondent roles in broader setting

Vietnam, by Max Hastings. London: William Collins. 2018. 722 pages. ISBN 978-0-00-813298-9

WHEN SAIGON fell, 44 years ago on 30 April 1975, a number of journalists, photographers and cameramen were there to witness the final humiliation of the United States. Journalist John Pilger and cameraman Neil Davis, both Australians, were there to see the North Vietnamese Army take the city, as was New Zealander Peter Arnett, among others. Pilger's slim volume about those events, *The Last Day*, is a classic. Davis survived Saigon, but filmed his own death while covering an attempted coup in Bangkok in 1987.

Max Hastings was not there to see the North Vietnamese tanks roll into the presidential palace. He held on, he tells us, almost until the last moment when he lost his nerve and 'forced a path through the mob of terrified Vietnamese around the US Embassy and scrambled over its walls... A few hours later I was evacuated in a Jolly Green



Giant to the *USS Midway*' (p. xxi).

Hastings had covered the war on and off for several years, as well as US domestic politics. He was young, ambitious, but a long way, one imagines, from the kind of stoned adventurers who hung around with other wannabe journalists like Sean Flynn. Still, perhaps he was also thinking of himself when he described the journalists in Saigon as 'young, green, pretty bright, fiercely ambitious' young men who fell in love with the romance of it all (p. 133).

Hastings dismisses his own reporting of the war as immature, but says it did at least provide some personal colouring to his description of events in the book.

Since Vietnam, Hastings has made a name for himself as an editor and a

historian, largely of the Second World War. Perhaps it is this last aspect of his career that has gelled with his journalistic experience to make this book such a worthwhile read.

He is able to place the activities of the Vietnam correspondents in a far broader context than it is usually given and, with experience of other conflicts behind him—especially his on-the-ground coverage of the Falklands campaign—of understanding what the war involved on a personal level.

His dissection of the role of correspondents in Vietnam begins with the battle of Ap Bac on January 1963, when an attack by South Vietnamese and US forces on Communist forces ended in confusion, farce and deaths from friendly fire. Senior US military leaders claimed that the VC would soon be destroyed, but journalists who had witnessed the battle knew the truth. They also knew that what was claimed to be a final, great assault on the VC positions was simply a pantomime because by then Communists had withdrawn.

The insistence of the US military leadership on telling lies, its delusional claims and its unwillingness to understand that it was simply propping up a much hated regime and inflicting pain on the very civilians it was supposed to be protecting, became abundantly clear after Ap Bac. Thereafter, despite the best efforts of publications like *Time* to toe the official line, journalists viewed the war with increasing bewilderment, jaundice and disgust.

The story of the Vietnam corres-

pondents is just part of a much wider story that Hastings tells with great skill. For the general reader, the great advantage of this book is that Hastings is not American and so he writes about the war without the conviction of so many American writers that they were the only ones there. He writes about the Australian and New Zealand involvement and makes excellent use of non-Western sources to write about the experience of Soviet troops manning missile batteries in Hanoi and Chinese advisers in the North. He also acknowledges official Vietnamese sources and has found some alternative voices in Vietnamese literature.

Hastings is scathing of those on the right and the left who see the war as having been a one dimensional struggle between good and evil. As Philip Knightley pointed out in *The First Casualty*, American troops committed atrocities so often that nobody bothered to report them. Equally, however, Hastings lambasts those on the left who only wanted to see the Viet Cong as angels and refused to acknowledge the horrors inflicted on southern villagers by VC cadres.

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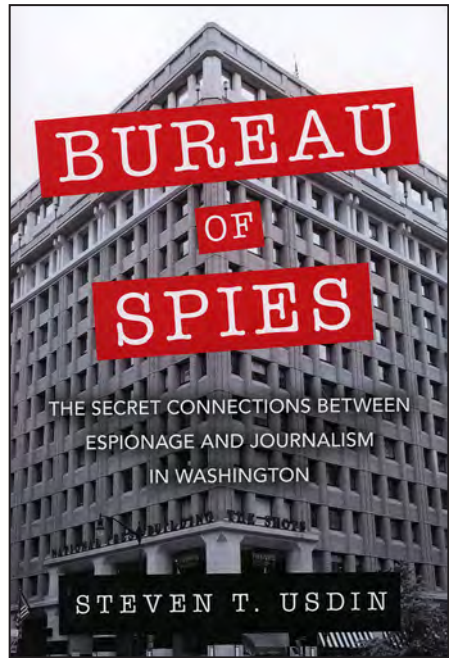
STEVE ELLMERS won the Unitec Dean's Award for Research Excellence for his Master in International Communication thesis on the use of social media by President Duterte's supporters during the Philippine elections.

Riveting National Press Club tales of espionage

Bureau of Spies: The secret connections between espionage and journalism in Washington, by Steven T. Usdin. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books. 2018. 360pp. ISBN 9781633884762.

DON'T be fooled by *Bureau of Spies'* provocative title. Steven Usdin's careful and considered account of how foreign and domestic agitators have manipulated the American media and subverted that country's democracy is thoroughly researched and extremely well written. It contains riveting descriptions of America First's Nazi propaganda efforts as well as the extent of Russian intelligence's attempts to hoodwink US delegates and voters. However, the setting for these seismic events is in the 20th Century rather than the 21st.

Usdin uses the early history of Washington's National Press Club as the backdrop for most of his tales of espionage. He eschews speculation



and confines himself to outing only those individuals whose activities can be corroborated by archival sources. Even so, he admits that much of what occurred during the tumultuous period prior to America's overt participation in the Second World War may remain uncertain. More importantly, he also reminds us that only a tiny percentage of the journalists who called the National Press Building home were anything other than your standard run-of-the-mill hacks.

Those familiar with the encyclopaedic intelligence histories produced by other researchers such as Christopher Andrew may be reluctant to give *Bureau of Spies* the credit it deserves. Yet even though Usdin has not benefited from the official support Andrew has received, Usdin's even-handedness instantly

dispels any doubts about his motives or the quality of his conclusions.

Progressives will be challenged by the number of individuals who for a variety of reasons co-operated with Moscow in order to bring about a left-wing dictatorship in the United States, or to at least discredit American claims of moral leadership. On the other hand, conservatives will be shocked by how some of America's leading plutocrats did more than just fantasise about the benefits of fascism during the 1930s.

Readers will also discover that the most successful foreign influence operation ever to target the American political system—and which employed more media and government sympathisers than all the other plots combined—was British intelligence's efforts to defeat US isolationist candidates during the 1940 presidential election. This is something British scholars have downplayed, but for which Usdin provides extensive evidence.

In its Cold War chapters, this book is on more familiar ground. The contest for media and political advantage between the KGB and the American intelligence community has already received numerous treatments. Nonetheless, it's still gratifying to encounter Usdin's exposure of previous Russian anti-secrecy organisations and activists for the proxies they really were all along.

Bureau of Spies benefits not just from sure-footed analysis; it's also a delight to read because of the author's background as a reporter. His accessible prose and ability to convincingly describe the journalists who created an institution that used to emphasise bourbon and poker over almost all other considerations, makes this text more than just an essential primer on the machinations of another age.

Usdin has arranged a collection of colourful and often despicable characters into a thoughtful tableau. The archives he uses to speak for them are more damning than any of the words they ever penned on behalf of others.

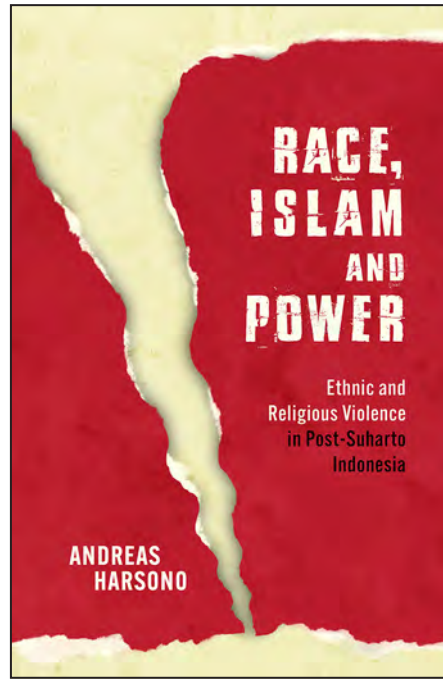
DAVID ROBIE is the Pacific
Journalism Review editor.

How Indonesia's political system has 'failed' minorities like Papuan

Race, Islam and Power: Ethnic and Religious Violence in Post-Suharto Indonesia, by Andreas Harsono. Melbourne: Monash University Publishing. 2019. 288 pages. ISSN 978-1-925835-09-0

THIS PASSIONATE book is something of a cross between an inspired political travelogue, journalistic catalogue of insights into suffering and a cathartic defence of human rights. Published on the eve of the Indonesian national elections on 17 April 2019 and barely a month after the Christchurch mosque massacre, from a Pacific perspective *Race, Islam and Power* is also an impeccably timed analysis of how the centralised political system has failed many of the country's 264 million people—especially minorities and those at the margins, such as in West Papua.

Author Andreas Harsono argues a 'radical change is needed in the mindset of political leaders' and he is not optimistic for such changes after the election, which saw the incumbent, President Joko 'Jokowi' Widodo, secure



a second term. The book is based on 15 years of research and travel as a journalist and human rights defender between Sabang in Aceh in the west and Merauke in West Papua in the east.

Founding President Sukarno used the slogan 'from Sabang to Merauke' when launching a campaign—ultimately successful—to seize West Papua in 1961. However, as Harsono points out, the expression should really be from Rondo Island (an unpopulated islet) to Sota (a remote border post on the Papua New Guinean boundary (p. 197).

Harsono, a former journalist and Human Rights Watch researcher since 2008, argues that Indonesia might have been more successful by creating a federation rather than a highly centralised state controlled from Jakarta. He believes violence in post-Suharto

Indonesia, from Aceh to West Papua, from Kalimantan to the Moluccas, is evidence that ‘Java-centric nationalism is unable to distribute power fairly in an imagined Indonesia’. In fact, ‘It has created unnecessary paranoia and racism among Indonesian migrants in West Papua’ (p. 244).

Papuans simply reacted by ‘saying they’re Melanesians—not Indonesians. They keep questioning the manipulation of the United Nations-sponsored Act of Free Choice in 1969’. Critics and cynics have long dismissed what they see as a deeply flawed process involving only 1,025 voters selected by the Indonesian military as the ‘Act of No Choice’.

Harsono’s criticisms have been borne out by a range of Indonesian activist and watchdog groups, who say the generals behind the primary two presidential contenders are ridden with political interests (Jenderal di balik, 2019). The Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence (Kontras) and the Mining Advocacy Network (JATAM) have repeatedly warned that both presidential candidate tickets—incumbent Widodo and his running mate Ma’ruf Amin as well as rival Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno—have close ties with retired TNI (Indonesian military) generals. These retired officers are beholden to political interests and the prospect of resolving past human rights violations will ‘become increasingly bleak’ even with Widodo’s success.

Kontras noted that nine out of the 27 retired officers who are behind

Widodo and Ma’ruf have a ‘problematic track record on human rights’. ‘Likewise with Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno where there are eight retired officers who were allegedly involved in past cases of HAM violations,’ according to Kontras researcher Rivanlee Anandar.

Prabowo himself, a former special forces commander, is implicated in many human rights abuses. He has been accused of the abduction and torture of 23 pro-democracy activists in the late 1990s and is regarded as having knowledge of the killing of hundreds of civilians in the Santa Cruz massacre in Timor-Leste.

Harsono’s 280-page book, with seven chapters devoted to regions of Indonesia—Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Java, The Moluccas, Lesser Sundar Archipelago (including Timor-Leste) and West Papua—documents an ‘internally complex and riven nation’ with an estimated 90,000 people having been killed in the decade after Suharto’s departure. It lifts the ‘black veil’, as Jakarta academic Musdah Mulia describes it, that cloaks human rights violations and religious and ethnic violence in Indonesia:

In East Timor, President Suharto’s successor B. J. Habibie agreed to have a referendum [on independence]. Indonesia lost and it generated a bloodbath. Habibie’s predecessors, Megawati Sukarnoputri and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, refused to admit [that] the Indonesian military’s occupation, despite a United Nations’ finding, had killed 183,000 people between 1975 and 1999. (p. 244)

Harsono notes how in 1945 Indonesia's 'non-Javanese founders Mohammad Hatta, Sam Ratu Langie and Johannes Latuharhary wanted an Indonesia that was democratic and decentralised. They advocated a federation.' However, Sukarno, Supomo and Mohammad Yamin wanted instead a centralised unitarian state.

Understanding the urgency to fight incoming Dutch troops, Latuharhary accepted Supomo's proposal but suggested the new republic hold a referendum as soon as it became independent. Sukarno agreed but this decision has never been executed. (p. 244)

The establishment of a unitarian state 'naturally created the Centre', argues Harsono. 'Jakarta has been accumulating and controlling political, cultural, educational, economic, informational and ideological power.

'The closer a region to Jakarta, the better it will benefit from the Centre. Java is the closest to the Centre. The further a region is from the Centre, the more neglected it will be. West Papua, Aceh, East Timor and the Moluccas are among those furthest away from Jakarta. (p. 245)

The centralised political system needed a 'long and complex bureaucracy' and this 'naturally created corruption', Harsono explains. 'Indonesia is frequently ranked as the most corrupt country in Asia. Political and Economic Risk Consultancy Ltd listed Indonesia as the most corrupt country in Asia in 2005.'

Harsono also notes how centralised power has helped a religious and ethnic majority that sees itself as 'justified to have privileges and to rule over the minorities'. The author cites the poet Leon Agasta as saying, 'They're the two most dangerous words in Indonesia: Islam and Java.' Muslim majority and Javanese dominance.

Harsono regards the Indonesian government's response to demands for West Papuan 'self-determination' as 'primarily military and repressive: viewing Papuan "separatists" as criminals, traitors and enemies of the Republic of Indonesia'. He describes this policy as a 'recipe for ongoing military operations to search for and destroy Papuan "separatists", a term that could be applied to a large, if not overwhelming, portion of the Papuan population'. He is highly critical of the military and its corrupt conduct.

The Indonesian military, having lost their previous power bases in East Timor and Aceh, ruthlessly maintain their control over West Papua, both as a power base and as considerable source of revenue. The Indonesian military involvement in legal businesses, such as mining and logging, and allegedly, illegal businesses, such as alcohol, prostitution, extortion and wildlife smuggling, provide significant funds for the military as an organisation and also for individual officers. (p. 219)

Andreas Harsono launched his journalism career as a reporter for the Bangkok-based *Nation* and the Kuala Lumpur-based *Star* newspapers. In the

1990s, he helped establish Indonesia's Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI)—then an illegal group under the Suharto regime, but today the most progressive journalists' union in the republic. Harsono was also founder of the Jakarta-based Institute for the Studies on the Free Flow of Information and of the South East Asia Press Alliance (SEAPA).

In a separate emailed interview with me in response to a question about whether there was light at the end of the tunnel, Harsono replied: 'I do not want to sound pessimistic, but visiting dozens of sites of mass violence, seeing survivors and families who lost their loved ones, I just realised that mass killings took place all over Indonesia' (Personal communication, 15 April 2019).

'It's not only about the 1965 massacres—despite them being the biggest of all—but also the Papuans, the Timorese, the Acehnese, the Madurese etc,' he argues. 'Basically all major islands in Indonesia, from Sumatra to Papua, have witnessed huge violence and none of them have been professionally understood. The truth of those mass killings has not been found yet.'

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MEDIA, MAYHEM & HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE PACIFIC

DAVID ROBIE



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PHILIP CASS is reviews editor of Pacific Journalism Review.

Scottish workers' act of solidarity in Chile struggle

Nae Pasaran. Documentary directed by Felipe Bustos Sierra. BBC Scotland/Conejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes/Creative Scotland. 2018. 96 minutes.

IN 1973, the Chilean military, with the encouragement of US President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the collusion of the CIA, overthrew the democratically elected socialist government of Salvador Allende.

In the years that followed, tens of thousands of people were murdered, detained and tortured by the regime, which became increasingly brutal in its repression of opposition. Hundreds of Chileans fled abroad, aided and abetted by foreign governments, trades union and church organisations.

Even the New Zealand Embassy in Santiago briefly—and reluctantly—gave shelter to a Chilean trades union leader before handing him over to Swedish diplomats.

It was an era when any kind of political immorality seemed possible. Two years after the coup, in 1975, Nixon and Kissinger gave Indonesia the go-ahead for the invasion of East Timor. That same year the CIA in Sydney kept in close touch with Governor-



General John Kerr in the lead up to his dismissal of the Whitlam government.

However, this was also a time when workers' unions had the power to take a stand on issues as a sign of international solidarity against oppression. Around the world trades union rallied in solidarity with the workers and ordinary people of Chile.

Nae Pasaran tells the story of one such struggle in Scotland, where workers in the East Kilbride Rolls-Royce plant refused to work on Avon engines from the Hawker Hunter squadrons of the Fuerza Aérea de Chile. East Kilbride was the only place in the world where the Avon engines were maintained.

The Hunters had been used in the attack on the presidential palace in which Allende died and without maintenance they would eventually be grounded.

When the Rolls-Royce workers at East Kilbride realised they were being asked to work on Chilean engines they immediately declared them black. The engines were put into crates and stored outside where they rapidly deteriorated.

Four of the engines were stolen in the middle of the night and subsequently four Hunters were able to fly back to Chile. Claims are raised in the film that the return of the engines was part of a deal to release seven political prisoners, but there is no proof of this and none of the Roll-Royce workers were involved.

This film explores the links between the long running act of solidarity in Scotland and the detainees in Chile. For those detained by the fascist regime in Chile, every act of solidarity was vital as it raised their spirits and put pressure on the junta.

Director Felipe Bustos Sierra has done an astonishing job in bringing the two sides together and showing just how much the Scottish actions meant. It also demonstrates that what was, for the workers, a local action, had major repercussions on the other side of the world.

In 2015 the surviving workers were awarded the Order of Bernardo O'Higgins, Chile's highest award, for their act of solidarity. It's a deeply moving moment and indeed much of this remarkable film will invoke deep emotions as it reveals the suffering of the Chilean people under the fascist Pinochet regime and the determination with which the Rolls-Royce workers maintained their act of solidarity with fellow workers.

Links

The *Standard* website has links to the original 13 minute documentary that was used to raise money for the full length film and to a chapter from *No Truck with the Chilean Junta!: Trade Union Internationalism, Australia and Britain, 1973-1980*.

Nae Pasaran has been screened across the UK and at international film festivals. It was due to be released on DVD in June and can be ordered from the film's official site.

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The Standard <https://thestandard.org.nz/solidarity/>

Nae Pasaran official film website <https://naepasaran.com>

20,000 people lost their lives through the actual fighting between the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) and other armed groups and the Papua New Guinean military, and through deaths from lack of medical treatment and starvation as a result of a military blockade around the island state, a breakthrough was achieved in New Zealand.

Exhausted by the deadlock, the deprivations of the war and 14 failed attempts at negotiating a peace, talks in the bitter cold at Burnham sparked off the long journey for a lasting peace. As former North Solomons provincial government official and peace process officer Robert Tapi recalls:

The silent majority of Bougainvilleans were tired of war and longed to return to normal village life. Women's groups, church groups and chiefs increased the pressure on both the BRA and the PNG-backed Bougainville Transitional Government to negotiate for peace. (Tapi, 2015)

On all sides, the likely cost of victory was proving too high. The moderate revolutionary leaders realised that even if they did 'win', they 'would inherit a hopelessly divided society'.

The first meeting resulted in the Burnham Declaration of July 18, 1997, which urged the leaders to call a ceasefire and for the establishment of an international peacekeeping force with the withdrawal of the PNG Defence Force.

Following the Burnham Truce and the endorsement of a Truce Monitoring Group (TMG) in Cairns in November 1997, a further Burnham meeting in

January 1998 produced the Lincoln Agreement and paved the way for the Ceasefire Agreement in Arawa on April 30, 1998.

The success of the breakthrough in Burnham and the following meetings was thanks to the inclusion of women's groups, churches and local chiefs as well as the political opponents, meeting on neutral territory and with New Zealand not intervening in the talks. Also helpful was then Foreign Minister Don McKinnon's friendly and chatty style with the delegates, which boosted Bougainvillean morale.

Filmmaker Will Watson stepped up to tell the extraordinary New Zealand peacekeeping story firstly with an award-winning 2018 documentary for Māori Television, *Hakas And Guitars*, and now in the 2019 feature film *Soldiers Without Guns*.

He had been monitoring the war and aftermath while he was a journalism student and began to put together a project team in 2005. Ironically, due to funding and other obstacles, it took him 13 years to complete the feature film—longer than the actual war.

A couple of years later, in 2007, he had a film crew on the ground in Bougainville to carry out interviews and gain invaluable footage. His documentary is an inspiring and fitting tribute to the innovative 'guitars, waiata and wahine' approach of the NZ-led peacekeeping force.

By concentrating on a strategy of winning the hearts and minds through hundreds of kilometres of foot slogging treks to villages and communicating

directly and honestly with ordinary people, the soldiers gained the trust of Bougainvilleans from all sides.

It was a courageous and insightful decision by the first mission commander, Brigadier Roger Mortlock, now retired, to go to Bougainville without weapons and guarantee the peace. He had experienced a UN peacekeeping failure in Angola and was determined this mission would succeed.

Another key factor in the success was Major Fiona Cassidy, an Army public relations manager at the time and her ability to communicate in a meaningful way with the Bougainvillean women in what is a matriarchal society.

In an RNZ Pacific interview, she admitted finding the challenge a bit ‘scary’:

When you looked at the country brief, you knew that you were not going into a benign environment. It actually was hostile. So it was a little bit scary thinking, ‘Okay, we’re going to a country which has been at war for so long, it still isn’t stable, and we’re going in unarmed.’

During the start of the Bougainville war, I was head of the journalism programme at the University of Papua New Guinea and reported the first year of the conflict in a cover story for *Pacific Islands Monthly*. As part of this, I revealed how a New Zealand environmental consultancy unwittingly became a catalyst for fuelling the conflict.

I wrote in my 2014 book *Don’t Spoil My Beautiful Face*:

Apart from convoys with soldiers riding shotgun and yellow ochre Bougainville Copper Limited trucks

packed with security forces sporting M16s, you would hardly guess that a guerrilla war was in progress near the Bougainville provincial capital of Arawa. But once you reached the sandbagged machinegun nest in Birempe village at the foot of the rugged mountain jungles of the Crown Prince Range, the tension started to rise.

Scanning the dense vegetation for a sign of the militants of the Bougainville Republican Army (BRA)—known as Rambos in the first year of the decade-long civil war—the Papua New Guinea Defence Force soldier manning the machinegun didn’t notice the irony of the T-shirt he was wearing.

Scrawled across his chest were the words MINE OF TEARS, a word play on the title of Richard West’s 1972 book *River of Tears: The rise of Rio Tinto-Zinc Mining Corporation*. The book was an expose of the mining operations by BCL’s parent company CRA Limited of Australia—a subsidiary of Britain’s Conzinc-Riotinto—and it had already become the “Bible” of the many of the militants.

At the time I was reporting on the fledgling war for a cover story featured by *Pacific Islands Monthly* in its November 1989 edition entitled MINE OF TEARS: BOUGAINVILLE ONE YEAR LATER. No other journalists were on the ground at the time and the only other people staying at the small hotel in the port town of Kieta were soldiers, some cradling guns on their knees when having dinner. The atmosphere was surreal and ghostly in those early days.

The problems of Bougainville cannot be divorced from the rest of the country, or even from the rest of the Pacific. At stake are the crucial issues

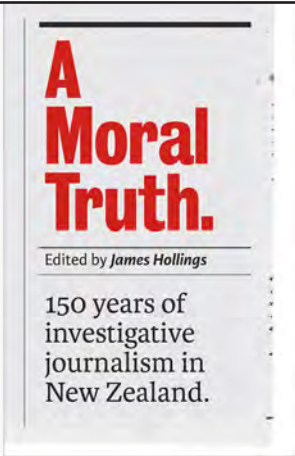
of a conflict between Western concepts of land ownership and indigenous land values, the equity between the national government, provincial administration and the traditional landowners, and a choice between genuine sovereignty over resource development projects or dependence on foreign control. (Robie, 2014)

For those of us who have had some involvement in the Bougainville war bearing witness, Will Watson and his crew deserve huge praise for bringing this story to the big screen and honouring New Zealand's contribution to peace—Australia couldn't have done it with its colonial baggage—and providing hope for Bougainville's future.

With luck, the island will become independent and bring some meaning to all the terrible loss of life and deprivation.

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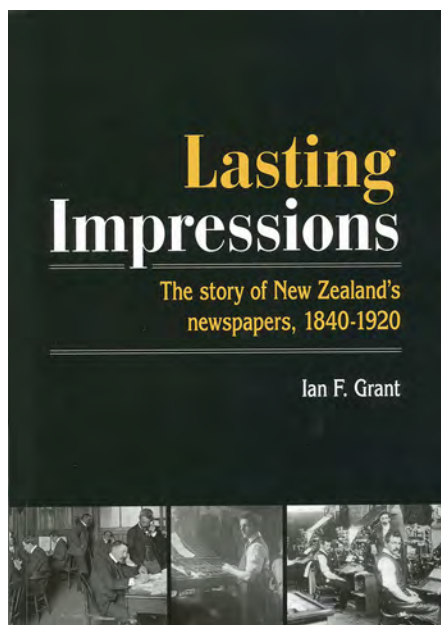
STEVE ELLMERS is winner of the 2019 Unitec Dean's Award for Research.

Māori and Pākehā newspapers vied for audience in colonial New Zealand

Lasting Impressions: The story of New Zealand's newspapers, 1840-1920, by Ian F. Grant. Masterton, New Zealand: Fraser Books, 2018. 676 pages. ISBN 978-0-9941360-4-6

IAN F. GRANT'S *Lasting Impressions* is a magisterial history of New Zealand's early newspapers and is the culmination of many years of research as well as a life-long fascination with this country's print media. The Alexander Turnbull Library's first adjunct scholar has produced more than just the definitive account of how this industry rose and developed between 1840 and 1920; he has also written an enthralling tale of the making of New Zealand.

Grant is not afraid to challenge the stereotypes and assumptions that have clouded the previous scholarship on this era either. His unparalleled archival access and analysis combined with his instincts as an industry insider have allowed him to place what occurred between the birth and subsequent early adulthood of New Zealand's media within their actual context. The geo-



graphical and social isolation of the European settlers shaped the newspapers that arose to serve their needs.

Grant does not dispute that a few of these publications were also used as vehicles for the political aspirations of their proprietors. However, he conclusively shows that the outlets concerned succeeded *despite*, rather than because of, these factors.

The scarcity of essential goods in the new colonies ensured that news of their arrival always took precedence over everything else. In the pre-telegraph age even news from Britain took months to reach our shores. As a result, announcing which merchants had received new shipments meant that advertising comprised the majority of the first newspapers' content.

Even then this was not enough to guarantee their financial viability. Stationary sales and printing to order

were also essential to these early businesses while the small readership with the leisure and inclination to follow international affairs would have to be content with whatever could be reproduced verbatim from the papers the ships carried out from England.

In this environment newspapers were ventures which their owners—like many new migrants—were forced to embark on.

The beginning of mass literacy and the dearth of economic alternatives meant that some entrepreneurs saw them as one of the few ways they could secure a toehold in a distant land and, potentially, their commercial futures. As their success or failure were invariably intertwined with those of the communities they reported on there was an understandable surge of cheerleading.

Yet any personal political stance they adopted could alienate the very readers and advertisers upon whom they were dependant if it didn't represent the general feeling in their individual settlements.

Māori newspapers are also given their rightful place as the voice of the most literate of all indigenous peoples. Grant draws a strong distinction between the Māori-owned publications and those produced in te reo Māori by Pākehā governments, churches, and philanthropists.

During a period dominated by land disputes and conflict between Māori and Pākehā, the papers concerned were engaged in an information war that relied on prose that drew upon the poetic oral traditions of their reader-

ship. However, there is no disguising the existential stakes involved when the very language they were printed in was at risk of disappearing.

By the outbreak of World War One in 1914 *Lasting Impressions* has traversed the most transformative era in New Zealand's history. The familiar Dominion has begun to take shape and the newspaper environment we have come to expect, regardless of its flamboyant failures and remarkable successes, has emerged.

This journey from what the trans-Tasman World initially referred to as Māoriland (it was an especially favoured term of Australia's leading colonial journal, *The Bulletin*) to something utterly unrecognisable a few decades later, is truly a delight to read. Grant has avoided a 'dry as dust' treatment and concentrated on bringing to life the details and impact of a profound communications and social revolution.

His achievement will tower over everything that comes after it well into the second half of this century and it can only be hoped that the author completes his anthology up to the present day—and causes every New Zealand academic and public library to set aside additional shelf space for the companion volume.

Nor do you have to bleed ink in order to add it to your personal collection. If you profess to be a scholar of New Zealand media or even a slightly interested amateur, then owning it is a must.

PHILIP CASS is reviews editor of *Pacific Journalism Review*.

How Fijians served Britain's Army

212 Soldiers for the Queen: Fijians in the British Army 1961-1997, by David Tough. West Geelong, Victoria: Barralier Book. 360 pages. ISBN 978-0-6483552-1-2

WHEN MIKA Vuidravuwalu was asked why he enlisted in the British Army in 1961, he replied: 'Experience, put on the British Army uniform, and fight for the red, white and blue.'

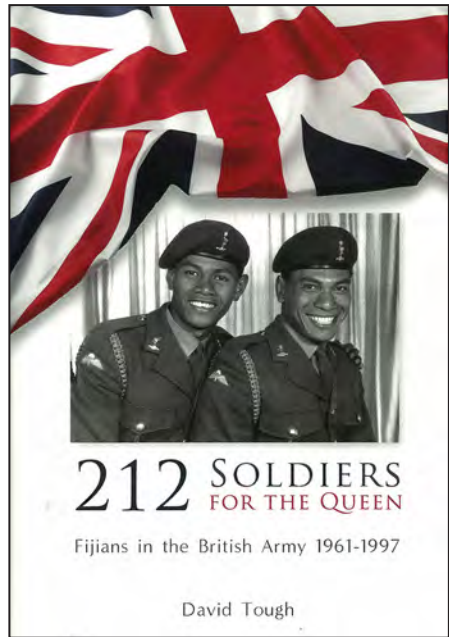
He added that his brother had served with Fijian forces against the Japanese in the Solomons.

Vuidravuwaluwa, one of 212 Fijians who eagerly signed up when the British Army, short of soldiers and specialists, sought recruits from the colonies.

While the British army needed the Fijians, it is a good thing the Fijians were unaware of some of the staggeringly racist attitudes that infected those in power in the UK. It is almost unimaginable today to think of the British worrying about having 'coloured men' in the ranks.

And one is left speechless at a memorandum written by the head of the Women's Royal Army Corps, Brigadier Dame Jean Rivett-Drake, who wrote, in advance of the arrival of a group of women volunteers from Fiji:

I am under the impression that they will be jet black and woolly haired and I feel



most strongly these women will present considerably more problem to us than the coffee coloured Seychellois.

The Fijians proved to be exceptional soldiers, extremely loyal and keen to stay on in the army. Many remained in the UK or Germany and raised families after they were demobbed. Others returned to Fiji and played prominent roles in the development of the Fijian armed forces after independence.

Some, too, played a role in the Rabuka coup which overthrew Fiji's democratically elected government and set the country on the path towards years of instability. Others prospered in businesses large and small.

Tough's book is excellent for invoking the special relationship Fijians believed they had with the United Kingdom, their pride in their traditional role as *bati* (warriors) and the eagerness

of young people everywhere to have adventures and see a wider world.

Books about Fiji's military forces are rare, but this work brings together a fascinating period when Fijians served all over the world under the British flag.

Tough's book has been 20 years in the making and is probably all the better for its slow genesis as he has had time to make connection with many of the survivors of the 212. While he gives a good account of the background to the British recruitment of men from the colonies, the real contribution of this book to Fijian and Pacific history is the personal biographies of the volunteers.

While they fought on the fringes of Britain's contracting empire, other Fijians had some strange adventures. Joe Tuwai and Naiuka Qarau volunteered for an expedition up the Congo in 1974 and found themselves under the command of the eccentric Colonel John Blashford-Snell. Officially the expedition was researching river blindness, but also spent time looking for the Congolese otter shrew.

Some of the men took the opportunity to draw lessons from their service in other part of the empire. Mikaele Yasa, who had studied agriculture in India before joining up, was sent to what was then the South American colony of British Guiana (now Belize) where the British army kept the peace in a country split along communal lines.

As Tough put it: 'Mike identified with all parties to the political turmoil and could see the possibility of similar problems in the future for Fiji.'

Of all the Fijians who joined

the British Army, the best known is Sergeant Talaiasi Labalaba, who was killed during the Battle of Fort Mirbat in southern Oman during the Dhofar rebellion when Marxist guerillas—the Adoo—came across the border from Yemen to try to overthrow the rule of Sultan Qaboos, who had been put in place by the British after they had engineered the overthrow of his father.

Labalaba, should, by most accounts have been awarded the VC for his actions that day. He heroically manned a 25 pounder field gun, which normally required six crew, single handed and held off wave after wave of attacks by the Adoo. Another Fijian soldier, Trooper Sekonaia Takavesi ran to his aid and he and Labalaba were soon firing at point blank range at the attackers.

The rest of the small band of SAS and some Omani and Pakistani soldiers were firing from the small fort behind him and just managed to hold on long enough for strike aircraft from the Sultan of Oman's Air Force to fly down the coast through appalling weather and chase the remaining Adoo away.

Instead of a Victoria Cross, Labalaba—who had already been awarded the British Empire Medal for his bravery in Borneo and Aden was accorded a posthumous mention in despatches. Takavesi was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.

In October 2018, during their visit to Fiji, Prince Harry and Meghan Markle unveiled a statue of Sgt Labalaba in Nadi.

PETER GRACE was a journalist for 36 years and editor of New Zealand Catholic newspaper from 2010-2016.

A possible new path to Māori-Pākehā understanding

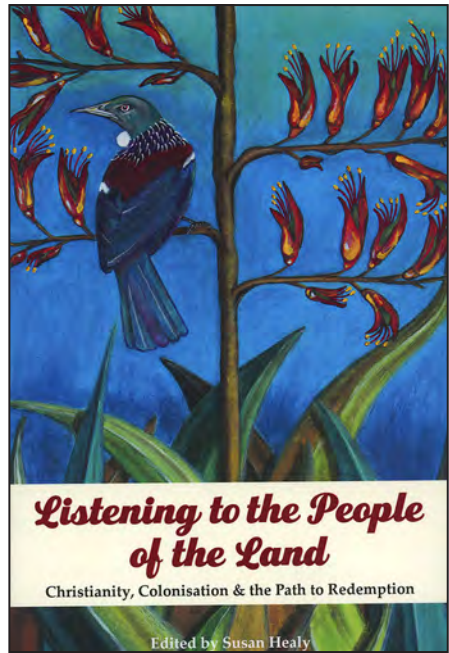
Listening to the People of the Land: Christianity, Colonisation & the Path to Redemption, edited by Susan Healy. Auckland: Pax Christi, Aotearoa New Zealand, 2019, with support from the New Zealand Dominican Sisters. 332 pages. ISBN 978-0-473-45957-4.

Praying for Peace: A Selection of Prayers and Reflections, edited by Kevin McBride. Auckland: Pax Christi, Aotearoa New Zealand, in association with the Pacific Media Centre, 2018. 152 pages. ISBN 978-0-473-43798-5.

THE STRENGTH of the series of essays in *Listening to the People of the Land* is the varying perspectives given on the brutal losses forced on Māori by white and Christian colonisation. In fact, if New Zealand was a truly just society, the teachings here would be a significant part of our school curriculum.

Editor Susan Healy draws the outline in the first 95 pages. Her chapter raises the occasional quibble and sometimes seems to downplay how inextricably interwoven were the settler culture and the Christian church in 1800s New Zealand.

However, as contributor Jen Margaret says later: 'Christianity and colo-



nisation have been intertwined from the outset; they are mutually reinforcing projects.'

Healy traces the mistreatment of Māori, at least in part, to Pope Nicholas V's publication of a papal bull, *Romanus Pontifex*, in 1454, which kick started the Doctrine of Discovery.¹ By today's lights, it is ugly reading, but within less than 100 years, popes, as well as Catholic scholars and leaders, were starting to defend the human rights of indigenous people in documents such as *Sublimus Deus* in 1537.

Healy's description of friendship between Māori and missionary is sad and tragic. For example, despite Samuel Marsden's genuine friendship and insights, he 'betrayed the people of Rangihoua'. It was a betrayal, but it may be that Marsden simply didn't know what he didn't know.

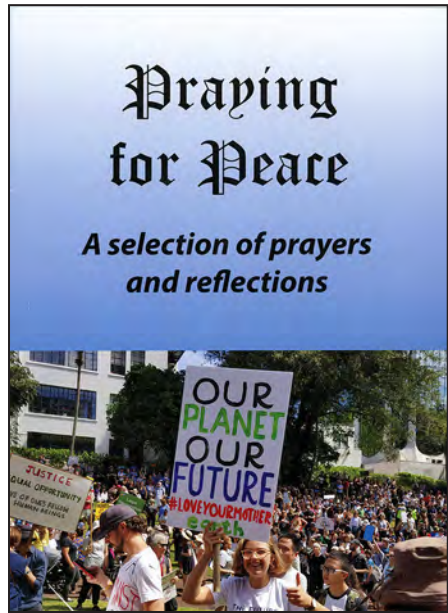
Faith in his own culture blinded him to the magnificent possibilities within a different culture and in that example was contained much of the tragedy of the Māori experience after 1840. Yet not all—for after Te Tiriti o Waitangi, most government administrations acted dishonourably and in bad faith towards Māori, especially by stealing land and taonga.

Land theft effectively destroys the soul of Māori culture. The communal nature of Māori society is based on Papatuanuku (mother earth) and the land. In 1840 Māori owned 100 percent of New Zealand land. About 150 years later they owned a pathetic 4 percent, almost all the rest having been taken from them.

Some Pākehā, mainly missionaries, had insight into the treasure that Māori culture is, and sought to defend it. In the chapter Rethinking Ownership, Healy points out that although evidence to the Waitangi Tribunal painted a picture of a Māori economy in which spirituality, ethics and practice were all geared to the care of people, ‘This is not to suggest that Māori belonged to some sort of saintly society’.

The different strands of the 10 authors are woven together to show how outrageous has been the treatment of Māori over nearly two centuries.

Even today, Māori culture is widely misunderstood, with many non-Māori thinking Māori understanding of and attitude to land, river, sea and forest underlies a primitive, animistic faith. Kennedy Warne quotes Tamati Kruger of Ngai Tuhoe who explains: ‘We are



this land, and we are the face of this land. Wherever those mountains come from, that’s where we come from. Wherever the mist emerges from and disappears to, that’s where we come from.’

That English offers inadequate translations of Māori principles, such as atua, tapu and many others, even utu, is part of the problem. Christians and others of good faith need to go further than seeking inadequate translations and look for deeper understanding of Māori culture.

Māori matters also feature in *Praying for Peace*, another new book from Pax Christi.

Its 35 reflections cover a range of social and environmental justice matters, as well as honouring particular events and people of significance to many New Zealanders.

Seven themes cover Special Days, Peace and Justice Makers, Indigenous

Rights, Justice, Family Welfare, Cultural Minorities and Creation. Generally speaking, each reflection describes the event, person or issue, explains the significance, has questions to provoke insights and includes prayers and a hymn.

All reflections are worthwhile, although several that struck me in particular dealt with Discrimination, Oscar Romero, Hiroshima Day, the 1835 Māori Declaration of Independence, Parihaka, West Papua and the Rohingya people.

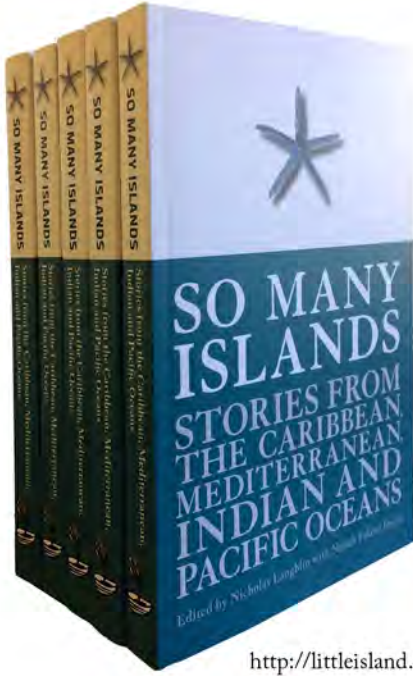
This is a straightforward book which will help those interested mark special days in meaningful ways.

Note

1. As Professor Nick Grier at the University of Idaho puts it: ‘In 1455 Pope Nicholas V exhorted Catholic rulers to conquer, even those “in the remotest parts unknown to us”, all who were enemies of Christ. The Pope gave them permission “to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens [Muslims] and pagans”, take their possessions, and “reduce their persons to perpetual slavery”.’ In the 19th century the doctrine was used by the United States Supreme Court to justify the seizure of Native American land.

Reference

Grier, N. (n.d) The doctrine of discovery and the Christian conquest of the world. Retrieved from <https://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/ngier/discovery.htm>




SO MANY ISLANDS
Stories from the Caribbean,
Mediterranean, Indian and
Pacific Oceans

Edited by Nicholas Laughlin
with Nailah Folami Imoja

So Many Islands brings together stories from the distant shores of the island communities in the Caribbean, Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and Pacific. Giving voice to their challenges and triumphs, these writers paint a vibrant portrait of what it is like to live, love and lose the things most precious to them on the small islands they call home.

#2 on the Unity Books
bestseller chart for the week
ending March 23 2018

<http://littleisland.co.nz/books/so-many-islands>



little island
press

NOTED:

Documentary exposes dark side of Tongan diaspora

Gangsters in Paradise—The Deportees of Tonga. Documentary. 2019. Director: Ursula Williams. *Vice/Zealandia*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=72u5q-0R48A

IT'S LIKE crabs being stuck in a bucket scratching each other to get out.'

'It's like rubbish dumping.'

Those are two views about the crisis facing Tonga as countries like the United States, Australia and New Zealand deport criminals to the kingdom.

The first comes from a deportee who talks about how it feels being sent back to struggle for a living in a country with which he and other former prisoners are often barely familiar.

The other is from Tonga's Commissioner of Prisons, who wants western countries to take more responsibility for the people they deport and stop treating Tonga—and Samoa and Fiji—as dumping grounds for people they regard as rubbish. They are, he reminds us, human beings.

The two views come from a hard hitting documentary, *Gangsters in Paradise - The Deportees of Tonga*.

Made as part of the *Vice/Zealandia* series of documentaries, *Gangsters in Paradise* is not comfortable viewing. It begins with an interview with a



deportee who admits to having been jailed when he was barely out of childhood for shooting another boy four times in the stomach.

While some of the interviewees regard their time in prison as a chance to re-think their lives and gain a different perspective, others have brought nothing but trouble to Tonga. The kingdom is in the midst of a methamphetamine crisis and some deportees have gone back into the drugs trade.

As the film's associate producer, Todd Henry, recounts elsewhere in this edition, *Gangsters in Paradise* was the result of careful planning and lots of patience.

The half hour documentary has been watched by more than five million people since it was uploaded to YouTube and is a brilliant example of how short films can carry a big punch. It also shows how online platforms can reach out to global audiences, especially when they feature a diasporic community like Tonga's, which stretches from Sydney to Salt Lake City.

This is the dark side of Appudurai's ethnoscapes, a reminder that the movement of people can end in dislocation and, sometimes, death.—*PHILIP CASS is reviews editor of Pacific Journalism Review.*

A window into a displaced Pacific community

Banabans of Rabi: A Story of Survival, a documentary by Blessen Tom and Hele Ikimotu. 10 minutes. Pacific Media Centre, Auckland University of Technology: www.youtube.com/user/pacmedcentre

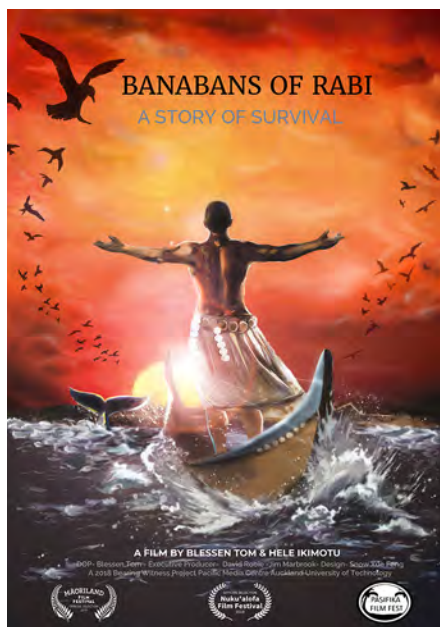
ONE thought in particular is likely to linger in the mind of anyone who watches *Banabans of Rabi*—how can people who have endured such hardship remain so happy?

Produced by Auckland University of Technology students Hele Ikimotu and Blessen Tom as part of the Pacific Media Centre’s 2018 Bearing Witness climate project, the documentary provides a window into the houses of the smiling people whose ancestors were forcibly displaced from their home island of Banaba in the 1940s.

Now part of Kiribati, Banaba was, and still is, rich in phosphate, and the British Phosphate Commission confiscated it after World War II. Over 20 million tonnes were mined from the island, much of it used to fertilise land in New Zealand.

With Banaba rendered uninhabitable, the residents were relocated to Rabi Island in northern Fiji where many of their descendants remain to this day. The narrative captures the lives and histories of these people against the verdant backdrop of tropical Rabi.

While the film is immensely topical through its perspective of community displacement in the Pacific—something that climate change will only exacerbate—it also weaves a deeply personal and intimate element through Ikimotu’s Banaban heritage.



—it also weaves a deeply personal and intimate element through Ikimotu’s Banaban heritage.

His mother was born on Rabi and the film features interviews with her and older relatives who live on the island today. They discuss the early days of integrating into a new home, harvesting copra and the way their village has been changed by rising tides.

‘They definitely had their challenges,’ narrates Ikimotu. ‘And now the Rabi Islanders are faced with a new challenge—climate change.’

Blessen Tom’s stunning shots capture the natural beauty of the island and its people while the spirited singing of the Rabi Islanders plays throughout.

All this effectively captures the essence of a versatile community abounding in wholesome happiness and not easily shaken.

As the narrator concludes:

It warmed my heart to see that they were still happy, despite all the challenges that they have gone through and the new threat of climate change.

The Banabans are survivors.

The documentary premiered at the 2018 Nuku'alofa International Film Festival in Tonga and has also been screened at the Pasifika Film Festival in Salt Lake City, United States. The New Zealand premiere was held at Māoriland Film Festival 2019. It is due to be released on the Pacific Media Centre's YouTube channel later in 2019.—*MICHAEL ANDREW is Pacific Media Watch contributing editor.*

Islanders call for climate change action in new student film

Subject to Change. 2018. Documentary. Director: Wiktoria Ojrzyńska. Massey University/ MFAT: www.youtube.com/watch?v=VupDgO-4kC8

AS TOO many world leaders continue to do too little about climate change, powerful voices continue to call for action.

From Pope Francis to David Attenborough, there are global demands that something be done before it is too late. Now ordinary Pacific Islanders are having their say in a new short film, *Subject to Change*.

Using interviews with a range of people whose lives will be affected by climate change, the film explores their concerns, hopes and fears for the future.



Changing weather patterns are already causing hardship, something underlined by the testimony of people who survived a cyclone in Fiji.

The film also warns that it is the younger generation—those who will be in their 30s in 2050—who will have to contend with when the worst effects of sea level changes.

The film was premiered at the UN Climate Change Conference in Katowice, Poland, at the end of 2018 and has been released on YouTube.

The film was produced by Amiria Ranfurly, who is of Niuean-New Zealand descent, and Polish director Wiktoria Ojrzyńska. Both are students at Massey University.

The film was produced in collaboration with New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.—*PHILIP CASS is reviews editor of Pacific Journalism Review.*



Vol 26, No 1, July 2020

Call for articles and commentaries: Media freedom in Melanesia

The next edition of *Pacific Journalism Review* after our double special edition in July 2019 will be an edition devoted to media freedom in Melanesia in collaboration with the Melanesian Media Freedom Forum.

This special issue on Media Freedom in Melanesia will focus on political and socio-cultural challenges and impediments to a free press in Melanesia. The journal invites presenters at the special Melanesian Media Freedom Forum in Brisbane, Queensland, on 11-12 November 2019, and other interested scholars, to contribute papers. The edition seeks to examine contemporary media in Melanesia within the global understanding of freedom of communication and media as a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of a democratic culture. Within this context, this special issue invites a wide range of theoretical and applied research exploring press freedom in Melanesia, particularly studies that explore culture sensitive solution-based studies that are cognisant of the intersect between contemporary Fourth Estate journalism practice and community-based custom and indigenous knowledge. The journal especially seeks papers developing inclusive and culture-sensitive solutions to contemporary media issues

Papers can include but are not restricted to:

- The politics of press freedom in Melanesia
- Intersect between custom and indigenous knowledge in contemporary Fourth Estate practice
- Gender and identity in Melanesian journalism
- Human rights journalism in Melanesia
- Environmental journalism: Reporting climate change and human migration
- Circumventing censorship and restrictions to free and fair publication
- Legal safeguards to press freedom

The above list is a guideline and other related topics will also be considered. The journal has an unthemed section and other papers related to journalism studies, and journalism education, theory and practice will also be considered.

Submissions must be uploaded to the OJS open access website for Pacific Journalism Review on the Tuwhera indigenous research portal at Auckland University of Technology: <https://ojs.aut.ac.nz/pacific-journalism-review/>

Contact: k.ubayasiri@griffith.edu.au

Deadline: February 20, 2020



Notes for contributors

Pacific Journalism Review, founded at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1994, is a peer-reviewed journal covering media issues and communication in the South Pacific, Asia-Pacific, Australia and New Zealand. It is now published by the Pacific Media Centre, AUT University, and has links with the University of the South Pacific. While one objective is research into Pacific journalism theory and practice, the journal is also expanding its interest into new areas of research and inquiry that reflect the broader impact of contemporary media practice and education.

A particular focus will be on the cultural politics of the media, including the following issues—new media and social movements, indigenous cultures in the age of globalisation, the politics of tourism and development, the role of the media and the formation of national identity and the cultural influence of New Zealand as a branch of the global economy within the Pacific region. It also has a special interest in environmental and development studies in the media and communication—and vernacular media in the region.

Main sections:

- *Research*: Academic research and analysis papers (up to 6000 words)

- *Commentary*: Industry insights, developments and practice (1500-3000 words)
- *Frontline*: Reflective journalism research (up to 6000 words)
- *Reviews*: Books, films, online developments, multimedia (800-1500 words).
- *Noted & Books*: 300-350 words.
- *Forum*: Letters, brief commentaries (up to 800 words)

Submission of papers:

Within the editorial scope of the journal, we invite the submission of original papers, commentaries and reviews. Submissions are reviewed by the editor, or editorial committee. Submissions are double blind peer refereed.

Editorial deadline for next issue:

February 20, 2020. Submissions should be filed through the new submissions website on Tuwhera: ojs.aut.ac.nz/pacific-journalism-review/

Correspondence should be emailed to the managing editor,

Professor David Robie:

pjreview@aut.ac.nz

School of Communication Studies
AUT University

Style: Use *APA (American Psychological Association) Style* for author-date system of referencing. See style guide at www.pjreview.info



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*Cover: Front cover cartoon by Malcolm Evans.
This back cover photo of media crews awaiting
the French Prime Minister, Édouard Philippe, in
Noumea after the New Caledonian referendum on
independence in November 2018 is by David Robie.*

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O TĀMAKI MAKĀU RAU



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