Routledge Research in Journalism

GLOBAL MEDIA ETHICS AND THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Edited by
Noureddine Miladi

Global Media Ethics and the Digital Revolution

This volume responds to the challenges posed by the rapid developments in satellite TV and digital technologies, addressing media ethics from a global perspective to discuss how we can understand journalism practice in its cultural contexts.

An international team of contributors draw upon global and non-Western traditions to discuss the philosophical origins of ethics and the tension that exists between media institutions, the media market and political/ideological influencers. The chapters then unveil the discrepancies among international journalists in abiding by the ethics of the profession and the extent to which media ethics are understood and applied in their local context/environment. Arguing that the legitimacy of ethics comes not from the definition per se, but from the extent to which it leads to social good, the book posits this should be the media's raison d'être to abide by globally accepted ethical norms in order to serve the common good.

Taking a truly global approach to the question of media ethics, this volume will be an important resource for scholars and students of journalism, communication studies, media studies, sociology, politics and cultural studies.

Noureddine Miladi is Professor of Media and Communication at Qatar University. He is former head of the Department of Mass Communication and President of the Arab Media and Communication Network (AMCN.online). He is editor of JAMMR, the first peer-reviewed English journal in Arab media and society.

Routledge Research in Journalism

Understanding Citizen Journalism as Civic Participation
Seungahn Nah and Deborah S. Chung

Newsroom-Classroom Hybrids at Universities
Student Labor and the Journalism Crisis
Gunhild Ring Olsen

Beyond Journalistic Norms
Role Performance and News in Comparative Perspective
Edited by Claudia Mellado

Journalists and Confidential Sources
Colliding Public Interests in the Age of the Leak
Joseph M Fernandez

Journalism and Digital Labor
Experiences of Online News Production
Tai Neilson

COVID-19 in International Media
Global Pandemic Perspectives
Edited by John C. Pollock and Douglas A. Vakoch

Journalists and Job Loss
Edited by Timothy Marjoribanks, Lawrie Zion, Penny O'Donnell and Merryn Sherwood

Global Media Ethics and the Digital Revolution
Edited by Noureddine Miladi

For more information about this series, please visit:
https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Research-in-Journalism/book-series/RRJ

Global Media Ethics and the Digital Revolution

Edited by
Noureddine Miladi

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2022
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A catalog record has been requested for this book

ISBN: 978-1-032-06214-3 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-032-06724-7 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-003-20355-1 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003203551

Typeset in Sabon
by Taylor & Francis Books

To my parents

Contents

List of illustrations ix
List of contributors x

Introduction: Global digital media explosion and the question of ethics 1
NOUREDDINE MILADI

PART 1
Media ethics revisited 13

1 Political correctness in a global age: The ethical implications of a hegemonic discourse 15
ANDREW PILKINGTON

2 Impartiality, fairness and the bias of empire: Technologies of freedom or constraint? 38
SYLVIA HARVEY

3 Freedom of expression and social responsibility: Contested worldviews on media ethics 53
NOUREDDINE MILADI

4 Global media ethics: Ideology, politics and eurocentrism 71
MAZHAR AL-ZO'BY

5 Rethinking global media ethics for a 'post-American' world 88
DAYA THUSSU

PART 2
Media ethics in practice 101

6 Freedom of speech, responsibility and human rights in Islam 103
FETHI B. J. AHMED

7 Philosophical roots of media ethics in the Islamic tradition 122
NOUREDDINE KHADMI

8 Ethics of investigative journalism 137
JAMEL ZRAN

9 Fake news as a challenge for media credibility 156
SUZANA ŽILIČ FIŠER AND IRENA LOVRENČIČ DRŽANIČ

10 Media ethics and the challenges of democratic transition in Tunisia 172
MOEZ BEN MESSAOUD

11 Journalism ethics and conflict-sensitive reporting: The case of Al Jazeera network 186
HALA A. GUTA

PART 3
Global media ethics global challenges 203

12 Journalistic deontology in news coverage of poverty in the digital age: Why objectivity is bad when reporting on inequality 205
JAIRO LUGO-OCANDO AND STEVEN HARKINS

13 The culture of framing terminologies 221
IBRAHIM N. ABUSHARIF

14 Tracing securitization of narratives and images in the global media discourse 235
ABDULFATAH MOHAMED

15 Decolonizing African journalism ethics: From Afriethics to Afrokology 250
WINSTON MANO

Index 267

Illustrations

Figure

9.1 Social media as a replacement for other media 163

Tables

8.1 List of Few Investigative Journalism Reports which Employ Unconventional Methods 140
11.1 News values in AJA and AJE coverage of Raqqa 192
11.2 Sources of Raqqa Coverage 195

Contributors

Andrew Pilkington is Professor of Sociology at The University of Northampton, UK and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. His research has especially focused on issues relating to race and ethnicity, and he has published widely in this area, including *Racial Disadvantage and Ethnic Diversity in Britain* (Palgrave, 2003) and, with Shirin Housee and Kevin Hylton, an edited collection, *Race(ing) Forward: Transitions in Theorising Race in Education* (HEA, 2009). A particularly influential book is *Institutional Racism in the Academy: A Case Study* (Trentham, 2011) in which he compares the response of universities and the police to legislative measures and policy initiatives designed to promote equality and diversity.

Sylvia Harvey is a Visiting Professor in the School of Media and Communication, University of Leeds (UK). She obtained her doctorate from the University of California, Los Angeles, returning to Britain to teach film studies and then broadcasting policy from 1975 to 2009. She chaired the Citizen's Coalition for Public Service Broadcasting (2009–10), was a founder member of the Sheffield International Documentary Festival (Doc/Fest) and is a trustee of the Voice of the Listener and Viewer. Her publications include *May '68 and Film Culture*, articles on cultural history, Channel 4 Television, broadcasting regulation and impartiality, spectrum allocation and the importance of public service and free-to-air television. Her most recent work is on the impact of subscription video on demand on public service broadcasting: 'Broadcasting in the Age of Netflix: When the Market is Master', in *A Companion to Television*, 2nd edition, ed. J. Wasko and E. Meehan (2020). She has made regular policy submissions to the UK regulator Ofcom and to government and parliamentary inquiries.

Noureddine Miladi is Professor of Media and Communication and former Head of Department of Mass Communication, at Qatar University. He is Editor of the *Journal of Arab and Muslim Media Research (JAMMR)*, an international peer-reviewed journal specialized in Arab and Middle Eastern Media and Society, www.intellectbooks.com/journal-of-arab-muslim-media-research. He is co-editor of *Routledge Handbook of Arab Media* (Routledge, 2021). He is also co-author of *Media and the Democratic Transition in the Arab World* (2019) *and Mapping the Al Jazeera Phenomenon 20 Years*

On (2017). He supervises MA and PhD researchers in social media and social change, media and democracy, youth, identity and social media networks, media ethics, Arab media, Al-Jazeera and global media and public opinion.

Mazhar Al-Zo'by is Associate Professor of culture and politics in the Department of International Affairs at Qatar University. His interests, both in research and teaching, focus principally on the politics of representation, identity and social change in the context of globalization. While his work is comparative in nature, his area of focus is the Muslim world in general and the Arab world in particular. Among the critical issues on which his teaching and writing have concentrated are the role of culture in the production of hegemony, media and identity, social movements, colonial discourse and the world system.

Daya Thussu is Professor of International Communication at the Hong Kong Baptist University. For the academic year 2018–2019, he was Distinguished Visiting Professor and Inaugural Disney Chair in Global Media at Schwarzman College, Tsinghua University in Beijing. For many years, Professor Thussu was Professor of International Communication and Co-Director of India Media Centre as well as research advisor to the China Media Centre at the University of Westminster in London. Professor Thussu is the Founder and Managing Editor of the Sage journal *Global Media and Communication*. Author or editor of 18 books, among his main publications are *Electronic Empires; International Communication: Continuity and Change*, 3rd edition; *Media on the Move: Global Flow and Contra-flow; News as Entertainment: The Rise of Global Infotainment; Internationalizing Media Studies; Media and Terrorism: Global Perspectives; Communicating India's Soft Power: Buddha to Bollywood; Mapping BRICS Media* (co-edited) and *China's Media Go Global* (co-edited).

Fethi B. J. Ahmed holds a Ph.D. in Sociology (2003) and an MA in Islamic Studies (1997). He is former Assistant Professor at the International Islamic University in Malaysia, International Student Advisor at the University of Auckland, Academic Director with the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission in New Zealand, and Research Coordinator with Hamad Bin Khalifa University in Qatar. Dr Ahmed authored a number of refereed as well as general and online publications in sociology, ethics and Islamic studies.

Noureddine Khadmi is Professor of Islamic Studies and Head of the Research Unit at the College of Sharia, Qatar University. He formerly served as Minister of Religious Affairs in Tunisia, and President of the Tunis International Center for the Purposes of Sharia and Jurisprudence. He is member of the Board of Trustees of the World Federation of Muslim Scholars. In terms of his scholarly output, Prof Khadmi has authored more than 60 published books and dozens of research articles. He is a member of various scientific institutions and jurisprudence bodies. He has numerous TV and radio educational programmes on Islamic culture. He is winner of various international scientific awards.

Jamel Zran is Professor of media and communication at the Institute of Journalism and Information Sciences, University of Manouba, Tunisia. He previously worked at Qatar University and served as Editor-in-Chief and Director of the Tunisian Cultural Radio (public radio) in 2012. His research interests include social media networks in the Arab world, media ethics and Arab media issues in the new communication environment. He co-edited various books, including *Media and Democratic Transition in the Arab World* (2019), with Dr Noureddine Miladi, and the *History of Journalism in the Mediterranean Countries* in 2014. Dr Jamel Zran was awarded a major grant from the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) to study 'Media and national identity in Qatar, case study: *Al Rayyan* channel and its audience'.

Suzana Žilič Fišer, is Associate Professor and head of the Institute of Media Communication at the University of Maribor. She spent ten years in the media the industry as a journalist and an executive producer. She conducted research as the Chevening scholar, and worked as a visiting lecturer at various universities in Europe. In her research, she mainly focuses on journalism, broadcasting, media management, culture and public interest. She has published various books, chapters and articles in international scientific journals. From 2011 to 2013 she served as the Director General of the European Capital of Culture, Maribor 2012. She was designated by the European Commission for two mandates (2013–2019) as a member of the selection panel for the European Capital of Culture.

Irena Lovrenčič Držanič is a Researcher and PhD student at the Institute of Media Communication at the University of Maribor. Her research focuses on Media Ethics, Fake News, Journalism, and Digital Platforms. Currently, she is involved in research work for multiple Erasmus+ projects, as well as conducting research for scientific papers and book chapters. She is also active in national projects funded by the Slovenian Research Agency. Her PhD work focuses on platformization and its effects on the media organizations and audiences.

Moez Ben Messaoud is Associate Professor in the Department of Mass Communication, College of Arts and Sciences, Qatar University. He got a PhD from the Sorbonne University in France and served previously as Head Department of Communication at the Institute of Journalism and Information Sciences (IPSI), University of Manouba, Tunis. Ben Messaoud served also as Editor-in-Chief of the Tunisian *Journal of Communication Sciences*, and coordinated various research projects in both Manouba University, Tunisia, and Qatar University. His research interests include social media networks and social change, public service broadcasting, and media and democratic transition. He has authored several refereed articles, books and book chapters of which the most recent is 'Social Media Networks and Democratic Transition in Tunisia: From Censorship to Freedom' in the *Routledge Handbook on Arab Media* (2021).

Hala A. Guta is Associate Professor of Mass Communication, Qatar University. Her research interests include international media and communication, feminist media studies, communication for social change, and the intersection of communication, culture, and identity in the global South. Her publications and conference presentations include papers on the role of culture in communication, communication role in peace building in societies emerging from conflict, and the role media and other cultural institutions play in social change and the identity politics, as well as digital communication.

Jairo Lugo-Ocando is Professor in Residence and Director of Executive and Graduate Education at Northwestern University, Qatar. Born in Venezuela, he is author of several books, journal articles and other academic publications. Over the years he has received over US$ 1.1 million in external research grants funding from a diversity of institutions and organizations from around the world and was recipient of the Theodore C. Sorensen Fellowship from the John F. Kennedy Library and was a visiting fellow at the National University of Singapore. Before becoming an academic, he worked as a journalist, correspondent and news editor for several media outlets in Latin America.

Steven Harkins is a lecturer in Communications Media and Culture at the University of Stirling. His research interests sit at the intersection between journalism studies, political communication and social theory. His most recent research examined news framing of poverty and inequality.

Ibrahim N. Abusharif, PhD, is Associate Professor at Northwestern University in Qatar, in the journalism and strategic communication program. He has a post-graduate degree in journalism and a doctorate in religious and Islamic studies. His academic interests include the intersections of religion and media, particularly digital media and religious authority. He also researches the origins, promulgation and effects of key journalistic framing terminologies used in prominent Western print news sources in covering Middle East and North African events and ongoing affairs.

Abdulfatah Mohamed is Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Hamad Bin Khalifa University in Doha, Qatar. He has more than 30 years of experience working in various disciplines and sectors, from being advisor to government institutions to an independent advisor to The United Nations Office Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) during the consultation process leading to the World Humanitarian Summit. He has worked with major corporations and NGOs, in the Middle East, Europe and Africa. Mohamed has lectured and wrote numerous articles on Islamic charities. He holds PhD in Middle East Politics and International Studies from University of Exeter, United Kingdom.

Winston Mano is Reader and a member of the University of Westminster's top-rated Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI). He is also Course Leader for the MA in Media and Development and the Founder/

Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of African Media Studies*. Mano joined the University of Westminster's Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI) from the University of Zimbabwe in 2000 where he was a Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication. He studied in Zimbabwe, Norway and Britain. Among his publications are *Routledge Handbook of African Media and Communication Studies* (2021) (with viola c. milton); *Social Media and Elections in Africa* (2020) (with Martin N. Ndlela), vols 1 and 2 (2019) and *International Media Development: Historical Perspectives and New Frontiers* (with Nicholas Benequista, Susan Abbott, Paul Rothman). Link to his publications: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/our-people/directory/mano-winston.

Introduction

Global digital media explosion and the question of ethics

Noureddine Miladi

The renewed debate on media ethics is a valid discussion and remains ever needed due to the unprecedented developments in global communication technologies and its impact on society. For decades, globalization has firstly meant a growing sense of interconnected and fast movement of information due to satellite technology and Internet social media platforms. Recent developments in media and communication technologies have had impact on the everydayness of people around the world. The unremitting global reach of satellite and mobile technology, the Internet and social media have meant blurring of geographical boundaries and shrinking of time and space through which the media message can travel. It can indiscriminately penetrate and affect every culture and tradition.

Secondly, such technological developments have also meant resistance of the local and a resilience to sustain native identity in face of the global homogenizing forces. Thirdly, the developments of digital platforms on the Internet and the explosion of global communication have entailed mounting challenges with regard to controlling disinformation on the web and upholding basic ethos of media ethics and responsible journalism.

Such unprecedented developments in the global media and communication scene invite philosophical responses from all disciplines in order to come up with a holistic view about ethics and the media. The temporal changes on a global scale beg global considerations for a media ethics approach that appreciates the sophistication of the global. Stark discrepancies in diverse worldviews concerning what constitutes ethics in journalism is more evident nowadays than ever before. Not least, the unmissable differences that exist between the East and the West in what constitutes responsible journalism and whether free speech should have limits or not. For instance, the Islamic perspective regarding limits to free speech especially when it comes to the sacred compared to the unlimited scope of freedom of expression in the Western context is a case in point. However, this is not in my view the only problem. What increases tension and misunderstanding is the inability of marginalized voices to be heard and appreciated. Also, what adds to the clash of values are the double standards in some parts of the world in applying rules about freedom of expression and controlling hate speech in the media.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003203551-1

For example, president Macron's claim in October 2020 (The Telegraph, 2020) that insulting the Prophet Muhammad is a matter of free speech reminds us that morality in some parts of the world has reached the end of the tunnel. We are witnessing the demise of the ethical, what Nietzsche (2014) calls moving beyond good and evil. In his philosophical views, Nietzsche (2019) overemphasized the agency of the individual above the group. He attributes an absolute freedom to man, giving him a total subjective morality, which goes beyond the boundaries of religion. This view is in line with the growing criticism to the Enlightenment rationalism, which 'has been exposed as imperialistic, oppressive of non-western perspectives' (Christians, 2010: 7). Nietzsche call the Christian morality as herd morality as they obstruct the individual's 'will to power'. That is why he revolted against the European puritanical values of the time and instead called to destroy all moral values and promote Nihilism as a solution. Man according to him should then break away from the Christian devalued morality and create their own value system. One may argue that the French approach as a symptom of ethics in crisis seems caught in this juncture of a nihilistic stance, which does not appreciate ethical moral values stemming from other cultures or faith groups.

Moving beyond this debate, globally there has been growing interest in academic research in recent years about ethics in the media. What has been termed in the work of Garber, Hanssen and Walkowitz (2000) as 'The Turn to Ethics' in social science disciplines has also dominated public debates especially in liberal democracy. The media coverage of the invasion of Iraq in 2003, coverage of humanitarian crises, as well as coverage of ethnic minority communities on Western media received lots of criticism during the last few decades (Hall, 1973; Zulaika and Douglass, 1996; Said, 1997; Poole, 2002; Richardson, 2004; Shaheen, 2009; Morey and Yakin, 2011) among scores of other studies. Also, debates about the media and social responsibility are as old as mass media itself. However, French President, Emanuel Macron, repeated defence of offensive Charlie Hebdo cartoons on Prophet Muhammad in October 2020 yet again ignited the debate on free speech and social responsibility. The echo of Macron's stance regarding Islam and French cartoons moved beyond the French context and took a global scale.

In this global debate on media ethics, an important precursor is the work of Clifford Christians. Christians (2010) suggests that in the pursuit of global media ethics we should develop global media values, which he calls 'ethics of universal being'. These universally shared values encompass truth, human dignity and non-violence. He writes that these values should be primarily 'grounded in the sacredness of the human life' (2010: 6). A credible ethics, argues Christians (2010: 6), 'must be transnational in character'.

In this book

Global Media Ethics and the Digital Revolution appears at a strategic time when debates about the ethical practices in journalism and the challenges of digital platforms are becoming of a global nature. Approaches to ethics in

relation to global cultural diversity and considerations of what sensitivities we should be aware of are paramount (Miladi, 2021).

This book recognizes the fact that global collective ethics standards are farfetched. Diversity in the world of journalism across cultures, worldviews, political/ideological interpretations makes a solidly defined and encompassing set of codes accepted by all is almost impossible. However saying this, it is not unrealistic to come to a shared ground of respect and understanding.

The challenges of global media outreach entail a global understanding/approach of ethics. On the one hand, Internet and social media platforms have been employed by various right-wing and extremists groups around the world to spread hate speech content. For instance, Apple, Google, Facebook and Spotify rightly removed material posted by right-wing sites like conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, or such extremist groups like Al-Qaida and Daesh. Alex Jones Infowars on social media channels has been considered a platform to 'spread dark and bizarre theories, such as that the Sandy Hook school shooting was a hoax and that Democrats run a global child-sex ring' (Nicas, 2018).

On the other hand, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have been criticized of playing a gatekeeping role when it comes to manipulating social media content to serve their agendas. Fukuyama (2018) asserts that such digital platforms '… craft algorithms that determine what their users' limited attention will focus on, driven (at least up to now) not by any broad vision of public responsibility but rather by profit maximization, which leads them to privilege virality'. Further examples show that Facebook for instance was accused of allowing Cambridge Analytica to access its data to help the Trump presidential campaign in October 2020 (Cadwalladr, 2020).

In light of the above challenges, this edited volume attempts to give voice to the often neglected perspectives of media ethics. It offers a platform where these various voices expressed and debated. Through a wide range of international experts, this work broadens the scope and contributes to the enrichment of the discussion in this regard. Chapters in this edited volume zoom into particular local contexts where ethics interact with the social, political and philosophical realms.

This book was partly funded through a research grant by Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), Grant #: CWSP16-W-0310-19062. This funding support thankfully helped kick start the book project with an international symposium in February 2020 on global media ethics.

Book outline

In Chapter 1, Andrew Pilkington discusses political correctness in a global age and the ethical implications of a hegemonic discourse. The concept of political correctness, or more accurately, anti-political correctness, argues Pilkington, has re-emerged in the last decade as a major interpretive framework in the media. Populist politicians such as Trump in the US and Farage (a key advocate of Brexit) and Johnson in the UK for example routinely draw upon a discourse featuring political correctness as a bête noire. Pilkington adopts a Foucauldian

analysis to argue in this chapter that such an anti-political correctness discourse has become hegemonic and is frequently routinely reproduced by journalists. This chapter critically examines the arguments mounted by critics of political correctness and argues that they are not only flawed but that they also constitute an ideology which delegitimizes an agenda concerned to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

Sylvia Harvey (Chapter 2) discusses the principles of 'impartiality' and 'fairness' as developed in British and American broadcasting, taking as a brief case study the 'Suez' incident of 1956 when a British Conservative Government attempted to regain control of the Suez Canal following its nationalization by the President of Egypt, Gamal Abdul Nasser. At that time both the BBC and its new commercial rival, Independent Television (ITV), faced the challenge of representing sharply opposing views as Britain began to move slowly beyond the age of empire.

Harvey suggests that the 'home' of impartiality lies within the nation state and that the implementation of the principle is significantly affected by perceived national interests. She also argues that attachment to the journalistic value of an even-handed representation of competing beliefs has survived the abolition in 1987 of the Fairness Doctrine in the United States. Some ten years later saw the launch in the Arab world of the satellite channel Al Jazeera with a commitment to representing 'the opinion and the other opinion'. Thus, a new lease of life has been given to the principle – once strongly advocated in the US – of a 'due regard for the opinions of others'.

Noureddine Miladi (Chapter 3) discusses the notion of freedom of expression and social responsibility and considers the contested worldviews in this matter. He approaches the debate through analysing two examples from the cartoons controversies about Prophet Muhammad from the French newspaper Charlie Hebdo and Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten. These cases, which ignited cross-culture differences regarding the boundaries of free speech and received inevitably global impact and wide criticism. Miladi's chapter explores the roots of such problem of misunderstanding and engendered in the systematic French attitude towards Muslims. Although the proponents of absolute free speech may argue that both cases are local in nature and they reflect the fundamental value of free speech, Miladi contends that their impact have proven global in its outreach. The repercussions of such media content have been dramatic in light of the outbreak of dissent from affected communities.

This chapter further analyses these two examples in relation to the controversial responses received and the contested debates about free speech and social responsibility. It engages with the questions of where should the media draw the line between the sacred value of free speech and respect of sacred religious symbols? Should freedom of speech have limits? Does social responsibility come first, or does freedom of the individual supersede all other benefits?

Worldviews regarding this, argues Miladi, have obviously been divergent. However, in this chapter he suggests that political cartoons as a form of satire should not be different from any other journalistic genre when it comes to

raising ethical considerations. The right to freedom of expression should also not mistaken with the right to freedom of opinion, thought and religion. Freedom of expression is a right with outward reach and public scope that might well interfere with the rights of others.

Mazhar Al-Zo'by (Chapter 4) analyses what he terms as the ideology of difference and Eurocentrism. He argues that the advent of capitalist modernity in its transnational mass-mediated digital forms has clearly inspired a critical discussion about the universal ethical virtues of media in modern history. At the heart of this discussion, he argues, is the emergence of an ideological and epistemological formation of a hegemonic Western account of media ethics that is enshrined in Eurocentric philosophical values and professed as the exclusive domain of European liberal tradition. Conversely, and afflicted by the doctrinal complicities of colonial and orientalist representations, the non-Western is presumed to be constrained by the imperatives of cultural irrationality, and therefore is unable to symbolize in universal reason. In order to analyse this intrinsic and complex interplay between universalization and localization in the global media ethical discourse, Al-Zo'by seeks to examine the foundation of universal ethical principles to illustrate its Eurocentric discursive character. Therefore, to him, in order to disrupt and transform this prevailing narrative of media ethical ideology, it is insufficient to simply investigate its polemical Western site of production – additionally, one also has to seek its fundamental deconstruction and reproduction. More specifically, he asserts in this chapter that universal ethics must be shaped within the realm of cultural differences, yet should never remain an exclusive domain of Western cultural hegemony.

Daya Thussu (Chapter 5) rethinks global media ethics for a 'Post-American' world. In the era of digitized and globalized 24/7 media, the one-way vertical flow of media and communication from the West to the Rest has given way to multiple and horizontal flows, in which Asian countries play an increasingly significant role. While the US-led Western domination of the global media and communication hard and software continues, new actors, harnessing the potential of digital globalization, have emerged in the past decade to challenge and contest the Western hegemony in the 'post-American' world. In this chapter, Thussu suggests that the change in communication environments warrants a re-evaluation of how we define the global media and its ethics. The global communication order, shaped and structured by major Western powers – notably the United States, is undergoing a transformational change. This change triggered by the relative decline of the West and the growth of large non-Western nations such as China and India, together with the exponential expansion of digital connectivity. China is already the world's largest user of the Internet, followed by India. Apart from being the world's two most populous countries and fast-growing large economies, both China and India are also civilizational powers, with old and distinctive cultures and aspirations for a greater role in a multipolar world. The Asian giants also have the world's two largest diasporas, increasingly connected with their countries of origin and acting as a bridge

between cultures. Thussu further contends that the notions of ethics based on Confucian ideas of 'harmony' and old Indian concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* ('the world is one family') are also potential alternatives to the Western definition of media ethics. Given the scope and scale of change in these two countries, he suggests that a new world communication order may be evolving for the digital age. The chapter ultimately asks about the possible implications that such digital connectivity will have for global media and communication flows, media ethics and broader communication agendas? His chapter suggests that the ascent of Asia contributes to further internationalizing of media and its study.

Fethi Ahmed (Chapter 6) discusses the relationship between freedom of speech, responsibility and human rights in Islam. Traditional methods of communication, he argues, have declined in popularity and new media channels that rely essentially on digital technology have emerged. However, numerous problems have appeared due to this including the wrong perception and practice of freedom of speech and lack or absence of social responsibility. For instance, numerous social media users believe that freedom of speech is without limitation and thus they fall into unethical practices such as breach of privacy, hate speech, racism and defamation. Besides, other social media users, he argues, have been influenced by funding, political power and ideological influences to serve certain agendas. These unethical problems in new media have become very complicated due to many factors particularly globalization, the high Internet speed and frequency mechanisms that digital technology offers.

Therefore, Ahmed's chapter examines the correlation between freedom of speech, responsibility and human rights from an Islamic perspective within the context of new global media ethics. Ahmed offers a multidisciplinary approach, which includes media studies, sociology, ethics, human rights, Islamic legal maxims, and higher objectives of *Sharia* (Islamic law). He finally asserts that freedom of speech is a crucial value in Islam, guaranteed for all creations and tied to responsibility and liability.

Noureddine Khadmi (Chapter 7) analyses the philosophical roots of ethics in the Islamic tradition. His chapter attempts to discuss the Islamic worldview of what values should characterize journalism work. These summarized in few principles such as honesty, truth-telling, efficiency, free will, integrity and positive neutrality. They also include non-targeting of individuals, protecting privacy, public order, support of freedom and human rights, rigour in confronting foreign occupation and internal tyranny/corruption.

The functional Islamic view represents a significant framework, argues Khadmi, for guiding media performance. He suggests that this vision has three levels. Firstly, the philosophical vision which is concerned with the belief system and aims of human existence. This is based on the *raison d'être* of the human life on earth, upholding one's faith, the protection of human beings, and protection of dignity. Hence, media ethics should reflect awareness and protection of these universal values. Secondly, the Islamic jurisprudence vision which is concerned with the science of *Sharia*. It is the science of judgements on the one hand, framing the media moral act, and assigning it to its legal provisions.

Thirdly, the operational Islamic vision, which is concerned with summoning the practical side of the Islamic philosophical and scientific vision of media ethics, in terms of institutional and procedural work, taking into account diversity in contexts.

Jamel Zran (Chapter 8) discusses ethics of investigative journalism. Zran argues that journalism ethics relate to how to distinguish between the public interest, the individual and society's right to be informed and a journalist's right to access information. The judgement depends on the ethics of any decision, on the ethical framework used to justify it, and on the values adopted in this context. Ultimately, what journalists and editors need to decide is to determine who will benefit from the publication of his/her investigative reports in the first place.

Zran also asks if the press is committed to the democratic accountability of officials, the question to be asked is whether or not the citizen will benefit fairly from the publication of newspaper investigations. Whose interest does investigative journalism serve when publishing a specific news story? Does the press fulfil its social responsibility to reveal corruption for instance? Who will be affected? And whose rights, can be violated?

Most discussions on the ethics of investigative journalism, further argues Zran, have focused on whether there is an ideal method which can be useful in exposing the wrong behaviour of officials? Is resorting to deception considered legitimate when the aim of the journalist is to tell the truth? Finally, is it permissible for journalists to use false identities, lying or forging documents in order to obtain information which is difficult to unblock?

Suzana Žilič Fišer and Irena Lovrenčič Držanič (Chapter 9) discuss fake news as a challenge to media credibility. In this fast transforming digital world, they argue, the media industry is facing increasing economic, social and technological challenges, as well as changing media consumption habits. Social media consumers, also termed in this chapter the 'digital natives', tend to spend most of their time on social media and multimedia platforms. They are inclined to substitute traditional media with social media and other online services. In this chapter, Fišer and Držanič argue that despite these significant transformations and the growing standing of online media, online users still perceive traditional media to be more credible sources of information than user-generated content on social media. Social media networks, they contend, enable a breadth of 'fake news', which brings the overall perception of media into a different perspective. The phenomenon of misinformation and mistrust could be a new indicator of a crisis in the media that led to the post-truth era. Fišer and Držanič also suggest that due to the profound negative impact of fake news on individuals and society, various detection tools can be applied. Their chapter illustrates the challenges for society and modern democracy that arise from changing media consumption habits regarding credibility and trust issues.

Moez ben Messaoud (Chapter 10) discusses media ethics and the challenge of transitional democracy in Tunisia. After decades of authoritarian control, the Tunisian media witnessed a window of freedom and openness post the 14 January 2011 revolution that it had never experienced before. Despite this, he

argues, the traditional media sector seems so far unable to keep pace with the changes that accompanied the democratic transition phase in Tunisia. This reality has contributed to the development of social media activism as a counter hegemonic form in light of the development of the flow of information on these media and the growing power of the public. This situation has led to various manifestations of falsehood, fabrication of news, false headlines, disguised advertising, contempt, defamation, violent rhetoric.

Based on the above, Ben Messaoud sought to highlights the fragile media regulatory frameworks and the challenges of establishing a solid culture of journalism ethics given the transitional nature and sometimes instability of political frameworks in the country. He eventually attempts to signpost to the development of a solid foundation for professional ethics to protect the public and freedom of expression in the public sphere.

Hala Guta (Chapter 11) discusses in her piece journalism ethics and conflict-sensitive reporting by analysing Al Jazeera network as a case study. Considering its importance as a global media player, and its claims of providing an alternative model of journalism, Guta's chapter interrogates Al Jazeera's coverage of the Syrian conflict taking peace journalism as a frame of reference. It attempts to establish the ethical standards that guide Al Jazeera in its coverage and investigates if Al Jazeera brings an alternative point of view when it comes to conflict-sensitive reporting. Through employing a framing analysis method, Guta revealed that both Al Jazeera Arabic and Al Jazeera English focused on human suffering and high human cost of the conflict. Guta concludes that Al Jazeera demonstrated that conflict-sensitive reporting can indeed be achieved without falling into the trap of sensationalism and propaganda or compromising journalism ethics. Yet both channels, she argues, fell short in giving agency and voice to the victims as elite sources dominated the voices represented on both channels. Direct violence dominated the news discourse and little consideration was given to the structural and cultural aspects of the reported conflict.

Jairo Lugo-Ocando and Steven Harkins (Chapter 12) discuss the deontology in news coverage of poverty in the digital age and ask the question why objectivity is bad when reporting on inequality. Their chapter looks at how initial promises around the Internet for a more participatory and inclusive type of journalism have never been met. Also, why the digital revolution actually had very little impact upon the ethics and deontology of Western journalists when it comes to the news coverage of poverty. In their view, the practices, aesthetics and overall approach to poverty in the newsroom remain unaltered by the technological change in the media landscape. The authors argue that this is because the deontology of journalism in relation to poverty remains linked to prevalent professional normative aspirations such as 'objectivity', which impede the incorporation of structuralist notions, concepts and worldviews into the narrative of poverty in the news. Their analysis calls for a move away from the parochial and traditional ways of understanding journalism ethics and argues for a more comprehensive framework that challenges the values and goalposts set by the liberal and positive traditions of journalism in the West.

Ibrahim Abusharif (Chapter 13) discusses the culture of framing terminologies vis-à-vis global media ethics. He argues that academic research has shown that there are uneven usages of key journalistic framing terminologies applied in the Western coverage of public acts of violence, namely 'terror' and 'terrorism' ('domestic' and 'international'), which seem to be based on religious or racial categories of the perpetrators of the acts. While engaging in a critical evaluation of journalistic practices is valuable, it also has limits because such evaluations do not include sufficient consideration of the broader ideologies and epistemic imaginaries that have permeated the public sphere of a given society, in which journalistic practices have been established. In this chapter, Abusharif, argues that journalistic practices are best assessed in close colloquy with broader discursive trends and public discourses, which recently have attracted significant attention and that have linked news media practices with extra-journalistic phenomena, such as Islamophobia, racism, Orientalism, and calls for decoloniality. Guided by van Dijk's conceptual principle of 'news as discourse', the chapter also argues that it is critical to situate news processes within a larger 'macrosociology' and the social and political climates in which they exist.

Abdulfatah Mohamed (Chapter 14) discusses in this chapter securitization, global media and agenda setting. He argues that a new global political regime was instituted in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks in the United States. Launched in response to the attacks, the so-called 'War on Terror' increased securitization at the global, regional, and national levels, and this, it is argued, had significant impact on the global media discourse, as well as on refugees and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

In this chapter, Mohamed analyses the speech acts of the securitization process that have set and framed the agendas, narratives and discourses of global media conglomerates. Theoretical frameworks of Copenhagen School of securitization have been analysed through what is known as the *speech act* to produce securitization outcomes. Even though the *speech act* securitization does not demonstrate clearly how it gets to the audience, yet the political communication messages securitized quite often. Speech act means that expressions are understood in terms of their performative rulings. Mohamed further debates that the far-reaching impacts of securitization and the War on Terror have detrimental effects on Islamic NGOs and on refugees in many parts of the world, as highlighted in the findings of several reports, academic papers and case studies. The author asserts that the securitization discourse is curtailing the operations of Islamic NGOs, with devastating effects on vulnerable people, whilst negative depictions of refugees by the mainstream media are driving policies with often grave consequences.

Winston Mano (Chapter 15) discusses what he terms as Afrokology, Afriethics and African journalism in the digital age. His chapter deploys Afrokology in a double gesture: first, Afrokology is positioned in a way that underpins a critical engagement with remnants of colonial epistemes as well as to unmask the incompleteness of dominant global North journalism ethical frameworks. Secondly, Afrokology demands a commitment towards journalism ethics from an African standpoint, reimagining journalism ethics from an

African/global South perspective. In essence, Afrokology as deployed in Mano's chapter is underpinned by key values of conviviality and incompleteness, with emphasis on accommodating so-called 'other' knowledges and ethical norms from an African standpoint. Mano argues that the main objective is to build a resonant framework for ethical values and behaviour of African journalism. His chapter further reviews debates about ethics of African journalism and builds on Francis Kasoma's concept of Afriethics. Mano openly calls for a de-colonial approach to African journalism ethics. Afrokology according to him helps centre African ethics, derived from African lived experiences, in their own right not as appendages or mere add on to global ethics. In sum, the author contends that the digital age has amplified both the volume of vendetta journalism and its impact on society in African society. Such necessary corrective builds on Kasoma's Afriethics and proposes Afrokology as a viable heuristic tool for more relevant journalism ethics in Africa in the digital age.

References

BBC News (2005), 'French court bans Christ advert'. Retrieved from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4337031.stm. Accessed: 3 November 2020.

Cadwalladr, C. (2020), 'Fresh Cambridge Analytica leak "shows global manipulation is out of control"'. *The Guardian*, 4 January 2020. Retrieved from: Fresh Cambridge Analytica leak 'shows global manipulation is out of control' | Cambridge Analytica | The Guardian. Accessed: 23 May 2021.

Christians, C. (2010), 'The Ethics of Universal Being', in S. Ward and H. Wasserman (eds), *Media Ethics beyond Borders: A Global Perspective*. London: Routledge.

Cohen-Almagor, R. (2001), *Speech, Media and Ethics: The Limits of Free Expression*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Feinberg, J. (1984), *Harm to Others: The Moral Limits of the Criminal Law*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Fukuyama, F. (2018), 'Social media and censorship'. *The American Interest* (6 August). Retrieved from: https://www.the-american-interest.com/2018/08/08/social-media-and-censorship/. Accessed: 10 April 2021.

Garber, M. B., Hanssen, B. and Walkowitz, R. L. (2000), *The Turn to Ethics*. New York: Routledge.

Guyer, J. (2015), 'Political cartooning after the Charlie Hebdo attacks'. *Nieman Reports*, Winter 2015 2015.

Hall, S. (1973), *Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse*. Birmingham: Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies.

Hanafi, S. (2009), 'Cultural difference or cultural hegemony? Contextualizing the Danish cartoon controversy within migration spaces'. *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* 2, 136–152.

Hanafi, S. (2020), 'Macron's populism and Islam The election strategy that forges a new populism through its conceptualization of freedom of expression and "political Islam"'. *Open Democracy*, 2 November 2020. Retrieved from: https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/openmovements/macrons-populism-and-islam/. Accessed: 3 November 2020.

Miladi, N. (2021), 'The discursive representation of Islam and Muslims in the British tabloid press'. *Journal of Applied Journalism and Media Studies*, 10(1), 117–138.

Morey, P. and Yakin, A. (2011), *Framing Muslims: Stereotyping and Representation after 9/11*. Cambridge and Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Nicas, J. (2018), 'Alex Jones and Infowars content is removed from Apple, Facebook and YouTube'. *The New York Times*, 6 August. Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/06/technology/infowars-alex-jones-apple-facebook-spotify.html. Accessed: 10 April 2021.

Nietzsche, F. (2014), *Beyond Good and Evil*. London: Millennium Publication.

Poole, E. (2002), *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims*. London: I. B.Tauris.

Richardson, J. (2004), *(Mis)Representing Islam: The Racism and Rhetoric of British Broadsheet Newspapers*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing.

Riddle, K. (2014), 'The Case of Media Violence: Who is Responsible for Protecting Children from Harm?', in M. Drumwright (ed.), *Ethical Issues in Communication Professions: New Agencies in Communication*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 65–84.

Said, E. (1997), *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. New York: Vintage Books.

Shah, N. A. (2017), 'Charlie Hebdo: Testing the limits of freedom of expression'. *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights*, 14(1), 83–111. https://doi.org/10.1515/mwjhr-2017-0007

Shaheen, J. (2009), *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People*. New York: Olive Branch Press.

The Telegraph. (2020), 'Emmanuel Macron on Prophet Mohammed cartoons: It is not my role to limit freedom of speech'. *The Telegraph*, 1 November. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vu0JRs1KrAk. Accessed: 8 August 2021.

Zulaika, J. and Douglass, W. V. (1996), *Terror and Taboo: The Follies, Fables, and Faces of Terrorism*. New York: Routledge.

Part 1

Media ethics revisited

1 Political correctness in a global age

The ethical implications of a hegemonic discourse

Andrew Pilkington

Introduction: What is political correctness?

We are continually being reminded that we live in a world where political correctness is pervasive. And yet the concept itself remains unclear and indeed contested. A few writers embrace the term to signal their belief in the importance of being inclusive, especially in language, and their concern to redress the disadvantages faced by minority groups: 'PC fosters civility between diverse humans and … at its best, is sensitivity to the feelings and needs of others' (Alibhai-Brown, 2018: 11, 21). More commonly, however, the term is used in a disparaging way to mock what is seen as a ludicrous attempt to avoid the real issues (see Ridler below) or warn us of the dangerous new culture threatening free speech and plain honest speaking (see Hitchens below). In the process a contrast is often drawn between political correctness and common sense: 'Voters seek return to common sense in revolt against political correctness' announces a headline in one broadsheet (Shipman, 2020).

> Political correctness does not address the real problem faced by ethnic minorities, says head of the National Black Police Association … Andrew Gaye, an inspector with the Police Service of Northern Ireland told the Sunday Telegraph that this sensitivity may have gone 'too far in some stages' such as leaving people unable to call a black coffee black coffee. (Ridler, 2020)
>
> I fear anyone who dissents from today's pervasive culture of political correctness will be visited by the Thought Police … so how long until anyone who writes an article like this is dragged away in handcuffs. (Hitchens, 2020)

In 2017 Trevor Phillips, the first Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, presented a documentary on British television entitled, 'Has political correctness gone mad?'. This question is commonly asked and answered in the affirmative (as in Bond, 2018). I shall restrict myself here to two examples where this common refrain is evident: the lampooning of an analysis of a children's book (Brown, 2019) and the response of a supermarket to a complaint (Young, 2019).

DOI: 10.4324/9781003203551-3