

the PEACE JOURNALIST

IN THIS ISSUE

- Project connects Indians and Pakistanis
- Dispatches from Uganda, Yemen, Nigeria, Turkey, Ethiopia
- A unique feminist perspective on PJ



Launching a PJ guide in Afghanistan



Probing the link between Peace Journalism and

Humanitarianism

Cover photo--

Al Yasmine camp, Bekaa Valley, Lebanon, 2019; by Cilene Victor.

The Peace Journalist is a semi-annual publication of the Center for Global Peace Journalism at Park University in Parkville, Missouri. The Peace Journalist is dedicated to disseminating news and information for teachers, students, and practitioners of PJ.

Submissions are welcome from all. We are seeking shorter submissions (300-500 words) detailing peace journalism projects, classes, proposals, etc. We also welcome longer submissions (800-1200 words) about peace or conflict sensitive journalism projects or programs, as well as academic works from the field. We do NOT seek general submissions about peace projects, but are instead focused only on articles with a strong media angle.

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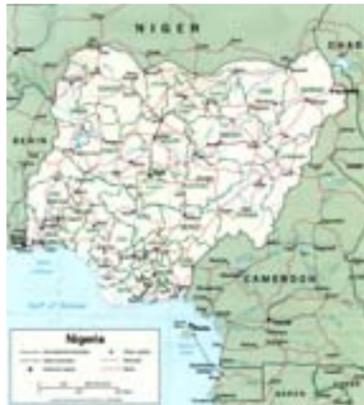
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What is Peace Journalism?

Peace Journalism is when editors and reporters make choices that improve the prospects for peace. These choices, including how to frame stories and carefully choosing which words are used, create an atmosphere conducive to peace and supportive of peace initiatives and peacemakers, without compromising the basic principles of good journalism. (Adapted from Lynch/McGoldrick, *Peace Journalism*). Peace Journalism gives peacemakers a voice while making peace initiatives and non-violent solutions more visible and viable.

A number of valuable peace journalism resources, including curriculum packets, online links, as well as back issues of *The Peace Journalist* can be found at www.park.edu/peacecenter.

Center for Global Peace Journalism

The Center for Global Peace Journalism works with journalists, academics, and students worldwide to improve reporting about conflicts, societal unrest, reconciliation, solutions, and peace. Through its courses, workshops, lectures, this magazine, blog, and other resources, the Center encourages media to reject sensational and inflammatory reporting, and produce counter-narratives that offer a more nuanced view of those who are marginalized—ethnic/racial/religious minorities, women, youth, and migrants.

The first time I put out a call for submissions to this magazine, almost 10 years ago, I half expected to get one or two articles, leaving me to figure out how to fill an entire magazine by myself.

Instead, I continue to be amazed and thrilled not only by the quality and volume of submissions about peace journalism, but also with the contributors' willingness to share their stories for nothing but my thanks.

This is all doubly true during the Covid 19 pandemic. I had expected peace journalism research and project work to ground to a halt after last March. I was, once again, mistaken.

A quick glance at the table of contents reveals a wealth of stories about ongoing PJ project work in places as diverse as Uganda and Afghanistan, where peace journalism events and trainings have even been

Editor's Notebook

held in person. A number of other Zoom peace journalism workshops and seminars are underway, including a fascinating one involving Indian and Pakistani journalists.

Peace journalism researchers and thinkers are also busy considering a feminist approach to PJ, social media negativity and PJ, and how PJ can benefit from the techniques of slow journalism.

I hope in reading this edition of *The Peace Journalist* that you, like me, will be inspired and energized by the drive and commitment of peace journalism's advocates and practitioners around the world.

If our colleagues can continue carrying PJ's torch in war-torn Afghanistan and Yemen during a pandemic, the rest of us don't have much excuse for not redoubling our own efforts.
--Steven Youngblood

Contributors

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Gloria Laker (*Uganda, page 6*) is a Ugandan award winning journalist and a peace journalism trainer. Gloria runs the Uganda Refugees and Migration Media Network.

Sabir Musa is young and passionate peace journalist based in Arua City.



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School of Applied Policy and Social Sciences researching the role of archives documenting incarceration in societies affected by conflict. Her work falls broadly into critical theory with an anthropological approach to fieldwork and focuses on viewing linear time as a social construct.

Rukmini Banerjee (*Turkey/Refugee reporting, page*



16) is the President of HasNa, a Washington, DC-based nonprofit organization with a mission to facilitate cross-cultural understanding and reconciliation between divided communities and to reduce barriers to positive peace.

Innocent Iroaganachi (*Nigeria, page 18*) is a member



and media correspondent with SIGNIS (World Catholic Association of Communication), where he has participated in various media related workshops and trainings.

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Masoud Momin (*Afghanistan, page 22*) is a freelance media trainer. He worked



with Mediothek Afghanistan and Nai Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan. He has conducted many trainings for Afghan journalists.

Is human suffering Invisible? How media under-report humanitarian crises

newspapers. In most cases, it amplified their power of omnipresence. According to the report "Measuring digital development: Facts and figures 2019," it is estimated that 53.6% of the global population, or 4.1 billion people, were using the internet in 2019, including

86.6% from developed countries.

Considering this high level of access to information, these questions must be explored: Why hasn't human suffering been made more visible? How should attention be given that might prevent the perpetuation of human rights violations? Is it enough to set a humanitarian agenda on migration and starvation caused by conflicts, wars, and disasters, for example?

As journalists, we must improve our coverage to help society achieve peace and justice, and especially to reduce people's suffering across the world. This includes victims of civil wars, armed conflicts, climate change, natural disasters, economic and political instabilities, and the pandemic. This coverage must include minorities' struggle for dignity, justice, and peace, made even more difficult by these challenges.

It is crucial to discuss how the media has reported humanitarian crises and avoided hate speech. For that, it is necessary to understand the dynamics of the information production process, which I have called the lifespan of journalistic information. This process starts in our hands.

It means that, as journalists, we must be aware of how the narratives, perspectives, and approaches can impact the perception of the audiences on national and international realities. Our role is to eliminate the invisibility of the people in need and at the same time to rescue our moral and ethical commitment to humanity. For that, it is necessary to set a humanitarian agenda in the public spheres as a crucial condition to discuss, face, reduce, and eliminate the root causes of wars, conflicts, disasters, and other social tragedies.

Continued on next page

Imagine a world where disasters, climate change, civil wars, and armed conflicts happened simultaneously, impacting dozens of countries, and making the first three decades of the 21st century a portrait of the worst humanitarian crisis since the end of the Second World War.

That was our world before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, which, for over a year now, has increased the suffering of millions of people and exacerbated the weaknesses of political and social institutions in facing the problem. In 2021, the first World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul, in 2016, celebrates its fifth anniversary, although it seems that its alerts and appeals, in essence, materialized in the Agenda for Humanity, have not been heard. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), it is estimated that in 2021 there will be around 239 million people in need in 57 countries.

Before moving on to the discussion, I would like to go back in time a little. Even though the Rwandan genocide was one of the most brutal conflicts of the 20th century's last decade, it was also one of the most invisible events in the Western mainstream media. This lack of coverage in turn was used as an excuse internationally for not knowing what was happening in the African country.

Considering that in 1991, technological advances innovated international news coverage, making possible the live transmission of Gulf War images, what would explain the invisibility of the Rwandan genocide three years later?

This is not a 'last century' problem. The five editions of Care International's annual report "Suffering in Silence - The 10 most under-reported humanitarian crises" have tried to sensitize journalists and public opinion about the suffering of millions of people. That sensitization has often failed.

At the beginning of the era of the connected society, it was feared that the internet would eliminate the radio, TV and

These root causes have been underreported. Journalism students in different parts of the world continue to share their dream, asking their professors how they can prepare to become international correspondents to cover wars, believing they will promote peace. Is there something wrong with these students' dream?

The problem is their understanding of peace, which they see as a total absence of conflicts. It is like, "After the war ends, there will be peace."

From the perspective of Dr. Johan Galtung, our main reference in peace studies, here we have an example of "negative peace" – when peace means an absence of visible violence. Many people understand peace only in this sense, a reductionist comprehension of the subject which hides the interconnection between justice and conflict. Conflict does not always necessarily mean violence, and peace is more than the absence of wars.

Galtung's concept of positive peace is more complex and involves a social system in which people are able to manage conflicts positively, it is "the integration of human society." Under positive peace, there is a lack of systemic structural and cultural violence (conditions that fuel conflict). Positively peaceful societies allow all individuals to self-actualize.

In contexts of generalized injustice, as we can see in displacement by disasters, climate change and wars, positive peace is a crucial condition to follow the lifespan of the struggle for justice which starts when we publish the first news about the issue.

These concepts underlie peace journalism. The first lesson we have learned from Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick in their foundational

work "Peace Journalism" is that "peace journalism is when editors and reporters make choices – of what stories to report and how to report them – which create opportunities for society to consider and to value non-violent responses to conflict."



Photo left-Author Cilene Victor and her former master's student Lilian Sanches in Karbala, Iraq in 2019. Photo above-Victor and Sanches during a lecture in Qom, Iran in 2019.

Given that, we can identify a considerable connection between peace journalism and humanitarian journalism. This is represented by the research of Martin Scott, Mel Bunce, and Kate Wright, who have examined media coverage of crises. In the most complete study on the theme, "The state of humanitarian journalism," the authors offer possible ways to guide a humanitarian media agenda.

More than removing people's suffering of invisibility and opacity, the main role of humanitarian journalism is to provide coverage guided by humanitarian ethics--coverage that respects the dignity of minority groups.

As journalists we have to observe and cover the root causes of injustice, thus helping society avoid new social tragedies while laying a foundation for positive peace.

The research conducted in the workgroup Humanitarian Journalism and Media Intervention of the Communication Program at Metodista University of São Paulo, Brazil examines the connection between peace journalism and humanitarian journalism, and the need

to avoid the invisibility of human suffering. The researchers want to contribute to highlight the root causes of wars, disasters, climate change and conflicts, putting journalism at the center of the worldwide struggle for human dignity.

--Cilene Victor



Election violence menaces Ugandan journalists

PJ, safety trainings provide some assistance

Before Uganda's recent election, several media development organizations played a leading role in training local journalists to prepare them for a balanced, professional, and peaceful coverage of the January, 2021 general election.

One such media developer is DW Akademie, Germany's leading media development organization. They tailored their election project by training journalists in five of its partner radio stations across the country in key areas including democracy, peace, and electoral reporting and media law in Uganda.

As a local peace journalism trainer on this project, the trainings were timely, as many of the radio journalists were not aware of how to cover the election in a more professional way.

PJ/Election Trainings

During the trainings, it became clearer that peace journalism and electoral reporting was much needed given the tense political atmosphere which began in October with election violence witnessed during the elections of the ruling National Resistance Movement party. These elections were associated with violence in many parts of the country, and this laid a foundation for the need for safety and PJ training.



In Arua, trainer Gloria Laker discusses peace journalism and responsible electoral reporting.

These trainings resulted in an improved media approach in these selected radio stations, according to the trainees.

"We have been running a peace journalism radio program call 'let's talk peace' here at Radio Pacis (Arua, Uganda), but we were not sure of how to do it right. But now after training, my manager, who is also the producer of this show, is incorporating some of the peace journalism strategies and styles we learnt from the training into our peace program during and after the election," said Sabir Musa, a trained journalist.

Violence against the media

Safety training was part of the peace and electoral journalism workshops. Alex Pithua of Choice FM radio in Gulu was careful and applied the safety tips given ahead of the election.

"I encountered violence on two occasions in Gulu and I kept close on the side of police and luckily I was wearing a press reflector jacket which also saved me," he said.

Unfortunately, despite several safety training tips different media developers gave journalists, more and more journalists were this time detained and beaten up and their gadgets (recorders, cameras, etc.) destroyed while at work. Journalists said this problem was worse than during previous elections.

According to the Human Right Watch, Uganda's recent elections were associated with violence and human rights abuses. Security restrictions on journalists resulted to beating of many reporters covering the election.

The Committee to Protest Journalists has published similar reports. For example, "On February 17, a group of Ugandan military police officers used sticks and batons to beat at least 10

journalists covering opposition politician Robert Kyagulanyi, known popularly as Bobi Wine, while he delivered a petition to a United Nations office in Kololo, a neighborhood of the capital Kampala, according to nine of those journalists, who spoke to CPJ, media reports, and statements by local press rights groups."

Journalists became targets of security personnel. Many reporters faced arrests and were beaten by security forces. A month before the presidential election, the Uganda Media Council (UMI) issued statement to regulate journalists by requiring them to register. According to the statement, "The Media Council has been registering reporters...to ensure the industry is well-monitored and sanitized from quacks."

The decision to register journalists was protested by media practitioners who challenged the legality of registration. Following the outcry, the regulation was later withdrawn. However, in the weeks leading up to the election cycle and on voting day, journalists in the West Nile region were targets of intimidation and arrest.

In central Uganda, news of the shooting of journalist Moses Bwayo on 5th November sent rays of fear to many journalists. Another reporter, Ashraf Kasirye, was reportedly injured while covering election campaigns in Masaka district.

Moving to West Nile, Vision Group's journalist in Nebbi, Emmanuel Ojok, was arrested by the army and later detained at Nebbi Central Police station prior to the election. At the time of his arrest, Ojok was covering a raid carried out by army forces at the home of an opposition candidate, Robert Onega, who was standing for a municipality as a member of the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) party. Ojok

Continued on next page

Uganda from Pg 6



Irene Abolo Atto is among the eight journalists recently beaten by security forces after the January presidential election.

was released days later and started treatment for the injuries inflicted on him while he was detained.

In another incident, NTV journalist Iceta Scovin says he was forced to delete photos captured and recordings during Presidential and Parliamentary election in Obongi District.

Oguzu Alua Ronald, a seasoned news reporter with Arua One FM, was also briefly detained by police in Vurra Sub County. Oguzu was arrested at a graduation ceremony for newly

trained police constables who were to provide security during the election. According to the Oguzu, he was accused of accessing the venue without seeking permission.

Obongi Resident District Commissioner Gorre Gofin called for teamwork and peace in the post elections. However, the West Nile Press Association, which brings together different media houses in the region, has spoken out against the escalating numbers of violations and condemned acts of security officers against journalists.

Internet shutdown

Away from violence against journalists, the media also face numerous challenges submitting their stories following a decision by the Ugandan communication authorities ((https://acme-ug.org)) to shut down internet and social media.

Despite these challenges, there were no reports of media induced violence during and after the election for Uganda's president and members of parliament. Before polling day, different stakeholders called for peaceful, free, fair and credible elections. To ensure that this was achieved, members of the media play a vital role through election reporting and informing the public.

Journalist Alex Pithua of Choice FM radio in Gulu said when the Ugandan government shut down internet, their radio station did not broadcast news for three days. "Usually we submit our stories via email to the editor and this became hard for us as reporters and even for our editor who could not access international news or search. So everything was a mess for journalists because of the shutdown," he said.

--Gloria Laker and Sabir Musa

Reporting Beyond the Problem

From Civic Journalism to Solutions Journalism

In a time of journalistic disruption, an over-abundance of negative news (heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic), extreme political partisanship, and low levels of public trust in the news media, we believe productive, socially responsible forms of reporting that go beyond problem-based narratives offer a way forward.

The new book, "Reporting Beyond the Problem: From Civic Journalism to Solutions Journalism" provides an in-depth examination of socially-responsible news reporting practices, such as constructive journalism, solutions journalism, and peace journalism. Each chapter focuses on one reporting form, defining it and detailing its evolution and status among scholars and practitioners, as well as discussing its known effects and future direction.

These approaches hold true to journalism's professional values—seek truth, minimize harm, act independently,

be accountable and transparent—while implementing productive, socially-responsible

reporting approaches that inform the public with the understanding that our democracy cannot prosper without an informed populace.

We believe that caring about the world does not make journalists activists. Embracing our shared goal of making the world a better place through reporting that seeks meaningful impact—with an appropriate level of context, complexity and journalistic rigor—may just be an effective way to reach people.

This edited volume is the first academic book published on these forms of reporting in the United States and is scheduled to become available later this Spring.

--Karen McIntyre & Nichole Dahmen, book editors

Feminist PJ seeks to empower authentic voices

“Passing the mic” to women

During the Rwandan Genocide, radio was one of the key enablers in orchestrating the genocide – pointing out localities where the Tutsis were so Hutu militia could find and kill them. In doing so, the media exacerbated tensions and channeling hatred, contributing to genocide.

In Serbia, television was deployed to convey propaganda that would stir ethnic tensions in the run up to the civil war. In the former Soviet Republic of Georgia, nationalist mythology was propagated by the media, and deployed to exacerbate the already simmering tensions over boundary disputes. Years later, even if the media hasn't been so proactively involved in facilitating conflict and genocide, a subtle undercurrent that borrows from these instances continues.

War journalism

War journalism keeps war alive. It is the front-runner element that campaigns for the prolonged business of war. For the uninitiated, as the name suggests, War Journalism refers to journalism that is focused on war, and encourages a presentation that [1] is heavily-oriented towards violence and projects the conflict arena in a two-party and one-goal deal. It confines itself to closed spaces and time, and studies the cause and effect only in the arena. It typically concerns itself only with the visible or tangible effects of violence, making the conflict opaque. The focus is on an ‘us-and-them’ rhetoric while seeing the enemy ‘them’ as the problem and dehumanising them. War journalism is heavily reactive in that it waits for violence to start before it does or says anything, and is heavily propaganda-oriented, seeking only to expose ‘their’ untruths while helping to cover up ‘our’ own flaws.

It tends towards the elite, by focusing on ‘their’ violence and ‘our’ suffering, calling ‘them’ evildoers and focusing only on the elite segments of society – spokespersons and peacemakers. In sum, what War Journalism does is create a hype that gets everyone to say “Never Again” and employ powerful sounding hashtags – but it stops with that. Once the conflict is resolved or becomes old news, there is a massive decline regarding concern over the issue, yet without ever understanding the root of the problem in the first place. This leaves a sort of Band-Aid on the sore, without any concern for preventing the conflict from recurring.

Take any conflict in the world today. There are a range of

“
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seeks to center
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lived experi-
ences shape the
narrative...and
present their
truth.”

different narratives, conflicting ones no less. Each passes off a version as the truth, some building on propaganda and a political agenda that they are either paid for, or were founded for, in the first place. This makes getting an accurate idea of the events around the country or the issue virtually impossible.

Assessing the role of the media globally, it is no guess that reporting on most conflict zones presents a torrid dilemma. With the many actors involved in any conflict, there are scores of outlets that offer partisan accounts of the news. Ethics continue to be flouted with tampered videos being passed off as news, media houses imposing value judgments and aligning themselves by taking sides. That a biased report or one constructed on untruths can culminate in distrust, disillusionment and cynicism about the media is a given. In an already polarised society that is divided, or on the brink of conflict, a section of the society can end-up feeling disadvantaged. Their voices being silenced renders the essence of a democracy redundant.

A community of people who subscribe to such forms of media reporting, where violence continues to remain the key theme, will be more inclined to sponsor or create conflict. The saying that history is written by the hands of the victors rings true in the context of the media. Accordingly, the foundations of hatred will continue to be built upon, and a future citizenry swearing by hatred and anger will be built on the founts of false or incorrect or unverified information.

Peace journalism

In contrast, Peace Journalism doesn't concern itself with the winner-versus-loser rhetoric, but rather zooms right into the root of the very issue. It portrays conflicts in realistic terms and encourages the exploration of backgrounds and contexts of conflict formation. It presents the causes and options of every side involved, without introducing the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ perspective.

It effectively serves the purpose by [2] being transparent in the representation of the causes, background and issues concerning a conflict; giving a voice to the rival parties involved and their views; exposing lies, cover-ups and attempts to cover-up as well as culprits on all sides unequivocally; revealing the suffering inflicted on people of all parties involved in the conflict; paying attention to peace stories and efforts for peace and providing informa-

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www.park.edu/peacecenter

Feminist PJ from Pg 8

tion on post-war developments. Peace Journalism is about transparent journalism that relies on facts and explores the reality of the situation.

Calling for a Feminist Peace Journalism

Even as peace journalism centers on the root cause and asks for attention to be drawn to solutions, the truth, and the realities surrounding a conflict, feminist peace journalism draws upon the principles of intersectionality and standpoint feminism [3]. It seeks to center those whose lived experiences shape the narrative, presents their truth only with the exercise of their agency - and in their original, authentic voice rather than have another occupy or appropriate that space.

Feminist peace journalism addresses structural violence and cultural violence, and acknowledges the need to dismantle these factors by shining a light on the root causes and the enabling environment that culminate in particular forms of violence.

Central to feminist peace journalism is gaze: who is producing what, for whom, and to what end? Feminist inquiry aims at subverting the patriarchal male gaze, and instead, strives to look at the world, gathering and interpreting knowledge through the subversion of patriarchal structures, and to look at the world with a non-cis-het male lens. It serves to question structures that are oppressive, discriminatory, unequal and exclusionary.

Put together, Feminist Peace Journalism aims at passing the mic to facilitate transparent journalism, storytelling, truth-telling, and creating information by relying on facts, and exploring the realities of the situations around us. Drawing from the values of intersectional and contemporary standpoints feminism, feminist peace journalism takes the formula of peace journalism and amplifies it further by centering the voices of those that have been marginalized, excluded, oppressed, and talked over. It is cautious about who holds the pen while telling a story, and builds in a committed, and dedicated approach to stay away from sensationalism.

The media as a platform is meant to crystallise public opinion as only one part of its duty. Its primary responsibility is pivoted around being a conduit between the incident and those who should be informed of it. Deploying feminist peace values, the media would not only have a duty to collect facts, ascertain and verify the

truth behind them, and put them out before the masses in black and white. It is not for the media to insinuate, to decide, or to pass value judgment on any subject it explores: but to deliver the truth as it is, by centering those whose truth it is only if they exercise their agency freely and fully in deciding whether to tell their story or not, and accordingly, if they decide to tell their story, then how.

The role of the media

The duty of the media begins and ends with the sole duty of dispensing impartial information for public awareness. In the course of doing so, it has a duty to be blind to prejudice, and to expose facts that are grounded in committed verification. The role of the media in containing tension by reporting pure fact cannot be emphasised enough. As a voice that offers information, the media is perhaps among the earliest to know about the country's fragile state, or at the very least, to know where the country's fragile areas lie. Instead of exacerbating conflict by playing up on these divisive aspects, the media should function from a place of commitment to truth-telling.

Refraining from alarmist or over sensationalised reporting will go a long way towards keeping the media within its line of duty. What the media needs to be providing is wholesome information and a statement in clear terms that what it does not know, it does not know. Bridging the objective with purported statements covered with the subjective are counterproductive at best, and only go to create space for baseless propaganda to thrive.

--Kirthi Jayakumar

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If the events at the US capitol in January revealed nothing else, they underscored the increasing importance of the peace journalism approach (and the dire consequences of traditional journalism) as well as peace journalism's connection to the field of media literacy. Media literacy, according to Cortland.edu, has five key principles: All media are constructions; the media construct reality; audiences negotiate meaning in media; media have commercial implications; and media contain ideological and value messages.

PJ and media literacy are, in fact, two sides of the same coin. While it is vital that media embrace more productive peace journalism approaches, it's equally crucial that news consumers are able to intelligently, thoughtfully, and critically receive media messages.

The chart shows my hypothesis about the relationship between media literacy and peace journalism. The basic premise is that individuals who are more media literate are more willing and able to break out of their media echo chambers, and better equipped to sniff out bias and inaccuracy. Thus, media literate individuals are more receptive to peace journalism style messaging, including counternarratives, bridge building, giving peacebuilders a voice, and rejecting propaganda and "us vs. them" story framing.

Media literacy projects launched

Leveraging links between PJ and media lit

With this in mind, the Center for Global Peace Journalism recently concluded two media literacy projects—one in the Kansas City area, and the other in Yemen.

Kansas City media literacy project

As American wound down the road toward the November election, it became abundantly clear, if it wasn't already,

that social and traditional media were being weaponized by political operatives and malevolent foreign actors against the American people.

How can we fight back? I think one of the best ways is through media literacy. Media literacy is the thrust behind a project I spearheaded last year. Sponsored by a Citizen Diplomacy Action Fund Rapid Response award from the U.S. Department of State, the project was titled, "Media Literacy for Students: Lessons from Covid-19."

It kicked off in September with a Zoom conference for Center Middle and Center High School students from Kansas City, and college students from Johnson County Community College

(Overland Park, KS) and Park University (Parkville, MO).

Co-presenters Lewis Diuguid (journalist/multicultural education trainer), Allan Leonard (Fact Check Northern Ireland), and I presented the attendees with an introduction

Peace Journalism and Media Literacy		
Hypothesis: Media literate consumers are more receptive to peace journalism framing and storytelling approaches		
	MEDIA ILLITERATE	MEDIA LITERATE
RECEPTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Propaganda-pro "us"; or anti "them" --Anti "them" news --Misinformation/disinformation about "them" --Pro "us" news --Sensational news framing --Voice for "our" voiceless --Inflammatory, demonizing language about "them" --Spreading misinformation like blue lies (lies that are told on behalf of a group) to benefit a political, economic, social, racial/ethnic group; or to denigrate/damage an opposing group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Balanced, neutral news --Bridge building, peacebuilding stories between "us" and "them" --Voice of the voiceless stories on all sides --Solutions oriented stories --Analyzing/discussing journalism responsibility (peace?), ethics, and objectivity
SEMI-RECEPTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Balanced, neutral news --Solutions orientation stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Misinformation/disinformation about "us" or "them" --Counternarrative stories about "them" --Sensational, inflammatory news
UN-RECEPTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Propaganda—pro "them" or anti "us" --Misinformation about "us" --Bridge building, peacebuilding stories between "us" and "them" --Counternarrative stories about "them" --Stories giving their voiceless a voice --Thoughtful consideration about journalism responsibility (peace?), ethics, and objectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Propaganda about "us" or "them" --Sensational news framing --Inflammatory, demonizing language --Spreading misinformation like blue lies (lies that are told on behalf of a group) to benefit a political, economic, social, racial/ethnic group; or to denigrate/damage an opposing group

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the PEACE JOURNALIST

Literacy from Pg 10

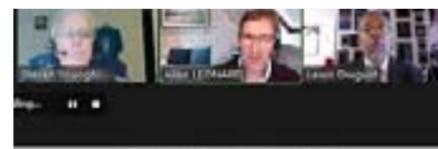
to mis, dis, and mal-information and an overview of mis/disinformation in media reports about Covid-19 and the recent civil rights protests. We armed the students with information about how to sniff out fake news (e.g. consider the source, the target audience, double-check info, examine the writer's motivations, etc.); how to conduct their own fact checking; and how to implement their own basic content analysis study to detect media biases.

The students did an excellent job coming up with coding lists designed to discern differences, for example, in reports about hydroxychloroquine (a Covid "cure" promoted by Donald Trump) on Fox News vs. CNN.

Central Middle School Principal Dr. Jarius Jones was thrilled by his students' engagement in the project. He said, "... Center Middle School and Center High School scholars have been afforded the opportunity to apply critical thinking skills to real-world issues. Knowing that relevant topics and current events are being examined during the study, is exactly the experience we want for every student."

KC literacy project concludes with summit, magazine

The project culminated in December with a Media Literacy



Above-From the media and literacy seminar for KC students. Below-Flyer for media literacy for journalists program in Yemen.



the_misreport_digital-web). The students also produced a podcast (<https://soundcloud.com/user-961623623/media-literary-podcast>). Both of these products were professionally executed.

Yemen media literacy project

On March 18, Steven Youngblood, director of the Center for Global Peace Journalism, conducted a media literacy workshop for Yemeni journalists sponsored by the US Embassy in Yemen and US State Department.

The 2.5 hour seminar via Zoom covered in the introductory segment a discussion about whether journalists can recognize fake news, as well as definitions of terms like mis- and dis-information. The seminar transitioned into an overview of news media literacy and its principles. Then, the journalists examines mis- and disinformation case studies, especially focusing on the "Infodemic" of false information about Covid-19.

The final segment of the seminar armed the journalists, who came primarily from Yemen with a few Egyptians and Turks sprinkled in, how to combat misinformation. The tools discussed included fact checking, social media verification, how to educate their readers/viewers on how to be smarter news consumers, and how to check their own work and the work of others using content analysis tools. Saleh Al-Mansoob, a reporter for Al-Jumhuriya newspaper, said, "The training information has been useful to us as journalists. We learned about how we can verify misleading news and rumors. What terms should we use? How do we get real information in light of the Covid-19 pandemic? We have gained new skills. This training was thorough."

--Steven Youngblood

As part of the project, the students submitted articles that were compiled into a magazine, *The Misreport-A Study of Media Literacy* (<https://issuu.com/peace-journalism/docs/>)

Projects builds bridges across boundaries

Pakistani, Indian journalists unite

The East-West Center, a State Dept. grantee, launched a project titled "Reporting on Cross-Border Issues of Mutual Concern" for 80 Indian and Pakistani journalists last year. The project has included subject matter seminars (economy, environment, agriculture, and health) as well as more generalized seminars on multimedia production and peace journalism.

In the project, one journalist from each country is working together as a team on a cross-border media story to be published or broadcast within the region and on the project's website (<https://www.journalistsforchange.org/>). Two peace journalism workshops have been held thus far, one in September last year, and one in January this year.

The two pieces below were written by a Pakistani and an Indian participant in the project, which will culminate with a face to face workshop later in 2021 in Kathmandu, Nepal.



An Indian Perspective

"Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding." --Albert Einstein
 "There is a higher court than courts of justice, and that is the court of conscience. It supersedes all other courts." --Mahatma Gandhi
 "Journalism is in fact history on the run." --Thomas Griffith

These three quotes sum up the meaning of journalism, how it should work

and why it should aim at building peace and work for inclusive growth.

In the month of January 2020, I came to know about the first-ever India-Pakistan cross-border journalism project by the East West Center (EWC) and I was really excited to get an opportunity to join the group of journalists from both the neighbouring countries to discuss and work on cross-border issues of mutual concern.

A series of workshops was scheduled in Kathmandu in the mid of 2019, but COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown forced the EWC to postpone the physical gathering by one year. In its place were two seminars featuring much-needed interaction started on Zoom.

The cross border journalism project features interactions within subject matter areas (agriculture, economy, environment, health) as well as more broad areas like multimedia production and peace journalism.

In the very first interactions with organizers Susan Kriefels and Carolyn Eguchi from EWC and presenters Stephen Franklin, Steven Youngblood, Randall Smith, and Steve Rice, and discussions with selected fellow journalists from both India and Pakistan, I realised that this project was going to be one of the best collaborations I have ever done in my entire professional career.

For me, it was the first interaction with anyone from Pakistan, and the continuous discussion with them on cross-border issues and their solutions made me think that people from both countries have been facing almost the same issues for ages.

The EWC team which initiated the project brought together 80 selected journalists on a single platform to brainstorm, ideate, and work on cross-border topics directly related to the people living on both sides of the border.

Since I am a certified fact-checker associated with Google News Initiative India Training Network as well, I used this opportunity to connect with fellow journalists and debunk fake claims about Pakistan which are viral on social media platforms in India.



I got immediate support and required quotes in the series of fact checked articles from colleagues across the border - Naveed Akbar (Senior reporter of AAJ News), Tahir Amin (Staff Reporter at Daily Business Recorder), and senior journalist Lubna Jerar Naqvi.

I became a part of a separate group with Usman Hanif, Safina Nabi, and Shahzada Irfan. We are all are working collectively on a few topics assigned to us.

The regular online interaction and training sessions helped all of us to understand the issues and most importantly look for solutions through carefully created articles covering all the cross-border identical topics.

Personally, I am very much excited to finish the story assignments quickly, meet everyone in Kathmandu later this year, and take forward the collaboration to a new level where we all become the change agents to establish peace in the South Asia region.

--Pratyush Ranjan

A Pakistani perspective

"Lucknow (India) is cold now....I believe Karachi is comfortable," said Biswajeet Bannerjee while we chatted online while discussing a story we were working on.

"Yes, we have mild winters compared to elsewhere." I wrote. "My father used to live in Lucknow when he was a child. He loved that city."

Continued on next page

Q: How have you used peace journalism in your work during the last four months (after the September workshop)?
 Quotes collected from East West Center/Center for Global Peace Journalism Zoom conference participants, February, 2021.

--Collaboration in fact checking work and made it cross-border practice to debunk misinformation
 --Covering the communally polarising issue (redacted) in India, I looked at the impact the hateful politics and the impact it has on the minds of children who are being taught to hate their classmates and friends from other faiths

--I am working in a conflict area, but I tried to cross check from both sides of LoC
 --Coordination for cross boarder stories

--I try to stop the sharing or spreading of hate content on different social media platforms especially
 --Look at yourself as an independent observer and not partisan to any side giving the other side a disadvantage

--In December, I did a story ... holding both the Indian and Pakistan states accountable for the region's volatility and not just peddling one state's narrative
 --Restrained using inflammatory words

--More selective about language/ tend to do more personalize stories/talk about people's life
 --Be careful reporting on conflict zone

--Fact checking and excluding all hate incidents

was the core of my stories
 --I work for (an Indian daily newspaper). In our daily meeting, I have become the kind of 'Voice of Pakistan' after attending our meetings

--We are writing about India sending vaccines to various countries including Pakistan under the Covax initiative. Interdependence is one of the important reasons for peace
 --Fact checking during COVID rumours, especially ones that stigmatised a community or profession

--We in our group of three (from both sides) covered the story of farmers in detail.
 --Try to add all voices instead of giving one side of the story

--Have been more aware of the words I use in my copy to not make it provocative/

inflammatory but focused on giving information
 --I've used it for my college academic writings. It was helpful to look at security studies through the lens of peace journalism

--I have stopped writing words like Hindus and Muslims during conflicts, instead say two groups of different religion
 --I write about climate change often and I'm much more mindful now of reiterating how both the issues and solutions have to involve multiple countries

--Working on cross border water conflict but avoiding term "Indian Water Aggression"

Indian-Pakistani Reporters: How we use peace journalism

Pakistan, India from Pg 12

"This is really a nice city. You should visit Lucknow," wrote Biswajeet Bannerjee

"I wish I could. Is there an Urdu Shia College in Lucknow? My father used to study there," I wrote back.

"Yes, there is a Shia College in Lucknow. It is still there and has a good reputation," Bannerjee wrote. "I had a hunch that you have a link with Uttar Pradesh and Lucknow....."

This short online discussion brought two strangers in different countries, neither of whom ever visited the other's country, some common things.

It is amazing that East-West Centdf - a project based in Honolulu, Hawaii - would be the platform to give journalists in neighboring countries an opportunity to connect.

When I was selected by EWC, I thought it would be a series of workshops conducted online due to Covid and lockdown, it will be impersonal and routine. Happily, I was proved wrong when suddenly faces on the computer screen became familiar and everyone comfortably interacted.

One primary focus of the project was peace journalism, taught by Steven

Youngblood. Who knew the project was also an opportunity to make friends?

Susan Kreifels, Media Programs Manager of EWC, smiled as she encouraged journalists from both countries to brainstorm and produce interesting stories.

Participating in this project has made me realize making peace is tough and is an ongoing process. Peace journalism is a tough job but someone has to do it.

And that is exactly what Kreifels has

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Slow journalism is an effort to develop a form of truth-telling with room for nuance and complexity, also incorporating ideas of co-production and participation. This counters the normative ethos of modern-day journalism, which is intent on ‘breaking’ news to disseminate information quickly. This rapid and widespread dissemination

S L O W Slow journalism can be valuable peace tool

of information is often seen as a pillar of democracy through creating a more informed citizenry. However, this assumes that understanding is

based on information that is objective and concrete. This view is particularly difficult when considering reporting on peacebuilding efforts and from societies affected by conflict, which often are consumed by differing and contentious understandings of societal realities.

This is not to suggest that truth is malleable but rather to say that the most objective, or at least complete, truths are those that are co-produced and create room for discussion and various perspectives. Access to information, without the ability to also participate in contributing to that information, as a pillar of democratic practice main-

tains status quo and exclusionary systems of knowledge construction.

This perspective on knowledge dissemination has a long history. Consider the founding of the public library system in the United Kingdom—In 1850, a parliamentary act was passed making libraries open to the public. This was done out of a desire to give working class people access to information and ‘culture.’ However, this still maintained a hierarchical class system. The working class was invited to participate in a construction of culture of which they were not allowed a say.

Contextualizing this understanding of knowledge-building in the democratic theory of Jacques Rancière and Chantal Mouffe offers a framework for understanding the revolutionary nature of a ‘slow’ journalism for peace. Rancière understands democracy as working against the privatization of society. Rather than thinking of this as more State involvement in society, he sees this as more opportunity for individual citizen involvement in the State. In his seminal text *Hatred of Democracy*, he describes this as a process of “enlarging the public sphere.” An essential part of this process, according to Mouffe, is the institutionalization

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Pakistan, India from Pg 13

been working on, building peace in this region through projects of the EWC. These projects help journalists to see the story from other side and improve the way they have been doing journalism.

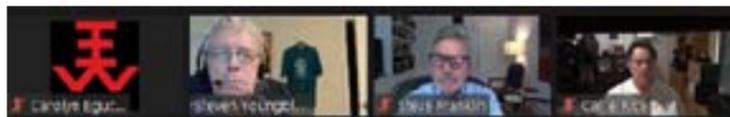
Building peace is harder than war. But Susan and experts from the EWC enable journalists from Pakistan and India to see the finer elements of stories that are otherwise hidden below the rhetoric.

And soon as South Asians usually do, we had a WhatsApp Group which began buzzing from the time it was created.

The second friend I made was Pratyush Ranjan, a fellow fact checker and journalist, had shared a story he needed fact checked about Pakistan and I volunteered. This was an interesting experience. As well as Vijay who has some great stories we are collaborating on.

We also met some amazing Indian women journalists who helped me with the story- Zeba Warsi and Shreya Pareek.

The EWC’s cross border journalism project has not only helped to improve the way journalism is done for cross border stories, but (the peace journalism instruction) also made us aware of how we report local sto-



ries that are sensitive. With delicate relations between our two countries, peace journalism is helping us to tackle sensitive stories more carefully, reporting facts without provocation.

During the initial days of the project, the Indian farmers’ protest was going on. Pakistan had a temple attack. And there were some incidents across the Line of Control (LoC). This was a test

for journalists from both sides participating in this project. And it was heartening to see mature approach from both sides. In fact, it was nice to see how many participants highlighted some stories from each side which they thought did not adhere to the rules of PJ and could have been done in a better way.

It is evident that despite being patriotic, they want to work towards peace and build bridges.

Peace journalism is an important tool to help try to mend relationships. Journalists have a duty to continue to speak above the din of hate in the region.

The EWC, Susan Kreifels, and the whole team should be commended for efforts to bring peace in the region and we hope this project continues for years to come to help build peace and lifelong friendships.

--Lubna Jerar

Slow from Pg 14

of dissent. This means understanding democracy as a conversation that should not aim for closure. Because democracy is a political structure based on creating conversation around best societal practices, ending this conversation means ending the opportunity for participation. Thinking of journalism as an effort to create spaces for ongoing conversations means accepting a form of journalism that does not seek quick conclusions. Walt Harrington argues that conducting journalism quickly causes writers “to fall back on well-worn themes and observations—interpretive clichés” and does allow “the time or frame of mind to see anything beyond that.”

This is a system of understanding I attempt in my own doctoral work. Before the coronavirus pandemic, I was conducting anthropological fieldwork in Germany. My PhD thesis aims to understand how peacebuilding efforts can be more participatory and democratic. My fieldwork consisted primarily of conducting qualitative ethnographic interviews with former political prisoners incarcerated within the Cold War-era East Germany, the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The interviews conducted were done based on structured dialogue, rather than a more traditional semi-structured or structured interview format. In this style, interview length is dictated by the participant and multiple interviews are conducted with a single participant. Although I focused each interview around similar themes, the conversation’s direction was heavily dictated by the interviewee and what they thought was important for me to know and understand in my research.

This is an act of collaborative knowledge production and a movement away from hierarchical preferences of knowledge from certain sources over others. It is an acknowledgement that the job of the anthropologist is not to act as a singular voice producing ostensibly objective knowledge but to reflexively engage in the knowledge building process while being critical of one’s own preconceived assumptions. Using this style places importance on the individual narrative as an essential part of building pluralistic and nuanced societal understanding, particularly in places with a contentious history and divided past. This follows a trend in contemporary anthropology towards viewing the work of the ethnographer as a collaborative project in understanding humanity with the participants. This collaborative approach problematizes the observer: subject binary endemic of traditional colonial ethnographic practice.

Johan Galtung argues that to reach a state of ‘positive’ peace, it is necessary to examine every day dominant structures that perpetuate structural violence and to introduce new ideas for changing or dismantling these structures. In Galtung’s understanding, structural violence is, at its very core, exclusion from participation. It is a limiting of potential. To slow down from the pace in which

these normative structures operate is to create the space to change them.

As an act of speaking peace into existence through telling the stories of peacebuilding and considering how peace might be maintained, the act of developing a slow journalism of peace is a radical step towards the more peaceful world that can be. Speaking of a sense of slowness is a radical choice to remove understanding from traditional linear temporality and traditional notions of progress. This removal allows for transformation.

Discussions of the potential of this transformative space are beginning in the peacebuilding field. Critiques of ‘fast’ journalism addressed by the

“**Conducting a more narrative and co-produced style of journalism creates space for conversation.**”

slow journalism movement mirror critiques of top-down peacebuilding efforts. From *Transitional to Transformative Justice*, a recent collection of papers edited by Paul Gready and Simon Robins, addresses a critique that transitional justice efforts lack opportunity for participation. This creates a problematic space in peacebuilding efforts that, in the interest of transitioning a society out of a violent and difficult past, often disenfranchises average citizens by limiting room for individualized perspectives.

Creating journalistic efforts for the purpose of sharing stories and reaching conclusions quickly leaves little space to consider alternative narratives. Conducting a more narrative and co-produced style of journalism creates space for conversation and for the development of new ideas that Galtung argues are necessary for sustained peace.

The COVID 19 pandemic and the resulting lockdowns and other disruptions have colloquially been called ‘The Great Pause.’ This temporal framing of our collective global reality is echoed in calls to ‘restart’ economies. It’s as if normal as we know it were simply put on pause and we’re all fumbling for ways to press ‘play’ again. Understanding the pandemic as a ‘pause’ removes a sense of urgency from problems that should feel urgent—racism, climate change, etc. Considering this period an opportunity for slowness, rather than a pause in normal, offers space for us to reconsider if we want to press play again on our old lives. By framing our worldviews in linear temporality, we limit the potential for transformation. Developing a slow journalism to report on and discuss peacebuilding efforts is a step towards this transformative framework.

--Laney Lenox

Anti-refugee narratives thrive in Turkey

Fostering a more positive, truthful discussion



Just before the local elections in March 2019, İlay Aksoy, a founder of the nationalist İyi Party and mayoral candidate for Istanbul's Fatih Municipality, displayed campaign banners reading, "We will not concede Fatih to the Syrians" throughout the busiest points of the district. Her subsequent campaign speeches, rallies, and social media posts came to employ the same tenor of xenophobic language, blaming the Syrian refugee community for Turkey's economic and societal woes.

While official complaints were filed against her for inciting public hatred, enmity, and discrimination, many media outlets opted instead to amplify her divisive message that "actually, it is the Syrians who pose the existential threat". Such is just one of the many instances of anti-refugee narratives employed in nationalist/nativist political rhetoric and bolstered by right-wing media. What then are the dominant narratives in Turkish media regarding refugees and immigrants, pg 16

and how can a more positive and truthful discussion be fostered?

The most basic definition of a narrative is a record or an account of interconnected events, simply defined as a story. The cognitive wiring of human beings leads us to believe stories that we hear multiple times. The media therefore plays a critical role in communications: in building (or dismantling) narratives that hold significant power to sway the beliefs that the audience considers to be truths.

In 2019, the Hrant Dink Foundation's Hate Speech and Discriminatory Discourse in Media Report found that Syrian refugees in Turkey were consistently associated with "criminal actions such as murder, theft and harassment," blamed for Turkey's declining economy, and labeled as a "threat" against Turkey's demographic structure. Furthermore, the Research Center on Asylum and Migration (İGAM) released a report on the Turkish media's coverage of refugees

between June 2017 and November 2018, finding that there were 17,814 news articles related to refugees, most of which associated them with violence and crime. Turkish digital news platform Ahval has also reported on anti-refugee rhetoric voiced by mainstream political leaders, as seen in the April 2019 social media posts of Ümit Özdağ, Istanbul's deputy for the center-right opposition İyi Party. In his posts, Özdağ claimed that 1 million Syrian refugees had entered the workforce while 6 million Turks remained unemployed. He went on to rebuke Syrian workers for protesting against unfair treatment from their employers, invoking the populist "love it or leave it" maxim that is widely observed in many immigrant and refugee hosting nations.

Currently, there are only a handful of civil society organizations in Turkey that focus on the representation of refugee voices in mainstream media.

Continued on next page

www.park.edu/peacecenter

Mülteci Medyası or Refugee Media is a web platform founded by refugees, journalists, and refugee rights advocates, committed to creating a media perspective focusing on refugee rights, reducing hate speech in the media that hinders social harmony, and enabling refugees to produce and publish their own news, tell their own stories and shape their own narratives. Civil society organizations such as the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (SGDD-ASAM) and İGAM have consistently run campaigns and produced digital content to present alternative perspectives on the Syrian refugee crisis and Turkey's role as a host country. Nonetheless, the declining state of the Turkish economy, exacerbated by the advent of the Covid pandemic, has led to a rise in anti-refugee sentiment among local host communities.

In this context, peace journalism focusing on building compassion and understanding needs to be prioritized by progressive media platforms in order to highlight the advantages and opportunities that refugee populations bring to host countries. Moreover, an authentic representation of the imminent dangers and hardships faced by the refugee community on a daily basis would also go a long way in generating a sense of empathy with refugees among host communities. In a 2018 blog post written for the International Youth Foundation, Riva Demaski, a Syrian refugee in Istanbul describes the hardships faced by her family in trying to find employment because neither of them spoke Turkish. Riva eventually took Turkish language classes at Mülteciler Derneği (Refugees Association) and was eventually able to get a job that helped her support her family. "Within this process," writes Riva, "I also had the opportunity to establish nice friendships. I have seen people help each other and approach each other without prejudice. Still, people gener-

ally think that we are in very needy situations, and they think that we are doing something just to get help. Actually, we are just trying to keep our lives, trying to stand on our own feet."

Riva is among the lucky few who have received a platform to tell their stories from their own perspectives. In what other ways can Turkish media practice peace journalism when building narratives around refugee issues?

Johan Galtung and Jake Lynch came up with a few basic principles that can serve as guidance for those building narratives and molding public opinion. To foster more compassion and give voice to the voiceless, peace journalists should:

- Explore the formation of conflicts: who are the parties involved; what are their goals; what is the socio-political and cultural context of the conflict; what are the visible and invisible manifestations of violence;
- Avoid the dehumanization of the parties involved and expose their interests;
- Offer nonviolent responses to conflict and alternatives to militarised/

“ Peace journalism focusing on building compassion and understanding needs to be prioritized by...media. ”

violent solutions

- Report nonviolent initiatives that take place at the grassroots level and follow the resolution, reconstruction, and reconciliation phases.

Of course, peace journalism favors truth, as any form of journalism should. Reporters must be as veracious as possible when reporting the facts. However, peace journalism also urges us as the audience to contemplate how observers, reporters, and storytellers have come to encounter the particular facts, and how these particular facts have come to meet them. For this reason, in our roles both as producers and consumers of media narratives, we must be aware of the power dynamics at play in the representation and framing of the lives and stories of disadvantaged communities, especially refugees.

--Rukmini Banerjee



Opposite page, top: Vote to care about Refugees – Refugee Action protest 27 July 2013 Melbourne by John Englart (Takver) is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0. Above: The direct translation of the banner is, "We will not concede Fatih (a city in Turkey) to the Syrians." This phrase was used by İlay Aksoy, a mayoral candidate from Turkey's İyi Party, during her election campaign.

Social media is a form of electronic communication tool, through which human beings can create and share content that will enable for social networking. In doing this, people use dedicated websites and applications to interact with other users, and find people with similar interests. This assertion is gradually eroding young people in Nigeria, as it seem like they are deviating from the social networking attribute, which is the most important in social media usage, to using social media as a tool for attacking, abusing, and invading the privacy of others.

It is so popular to witness on social media platforms of some Nigerians, who, when asked a simple question, respond

“Ugly Threads” Demonizing patterns in Nigerian social media

the question asked. Reacting to this ugly thread, Godswill Agbagwa wrote on his Facebook timeline that “many Nigerians can’t engage in logical arguments without digressing or using ad hominem.”

Prior to 2015 elections in Nigeria, the opposition party was prone to using comments that demonise the ruling party, as far as they were concerned, there was absolutely nothing good about the then ruling party, and the social media was the main platform through which the demonization was fostered. Since 2015, the opposition has been in power and nothing seems to have changed. The adverse effect of preferring demonising to constructive criticism is that, it increases the bitterness within, unconsciously blinding us from seeing concessions to hold unto and examine issues properly, so as to proffer a lasting solution. It also distorts our sense of understanding and compromise, such that we begin to see and feel that the world and those in it, should operate in a particular way and anything contrary to that must be annihilated.

Maybe the error is that many social media users are yet to understand the difference between demonising and criticising constructively. The two are different from each other. In demonising, there is the use of abuse, hate, threat, conspiracies and personal attacks to shut the door of dialogue and conversation. It also uses unconnected ideas to divert the conversation under review, as well as fostering the presence of words that crave to make people and views that are different appear inferior. In constructive criticism, there is the use of facts to debunk conspiracies and justify ideas under review and it abhors use of abusive, hateful, threatening views or words to prove a point. It is devoid of personal attack and makes effort to understand and respect different

views. Finally, it does not shut the door of dialogue and conversation.

The alarming rate of abuses on social media platforms in Nigeria should give concern to the call for adherence to ethical standards in its usage by all users, especially those without journalistic training. The fact that one uses the social media to transmit information to an audience (homogenous or heterogeneous), qualifies the user as a media practitioner. In the media world, there are two categories, the professionals and practitioners. A media user can be a professional (as a result of the training) or a practitioner (as a result of the practice, even without a formal training). But the double title of a professional and practitioner can as well falls on those who as a result of their training, are involved in the practice, mostly journalists. In other words, the demands of adhering to ethics in the use of social media while sharing of information, does not exclude practitioners (which is a category most social media users fall into).

Some social media users have argued that emphasising ethical standards will be about holding back the truth and trampling on their right to freedom of speech. These are common relational standards that are already obtainable in the society. They include: truthfulness and accuracy (confirming and giving all the relevant facts), fairness and impartiality (presenting all sides to the story), humanity (doing no harm to the lives of people with words and images), and accountability (correcting errors and expressing of regret when at fault). The above standards are meant for media users who involve themselves in the sphere of information transmission.

Inasmuch as the social media is a very handy platform for use to freely air views, there is a responsibility attached to the freedom it offers, which in this regard concerns not using it to propagate contents that are capable of causing harm. Although there is a right to freedom of speech, at the same time, it does not allow for irresponsibility and recklessness. Even when apologies are offered to mitigate the harm, they usually do not go as far as the harm already done. This is why the ethics of media usage emphasis on its responsible usage.

Adhering to ethical standards are not in any way stopping constructive criticisms, neither do they censor users in their freedom to express themselves, rather they look at maintaining stability and equity, which are key to individual and collective development. Observing ethical provisions or principles while using the social media, demand that in transmitting of information, users should be critical, thus, always consider the facts, and check to see that published contents are from reputable persons and

Continued on next page

Nigeria from Pg 18

outlets. Thanks to the constant evolution of information communication technology, which has brought forth free fact - checking platforms that are very effective for use in authenticating pieces of information.

A friend of mine in the university once saw his photo which he shared on Facebook informing his friends about an accident he survived. But famous Nigerian blogs, without his consent, used that picture of his, and framed a different narrative around it saying he got the wound where he was caught with another man’s wife, and for a long while people associated him with this wrong frame. It had to take some of us who knew what happened, to go to the various platforms, where the ridiculous frame up was published and debunked the lies. Indeed, he was strong enough to have survived it, because he had colleagues who assisted him in countering the incorrect viral narrative about his photo.

The same could not be said about a young Nigerian man, whose name and photo was added on the tweet of a popular blogger, who had called on people to add names of those who they feel are rapists. The young man was



later reported to have committed suicide because he could not bear the unwarranted condemnations, hate and threat targeted at him on the social media as a result of the accusation.

There was also the case of a social media user in Nigeria who on Facebook publicly stated that he had hacked the social media account of a certain pastor, invaded his private messages, and published the private chats and photos the pastor shared with some supposed married female members of his congregation. It was so disgusting to see how social media users in Nigeria, were sharing and making despairing comments to demonise the pastor, the members and surprisingly, congratulating the hacker for invading the privacy of other people. It was troubling to see the number of young Nigerians who did not see the action of the hacker to be wrong. There have been many occasions where people who were alleged to have committed an offence, had their pictures and names published on social media and going through the comment sections, the level of ignorance, bigotry, hate, blame, and judgment are so disturbing. Meanwhile, those were

only allegations, no competent court had proven them guilty of the alleged offences.

The above three instances are clear cases of individuals who were falsely accused, and without consent, their private data were collected and used online. This is wrong. Inordinate actions like the above give credit to the call for data protection or hate speech laws, which is needed to protect individual and private data that do not clash with the public interest. Although the constitution of Nigeria lays emphasis on the right to privacy and private property, the above instances seem to contravene the constitution. But because Nigerians are yet to embrace fully the culture of litigation, individuals seem to allow those who unjustly trample on these constitutional right of theirs to evade justice.

Social media have become an extension of our lives and people and organisations no longer rely on the content of character alone to judge their associates, they now include judging by the contents they see their associates exhibit online. Users need to see the social media as a platform for enriching human interaction and connection, and thus, avoid using it to demonise others or glorifying hate and contents that are capable of causing direct or indirect harm, especially those that put people down. Most times I wonder if these Nigerians in all honesty can say these horrible rantings I see on social media to the same person(s) if it were to be in a face – to – face situation.

Making judgments and demonising people even without hearing their own side of the story is unbecoming of a responsible person. No doubt, these inordinate views may have the intention of correcting a perceived error, but the words and styles been adopted end up tearing apart those they seek to correct or those whose views are different. According to Venatius Agbasiere, “correcting or disagreeing with people is not the issue but how we go about it matters.” Thus, attacking is never going to yield any positive impact. Suggesting a perfect approach to correcting, Venatius wrote on his Facebook timeline saying it is best done “respectfully and in charity with utmost humility and recognizing that none of us is perfect or know it all.”

That a particular view and lifestyle is commonly obtained, do not authenticate the absence or annihilation of differences. Those who are not emotionally strong, who cannot bear the pressure of having their personality maligned online, have in many occasions taken their lives offline. Nigerians and indeed all users of the social media need to understand that there are never going to be enough standards that will enforce total ethical adherence, unless we allow our sense of love and fairness to be the ultimate guide in our online interactions.

--Innocent Umezuruike Iroaganachi

News media fail to humanize Covid-19 deaths

Coverage leads to lack of empathy

Later this year, people will gather near downtown to commemorate the 114 lives lost and more than 200 injured when two skywalks collapsed on July 17, 1981, at what then was the Hyatt Regency Kansas City Hotel.

It was supposed to have been a festive, Friday night tea dance in the attractive atrium lobby, drawing hundreds of partiers to the fancy, new, 40-story hotel. But the fourth- and second-floor elevated walkways packed with partiers across the expansive lobby failed, pancaking onto each other, and then the lobby floor crushing people to death.

“**The lack of information has kept people from fully empathizing with (victims).**”

I had the day off because it was my 26th birthday. But I went into work at *The Kansas City Times-Star* immediately after seeing the bulletin on TV news. As a reporter/photographer only three years out of the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Journalism, I spent all night, and then the next morning helping to cover the tragedy. The next day, I led a team of reporters assigned to do news stories on each person who died in what was supposed to have been a fun night out. The stories were more than obituaries, which ran separately, because the individuals who perished had their lives cut terribly short by what turned out to be the deadliest, non-deliberate structural collapse in U.S. history. The ongoing and investigative reporting by the two newspapers earned them a Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting in 1982.

That journalistic duty of telling the public about the wholesome lives cut tragically short is what the nation and world have needed the last year as

the global coronavirus pandemic has killed more than half-a-million people in the United States and 2.5 million people throughout the planet. More than 28 million people in the U.S. have tested positive for COVID-19, and more than 110.9 million people throughout the world.

Yet except for a few profiles of individuals lost to the pandemic, the news media have failed horribly to give the public a complete and in-depth sense of this loss. We have not read in newspapers, magazines or on the Web, heard on radio or podcasts, or seen on television or the Web details about the many hundreds of thousands of individuals whose lives have been cut short by COVID-19. That lack of information has kept people from fully empathizing with the individuals who have died and the mourning survivors they have left behind.

U.S. Baby Boomers — born between 1946 and 1964 — can relate to this. A Vietnam War-era fact because of the exhaustive news media coverage of the bloody conflict was that individuals who were alive at the time knew at least one person from their high school or community who served in Vietnam as well as individuals who died during the war allegedly to stop the “domino effect” of Communism’s spread. That’s because the local, regional and national press reported the deaths of more than 58,300 Americans killed in Vietnam.

The press reported that from August 1964 to May 1975, more than 2.7 million Americans, or 9.7 percent of that generation of young adults, served in Vietnam. The names of those killed appear on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. They are the ones individuals look up first when we visit the memorial, opened in 1982. We knew them; we could identify with them; they were

our neighbors, our classmates, our co-workers, our family.

There is not that same sense of connection now in this coronavirus era of social distancing, staying away from public places and masking.

The United States was just as divided then as now with coast-to-coast protests that enveloped many cities and college campuses. The nation was undeniably split into doves, protesting for peace, and hawks, insisting that the bloodshed was justified to maintain democracy and free markets worldwide. But each side had in mind the sacrifice of U.S. soldiers.

The news media, in the last year as the COVID-19 death toll has climbed, have readily pointed out the connection between the United States’ various war casualties and the mounting number of those killed by the pandemic. It was in April 2020 that the number of people killed in the United States from the coronavirus surpassed the number of Americans who died in Vietnam. U.S. losses in World War I were 116,516; the U.S. coronavirus death toll of 116,567 topped that by mid-June 2020. More than 405,390 U.S. service personnel died in World War II; the coronavirus death toll topped that in January 2021, claiming 405,400 people.

The difference between now and the Vietnam War-era was the news media did their job of humanizing the losses so that everyone could empathize more closely with the tragedy. The combat losses were senseless, but so are the losses from the virus because the U.S. response was mishandled.

Part of the blame lies with then-President Donald Trump, who from the start tried to minimize, politicize and cover up the mounting U.S. numbers.

Continued on next page

Humanize *from Pg 20*

In news conferences, Trump explicitly and repeatedly labeled COVID-19 “the China virus.” It is believed to have originated in Wuhan, China, but it is a global health problem not attributed to any one country or group of people. Trump knew how deadly the virus was in February 2020 but chose to play it down, saying he didn’t “want to create a panic.”

Trump and his followers even politicized wearing a facial mask for self-protection and the protection of others. To them, not wearing a mask was an assertion of their freedom. The inaction and division served to put the U.S. out front among nations in the world for having the most cases of the coronavirus and the most deaths. Other nations do not want to follow that lead any more than they would want their political leaders — as Trump did on Jan. 6, 2021, — to provoke a mob of thousands to surge onto their capitols in a riot to disrupt the certification of a presidential election. A peaceful transition of power has to rule all nations as well as a unified effort to control Covid-19.

Until Joe Biden became U.S. president on Jan. 20, 2021, the U.S. had no cohesive plan to get the coronavirus under control and no news media stories chronicling the depth of the loss.

What is clear is a frustration over the global pandemic doing more damage to the world and U.S. economies since the Great Depression, slamming shut doors of hotels, restaurants and travel industries. The pandemic also exposed the grotesque income, wealth, health, housing, education and high tech disparities in the United States.

COVID-19 has hit African American, Latinx and Native American communities hardest with those who have tested positive for the virus becoming the sickest and more likely to die from it, leaving behind survivors to pick up the pieces. Black, Latinx and Native Americans also traditionally have been the least likely to receive coverage from the mainstream press. *The Kansas City Star's* own historic Dec. 20, 2020, front-page apology and series about its 140 years of deplorable coverage of the Black community explains that. The coast-to-coast news media failure has fed the national life-threatening denial that the coronavirus is only as bad as the flu or is a political hoax. It has created a refusal among many to believe that anyone could be victimized by it.

Instead of being united in getting COVID-19 under control, the U.S. has suffered a terrible population fatigue

of people being exhausted of social distancing, wearing masks, staying home to remain out of harm’s way, not going out to drink, eat or for entertainment and not traveling. Those conditions may be fairly new to white America, but because of this country’s long history of racism, bigotry and discrimination, people of color have suffered the violence of social distancing, wearing “masks” of being other than themselves and kept iso-

lated in segregated communities and low-paying jobs for generations. And that’s when they could find work.

The news media failure to tell us about the human losses has added to the diminishing amount of social capital in the U.S., connecting people to others with shared experiences. Social capital was devastatingly low before the pandemic so that empathizing with others’ suffering, sorrow and loss has been difficult in this age of social media, self-checkouts, internet shopping and home deliveries.

That has to change as the nation gears up and works through problems in the distribution of vaccines to inoculate the population against the continuing spread of the coronavirus as well as its many and possibly more deadly mutations. With the vaccines has to come a re-connection of Americans to each other and people elsewhere, an end to the disparities the virus exposed and a peace-driven sense of empathy for all others.

The virus doesn’t discriminate, and neither should people in this nation or the world. The vaccines have to be distributed equitably and not go mostly to the wealthiest, whitest neighborhoods in the U.S. and wealthiest Western nations of the world. We have to care about others so that this tragedy ushers in better health and a lasting peace. We must show that we care about the well-being of ourselves.

The downside of not caring, of not showing empathy is the coronavirus death toll in the U.S. could within a year rise to eclipse the estimated 620,000 who were killed during the Civil War. It was a time of great division in the United States with bloodshed over slavery.

Surely no one wants to repeat such a brutal part of the past. Surely, we are better than that.

--Lewis Diuguid



Afghan *from Pg 22*

In November 2020, Mediothek Afghanistan and the GIZ- Civil Peace Service Program in Afghanistan jointly have conducted a one day conference in Kabul. The event was attended by media activists, civil society activists, journalists and government officials. They have been spoken about the contents of this manual for Afghan journalists.

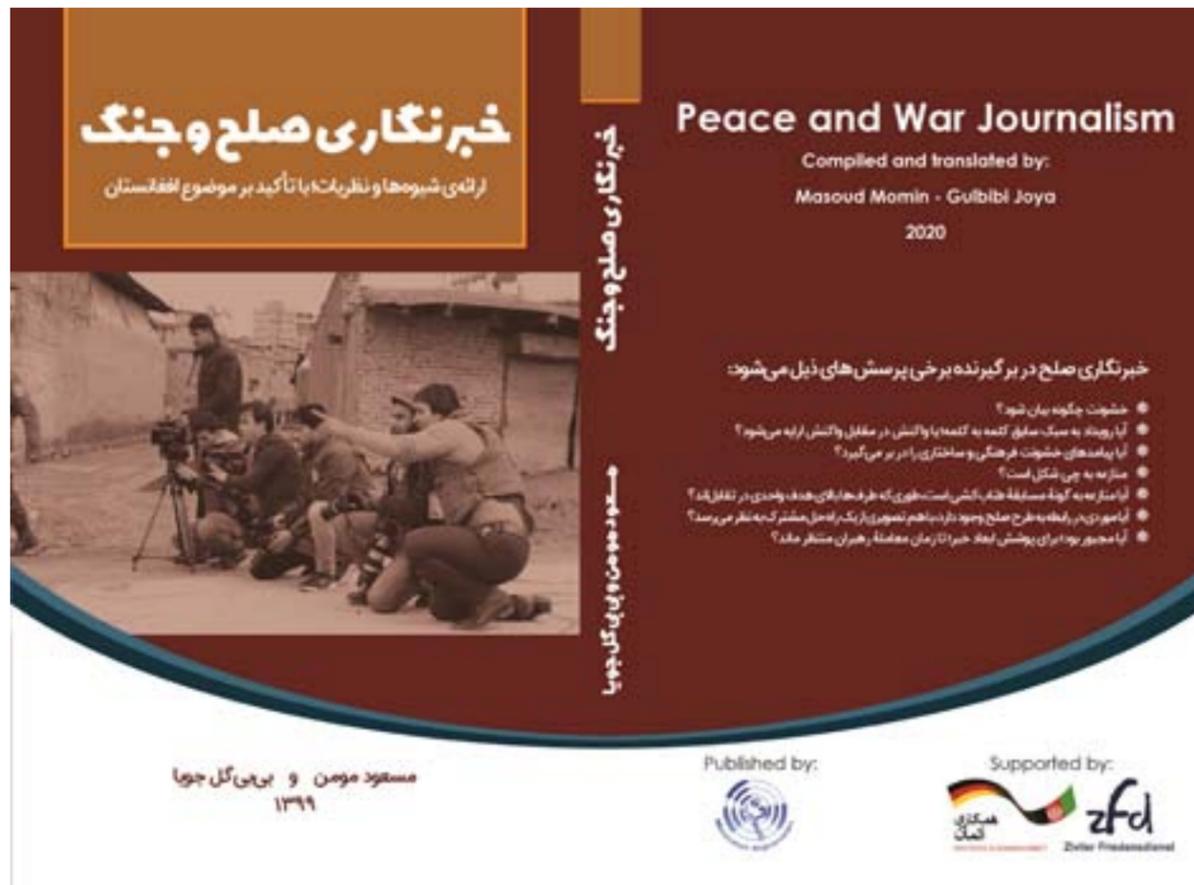
for a democratic and tolerant culture, and strengthen civil society to facilitate peace in Afghanistan. It was founded in 1993 in Germany with the aim of strengthening education, preserving cultural heritage and promoting a peaceful future for the Afghan people.

--Masoud Momin

Mediothek is committed to educate people, work



Mediothek launches the peace journalism guide at a one day event at Balkh University.



Mediothek Afghanistan publishes PJ guide

Mediothek Afghanistan with the support of GIZ- Civil Peace Service Program in Afghanistan has published a manual entitled, "Peace and War Journalism." This manual is written and compiled by Masoud Momin, freelance peace journalism trainer and Mrs. Gulbibi Joya, university lecturer and national advisor for civil society (CPS).

This manual consists of three chapters and it took about two years to write this manual. The first and the second chapters of this book are about the concepts of War and Peace Journalism in the times of peace and war. In these sections, the views and researches of Dr. Johan Galtung, Dr. Jake Lynch, Anabel McGoldrick, and Steven Youngblood as pioneers of peace journalism and conflict studies have been explained. The third chapter of this manual consists of six scholarly articles which have been written by some Afghan writers and journalists.

The titles of these articles are:

--Journalism Ethics and the Promotion of Violence in the Afghan Media- Mr. Mohammad Siddiq Zaliq, writer and journalist

--Political Propaganda in the Afghan media- Mrs. Homaira Saqib, writer and journalist

--The Impact of Media on Social Security in Afghanistan- Mr. Mustafa Aqili, writer and journalist

--War and Peace Journalism and the Afghan Media- Mr. Mohammad Ishaq Fayeze, writer and journalist

--Rumors and the Afghan Media- Mr. Seyed Noor-ulain Naweem, journalist

--Reporting on War and Violence in the Afghan media- Mr. Mahmoud Mobaarez, writer and journalist

This manual provides guidelines and tools for Afghan journalists to look deeper into peace and war issues in Afghanistan and later play a responsible role in promoting the values of peace in Afghan society. It has been published according to the internal needs of the Afghan media. The target audiences of this manual are Afghan journalists, reporters and journalism students. Currently, the contents of this manual are taught for students at the Balkh University, Faculty of Journalism.

Continued on next page

PJ needed to set tone for peace in Ethiopia

Bias, jingoism seen in traditional reports

It is with great alarm that I viewed the violent conflict unfold in Ethiopia late last year. I spent the spring, 2018 semester as a State Department Senior Subject Specialist at the University of Gondar, near Ethiopia's Tigray region from where the conflict originated. I traveled throughout the country, including to Mekelle, the capital of the Tigray region.

As a peace journalist, I am as always concerned with the news media and their coverage of the conflict. Are they accurately reflecting the situation in Ethiopia? Are they fanning the flames of conflict, or instead are they practicing peace journalism?

I called upon two of my Ethiopian colleagues to help me make sense of the media coverage. I've decided not to use their names, out of respect for their privacy.

First, regarding international coverage, both of my colleagues are critical of the news media. My colleague whom I'll call Abel said, "some of the international reporting has been surprisingly incomplete and partisan. The national defense forces were engaged in respecting rule of law in the defiant Tigray Liberation Front Forces. While this was the fact many news organizations such as Al Jazeera, Foreign Policy Magazine, the BBC and The Guardian represented the event as a brink of civil war. This is totally out of context and incomplete."

He continued, "The other dishonest news come from Reuters news agency. While the Tigrayan Liberation forces have killed more than 500 eth-

nic Amhara civilians in border town of May Khadra, the reporter reported as (though) they were ethnic Tigrayans and were killed the national defense force. This is totally a fake information which is aimed at disinforming the international community."

My second colleague whom I'm calling Kaleb agreed. He said, "Most of international news is biased... This is not civil war. It is a military operation... I also believe that Tigrayan brothers and sisters are ill informed and highly influenced by TPLF's (the ruling party in Tigray) propaganda and disinformation. TPLF has created a false narrative in the country that Amhara (the region bordering Tigray, which includes Gondar) is chauvinist."

Media coverage by Ethiopian outlets is also a concern. At the local level during any conflict, peace journalism asks whether local media reports are flag waving, jingoistic propaganda (traditional war reporting), or whether they are more balanced and give local residents a chance to consider non-violent responses to conflict.

A quick perusal of several Ethiopian news sources as the conflict unfolded late in 2020 revealed the prevalence of traditional war reporting. (Keep in mind that there are only a few sources in English, so this analysis is severely limited.) The Ethiopia News Agency for example, uncritically parrots government information in stories titled "Inhabitants of Addis Ababa Express Support for National Defense Force," "Ethiopians Honor Defense Force," and "Reports, Footages Claiming Airstrike on City of Mekelle (in Tigray region) False." Ethiopia Zare does the same in stories like "The Ethiopian government asked the international

community to condemn TPLF." One needn't look beyond the lead of this story to divine its approach: "The heinous and reprehensible massacre committed against innocent civilians in Mykadra by TPLF is clearly a grave violation of the most basic norms of international law."

The same jingoism can be found in at least one Tigrayan media outlet, Tigray Online (<http://www.tigraionline.com/>) in stories titled "Barbaric-Genocidal Ethnic Cleansing, Extreme Savagery, in Ethiopia," "(Ethiopian leaders) Abiy Ahmed and Esayas Afewerki Planned and Started a Joint War against the Innocent People of Tigray," and "Ethiopians fleeing to Sudan describe air strikes, machete killings in Tigray." This last story includes the quote, "They killed anyone who said they were Tigrayan. They stole our money, our cattle, and our crops from our homes..."

Instead of this traditional reporting, peace journalists would critically analyze propaganda, and instead seek to balance stories with reports from all sides. PJ stories would reject inflammatory language ("barbaric," "innocent people," "savagery," "machete killings") and instead use more straightforward, less anger-inducing verbiage. PJ would give a voice to everyday people impacted by the conflict, without exploiting them for partisan purposes. Peace journalists would also examine the source of the conflict, and lead societal discussions about potential solutions.

Peace journalism alone won't end the violence in Ethiopia, but can help erect a foundation upon which peace can someday be built.

--Steven Youngblood



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In the October edition:
-More on India-Pak pjct
-Refugee rept project



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