

Media and the Politics of Transformation in the Arab world and Asia

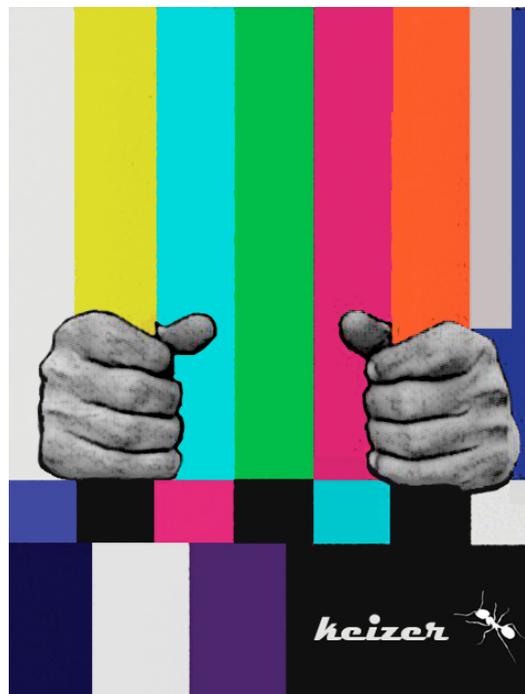
organized by

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Introduction

In times of increasing mediatisation and digitalization, indisputably media play an important role when it comes to political and societal transformation processes. But how exactly can we analyse the relationship between transformation and media (and also media in transformation) to contribute to both the fields of political science and communication studies? Which theoretical concepts, methodological approaches and empirical fields can be chosen and how can they "cross-fertilize" each other?

In the scope of this workshop, we seek to establish a comprehensive interdisciplinary dialogue among senior and junior researchers, acknowledging that despite several efforts theories and research practices in these two disciplines continue to co-exist rather than intersect.

The seminal uprisings in the MENA region in 2010/2011 have revitalized both research fields by bringing many-to-many media and mobilization processes into the focus. Choosing a country-based approach our conference seeks to inquire on how these processes evolve in the context of (formally) restricted media systems and state dominated public spheres. In order to allow for case-centred analysis as well as transnational comparisons these countries range from the MENA region and their respective transformation processes to the Far East.

The Organizers

Cilja Harders & Anna Antonakis

Center for Middle Eastern and North African Politics
Otto-Suhr-Institute of Political Science

Carola Richter & Martin Schiller

International Communication
Institute for Media and Communication Studies

Media and the Politics of Transformation in the Arab world and Asia

Thursday, 10th December 2015

Venue: Hörsaal A, Otto-Suhr-Institut, Freie Universität (FU) Berlin, Ihnestr. 21, 14195 Berlin

17–18h **Public Keynote: Sticks and Stones, Clicks and Phones: Contextualizing the Role of Digital Media in the Politics of Transformation**

Merlyna Lim, Carleton University, Ottawa

18–20h **Public Panel Discussion: When Theory Meets Ground**

Moderator: Carola Richter, Freie Universität Berlin

Podium: Jamal Ghosn – former Managing Editor of Al-Akhbar English and Blogger, Beirut
 Kaustubh Srikanth – Head of Technology at Tactical Technology Collective, Berlin
 Afef Abrouigi – Researcher on digital rights and global voices contributor, Tunis
 Khaled Yacoub Oweis – Research fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, SWP, Berlin

Friday, 11th December 2015

Venue: Senate Assembly Hall, Henry Ford Building, FU Berlin, Garystr. 35, 14195 Berlin

9.15h **Welcome:** Cilja Harders, Freie Universität Berlin/ Carola Richter, Freie Universität Berlin

9.30–11h **Panel 1: Digital Media and Women's Activism**

Anna Antonakis-Nashif: "In Transition: Renegotiating Publics and Gender in Tunisia"/
 Mina Naeli: "Exploring Impacts of Internet Communication on Social Activism in Iran:
 The Case of Women's Rights Activists"

Comments: Deva Woodly, The New School, New York

11.30–13h **Panel 2: Digital Media and Activism**

Almut Woller: "Visible – connected – united? Digital media and anarchist discourses in
 Arab countries"/ Abir Koptiy: "The Impact of Social Media and Online Communications on
 Palestinian Political activism"

Comments: Donatella della Ratta, University of Copenhagen

14–15.30h **Panel 3: Transforming Media in Times of Transition**

Nadia Leih: „The Egyptian Media in Transition: Reform Movements, Resistances and Other
 Obstacles"/ Burcu Yaman: „Transformation of Conservative Broadcasting in Turkey"

Comments: Eid Mohamed, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies

16–17.30h **Panel 4: Media operating within Authoritarian Structures**

Zhu Yi: „Institution-building of the online public sphere in an authoritarian society - the
 new actors in China"/ Naveed Iqbal: „Media during democratization in Pakistan: The Case
 of General Elections 2002 and 2008"

Comments: Natalie Fenton, Goldsmiths, University of London

17.30–18h **Conclusion**

Carola Richter, Freie Universität Berlin/ Cilja Harders, Freie Universität Berlin/
 Martin Schiller, Freie Universität Berlin

Sticks and Stones, Clicks and Phones: Contextualizing the Role of Digital Media in the Politics of Transformation

Dr. Merlyna Lim – Carleton University, Ottawa

Integrating theories and perspectives drawn from social sciences (social movement research in particular) and communication and media studies, this talk aims to generate an interdisciplinary conceptual and theoretical framework to understand the complex relationship between media and the politics of transformation, with digital media as a focal point. Drawing on empirical analysis from the Middle East and Asia, this talk also attempts to identify regional patterns and constellations of digital media as an instrument for protest, mobilization, and democratization. Some central questions include, but are not limited to: Are there similar characteristics and mechanisms in media activism and mobilization across the regions? How much does regional and national context define mobilizations and social movements? What specific roles can digital media play in the politics of transformation?



***Merlyna Lim** is a Canada Research Chair in Digital Media and Global Network Society with the School of Journalism and Communication, Carleton University. Lim's research interests revolve around societal implications of digital media, especially the production, consumption and exchange of information in cyberspace and (physical) urban space. Much of her work explores on how power relations are embedded in the production of spaces and how people continue to contest, create, expand spaces of participation, engagement and social movements. Prior to joining Carleton community, Merlyna Lim has held positions in Princeton University, Arizona State University, and the University of Southern California, among others.*

When Theory meets ground

In the opening panel discussion, we seek to bridge the gap between academia, activism and journalism in order to generate dialogue between practitioners and theoreticians. Our participants will share insights from their different professional and regional experiences: From traditional journalism, online journalism or blogging to support and capacity building in digital security. The spaces for alternative knowledge and activism that many-to-many media have created are certainly not only occupied by “freedom fighters” but also by totalitarian groupings. We will also debate how states and companies undermine emancipatory movements by interfering in their producing and sharing of knowledge, networking and organizing protest. What are the different experiences, challenges and priorities in working with and on digital and social media? How do ‘classic’ resources come into play? How do you effectively voice your message? Are there any supra-regional patterns emerging or are national contexts (publics, decision makers) prevailing? How can theories and concepts from academia be helpful to get a different view on practices?



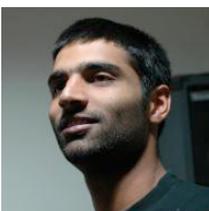
Afef Abrougui is consultant and researcher focusing on digital rights in Tunisia and the Arab region. She currently helps research and write *Digital Citizen*, a biweekly review of human rights technology in the region. She previously conducted research for several organizations and projects including *Ranking Digital Rights*, the *Digital Security School in Tunis*, the *2013 and 2014 Freedom on the Net Report*, and the *2014 Giswatch report on communications surveillance*.



Jamal Ghosn is the former Managing Editor of the English edition of the Beirut daily *Al-Akhbar*. The politically left-leaning *Al-Akhbar* is one of the most read dailies in Beirut, and has been a publishing partner of *WikiLeaks* on all of its Middle East related releases. Ghosn has also worked on different projects for local and regional Television and multimedia projects. He has also been blogging since 2005 and followed closely the rise and development of new media in the Arab world.



Khaled Yacoub Oweis is a visiting fellow at *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik* (the German Institute for International and Security Affairs - SWP) in Berlin. Before joining SWP in 2014, Oweis was the senior Syria correspondent for Reuters news agency. He has reported on the Middle East for international media for two decades. His experience includes covering Syria under Hafez al-Assad, war correspondent during the U.S.-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003, and the Arab Spring.



Kaustubh Srikanth is a hacktivist, technologist and researcher currently based between Bangalore and Berlin. An active open-source software practitioner, he has over 10 years of experience working with deployment of open, secure, distributed internet infrastructures. More recently, he has also been working on investigating and publishing on the current state of internet surveillance and censorship in India. He works as the Head of Technology at *Tactical Tech* (<https://tacticaltech.org>), an international NGO working to enable the effective use of information for progressive social change. Kaustubh tweets as *@houndbee*.

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Panel 1: Digital Media and Women's Activism



Deva Woodly is an Assistant Professor of Politics at the New School. Her research focuses on the impacts of civic and political discourse on democratic practice, especially from the point of view of ordinary citizens and social movements. She examines public discourse both theoretically and empirically, using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Her academic interests include: American public opinion, political behaviour, democratic theory and the study of political and politicized media. She is the author of *The Politics of Common Sense: How Social Movements Use Public Discourse to Change Politics and Win Acceptance*.

Panel 2: Digital Media and Activism



Donatella della Ratta is Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Copenhagen, where she received her PhD on the politics of Syrian TV. She is a former Postdoctoral Fellow: at the Annenberg School for Communication, Pennsylvania University, and an Affiliate of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Harvard University. She has authored two monographs on Arab media, and curated chapters on Syrian media in collective books. She is co-editor, with Naomi Sakr and Jakob Skovgaard Petersen, of *Arab Media Moguls* (I.B. Tauris, 2015). She has curated several art exhibitions on Syria, and co-founded SyriaUntold, a repository for Syrian creative resistance which received a Digital Communities award at Ars Electronica 2014. twitter @donatelladr

Panel 3: Transforming Media in Times of Transition



Eid Mohamed is an Assistant Professor of Transnational Literary and Cultural Studies at the Comparative Literature Program at Doha Institute for Graduate Studies & an adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Guelph, Canada. He served also as a Visiting Assistant Professor at the State University of New York in Binghamton. His teaching and research are chiefly cross-cultural and interdisciplinary, dealing with Society vs. Culture, and Text vs. Visuality. Author of many published journal articles and books including: *Arab Occidentalism: Images of America in the Middle East* (I.B. Tauris 2015), *Who Defines Me: Negotiating Identity in Language and Literature* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2014), *Education and the Arab Spring: Shifting Towards Democracy* (Sense Publishers 2016), *Tahrir Square and Beyond: Critical Perspectives On Politics, Law and Security* (Indiana University Press 2016).

Panel 4: Media operating within Authoritarian Structures



Natalie Fenton is a Professor in Media and Communications at Goldsmiths, University of London. She is Co-Director of the Goldsmiths Leverhulme Media Research Centre and Co-Director of Goldsmiths Centre for the Study of Global Media and Democracy. She has published widely on issues relating to news, journalism, civil society, radical politics and new media and is particularly interested in rethinking understandings of public culture, the public sphere and democracy. Her most recent books are: *New Media, Old News: Journalism and Democracy in the Digital Age* (ed., Sage 2010); and *Misunderstanding the Internet* (with James Curran and Des Freedman, Routledge 2012). Her next book *Left Out?: New Media and Radical Politics* will be published by Polity. She is on the Board of Directors of the campaign group *Hacked Off* and a founding member of the *Media Reform Coalition*.

In Transition: Renegotiating Publics and Gender in Tunisia

Anna Antonakis-Nashif

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) can be analyzed as a tool for creating networked “counterpublics” bearing emancipatory potential within an authoritarian system backed by restricted and manipulated mass media. I understand the engagement in those counterpublics as an attempt to influence politics and therefore a form of political participation. In the Tunisian uprisings 2010/2011, counterpublics created online could break the information monopoly of the state and facilitate political communication and mobilizations of protest within a particular dynamic between on- and offline activities. This study will investigate further how public spheres are being renegotiated through a gendered analysis. One question is then whether ICTs, specifically, social media, accessible to a wide audience, continue to have elementary function to enlarge spaces for participation and activism. This will be investigated in the specific policy field of gender politics, analyzed by mainly two elements: the “system of gender relations as part of a social order” and “the role of political institutions in the process by which social justice movements are shaped by and shape their societies” (Marx Ferree, 2012, p. 9).

I examine the construction of counterpublics by women of various backgrounds by reconstructing the strategies and methods they use in their activism with special regards to the use of social media. Drawing from intersectional theory and methodology (Crenshaw, 2001; hooks, 2011), the analysis is sensitive to different forms of structural oppressions: Besides gender, the categories of class, locality and age will be employed to draw conclusions on participatory practice in counterpublics in Tunisia’s post 2011 period.

Social media have introduced small changes locally and translocally, such as facilitating action and/ or community based “regroupment processes” (Fraser, 1992), or access to and sharing of transregional information. I discuss the Facebook group The uprising of women in the Arab World as one example of a translocal counterpublic, where “alternative knowledge” is produced, women and human rights abuses exposed and diversity among women debated.

Nevertheless, as for my preliminary findings, class and locality do influence the usage of social media, in terms of outreach to wider publics: networking (rather close friends, associations from their specific region) and choice of more limited forms to express opinions online (status vs articles or notes). So far, evidence from my data shows that the feelings of marginalization and a lack of representation persist, especially among young women from outside the capital.

The “real issues”, as the women in my interviews say, such as structural sexism and violence against women, or unequal pay have been derailed. Explanations go into two directions: When it comes to long term changes, such as the redefinition of policy fields, my research has shown that more formal actors such as parties, media or unions remain the main player and keep occupying the public sphere. These are very often still male dominated, especially in localities outside the capital. On the other hand, gender politics have been ideologized in a publically staged confrontation between the Nidaa Tounes party and the Ennahda party. This has exhibited empirically how the discourse on women’s rights serves as a marker for cultural-political differentiations and an instrument for power politics. Negotiating gender relations is then made in a frame of sensationalism (by the methods of personalizing, ridiculing, stigmatizing) and ideologization, reproduced in all powerful channels of political communication, constituting the national public sphere.

Anna Antonakis-Nashif is part of the organizers’ team.

Exploring Impacts of Internet Communication on Social Activism in Iran: The Case of Women's Rights Activists

Mina Naeli

1. Introduction to the presentation subject

Since the 1997 election of the reformist president, Mohammad Khatami, and birth of the reform movement Iran entered into a new political and social transformation era. Empowerment of civil society and democratic forces, such as NGOs and press, during eight years of Khatami's presidency, gave social activists an unprecedented collective aspiration for building a more democratic society. Expanding amidst this era, the Internet obtained a growing importance in the politics of Iran. Particularly since the 2002 escalation of the conservatives' crackdowns on reformist press and civil communities, the Internet has become a powerful supplement to Iranian activists' means of communication and socio-political interactions.

This presentation draws upon my doctoral thesis, which seeks to shed lights on some uncovered aspects of democratic potentials of cyberspace in the context of Middle Eastern countries like Iran, with their political and media systems' particularities. The thesis aims to explore the promises and pitfalls of online media for Iranian activists. It is conducted on the women's rights activists, as they have largely utilized the Internet not only to access and disseminate information, but also to voice their concerns about discriminatory laws.

2. Conceptual and operational framework

Three research questions are developed to examine how the internet impacts on the women's activists. The main questions are derived from extensive discussions on the background of Iranian women's rights activists and their online activities. Sub questions are derived from theories which hold particular relevance to the attributes of the Iranian women's rights activists.

RQ1. What have been the main implications of the Internet for the Iranian women's rights activists?

RQ2. How have the women's rights activists adapted to the cyberspace?

The Internet impacts on the activists' communication and deliberation

The Internet impacts on the activists' participation and commitment

The Internet impacts on the activists' organization and power relation

RQ3. How have online media affected the outcomes of Iranian women's rights activism?

Activism's influence on print media agenda

Activism's influence on policy makers

The theoretical framework of the thesis includes the main existing theories related to the three questions of the research. The empirical findings of the study are discussed in the light of these theories.

Qualitative semi-structured interviews with the women's rights activists is the key method of data collection. However, to enhance the validity of the results mixed data collection technique, or 'within-methods triangulation' is adopted: four cases of online space utilized by the women's rights activists were examined, seeking verification and more clarification of the results from the interviews.

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3. Research Findings

The ultimate findings of the thesis are driven from the interviews' thematic analysis and studies on the cases. The contributions of the results to the reviewed theories are imbedded in the findings' discussion. In this presentation due to lack of time only findings on RQ2a will be briefly presented.



***Mina Naeli** is a PhD student in the Institute for Media and Communication Studies at Freie Universität Berlin. Her thesis explores the impacts of online communication on social activism in Iran. She holds a BSc degree in Management and Information Systems from the London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE), and a MSc degree in Management and Information Systems: Change and Development from The University of Manchester. Her research interests include socio-political implications of the Internet, e-government, in particular e-participation, and human factors in information systems.*

Visible – connected – united? Digital media and anarchist discourses in Arab countries

Almut Woller

Central to my research is the question how digital media contribute to a transnational connectivity of marginalized groups. My focus lies on anarchist, autonomous and anti-authoritarian groups in Arab countries, i. e. groups that do not function according to the usual logics of politics as is commonly understood in parliamentary democracy: Their practices are not oriented towards a state or – to use Richard J. F. Day's words – they rather follow a „politics of the act“ with affinity-based organizational structures instead of a „politics of demand“ that would seek recognition by authorities and usually functions on the basis of hierarchical organizations (e.g. parties, NGOs, etc.) (Day 2004, 2005). Transformation from this perspective is to be understood in the context of „micro-politics“ or „politics of the first person“ that also takes everyday „private“ life as field of political intervention (George Katsifias 2006) and stands offside established politics of parliamentary democracy.

In her historical study *The eastern Mediterranean and the making of global radicalism* Ilham Khouri-Makdisi (2010) traces the development of a dense network of anarchists in the Mediterranean throughout the 1880s until the 1940s. The production and circulation of printed material played a central role for the establishment of a transnational network of anarchists and radical anti-capitalist groups who were „united in aspirations of civil progress“ (Anthony Gorman 2011). A short century later, in the 1990s, the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas became a prominent case where the „early“ digital media contributed to the establishment of a strong transnational connectivity. In the current phase of mediatization, i. e. 20 years on from the Zapatista uprising, digital media allow to produce content in a decentralized way and to circulate discourses beyond national borders more easily than ever before. It is against this backdrop that the question arises whether digital media are a useful tool for autonomous groups to spread their ideas and to connect with peers transnationally. Based on my observations I contend that digital media in fact play a very limited role in the case studied: although digital media are by far more accessible for marginalized actors and allow the circulation of discourses even in a highly repressive context such as Egypt, this leads to an intensified transnational connectivity among peers only in very few instances and produces rather weak ties.

Digital media do make discourses of autonomous groups visible. Not only did groups in Arab countries take note of anarchist practices outside their region, but also European/North-American groups have reacted to and commented on what they perceived from their peers especially since the Arab Spring.

I suggest understanding visibility as a fundamental function that digital media have by increasing marginalized groups' agency, even though this does not necessarily lead to a more binding kind of connectivity beyond the mere reception of texts or videos and the mere liking of likeminded groups on Facebook. Connectivity, understood as a form of dialogical communication on a somewhat regular basis or at least as intensive phase of discussion, paradoxically, does not seem to be a self-evident outcome of the various possibilities that digital media currently offer (think of commentary functions on blogs, forums, Facebook etc.). Referring again to Khouri-Makdisi's description of the common production and distribution of printed material by Mediterranean anar-

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chists, it appears that personal ties or „brokerage“ (Charles Tilly & Sidney Tarrow 2009) remain a crucial precondition to transform media visibility into a sense of being connected or even united transnationally.



***Almut Woller** received her M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies and Communication and Media Studies (Leipzig University) with a thesis on the transformation of gender relations in the UAE: A feminist Critical Discourse Analysis of the workforce integration of Emirati women (in German; article version in English). She has worked as research assistant at Freie Universität Berlin in the field of media practices and digital media. A recent published article focuses on the Media Cities in Dubai and her research currently concentrates on discourses of anti-politics and anarchist practices in Arab countries.*

The Impact of Social Media and Online Communications on Palestinian Political activism

Abir Kopty

My research investigates the impact of social media and online communications on Palestinian political activism, on the national level (Palestinian) and in its transnational contexts (regional and international).

The research will use McAdam, McCarthy & Zald's model to look at Social movements' emergence, development and outcomes through: 1) Mobilizing resources, 2) Opportunity structures, and 3) Framing processes, and will use Network analysis, participant observation and in-depth interviews with Palestinian online activists.

I aim to fill the gap in scholarship on three levels:

1) While scholarship discussed widely and with enthusiasm the positive impact of social media on activism, there is less literature discussing the negative impact, this literature includes the critique that internet promotes "slacktivism", referring to the "5-minutes" activists who take quick pointless actions to feel good about themselves (Shulman, 2005; Hindman, 2009; Morozov, 2009) and that it reduces the incentives to form Social Movement organizations (Earl & Schussman, 2003), in addition to that the internet creates fragmented and pluralistic structures, that exist for short term. (Bimber, 2000). I aim to contribute further to these findings.

2) Many scholars explored the impact on the organizing/mobilizing level of the group, however, there has been done little to research the level of interrelations between the members of the group or social movement and more particular the impact on the individual activists. Participant observation and interviews show that social media increase individuals' concern with their popularity and image which in return have implications on organizing, level of trust, or group unity. In this research I aim to challenge the assumptions that internet promotes collective identity (Arquilla & Ronfeldt, 2001) and helps in creation of community (Norris, 2003) and may reduce attention to individual differences and enhance group unity (Sassenberg & Postmes, 2002). I claim that internet can also enhance tension between individuals, competition and self-promotion which challenge the group's unity and effectiveness. Also, I aim to examine the assumption that Internet helps create decentralized, non-hierarchical movements (Arquilla & Ronfeldt, 2001), as participant observation shows that internet can also recreate existing hierarchical structures.

3) My research aims also to examine in more depth the impact of online activism on framing processes, which has been given less focus in literature. Participant observation and interviews show that first, activists' framing is influenced by "marketing" considerations, and second, activists do practice a form of self-censorship. To be more particular, in the case of Palestinians there are three dimensions of censorship: Palestinians are monitored both by Israel and to a certain extent by the Palestinian National Authority and thirdly, by their fellow activists. This challenges the assumption that internet offers a free space.

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Abir Kopty completed her BA at Haifa University in Economics and Accountancy. She then moved to work in the media and communication field in Palestinian civil society organizations. In 2006-2007 she was a Chevening Scholar of the British Council and completed her MA in Political Communication at the City University of London. Currently, she is a PhD candidate in the Institute for Media and Communication Studies, Freie Universität Berlin, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Carola Richter. Her research interest includes the impact of New Media on social movements.

The Egyptian Media in Transition: Reform Movements, Resistances and Other Obstacles

Nadia Leihns

The hopes were high in Egypt during the first year after the ouster of long-time president Hosni Mubarak in February 2011: Journalists praised their new gained freedoms, observers attested the Egyptian public sphere a widespread loss of fear, fresh news outlets sprang out everywhere, rallies and protests were daily business in the capital Cairo. Four years later, there is mere disillusionment. Media offices were closed and journalists imprisoned again, new laws to constrain freedom of opinion and expression were passed by the Sissi-regime, the media heroes of the new Egypt, risen in 2011 like Yousri Fouda, Reem Mageed or Bassem Youssef, have disappeared from the studios of privately-owned Egyptian television channels. De Angelis speaks of a degeneration of the public sphere in which “[c]ensorship and self-censorship returned, according to many journalists, stronger than before the revolution” (de Angelis 2015: 7). What has happened in between?

I argue with John Downing that the „ingrained occupational practices inherit from the previous situation” (Downing 1996: 203) are an important obstacle during an evolving system transformation. Similar to other scholars, Downing understands (media) institutions rather as ongoing and interconnected societal constructs than as calculable and steady running machines. The structures and mechanisms of which such institutions consist of are constantly re-configured by their members through the daily performance of routine practices. How these routines are realized is dependent on various factors as social and occupational norms and values, institutional and individual resources, or hierarchical positions and informal relations. However, they form a “cohesive set of rules” to be followed which determine both the structure of the institution and the self-perception of media professionals (Shoemaker/Reese, 1996: 101).

I observed the Egyptian media during field trips to Cairo between 2011 and 2015 and discussed its issues with journalists, media experts and citizens. The political transition in Egypt and the developments in the Egyptian media scene during that time period showed patterns resembling some aspects of the transitions in Latin America and Eastern Europe, namely the rise of sensationalism, tougher competition in the media market or an enduring economic crisis (Jones 2002: 416). Moreover, I argue that the Egyptian case is an excellent example for the high interconnectedness of the political and the media system. Reforming the state-owned media was one of the demands of the early revolutionary days and at times hotly debated in- and outside the media. Attempts by some journalists to reform their institutions and their profession could be observed, but earnest political support was lacking. The Ministry of Information was not abolished, the press laws were not revised, and the Egyptian media was not purged from regime-linked personnel. Thus, the Egyptian media’s development was restrained by resistances both from inside and outside the media. Means of control and unprofessional practices inherited from the Mubarak era did not vanish, but persisted.

In fact, those bad habits flourished once more after the ouster of Mohammed Morsi, who had been elected as president in mid-2012 and was imprisoned after the mass protests of June 30, 2013.

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Nadia Leihls is a PhD candidate at the Seminar of Communication Studies at the University of Erfurt, and has obtained her master degree in 2008 from Ruhr-Universität Bochum. Currently, she is coordinating the pilot-project "Ombudsmen in Tunisia" for the Erich-Brost-Institut for International Journalism at the University of Dortmund. Her research interests include gender and Arab media systems.

Transformation of Conservative Broadcasting in Turkey

Burcu Yaman

The rising neoliberal policies and developing telecommunication technologies since 1980's inevitably paved the way for the transformation of global and local media systems. Particularly, a dramatic shift in the control of broadcasting has been witnessed; from government monopolies to private broadcasting regimes through the de-regulation processes in all over the world. In Turkey, the experience of new media order has not only manifested itself as the commercialization, but it has also appeared as the liberalization of media and proliferation of different voices in the public sphere, including the visibility of ethnic minorities and religion in the media.

Religious groups, which are assumed to be politically suppressed during republican period, gained their visibility initially in political sphere and consequently in many other social and cultural realms, including media. With the emergence of new TV channels TGRT, STV and Kanal 7 which have affiliations with different Islamic groups and political parties religious broadcasting entered the mainstream. As Doruk Cino lu explains, these new media forms apparently differ from mainstream broadcasting in terms of its institutional aspects and content;

"After the 1980 coup, a strong Islamic media emerged in Turkey. Furthermore, the advent of commercial broadcasting in Turkey resulted in a break in the authority of the elitist discourse of TRT and prepared the site for the emergence of new actors and new discourses in the public sphere. In this context, Islamic groups in opposition to the state employed the same tools, media and education, to counteract the secularizing project of the state." (2010:18)

Due to the inevitable mutual interaction of politics and media systems, Islamic broadcasting has faced with a couple of institutional and content-related transformations in parallel to political processes. In Turkish context, in order to really understand Islamic broadcasting and its transformations, from their emergence to current context, it is essential to focus on the rise of political Islam, articulation of neoliberal ideology into Turkish political culture and social lives, increasing political power of AKP (Justice and Development Party) and the ongoing conflict between the leading party and Gülen Community which is the former ally of AKP and the owner of Samanyolu TV.

The analysis of different periods and breaking points in relation to the political context will be an attempt to understand how Turkish conservative /Islamic broadcasting has been evolved throughout the years and how local and global trends and context have a significant impact on media policies. This study will attempt to shed light on elaborating Turkish Islamic broadcasting as a country-based case within the context of understanding media systems of developing and especially Muslim countries in Middle East region.

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Burcu Yaman received her BA degree from the Faculty of Communication at Izmir University of Economics (IUE) in 2010 with an honors degree; she was the holder of a full-fee-paying scholarship throughout her BA studies. She also has a double major degree from the International Relations and EU Department, Izmir University of Economics. After the completion of her BA degrees, she got accepted to the Media and Communication Studies MA program at the same university, again, as the holder of a full-fee-paying scholarship. Throughout her MA studies she has also worked as a full time Research Assistant at the Faculty of Communication at IUE. She completed her MA studies in 2013 with her thesis which focuses on reality crime show genre. Currently, she is a PhD candidate in the Institute for Media and Communication Studies, Freie Universität Berlin under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Carola Richter. Her research interests include sociology of media, television studies and new media.

Institution-building of the online public sphere in an authoritarian society - the new actors in China

Zhu Yi

Along with rapid economic development, China has experienced radical social transformations over the last three decades. While liberalizing economically towards a sort of de facto capitalism, China has remained politically authoritarian. Due to political and legal constraints there is no space for a strong and autonomous civil society as in Western democratic countries. While social conflicts are increasing in a diversifying society, China still lacks the institutions to help handle these conflicts: free press, transparent and independent judiciary, or participatory political decision-making mechanisms.

However, since the new millennium the Internet has been expanding rapidly in China and fundamentally changing the flow of information in society. With 641 million Internet users in 2014, China has the world's largest Internet population. Chinese netizens' ability to access and share information, particularly about breaking news and sensitive topics, is growing continually. The Internet becomes a vital space to set the agenda of public discussion beyond official propaganda.

My presentation seeks to elaborate on how Chinese actors are shaping an emerging (online) public sphere under an authoritarian regime. Adapting different theoretical frameworks from communication studies and political science (public sphere, arena model, actor-centred institutionalism, civil society), I will discuss the following research questions: 1) Under what preconditions can the public sphere take form as an essential element of China's transformation process? What role does China's Internet play in the process? 2) Who are the actors from the society who are able to lead public opinion? What are their motivations and strategies? 3) What are the interrelations between the state and actors from society? How can civil society in China be characterized under the authoritarian system?

To demonstrate how online discussions can influence political decision-making in China, I will examine a case that set a milestone in Chinese legal affairs: The abolition of China's highly disputed "re-education through labour (Laojiao)" system. With inspiration of Gulag, it allowed the police and local authorities to detain persons in labour camps without judicial procedures. Since the 1990s, critical academics, human rights lawyers and journalists have called for an end to the system. Particularly in 2010, thanks to calculated tactics and to the rapid growth of social media, these actors managed to break the political taboo and make "Laojiao" a hot topic of public discussion.

2013, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) announced its decision to abolish the "reeducation through labour"-system. This case provides a comprehensive and multi-faceted example when analysing the institution-building process of the public sphere in China. The whole dimension of the decision-making process in this case is barely known and so far there is no academic research on it.

Media and the Politics of Transformation in the Arab world and Asia



***Zhu Yi** is a PhD candidate at the Institute for Media and Communication Studies, FU Berlin. With focus on China's online public sphere, her research is integrated into the fellowship program of the Graduate School of East Asian Studies (GEAS). She is also research associate at the Mercator Institute for China Studies (Merics) in Berlin. Zhu Yi was Head of Programs at the Heinrich Böll Foundation's Beijing office, where she worked closely with Chinese academics, journalists and civil society groups to discuss and analyze current developments in China. She studied German and Media Studies at the University of Trier, Germany.*

Media during democratization in Pakistan: The Case of General Elections 2002 and 2008

Naveed Iqbal Chaudhry

Elections are considered as gateways to democracy and boom of political activities in a social system. During dictatorships, polls become even more vibrant focus of political actors, mass media and general public. They become extra crucial in terms of their outcome when labelled as a key 'step towards the restoration of democracy' from military dictatorship. On the other hand, dictators either misuse their powers to delay the elections or rig them in favour of their co-opted political party. In these circumstances, only the conduct of fair elections, educated voter-participation and freedom of press can guarantee a better democratic replacement of dictatorship. Elections become an enormous challenge for journalism in dictator-led societies. So, media is ought to perform socially responsible roles to set a meaningful pro-democracy agenda, watchdog the electoral process and serve as platform of expression for diverse opinions. Media framing of political issues, events and actors plays an important role to accomplish these normative responsibilities. Frames in media text indicate the exertion of political power and by this imprint of power they actually register the identity of actors or interests that competed to dominate the text. Analysis of media frames not only enables to reveal different aspects of power struggle between political actors and interests but also the editorial inclination of news organizations.

In the perspective of General Musharraf's regime (1999-2008), Pakistan is also one of such dictator-led and politically conflict-stressed states to consider as case study for accessing the performance of said normative media roles. Since its birth in 1947, the seesaw between dictatorships and civilian regimes has resulted in a fractured political history of Pakistan. So far, the state has observed 4 phases of army-led dictatorships, almost 30 years long. During the remaining 38 years, only one elected civilian government was able to complete its constitutional tenure of 5 years. Poor governance, corruption, vulnerable state-military relations and electoral rigging remained prominent reasons for inconsistent and insecure governments. Initially, General Musharraf managed to place himself on the position of President of Pakistan through a controversial Referendum in April 2001. Then, he backed his co-opted political party to win General Elections in October 2001, eventually to approve his Presidential position for next five years. Before the conduct of this election, major political leaders were either exiled or jailed. He, once again in 2007, imposed the state of emergency by abrogating the constitution and forcefully resigning the supreme judiciary. This event triggered his political decline and the exiled leaders managed to return back and resume political struggle against dictatorship. With public pressure, Musharraf was forced to announce General Elections in 2008 which resulted in the defeat of King's party. Later, anticipating the impeachment cases, he resigned from the post and went to self-exile.

My paper will exhibit the framing analysis of editorials published by Daily Jang and Daily Nawa-i-Waqt regarding the said General Elections 2002 and 2008. It will attempt to explore the editorial framing of 'dictatorship', 'democracy' and 'electoral process' with regard to the performance of normative roles of journalism in a society like Pakistan. The results will reveal the change in dominant media frames and editorial policies during the selected period of time and political context. The

Media and the Politics of Transformation in the Arab world and Asia

findings will provide space for discussing the case of Pakistani media during political transformation. This paper is based on first two elections out of total three general elections (2002, 2008, and 2013) selected for my doctoral research.



***Naveed Iqbal Chaudhry** is Lecturer at the Institute of Communication Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore (Pakistan) since 2006. He has earned the degrees of M.A. Mass Communication, M.A. Political Science, M.Phil. Communication Studies and M.Phil. Political Science from University of the Punjab, Lahore. He has been awarded with HEC (Pakistan) & DAAD (Germany) Scholarship to pursue his doctoral studies under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Carola Richter at the Institute of Media and Communication Studies, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany. The title of his doctoral research is "Press, Dictatorship and Democracy in Pakistan: Editorial Framing of General Elections 2002, 2008 & 2013 by the Urdu Press of Pakistan".*

Organizers



Carola Richter is Junior Professor for international communication at Freie Universität Berlin. She holds a master degree in Arabic studies, journalism and political sciences from the University of Leipzig, Germany and obtained her PhD from the University of Erfurt with a thesis on the media strategies of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Her research focuses on media and transformation, protest movements, foreign news coverage and public diplomacy with an emphasis on the Arab World. She is the co-editor of „Arabische Medien“ (2015, with Asiem El Difraoui) and “New Media Configurations and Socio-Cultural Dynamics in Asia and the Arab World” (2015, with Nadja-Christina Schneider). Carola is also the co-founder of AREACORE - The Arab-European Association for Communication and Media Researchers.



Cilja Harders is a professor of political sciences, and the director of the “Center for Middle Eastern and North African Politics” at the Otto-Suhr-Institute for Political Sciences at Freie Universität Berlin and has held this position since 2007. She has extensive research experience in the Middle East with a focus on Egypt since 1992. She has published on local politics, political transformations and politics “from below”, Arab-European Relations as well as gender relations. She co-edited a book on “Local Politics and Contemporary Transformations in the Arab World,” with Palgrave in 2013. Cilja Harders is currently directing a project on “Political participation, emotion, affect, and transformation” in the framework of the German research Council (DFG)-funded Research Centre “Affective Societies” (DFG, 2015-2019).

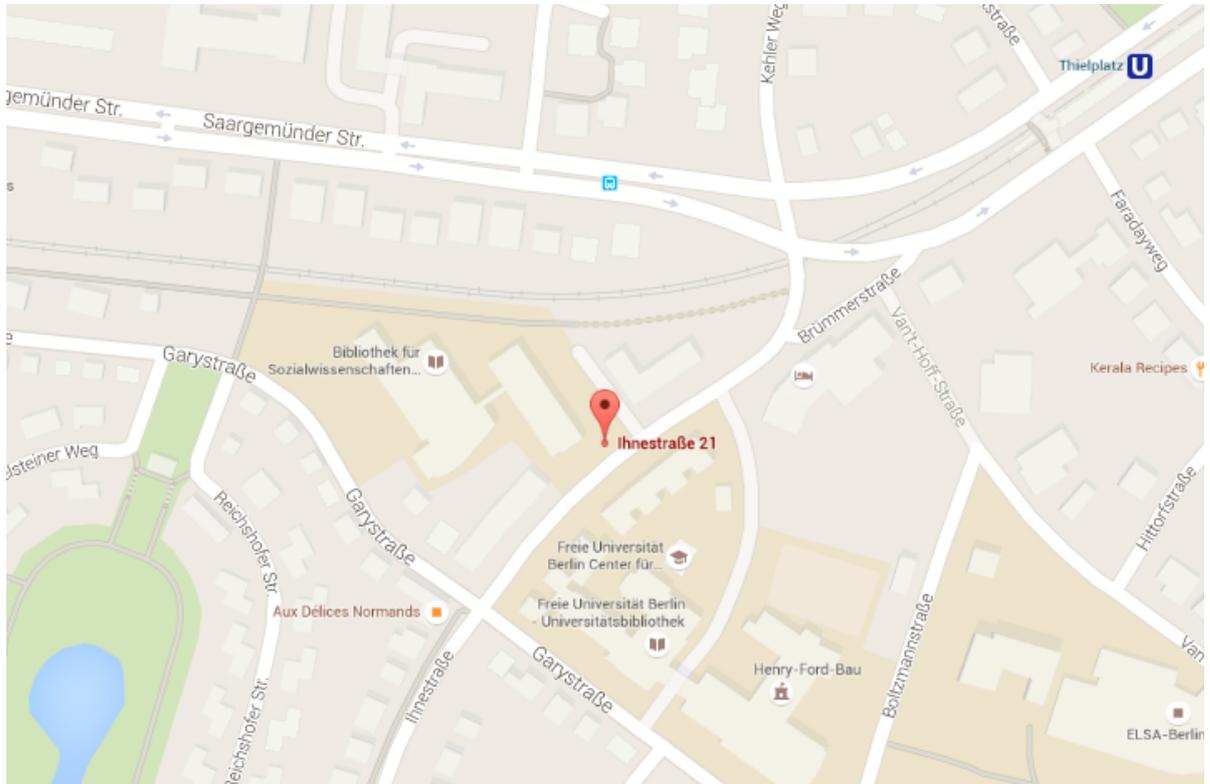


Martin Schiller holds a Double degree (M.A.) in political sciences and European Studies from Sciences Po Paris and Freie Universität Berlin. In his PhD project, supervised by Carola Richter and funded by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, he is focussing on state-press relations in France and Germany in the light of foreign news reporting on the Arab world. Besides his research interests in public diplomacy, media systems and political culture, Martin has been involved in capacity-building projects on the level of Euro-Mediterranean relations.



Anna Antonakis is a doctoral candidate at the Freie Universität Berlin. She holds a Master’s degree in Political Science and has acquired regional expertise on Tunisia via various fieldworks since 2009. Since 2013 she got a scholarship by the Heinrich Böll foundation and was granted a fellowship in the project “Elite Change and New Social Mobilization” at the Institute for Foreign and Security studies SWP in Berlin. Her research revolves around mobilization dynamics at the interface of on- and offline and includes intersectional theories and theories of (counter)public spheres. In her PhD, she analyses the creation and political impact of women’s counterpublic spheres in Tunisia after the uprisings 2011.

How to get there



Subway:

Take green line U3 (direction "Krumme Lanke") and get off at "Thielplatz". From there, the venue can be reached within a 5 minutes walking distance.

Venue addresses:

Day One, December 10th 2015 Lecture Hall A, Otto-Suhr-Institut, Freie Universität Berlin
Ihnstraße 21, 14195 Berlin

Day Two, December 11th 2015 Senate Assembly Hall, Henry Ford Building, Freie Universität Berlin
Garystraße 35, 14195 Berlin

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