THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN CONFLICT, PEACE-BUILDING, AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Abstract

This article analyzes the role of media in interethnic relations and conflict. The article argues that news media influences the outcome of conflict negotiations. This article adds to research on media by highlighting vital factors that are under researched (i.e. the role that the media play in the liberal peace agenda and alternative media’s revolutionary impact on cross border social movements). This article focuses on the Cyprus conflict with a particular emphasis on the role that the media play in the peace-building process. This article argues that alternative media reflect new factors impacting the international arena thus deserve comprehensive analysis. This article contributes to international relations theory and practice by stressing the impact that communication technology has on global affairs.

Key words/terms: the democratization of value-creation; infrastructure for peace; misinformation; liberal peace agenda; media hegemony.

Introduction

The media continue to be a primary source that the public turns to for insight into vital issues affecting their lives. However, communication researchers increasingly stress that the established media are not only providing information but shaping the way people perceive the issues and, it is apparent that, the media have the potential power to influence how people act in regards to issues. The public expects that (ideally) the media represent a non-state factor that will provide reliable, accurate, and unbiased information regarding domestic and international affairs. However, in too many instances the established media is proving to represent special interests groups—the establish media promotes the interests of select interest groups thus ultimately present issues in a way that appeals to those of special interest groups (Yang & Ishak 2012, p. 69).

On the one hand, this has a beneficial effect in that it provides freedom of choice (individuals are free to choose which broadcast best represents their interests) while, on the other hand, it seems to exasperate ethnic relations, intercultural relations, and conflict resolution in situations where it heightens negative impressions of conflict resolution proposals. The article argues that by presenting issues from a perspective of special interests the established news media is playing a significant role in the effectiveness of the liberal peace agenda (e.g. using the Cyprus conflict as an example of news presentations that highlight the dominant views of the established elite from both sides of the conflict). That is to say that in addition to reporting on issues media has the ability to frame the issue(s) in a way
that influences how individuals and policy-makers respond to the issues. However, as a consequence people are increasingly turning to alternative media for what they believe to be information that is more reliable, unfiltered, and unbiased.

This article analyzes the extent to which media represents a non-state factor that is slanting the way intra-state and interstate issues are perceived. This article accomplishes this by applying a content analysis to media portrayals in the particular case of the divided community of Cyprus. The emphasis is on whether or not the established news media’s portrayal of the proverbial other is influencing the peace-building process in a positive or negative way. In other words this article analyzes the extent to which the established news media is influencing (in a positive or negative way) how individuals perceive, feel about, and act toward other nationalities, cultures, and/or ethnic groups.

In addition, the article contributes to the body of international relations (IR) scholarship on conflict, security, and peace by analyzing the role that new developments in communication technology play in cross-border social movements. Although the impact of social media has been apparent it is under researched by IR scholars. This article contributes to science (especially in terms of the theory and methodology for doing IR research) by providing an overview of the impact that global communication technology has on international relations in connection with the theoretical discourse on security, diplomacy, conflict, how to do scientific research, education, in terms of the role of culture in IR research, and draws out the implications in each arena for further policy research and development (Tehranian 1997, p.1). This article stresses that the media and information communication technology (ICT) deserve comprehensive analysis by international relations scholars due to fact that conflict, security, and cross border social movements are influenced by media networks.

In terms of the impact that communication technology is having on the global arena the article argues that analyzing the role of alternative media through the lens of Giddens theory of Structuration reveals how alternative media are increasingly being used to create a new public platform, to create an infrastructure for implementing the democratic principle of participatory political communication, for social innovation, for positive change, and for empowering the civil body in ways that result in cross border social movements (thus as a tool for international dialogue and for generating and disseminating what the public believes to be unfiltered information—although the extent of the reliability of unfiltered information is uncertain). That is to say that advances in information communication are proving to validate the claim of the IR Structuration theorists that technologically enhanced means of structuring social dialogue, of engaging the civil society in a public arena, plus increasing the extent of participatory political communication and deliberation can result in an increase in security, a reduction of violent conflict, and the realization of the democratic peace.

This article proceeds with section two describing why content analysis is a viable IR tool for researching the role of media in interethnic conflicts (e.g. the Cyprus context is used as an example). Content analysis is employed as a research tool in order to indicate how the established news media can portray the same facts (or issues) from different perspectives. Section two includes an explanation of how alternative media emerged in the Cyprus case to provide a platform by which civil society could be engaged in social formation. This is followed by section three which analyzes the news headlines from the established Cyprus media as evidence of the role that news media play in interethnic relations, conflict, and peace-building. Section three continues with an analysis of the data and draws conclusions about the role of media in IR (both the established media and the revolutionary impact of alternative media). The fourth (final section) summarizes the article and explains the theoretical and practical implications for future research on the impact of ICT and media on the theory and practice of international relations.

Analyzing the Content of Media

This research article uses content analysis as a unique method for analyzing international issues because (whether or not an agent wants to improve international relations, create a better understanding between international agents, merely analyze what is going on in regards to international affairs, or predict and control international affairs) accurate information is fundamental. This research project
uses content analysis to point out the extent to which the established news media can filter information intentionally as with propaganda. “Propaganda is the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist” (Jowett & O’Donnell, 1999, p.7).

However, misinformation can happen unintentionally (as with the problem of an inadequate perspective and the failure of the established perspective to accurately determine what positively impacts social relations) but the outcome influences the factors that play a role in conflict, cross-border social movements, and security for “Even a little bit of imperfection in information could have large effects” (Stiglitz 2004, pp. 28 & 63; see also Mäki 2001, p. 381). And, of course, increased imperfection of information increases inadequacy and the ability to get the desired outcome. This article argues that this factor demands greater scrutiny not only on the part of communication and media researchers but on the part of IR theorists.

The article points out that because of the multi-level impact of the media content analysis is a viable tool for researching the role that the media play in influencing global affairs at multi-levels. This article claims that content analysis is a relevant method for researching the role of media in interstate relations because it reveals the extent to which the media have the power to frame issues, establish impressions, and set agendas in ways that have a significant impact on conflict, security, and efforts toward peace-building (Krizay 2011, p.1). Thus, media can act as an information hegemon in terms of determining what information is made available and from what source(s) thus the impression people have on issues. That is to say that “Media hegemony can be defined as a situation in which one frame is so dominant that people accept it without notice or question” (Yang and Ishak 2012, p.5).

Media researchers have made evident the fact that contemporary news media produce news presentations from the perspective of special interest which influences the way in which information is filtered and presented (Yang & Ishak 2012, p. 182). However, the main objective of this research project is to expose the extent to which the preferences of the established media support the state-centric approach to the liberal peace agenda and neglects the agent aspect of what is necessary for achieving the democratic peace. The article also explores the prospect that new technologically advanced media resources offer the possibility of engaging the public in a way that does impact social movements (both positively and negatively). Thus, the article proposes that an analysis of the impact of ICT does potentially offer positive benefits to international relations theory and practice (in terms of offering a more comprehensive perspective on what is impacting the global arena). This article uses content analysis as a basis for comparing the everyday (practical) perspectives from which individuals and groups have impressions of other ethnic groups. A content analysis reveals, uncovers, specifies, indicates, and discloses biases that are implied in the established news sources but made more evident through a content analysis comparison of news sources.

A comparison will be made between two local news sources (that maintain clear cultural and language differences with the expectation that a content analysis will reveal that each source is presenting from a slanted perspective). In this respect content analysis is used as a tool to indicate the extent to which the established media can be used in a way that reinforces the deadlock in the efforts to implement the liberal peace agenda. The hypothesis is that it will become apparent that the general public is turning to alternative media as a means of creating a social infrastructure for more positive interactions (especially in regard to the portrayals of other ethnic groups) due to the fact that the public increasingly recognizes that the established news sources show a preference for a narrow aspect of the concerns involved in conflict resolution. Thus, this article indicates the value of content analysis as a method for analyzing the media as a factor in conflict, its influence on the reconciliation of conflict, and the role that the media play in activity that permeates borders.

Content analysis has mainly been a tool for research in communications, social sciences, media studies, psychology, language studies, and for analyzing political campaigns (Prasad 2008, 5). However, because of the extent that ICT, global media, and the most powerful international organizations are all converging (due to the impact of new media and revolutionary advances in information communication technology) there is increased evidence that ICT is impacting international relations. This is true
because the media (and the converging industries the media represent) are clearly creating a force that is driving globalization. Thus, media analysis is relevant as a factor shaping interstate relations (this article is especially concerned about the role of media in shaping the impression that people have regarding their relationship with the established systems of power and how minorities fit into that established system.

Globalization, according to Anthony Giddens, “Can be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. Global media play a major role in the impact of globalization—“For example, twitter, Facebook, emails, [etc]. Because ‘yes’ everything is mediated” (Livingstone 2009, p. 4; see also Giddens 1991, p. 80). Giddens recognized that when the interests of media is too closely tied to that of special interest groups media can be used as a tool for promoting, maintaining, and reproducing systems of power and control (Giddens 1984, p. 16). It is in this respect that (in situations of conflict) the established media too often act to reinforce entrenched attitudes, perspectives, and positions which keep the conflict in deadlock.

Ideally media acts as a mediating force between social agents and social systems (e.g. acting as a public platform and/or sphere in which the civil society can be engaged, where the interests of the public are voiced, and acts as a tool for transparency (which holds the authorities accountable). This is the reason why media freedom is a fundamental building block for a liberal democracy (e.g. why media is an essential component of the infrastructure of peace). In other words the assertion that by abiding by certain principles there is a guarantee that conflict between agents is almost completely eliminated (or that the democratic peace can be realized when agents interact on the basis of certain principles that serve as the normative foundation for an infrastructure of peace) is premised on an actively engaged civil society as a key aspect of the principle. That is to say that recursive forces (the fundamental principles that promote the democratic peace) act as a factor in the infrastructure for peace when the apparent conflict of interests between agents are effectively mediated by the discursive structures of the system in a way that creates solidarity (Giddens 1984, pp.24-25).

The liberal peace strategy (e.g. the state-centric political economic approach to social formation) is a variation to the democratic peace concept in that it also advocates “Democratization, the rule of law, human rights, free and globalized markets, and a Neo- liberal approach to development” (Richmond 2006, p. 292). However, because the emphasis is on the structure rather than agents (e.g. the liberal peace approach tends to overlook the significance of including the populace in addressing and resolving conflict) it tends to accentuate the role of power, resources, and governance as the means for accomplishing its agenda. It is in this respect that the established media have tended to support the agenda of the liberal peace approach by means of the “Supervision of the activities of subject populations based upon the control of information” (Giddens 1991, pp. 57-63). Thus, proponents of the liberal peace approach overlook the significance of multi-level communication processes that are essential for conflict transformation and are central to major phases of social transformation (i.e. they overlook the factors that support participatory democracy), but, as well, the proponents of the liberal peace approach fail to recognize the role of communication as its “Most important dynamic force” (Giddens 2005, pp. 66-68).

Giddens points out that communication was the key factor in the founding of civilization and continues to play a key role in progressing civilization on to the global level. He asserts that communication systems facilitate progressive social movements when they engage the civil society in a way that results in a socially contracted means for protecting the interests of the individual by instituting the common good plus by implementing a means by which to put into effect the principles for realizing liberal democracy and sustainable peace. This is the basis of Giddens notion of Structuration (e.g. agents and structures interact to generate—by means of communicative processes that are defined in liberal societies as deliberative democracy— the power to reconcile the seeming differences within diverse societies, between different interests groups, and between the different status levels of the society).

When critically analyzing the Cyprus conflict from the perspective of Structuration it is evident that the liberal peace approach is managing differences by placing the emphasis on the structural aspects of
what is needed for resolving the stalemate (e.g. attempting to resolve the differences in the entrenched positions of the elite and/or the policy-makers which is essential for establishing the authoritarian, power-sharing, and resource sharing aspects of positive development) but is inadequate in creating an interactive civil society in which the general populace is engaged (e.g. the agent aspect of Giddens equation) which is necessary for establishing the social-psychological foundations for social transformation. A content analysis of Cyprus news media indicates the extent to which the established news media reinforce the perspectives of the entrenched positions on the conflict (the governance and structural problems that need to be resolved) which leaves out the forward looking more inclusive perspectives on progressive development (Christophorou et al. 2010, p. 186).

This research project presents a data analysis of the news portrayals of the Greek and Turkish Cypriots newspapers which is followed by an explanation of the role of alternative media in the peace-building process. The difference between the established and alternative media is highlighted by explaining the role that alternative media projects play in creating public participation, a vision of shared goals, values, and principles, plus the recognition that alternative media can be used as the basis of an infrastructure for peace. Alternative media is used as an example of the effectiveness of applying the Structuration model to facilitating social progress because it promotes positive interactions between the structure and agents.

The argument is that the peace-building process is enhanced when Giddens’ model of mediating progressive social development is employed to create structures that enable the actors within the system to establish an infrastructure which is necessary for generating sustainably beneficial outcomes for the system and the agents (Sinclair & Stuart 2007, p.189).

Method

This section of the article explains why content analysis is a good tool for illustrating how an issue can be viewed from different perspectives by different media sources. The analysis will focus on a particular issue in a particular context and point out how the established news media have come to believe it is more beneficial to their interests to portray information so that it appeals to particular segments of a population (based on the cultural, political, national, and/or economic interests of that segment of the population). Thus, content analysis contributes to researching the role that the media play in influencing global affairs at multi-levels. “Five Turkish and five Greek Cypriot newspapers were selected as samples for this study [and] were assessed according to the ‘Content Analysis Coding Schema’ (Ersoy 2010, p. 117).

Content analysis is defined as “A multipurpose research method developed specifically for investigating any problem in which the content of communication serves as the basis of inference” (Holsti 1969, p. 2). Holsti is a pioneer in the use of content analysis to determine the nuances in media messages and political communications. He asserts that content analysis has proven to be a viable “Technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages” (Holsti, 1968, p. 608). That is to say that there is an aspect of content analysis that acts in the same way as a survey method for collecting data regarding individual preferences. However, different from a survey method content analysis does not count the content of the respondents but counts the number of times a particular concept appears in the responses analyzed (Newbold et al. 2002, p. 80).

In terms of the Cyprus conflict the claim is that content analysis is a viable tool for demonstrating that the liberal peace agenda tends to reinforce the focus on structure and the status of the structure (thus on the position and opinion of the decision-makers). A content analysis of Cyprus news media points out the extent to which the established news media also reflect the governance and structural issues that need to be addressed but leave out the aspects of the peace-building process that contribute to social-psychological healing (Christophorou et al. 2010, p. 186).

The display of the data collected from the content analysis of the news content from the North and South of Cyprus is followed by an explanation of the role that alternative media play in the Cyprus
peace-building process. By pointing out the difference in the role of the established media and that of alternative media the article makes evident the significance of participatory political communication for progressive social development.

Unit of Analysis is a means for identifying categories and defining and/or interpreting the terms used in media presentations (Prasad 2008, p. 13). In other words “Unitizing is characterizing units by length, duration, size, and by their location in the continuum” (Krippendorf, 1980, p. 220). This research is based on a comparative analysis of the content of several news sources and an interpretation of the meaning implied.

Coding

“Once the unit of analysis has been determined a criterion for coding must be established for acquiring, categorizing, and quantifying the information” (Miller 2014, p. 7). The authors use a qualitative technique for assigning meaning to the texts. The authors devised a simple coding system to accurately decipher sentences and phrases in order to place the content in either positive, neutral, or negative categories. That is to say that the content of news items is assessed as representing either (a.) positive, (b.) neutral (merely describing the facts), or (c.) a negative perspective toward their counterpart. The assessment is based on reference to statements made by the Cypriots press and/or their counterpart the Northern Cyprus Press. The assumption is that the news media on both sides of the island display opposition to the aspects of the conflict proposal that project the interests of their counterpart due to the fear that it seems to diminish the prospects of realizing their own interests thus poses a threat to their identity and security. The comparison will be made by stressing the contribution to the peace-building process made by alternative media with the assumption that it will be more focused on what can be gained by cooperation.

News Coverage of the Conflict Resolution Proposals

The data displayed (see table 1 in the appendix) indicate the portrayals of the Greek news media of the Cyprus conflict and resolution process. The evaluations were made of five newspapers: Alithia, Haravghi, Phileleftheros, Politis, and Simerini. According to press headlines of Greek Cypriot newspapers, the majority of headlines are neutral or descriptive (65.4%), while 31.1% of headlines were negative and only 3.6% press headlines were positive about news related to proposals for resolving the Cyprus conflict. Thus, the results show that Greek Cypriot press was primarily inclined toward neutrality although negative sentiments prevailed over positive sentiments. However, on the other hand, the fact that 31.1% of press portrayals were negative indicates that the press generates a significant amount doubt about concerning prospects of resolution.

When it comes to the Turkish Cypriot press the Volkan newspaper stands out above the others because of the extent to which it publishes negative headlines and because it prints no positive headlines about the Greek Cypriot conflict resolution proposals thus giving a strong impression that the current peace-building proposals are not in the best interests of the North Cyprus community. The newspapers Afrika and Yeni Düzen print more positive news regarding prospects for resolution with 5.3% and 4.4% positive headlines and a low percentage of negative headlines (however still not a high percentage of positive headlines although comparatively higher than the other newspapers). The Kıbrıs newspaper has mainly published neutral headlines. The total numbers show that 72.1% of the Turkish Cypriot news coverage tends to be neutral reports and there is a very low number of positive headlines (e.g. 13 out of 444 headlines from 5 different newspapers) (see table 2 in the appendix).

Cyprus represents one of the longest running ethnic conflicts in history which also places Cyprus amongst the longest ongoing peace keeping missions in the history of the United Nations. The protracted nature of the conflict raises questions about why the liberal peace agenda has been so unsuccessful in resolving the conflict, what is revealed concerning the inadequacies of the liberal peace strategy when viewed from the perspective global statistics that stress the high percentage of a recurrence of violence after employing the liberal peace strategy (see Collier, 2003, p. 83), and the role that the media play in reinforcing the entrenched positions of the decision-makers. This article argues
that the success of alternative media for generating a breakthrough in the Cyprus standoff reflects the relevance of creating a social-psychological infrastructure for sustainable peace. That is to say that information communication technology provides an alternative public sphere where the public can engage in a Constructivist process to determine how to achieve the common good.

The impact that alternative media is having on the Cyprus peace-building efforts makes evident “The power of multi-dimensional partnerships involving local civil society and the international donor community, which manifests in itself the profound and inspirational value of citizen-led change” (Louise & Morgan 2013, p. 10). In the Cyprus case in particular communication researchers have found that conflict could be predicted and managed more effectively by engaging agents at multi-levels and that there are inadequacies in strategies that merely focus on power, resources, and governance (i.e. researchers have presented similar results in case studies on attempts to resolve conflicts in Africa and Asia). The Bi-communal engagement in the Cyprus case is evidence of the need for more research on the role of alternative media as a factor influencing peace and conflict (Broome & Anastasiou 2012, p. 293; Gawerc 2006, pp. 437-443).

This article defines the process of establishing an infrastructure for peace as the democratization of value creation and proposes that it is particularly effective when addressing the problem of conflict in divided societies: i.e. “In the social sciences there is a long tradition of accounting for certain societal [conditions], such as peacefulness, on the basis of an ability to establish shared values” (Fry & Miklikowska 2012, p. 230). However, the democratization of value creation—a phenomenon that the infrastructure for peace makes possible—is also a manifestation of the viability of the Structuration approach to mediating the relationship between the sides of the conflict that focuses on power, resources, security, and governance and the side of the conflict that is primarily concerned about identity, values, and interests.

Ron Fisher—a pioneer in structuring inter-communal dialogue in Cyprus—argues that the social-psychological perspective on solving deep rooted protracted conflicts and for developing an infrastructure for peace is inclusive of the role of multi-dimensional and multi-level engagement. In line with the ethos of democratic functions—that emphasize human relations, mutuality, and the practice of interactive conflict resolution—the multi-level approach has been effective because it prompts agents to “Deal with their differences in a respectful and cooperative manner, [and in a way that works] toward outcomes that are mutually beneficial and self-sustaining over the longer term” (Fisher 2009, p. 328). Fisher’s work indicates that making use of the alternative means for creating an infrastructure of peace (e.g. structuring a public sphere where separated parties in the conflict can engage in away that positively influences perceptions, attitudes and values) does reduce antagonism and prejudice, plus helps to transform competition into cooperation (Fisher 1990, p. 178).

Conclusion

As is evident from the data (displayed in the appendix on tables 1 and 2) the news coverage by the established media of the processes connected with the Cyprus conflict resolution portray a very low level of positive headlines regarding the reconciliation proposals and of the resolution plans. The data also reveal the significance of neutral reporting where there is no distortion of the facts but the newspapers provide information without making inferences (especially in terms of negative implications that occur by exclusively emphasizing the views of elite decision-makers and by only quoting from select representatives of special interest groups). According to evidence regarding the extent of negative portrayals of the proverbial other by the Cypriot news media on both sides it was evident that the entrenched positions have implications of some degree of nationalism that not only aroused animosity toward ethnic counterparts but escalated tensions between Turkey and Greece (thus making it more of an international issue that also involved the EU).

The overall findings are consistent with the hypothesis of the article: the established media do frame issues, establishes impressions, sets agendas, plus has an impact that influences interethnic and interstate relations. The results show that because the established media do not reflect the public voice
and, as well, represent the agenda of the liberal peace proponents the public has had to turn to other sources in order to have a voice in issues vital to their welfare.

Thus, the data indicate that in Cyprus the public felt a need for a source of media coverage that not only focuses on the structural, power, and resource problems connected with reconciliation but also engages in the problem-solving, values, and identity aspects of conflict and resolution. The Cyprus context is an example of where the alternative media model demonstrates that by employing multi-dimensional and multi-level strategies for implementing an infrastructure of peace there is more participatory political communication, a more progressively engaged civil society, plus a greater capacity for diverse identity interests to be shaped into the common good and sustained peace. The alternative media model also verifies the claim of proponents of the democratic peace that by engaging agents in a Constructivist dialogic process the knowledge of how to manage the challenges that agents are confronted with is generated which results in creating beneficial outcomes for participating agents.

Thus, the study indicates that due to the impact that media portrayals have on sentiments regarding nationality, conflicts, cross-border social movements, security, and peace communication technology is a relevant research topic for international relations research, theory, and practice. That is to say that the results of this research indicate that due to the revolutionary impact that ICT has on global affairs the IR scope for research and practice is enhanced by being more multi-dimensional plus inclusive of the social-psychological and identity factors involved in interethnic relations (which involves increasing the IR capacity to more adequately analyze the impact of communication media on security, conflict, and peace).

Summary of Overall Article

The primary argument of this article is that the established news media represent a source of information that the public has relied on for what they expect is reliable information about important issues. However, the fact that the media have increasingly specialized content so that it appeals to particular audiences has resulted in news reports that are presented in a way that reflect the perspective of a particular interest group. In addition to the extent to which the media and the authorities are aligned the news media protect the interests of those representing the decision-makers, power, and resources. Thus, this research project indicates that the established news media tend to reflect the governance and state-centric aspects of the liberal peace agenda but inhibits the more inclusive multi-level aspects of conflict reconciliation.

According to Lance Bennett and Shanto Iyengar members of particular groups (ethnic groups, religious groups, community groups, or those who feel a strong sense of national identity) tend to think along similar lines in regards to issues pertaining to “the proverbial other” and are heavily influenced by leaders who shape the opinions of the group. Media can be one of the opinion setters for such groups (Bennet & Iyengar 2008, p. 710). Members of such groups tend to be content with the perspective given to them by “gatekeepers” who set opinions for people under their influence (see Lewin 1951 for studies supporting the claim of the media and the gatekeepers for political communication). Research on protracted conflicts also indicates that Cyprus gatekeepers tend to perpetuate the view that the identity, interests, and the claims of the proverbial other (e.g. that they believe represent a group with identity distinct from their own) threaten the identity interests, and security of their own group (e.g. in protracted conflicts the out-group and in-group can be defined in ethnic terms which is the case in the Cyprus conflict which intensifies the rigidity of the entrenched positions).

This article has argued that because alternative media provide a platform for a much broader segment of the society it has demonstrated that it can be a means for establishing a significant aspect of an infrastructure for peace. Alternative media act as a structural medium (e.g. a public sphere) where the civil society can be actively engaged in Constructivist dialogic processes. The article points out the significant impact that communication media have on international relations which makes it a phenomenon that deserves theoretical analysis by IR researchers. That is to say that the field of IR has done a poor job of analyzing the role of communicative action in conflict, security, and promoting peace-building due to the fact that the established paradigm focuses on contingent party satisfaction.
and agreement-making” (Warfield, 2002, p. 384). The role of communication and media in IR is important because “Global communication has empowered the peripheries of power to progressively engage in the international discourse on the aims and methods of the international system” (Tehranian, 1997, p. 44).

The role of alternative media in the Cyprus conflict exemplify the viability of the ‘Structuration’ model because alternative media provide a platform in which the governance, power, and resource concerns that are central to the state-centric position can be reconciled with the more widespread values, interests, and identity concerns. Reconciling these two dimensions requires inclusiveness of the multi-level and interactive approach to peace-building which engages more of the total public in the process. The Structuration theory also provides an interface between international relations (theory and practice) and strategies for addressing conflict, security, and peace. In other words Giddens makes it apparent that the peace-building process works best when based on principles that have proven to assure the democratic peace (i.e. power is less effective for guaranteeing the democratic peace when top-down but must be mediated by means of a multi-level infrastructure for peace) (Giddens 1984, p. 16). However, Giddens does not actually refer to levels but to bi-polar components (made-up of the system and agents) and together they co-create, by means of deliberative Constructivist processes, a co-constituted social structure.

In this respect this research provides insight into how IR can benefit from applying Structuration as a theoretical model for addressing both protracted conflicts and the IR need to resolve the dichotomy between the liberal peace and the democratic peace agendas. This is because when putting the Structuration model into practice it becomes evident that recursive forces (the fundamental principles that are put into play to gird liberal democracies and made operative for realizing the democratic peace) act as a factor in the infrastructure for peace because they provide a means by which the conflicting interests of agents are effectively mediated by discursive structures which transform the various claims and diverse interests into solidarity (Giddens 1984, p. 24-25).

References


Appendix

Evaluation of the Headlines of Greek Cypriot Press

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive (towards the other)</th>
<th>Neutral (descriptive)</th>
<th>Negative (towards the other)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alithia</td>
<td>+2 3.8%</td>
<td>42 79.2%</td>
<td>-9 17.0%</td>
<td>53 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haravghi</td>
<td>+2 3.5%</td>
<td>39 68.4%</td>
<td>-16 28.1%</td>
<td>57 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phileleftheros</td>
<td>+3 3.6%</td>
<td>49 59.0%</td>
<td>-31 37.3%</td>
<td>83 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politis</td>
<td>+4 7.3%</td>
<td>35 63.6%</td>
<td>-16 29.1%</td>
<td>55 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simerini</td>
<td>0 0.0%</td>
<td>37 60.7%</td>
<td>-24 39.3%</td>
<td>61 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>+11 3.6%</td>
<td>202 65.4%</td>
<td>-96 31.1%</td>
<td>309 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: A content analysis of the tone of the news portrayal of the conflict resolution proposals indicates that the Greek newspaper Politis published more positive headlines compared to other Greek language newspaper, Phileleftheros published mostly moderate portrayals (negatively or neutral). The Simerini newspaper presented no positive headlines about the conflict and Turkish Cypriots at all (the reports are either negative or neutral). Accordingly, amongst 309 headlines from 5 different Greek Cypriot press there are only 11 headlines which are positive, a high percentage were outright negative, however there were also a significant number of neutral portrayals (data was supplied with permission by peace media researcher Metin Ersoy 2010).

Evaluation of the Headlines of Turkish Cypriot Press

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive (towards the other)</th>
<th>Neutral (descriptive)</th>
<th>Negative (towards the other)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kibris</td>
<td>+4 3.2%</td>
<td>91 73.4%</td>
<td>-29 23.4%</td>
<td>124 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halkın Sesi</td>
<td>+2 2.9%</td>
<td>47 68.1%</td>
<td>-20 29.0%</td>
<td>69 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeni Düzen</td>
<td>+4 4.4%</td>
<td>75 82.4%</td>
<td>-12 13.2%</td>
<td>91 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volkan</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>63 61.2%</td>
<td>-40 38.8%</td>
<td>103 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrika</td>
<td>+3 5.3%</td>
<td>44 77.2%</td>
<td>-10 17.5%</td>
<td>57 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>+13 2.9%</td>
<td>320 72.1%</td>
<td>-111 25.0%</td>
<td>444 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: A content analysis of the tone of the news portrayals of the conflict resolution proposals indicates that the Turkish newspaper Volkan published the most negative headlines and in addition published no positive headline about the conflict. The newspapers Afrika and Yeni Düzen seem to offer more positive press with 5.3% and 4.4% positive headlines respectively and a
low percent of negative headlines. The Kıbrıs newspaper mainly published neutral headlines. The total numbers show that Turkish Cypriot press also tend to publish neutral reports with 72.1% and very low number of positive headlines (13 among 444 headlines from 5 different newspapers) (data was supplied with permission by peace media researcher Metin Ersoy 2010).

About the Authors

Melike Yagmur Savrum is junior researcher at Tallinn University of Technology and a volunteer at the Turkey-Estonia joint project on academic and commercial exchange. Leon Miller is a lecturer at Tallinn University of Technology with a specialty in communication between cultures and why cultures collide.