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Living with Control, Working with Control: Reflections of Israeli Journalists

Miglė Bareikytė, Ingo Dachwitz, Lu Yang

Abstract: In this paper, liberal democracy is problematized by examining one paradox inherent to its conceptualization and practice: the possibility for those elected in to power to call out the state of exception, thereby implementing mechanisms of control through the system of law. At the same time, our assumption is that people are not only controlled by instruments of the state, but also by their self-imposed control and built-in processes of socialization and adaptation. Thus we conceptualize a theoretical framework where the use of big words like “democracy” and “freedom” is changed into the analysis of external and internal control mechanisms in a democracy based on the idea of sovereignty.

To combine this theoretical groundwork with empirical practice, we conducted qualitative interviews with Israeli journalists. In doing so, we wanted to analyze their reflections on what could be considered the potential control of a professional group of media practitioners whose role it is to expose the misuse of power, and act as a watchdog in a democratic society. Israel is used as an intensified example, because it is a liberal democracy where the state of emergency has endured for over fifty years. This has affected its media landscape through control mechanisms, such as media censorship or gag orders. The reflections of these Israeli journalists did pave the way for our explorative research to question the extent of “freedom” in any democracy that is based on the idea of sovereignty and focus on the mechanisms which limit and control their actions.

Keywords: Israel, Journalism, Israeli Media, Democracy, State Of Exception, Control, Censorship, Gag Orders

1. Introduction

Discussions about the crisis of democracy or the public’s inability to trust representative politics thrive in various circles – be it different media channels, academic groups, or discussions in think tanks. Media, often described as the “fourth estate”, or, with the help of Web 2.0, the “fifth estate”, is understood as one of the constitutive parts of modern representative liberal democracies – a public guardian in the democratic system of checks and balances. Nevertheless, media

systems are influenced by a diverse range of interests which means that a crucial part of a democracy is subject to certain forms of control. The general goal of this paper is to investigate possibilities of exerting control over contemporary democracies through the control of the media system.

Based on the assumption that a modern representative democratic system is one where diverse forms of control exist, this paper focuses on one form of control that is inherent to the very structure of representative democracy. This form of control is visible in the idea of sovereignty and the ability to call a state of exception. Modern representative democracies are conceptualized as systems where citizens can vote and thereby become a part of the political decision making process. In practice, through the ability to enact the state of exception, citizens can be controlled and may be excluded from active participation in the politics of their countries. The philosophical concept of the state of exception is used in this paper to explain the potential for violence in a democracy where the law might be used to suspend freedoms, such as freedom of speech. This is demonstrated in external control mechanisms that are limiting the work of media organizations.

Not only external control mechanisms, but also internal subjective self-control is of importance when analyzing how media systems function. That means understanding the media system as an entity, consisting of journalists, who are individual subjects – i.e. people with specific experiences, interests and (partly unconscious) ideological standpoints. Therefore, it is important to notice that the media sphere is not an ideal structure – it is a system, which has material effects and consists of real people and organizations that influence its output. Therefore, this paper is based not only on theoretical assumptions, but also on interviews conducted with journalists that explore the empirical reality of our theoretical framework. Our country of choice is Israel. The ongoing conflict with Palestine; the unremitting state of emergency; military censorship; and gag orders (which restrict the ability of media organizations to publish all the information they would want to), make Israel and its media a relevant research choice. Since Israeli media is still under surveillance by Israeli military, it is important to analyze how the logic of the state of exception can be used for the legitimation of media control.

Therefore, the ability to introduce the state of exception into the structure of representative democracy is illustrated in the example of the Israeli media system. The theoretical framework, first, examines the external control mechanisms in order to realize the theory in the existing context of the Israeli media system. Second, it shows internal control mechanisms. Both are demonstrated in the problem-oriented semi-structured interviews with Israeli journalists in order to answer the following research question: How is press freedom conceptualized by Israeli journalists in the context of the unremitting state of emergency in the State of Israel?

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. The state of exception and the problem of sovereignty

Israel was established in 1948 as an independent Jewish state. After the declaration of independence, the state of emergency came into force and has not been lifted since that time. Israel has thus remained in a state of emergency since 1948 – for 64 years. Since 1992, the Knesset is required to renew the state of emergency every year, which it has continued to do (Paraszczyk 2012). According to the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, “over the past year [2010], 45 ordinances have been revoked, leaving 11 laws and 58 ordinances to go. Most of these are (...) being revoked or turned into ordinary laws, so that the state of emergency can be ended (...)” (Lis 2011).

German legal theorist and political philosopher Carl Schmitt developed the concept of the state of exception in the 1920s and 1930s in his book, “Political Theology” (1922). Carl Schmitt was a problematic thinker not only because he supported the Nazis and dictatorship as a form of government, but also because he linked the state of exception to the concept of sovereignty and thus with liberal democracy. According to Schmitt, the latter is based on the transcendental idea of the sovereign – a higher authority, who has the power to rule the people. Schmitt writes that, “sovereign is he who decides on the exception [...]. Exception is to be understood to refer to a general concept in the theory of the state and not merely to a construct applied to any emergency decree or state of siege” (Schmitt 2006, p. 5-6). Which sovereign does Carl Schmitt mean? Although in contemporary discourses sovereignty is understood as a shared power between the state and non-state actors at all levels of governance (Bartelson et al. 2006, p. 466), for Schmitt it is a supreme transcendental power or authority. It is crucial to stress that here we are not praising the theoretical goals of Schmitt. We are using the analysis of the concept of sovereignty and state of exception in order to show the immanent problematic of (liberal, western) political systems today. These are conceived as liberal democracies, yet legal control and the oppression of members of society are still inherent to their structure. Schmitt praised sovereignty and the belief in transcendental power of authority (dictatorship as an example). We think that believing in sovereign power, which is removed from the material world, can be utterly dangerous.

It is important to analyze and criticize the system we are a part of not only for the benefit of pure negative critique (which is rare these days anyway), but also to formulate ideas around alternative structures for the future. The following question illustrates our approach: is it possible to think of democracy as a system that is not based on the idea of a transcendent ruler (in the form of the God concept, a model of governance through a parliament, president, etc.), and in such a way, distant violence and exclusion?

Many people today think of representative democracy and the rule of law as the best form of government, where people have the right to participate and to play a role in the shaping of the politics of the state. Schmitt criticizes the rule of law by outlining the paradox of the sovereign. For Schmitt, an extreme form of sovereignty is dictatorship: when the rule of law is suspended by the actions of such a sovereign, it, paradoxically, still remains a legitimate act, because a sovereign has the power to do so. Therefore, any form of rule based on the idea of sovereignty which can suspend its own system of checks and balances at any time, is simply a strategy for those in power to legitimize their actions. This may be in a dictatorship, which is a direct manifestation of one or few ruling over all others; or in a democracy, where power is visible in the form of a few members of parliament who can still suspend the juridical system and introduce the state of exception (Schmitt 2006, p. 26). The media in such democracies is often understood as the watchdog, protecting citizens and openly criticizing the wrongdoings of government. Nevertheless, media control exists and we think it is important to analyze this control from different levels – system and individual.

Now, we can let our imagination travel further: if the political power structures of modern democracies can potentially suspend the juridical system in the name of a state of exception or a national emergency (and in the case of Israel they do), one might reconsider the fundamentals of liberal democracy and its potential similarities with a dictatorship. In other words, the concept of democracy *should* be re-thought. Is our democracy really a system where the sovereignty of the people mean something? Or do have a few who makes the decisions in a democracy: whether it is the court, the government or the members of parliament? It is often stated that Israel is a country in continuous crisis, but still a parliamentary democracy with free elections, an independent court system and the freedom of expression. We want to question the idea of an uncontrolled expression of opinion in a democracy that is based on the concept of sovereignty. Israel serves as an intensified example of a country that can maintain the rule of law while potentially using legal constraints on the freedom of speech in the name of state security. Therefore, Israel embodies the ambiguity of the concept of democracy based on the logic of the sovereign, where the government as an external actor is able to create instruments to control its citizens in the name of, for example, national security. We limit our analysis to Israeli media and the examples of external control mechanisms (for example, gag orders and military censorship) the state of Israel has adopted to control its media (as well as mechanisms of internal control, see chapter 2.2). We have chosen to analyze freedom of expression through the analysis of the media system, a sensitive topic for modern democracies. We have elected to do so not only to analyze and question the concept of democracy as a system of control with Israel as example, but also to question the activity of the journalists as subjects, whose practice is being limited not only by the constant external control of their activities, but also by the journalists themselves restraining their own subjectivity.

By critically engaging with the concept of democracy based on the logic of sovereignty, we hope this paper will turn away from the discussions about the ideal attributes of democracy, and rather engage in the concrete analysis of the exercise of power in such democracies through the analysis of external control (of media system) and internal control (by journalists).

We have stumbled upon the concept of the state of exception because it enables an interesting way of thinking about the representative democracy and the position of the rule of law in such a democracy. First of all, it is not a juridical issue to decide whether a specific situation is an emergency, a crisis or an exception – decisions are always made by some person/group of persons, and therefore, are subjective. While the idea of the sovereign might have a transcendental quality (sovereign as “the people”, in the case of a representative democracy), it is always some person or a group of persons who has the power to enforce the exception (Schmitt 2006, 6-7). This leads to a second problem of the concept: by enforcing the state of the exception, the sovereign exists simultaneously inside and outside the system of law. A specific body or sovereign (for example, an elected leader), who is in the position to call a specific situation a “state of exception” or a “state of emergency” is able to step out of the system of law and make decisions which are not agreeable with the ones under the previous state of law (Agamben 1998, p. 25). Here we see a paradox, where the sovereign is able to legally step out of the system of law or legally become illegal (but still legal, since he or she is making the decisions).

The exception explains the rule and the exception at one time; therefore, it shows the subjective character of the system of law. A state of exception demonstrates the material reality of the illusion of the democratic, equal, and open-for-all, form of ruling: control in the form of representative politics still exists. Although this control might be curbed by the rule of law, where a sovereign may not do whatever she or he wishes, the ability to implement the state of exception shows the inherent disciplinary mechanisms of the system based on the model of sovereignty. We are aware that the concept of the state of exception has its limitations, but it also importantly suggests a system of representative democracy which allows for a system based on various control mechanisms.

Walter Benjamin in his essay “Critique of Violence” analyzes the inevitable relationship between the system of law and violence. According to him, law and violence are interconnected in the sense that the system of law wants to have a monopoly over power, thereby taking the responsibility for the execution of violence by itself (an individual execution of just ends through violence within the legal framework is not allowed). According to him, law and violence are interconnected in the sense that the system of law wants to have a monopoly over power, thereby taking the responsibility for the execution of violence by itself (an individual execution of just ends, whatever it means for him or her, through violence in the legal framework is not allowed). Therefore, a critique of violence in the legal framework should be done through the critique of the logic of such a

framework and not through the occasional visible use of power (Benjamin 1986, p. 281, 283). According to David Pan, Benjamin is criticizing the origins of law, which are based on violence and where the law is not an ideal of rightfulness and truthfulness, but only the extension of violence. An illusion of justice is created to legitimize the system of law, but it hides the existing oppressive power relations which make up the political system, based on the idea of transcendental sovereignty (Pan 2009, p. 43-44). When a legal system of a specific country is based on a fundamental belief in the rule of law (which incorporates violent power into the system of law), those in power are able to control and define what is right and wrong, and this control will always be legal. In other words, the Hobbesian concept of sovereignty implies that the legal power of the state is implemented through its capacity to define right and wrong, with the potential to use violence. In this context, justice is not a moral high ground, but a strategy for government or those in power to control society. This strategy helps to structure the world one lives in, and decides what statements, behaviors and values are allowed and accepted into the system, and which ones are excluded. The ability to enact the state of exception in modern democracies is a manifestation of the structural urgency to maintain a hierarchy in government which is based on violence.

To sum up, the violent origins of law; the possibility to suspend it in the form of the state of exception; and the use of violence to control the lives of human beings legally, is the theoretical basis for the analysis of the structure of the Israeli media system. This system functions within country where the state of emergency is continuously maintained. This theoretical basis allows us to state that control mechanisms of the population exist in modern democracies (Israel as an example). These are described as external controls and they are legitimized by the rule of law, which is based on violence. The theory shows the subjective and contingent character of the use of law and touches on the violent character of a democracy which is based on the concept of sovereignty and the rule of law as a strategy of those in power.

We have conceptualized democracy as a system where external control is permanently applied. This control is visible in the ability to stop the law in exceptional situations, and create and sustain exceptional situations in order to maintain the legitimacy of those in power. Therefore, it is possible to state that a democratic system is one where the people are controlled by those in power. Having accepted this argument, in our case, it is important to analyze the media system in Israel and look at what structural mechanisms are used to control the media system. The media system is one part of a representative democracy. It acts as a watchdog which enables critique and discussions about the representative democracy. But how is the media system controlled by the Israeli government and what material conditions are created by the state power in order to control it, in the name of constant crisis? How is the law used to control the actions of Israeli society, using the concrete example of Israeli media?

2.2 Internal censorship

Having discussed the theoretical framework of external control mechanisms in modern representative democracies, it is pertinent to observe internal control mechanism as well. Following the steps of French theorist Michel Foucault, it is important not only to analyze the use of external control mechanisms by various institutional actors (e.g., government) to control the population, but also to analyze the use of self-control. Therefore one has to focus on the internal control mechanisms, enforced by the members of society themselves. For Foucault, it is important to ask not “what is a subject?”, but “how are people made into subjects?”. In his theory, subjects are not monolithic unities, with an essential, stable core. Rather, subjects are affected by external influences and events. Because subjective minds are malleable by nature, it is important to analyze the mechanisms used to construct and alter the content of the subjective experience, as well as self-representation of the subject. In this paper, we are presenting the Israeli media system and its intrinsic control mechanisms, as well as interviews with Israeli journalists about the media situation and press freedom in Israel.

For Foucault, it is possible to construct and change the subject in two ways: by becoming a subject as an entity controlled by external mechanisms of power, on the one hand (one of the mechanisms is the governance of the people and their beliefs by using a specific transcendental model, for example, the concept of democracy and the rule of law we have outlined in the previous chapter). On the other hand, subjects can be controlled and influenced by internal control mechanisms. In other words, a citizen can be molded from an individual person into a subject through external (governance and control of a subject through others) and internal (ability of a subject to shape his or her own subjectivity) mechanisms of power. These can include the control of discourses, knowledge, or the deliberate inclusion or exclusion of specific information in the formation of one’s story (Foucault 1982, p. 781). It is important to stress then, that the internal mechanisms which form subjectivity, are constituted in the discourses and dispositive that construct the subject and simultaneously allow him to develop his subjectivity. In other words, the subject is always a product of his time, since he exists in a particular discursive field which works as a backdrop to develop his ideas, actions and subjectivity. It is possible to state that external and internal control mechanisms are intertwined as both work to produce a particular historical subject.

In other words, ethical conduct emerges from the subject, who is able to construct his or her ethical frame of reference and act upon it in a particular historical moment. Subjectivity, or image of the self, is understood as a social means to construct the individual in a relation to the other. Subjectivity involves the development of ethical frameworks and rules by an individual (or external mechanisms) in order to guide the individual’s actions in society. Therefore, we choose to believe that the subject is not only constituted by external disciplinary

powers, which determine and instruct his or her rules of conduct, but subjectivity is also constructed by the actions of the individual as an ethical subject. This movement of self-constitution is not free from discourses that exist in society, since self-constitution occurs in the moment of constantly relating to one's surroundings. Subjectivity is also created in discourses through the relationship between power and language (Colado-Ibarra et al. 2006, p. 45-48). In other words, the formation of the subject is affected by the control over the access to knowledge which results in access to a particular knowledge, or dynamic of power distribution.

To sum up, the concept of subjectivity formation is described here in a constructivist way, where identity is an effect of external and internal control mechanisms. It is never stable. We do not speak and think everything there is to think and speak about – only things we know and are able to express in a particular moment. This structuring of our ideas is an indication of unstable and floating power relations. In this paper we have conducted interviews with Israeli journalists in order to get first-hand answers from the subjects who are participating in the work of the Israeli media system. It is interesting and important to ask then, how do these subjects define and describe their work; and how do they recount the internal limitations imposed on their work, i.e. control of press freedom?

2.3. The control mechanisms of Israeli media

A media system always reflects a country's political system (Eames 2001, p. 2). Israel has been in a state of emergency since 1948, due to threats to the state's very existence; terrorist attacks; and tensed relations with its neighbors. Therefore, media practitioners in Israel work under different conditions than in many other liberal democracies: any highly controversial information could be regarded as a challenge to national security. Due to this complex situation, the Israeli government has intensified efforts to control the work of mass media. A military censorship ensures that Israeli media outlets do not release news that may endanger the state's security. Under such legal restrictions, the professional freedom of journalism is being inhibited by Israeli institutional instruments, alongside various forms of journalistic self-regulation that are deep-rooted in the Israeli media system.

In order to analyze the evolved relationship between the Israeli media and its control through security discourse, it is important to perceive it as a process. Therefore, we will discuss the historical development and the structuring of the control mechanisms of the mass media in Israel, under an enduring conflict situation. Because of the extensive liberalization of the TV market in Israel, television as medium has grown rapidly. The Second Authority for Television and Radio was established in 1990 to supervise the regional broadcasting stations, as well as privately owned television channels (Gentile 2010). In the past decade, the

new media industry has flourished as nearly three quarters of the population in Israel have access to the Internet (Gentile 2010). Comparable to developments in other countries, the dramatic expansion of broadcast and internet media has posed enormous challenges to print media. Small newspapers have closed down and prominent traditional daily papers have had to react swiftly to the threat of new media. Three of Israel's leading newspapers, *Maariv*, *Haaretz* and *Yedioth Ahronoth*, have launched their own digital papers, to adapt quickly to the world of Web 2.0. Approximately 3.7 million Israelis aged 13 and up surf the internet and 86 percent of them read online newspapers (Caspi 2008).

Mass media play a crucial role in relaying political perspectives and developments in Israeli society. However, when talking about the Israeli media, it will invariably be associated with the Israeli military (Limor & Nossek 2006, p. 484). During the Falklands War in 1982, the British Ministry of Defense pointed out: "The essence of successful warfare is secrecy; the essence of successful journalism is publicity" (Sherman & Shavit 2006, p. 552). This quote demonstrates that there is an inherently tense relationship between media and national security. In many countries we find that the media sphere adapts to military and national security needs at different periods (particularly in times of crises), and does not enjoy absolute freedom. In this model of communication, the freedom of the media could be restricted when the security of a state is threatened, or cannot be guaranteed. In contrast, when a state is at peace freedom of expression should be allowed and the media should not be controlled for the most part (Doron 2006, p. 523).

In a state that sees itself as continuously facing a threat to its existence, the freedom of Israeli press is consequently still limited by the military censorship which supervises media in Israel with legal rights (Limor & Nossek 2006, p. 492). The history of Israel's military censorship can be traced back almost 70 years. The British Mandate issued the Palestine¹ Defence (Emergency) Regulations in 1945 (Peri 2004, p. 73) and censorship law was also enacted at this time (Schmidt 2001, p. 425). With the help of the law, the Military Censor had irrefutable power and discretion, in accordance to Regulation 87(1):

"The censor may by order prohibit generally or specially the publishing of matters the publishing of which, in his opinion, would be, or be likely to be or become, prejudicial to the defence of Palestine or to the public safety or to public order." (Quoted from: Schmidt 2001, p. 425).

Based on the censor's authority, government and journalists signed an agreement in 1949 that defined the relationship between Israel's press and the military censor. The most crucial clause determined that any security and military-related information and commentary was illegal to print, unless the print media had permission from the military censor (Limor & Nossek 2011, p. 118). In most cases, the media did not resist this policy which strengthened the power of the

¹ Before the state of Israel was founded in 1948, the region was called *Mandatory Palestine* and was under British administration.

omniscient troops. Furthermore, this faith in the army was further supported by a series of victories in the Sinai Campaign in 1956, and the Six Day War in 1967 (ibid., p. 492). Overall, from the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 until 1973, the media were willing to comply with the military regulations despite the military's restrictive attitude towards the media.

The Yom Kippur War of 1973, however, instigated the turning point in relations between the media and military. The war had very damaging effects on Israeli society, and correspondents became aware of the role that their silence and cooperation with the military played in the build-up to this crisis. After the Lebanon War of 1982, the press became increasingly critical towards the IDF (Israel Defense Forces). At the same time, the military needed to adapt to these social changes. To some extent, the IDF did allow for more openness in the press, yet it continued to ban the information flow in military zones and control reporting in war zones during the first Intifada (Limor & Nossek 2006, p. 493).

Three years after the end of the first Intifada (1996), an actual agreement of military censorship was signed (Limor & Nossek 2011, p. 119). Nowadays, the military censor is responsible for censoring the news. The censor's authority is derived directly from the law. Despite the fact that the majority of Israel's press landscape did not sign this censorship agreement, and is not represented in the Editors' Committee (an informal forum set up under the British Mandate that consists of owners and editors of the big daily national print media, as well as the prime minister and other cabinet members) (Limor & Nossek 2011, p. 127), they too have to obey the rules of the agreement. According to the agreement, all press and broadcast media material concerning military topics (previously specified by the censor as military and national security-related topics on the production of military weapons; nuclear arms; and military force, etc.) needs to be submitted to the military censor for prior inspection. This list of sensitive subjects is regularly updated and determined by both the Editors' Committee and the government of Israel. While the inspection of content before publishing is not strictly enforced, the authorities still reserve the right to punish the media, if the coverage might threaten the IDF and national security. The punishments range from warnings, criminal prosecution, to large fines (Limor & Nossek 2011, p. 120).

In addition to military censorship, the second method of controlling information is through gag orders. These are issued by the courts and used to restrict information from being published (Bogoch & Peleg 2012, p. 973). For instance, due to a gag order that has been imposed since 2010, the Israeli media has not been allowed to report on 'Prisoner X', an Australian-Israeli Mossad agent, Ben Zygier, who committed suicide in his prison cell after being imprisoned for unspecified security crimes (The New York Times, 2010). Nevertheless, in the globalized media context some of the key details of this cover up were revealed overseas afterwards, particularly on the internet. This very case exposed the underbelly of these security measures, which are criticized as counterproductive and outdated. Because of the leaked scandal, the Israeli government received widespread criticism and pressure,

so much so that part of this gag order was lifted in early 2013 (ibid.). That is to say, the Israeli media can partially quote international press coverage about ‘Prisoner X’, but not the original complete version.

The third control mechanism to note is more voluntary: self-regulation. During the Six Day War in 1967, the Second Lebanon War in 2006, the war with Hamas in Gaza in 2008/9 and several other wars, both the government and society felt it was the function of the state to offer its citizens a sense of security. An interesting phenomenon could generally be observed: both the people and the media closely supported the leadership of the country and its military, as long as Israel was at war. The constant insecurity surrounding Israel affected the political and media landscape in as such that democratic notions of transparency, civil rights, and an open and fair media were simply not deemed as important until Israel found itself in a more peaceful and stable situation (Peri 2012, p. 24). According to Peri (ibid.), the general Israeli public value safety above all– even though the government infringement on media freedom might be harmful to their civil rights and interests.

Why do journalists also voluntarily self-regulate? From the perspective of mass communication, when a state faces a security dilemma or national crisis, both the public and media are willing to support a patriotic movement (Doron 2006, p. 524). In a state of emergency, the diversification, liberalism and tolerance of social attributes are crippled, while the expectations of citizens are amplified (Peri 2012, p. 22). As a result, the media takes a kind of “social responsibility”. That is, the journalists will criticize less, instead being in favor of collectivism and the leadership of the state. From Foucault’s perspective, where subjects are constituted through continuous self-regulation, it seems that in times of crisis self-regulation takes more rigid, conservative forms. Therefore, if an external threat takes place, journalists adapt themselves by imposing self-censorship. In doing so they would provide only information that does not intervene with military secrets or state security, in accordance with their social responsibility towards state and citizens.

In the face of continuous crises, the Knesset and the Israeli parliament have persistently re-extended the state of emergency year after year (Sagiv 2007). Agamben points out that any specific body that is in the position to call a specific situation a ‘state of exception’, is able to step out of the system of law and still, paradoxically, function legally (1998, p. 25). The ‘state of emergency’ or the ‘state of exception’ legitimize the state itself to interfere with the particular society and the private sphere. Agamben’s view is demonstrated by the media system in Israel. Through the enactment of the state of exception, there is formal legal censorship in Israel which threatens press freedom to some extent. For the leadership of a country in the state of exception, there is consensus that a military censorship is necessary to protect the country against external threats. Besides the censorship, the military may also interfere by isolating the press from official news feeds in order to get newspapers to conform to state logic (Doron 2006, p. 524). Some media professionals like Erwin Frankel, ex-editor of *The Jerusalem Post*, still

demand independence and professional considerations, even though they are under the pressure from both of the military and the media consumers. Journalists and media outlets, that do not conform to this so-called “social responsibility” towards the nation, may have legally imposed restrictions enforced on them (Peri 2012, p. 18).

2.4 Research questions

To sum up, our approach is to theorize the modern day liberal democracy as a political system that is based on the idea of sovereignty, the rule of law, and the possibility to legally step outside this system and misuse power. To empirically analyze this we decided to focus on media control, and more specifically on the Israeli press. Therefore, this research is based on an understanding of press freedom as a deficit-oriented activity: in an ideal democracy the media is an independent player, which is free from all restrictions. If we assume that total press freedom is not possible, what control mechanisms are then used to limit the activities of the media, and in our case the Israeli press?

In this chapter, we have constructed a theoretical framework consisting of three major components that provide the structure for the analysis. This framework leads us to ask three research questions:

1) We have theorized that a democratic system that allows for the state of exception to be enacted, is one where state and social control could lie in the hands of a few – all within the legal framework of the state. In this study we want to determine how Israeli journalists conceptualize press freedom and, therefore how they view the influence of the state of exception on the Israeli media (press) system and its role in a democracy. This leads to a more general research question that provides a basis for the rest of the analysis:

To what extent do Israeli journalists consider the ongoing tensed security situation in Israel to influence press freedom and its role in promoting democracy in Israel?

2) There are several external factors of control that influence Israeli media. We have given an overview of the development of the media system and showed how elements thereof are structured to officially limit the freedom of the press by law and government actions. These most commonly occur in the form of military censorship and gag orders. Therefore, it is important to analyze how Israeli journalists describe these external control mechanisms, which leads to the following research question:

How do Israeli journalists describe external factors restricting press freedom, and how do these factors influence their work performance?

3) We have also indicated how external factors can construct the subjectivity of human beings, and therefore affect the activities of journalists. This can be seen as part of a system of internal control mechanisms and leads to our final research question:

What internal control factors can be identified, and how do they reflect the Israeli security discourse?

3. Methodological approach

In order to confront our theoretical framework with empirical data, we have decided to conduct explorative research that will allow us first insights in how living and working with certain forms of control can restrict the actions of journalists in a democracy. The complexity of the topic has made it difficult to divide the research objective into measurable categories that are simply to navigate. It was likely that every journalist would have her or his own way of dealing with external mechanisms of control, and therefore would represent a wide range of outcomes on the role of media in democracy. Furthermore the internal mechanisms of control we wanted to identify, as shown in chapter 2.2, are shaped by lifelong experience and therefore would manifest themselves in various, personalized habits. To handle this complexity without ignoring important factors, the openness of a qualitative method was needed. Qualitative methods follow the premise of “understanding the world from the perspective of those who perceive it. Their concern is the subjectively perceived reality” (Fieseler 2008, p. 64). It enabled us to include the personal scope of the journalists (Mayring 1996, p. 17).

The method of choice for our study was an enquiry, since only the journalists themselves could provide information about their processes of dealing with external mechanisms of control and the manifestation of internal ones. As the paper is focused on the personal reflections on individual inner processes and decisions, rather than on the behavior of journalists as a group, we chose to conduct individual interviews and not group interviews (Häder 2010, p. 269-270). Since problem-centered interviews allow one to include information of a (simultaneously) developed theory in the data collection, we decided to work with semi-standardized problem-centered interviews (Mayring 2002, p. 70). An interview guide based on our theoretical approach was created, which was then used during the interviews.

In order to avoid the participants feeling any form of judgment, the questions were formulated with great care. This seemed necessary after we noticed that some of the Israeli journalists reacted with suspicion to alleged critique from foreigners (as we were). The feeling was that Europeans would not be able to understand the circumstances of their work nor their whole life context.

The interviews included questions on the notion of objectivity and the role it plays in journalism. This was done so that the interviewees would engage in a process of self-reflection. The interviews also included questions on the security situation in Israel, and its impact on journalism. Furthermore, we also asked questions on journalists' ability to be critical in Israel, as well as the general role of journalism in a democracy. Moreover, an extensive part of the interview guideline was devoted to the interviewees' understanding of external and internal control mechanisms. This was included in questions on different factors that control and influence the work of journalists, ranging from government control in its different forms; the newspaper organization itself; to Israeli society and the journalists as individuals. In most of the interviews, we used common Israeli examples of external media control, such as the 'Prisoner X' or the 'Anat Kamm – Uri Blau' affairs.²

Due to the extensive influence the print media still have in Israel, the group of participants consisted of newspaper journalists. To make sure we included a wide range of characters with different experiences, a qualitative sample of participants had to show certain heterogeneity (Kelle & Kluge 1999, p. 45; Lamnek 2005, p. 193). Therefore we developed three criteria grounded in our theoretical framework, and tried to achieve diversity through this criteria: political orientation of the media outlet that the journalists worked for; duration of their careers; and whether or not they had to deal with military issues in their work.

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Political Orientation of media outlet	Moderate	Liberal	Conservative	Conservative	Liberal	Liberal	Moderate
Duration of career	5–10 years	25 years or more	25 years or more	20–25 years	20–25 years	10–15 years	5–10 years
Dealing with military issues	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

Figure 1, Source: Own figure

Recruiting Israeli journalists willing to take part in the study turned out to be one of the major difficulties of the research process. Most participants consented to take part in the study only on the promise of complete anonymity. Through snowballing, we managed to interview seven journalists. As shown in Figure 1 we managed to meet our criteria of theoretical sampling, but there were still other

² 'Prisoner X' refers to the suicide of an Australian-Israeli Mossad agent in an Israeli prison cell, and the gag order that prohibited Israeli media from cover this issue (details in chapter 2.3). "Anat Kamm – Uri Blau" affair refers to the leaking of secret military information by the soldier Anat Kamm and its publishing in 2008 by the journalist Uri Blau (Der Freitag 2012).

factors where the sampling was too homogeneous. For example, only one interviewee was female.³ Also, three of the seven journalists worked for the same newspaper, and two of them worked together at another one.

Owing to the difficulties in recruiting the journalists, the interview settings were different from each other. The first three interviews were conducted in March 2013 in Israel, while the others had to be conducted later during the spring of 2013 via e-mail and Skype. We fulfilled the requirement, as postulated by Lamnek (2005), that interviews in qualitative research take place in an environment habitual for the interviewees, but we think our data base would have been more fruitful if we had managed to interview more journalists personally. Despite that, it is important to keep in mind that neither us researchers, nor the Israeli journalists we interviewed are native English speakers, which leads to possible distortions of meaning. This factor could have affected the interviews, as well as the transcription, coding and data analysis.

The interviews were transcribed and then clustered according to our three research questions as deduced from our theoretical framework. An analysis of qualitative interviews based on a theoretical framework, according to Mayring (1996, p. 98) is best done with a qualitative content analysis. This procedure moves away from the original text in an early phase of the process in order to reduce complexity and structure the data (Gläser & Laudel 2009, p. 200). We identified and extracted the relevant interview passages of each participant, and linked these to the appropriate research question. These were then analyzed in order to condense their meaning and later combined to show the greater picture (ibid., p. 199). Concepts like democracy, control, objectivity, patriotism and criticism helped to categorize the relevant passages, since they formed part of our theoretical approach and played a role in the process of developing the interview guidelines.

4. Analyses

4.1. Question 1

To what extent do journalists consider the ongoing tensed security situation in Israel to influence press freedom and its role in promoting democracy in Israel?

With this broader question we wanted to gain insight into the journalists' perspective on press freedom and the role of press in democracy – especially during a tensed security situation. These insights serve as a basis to interpret the following questions on external and internal control mechanisms, and their effects on neutralizing the function of the press in a democratic system with checks and

³ In order to anonymize the only female participant, we decided to use male pronouns to describe the results throughout.

balances.

On a very general level the interviewed journalists were mostly positive about the state of journalism and felt that, in general, the ability to be critical was largely applied. However, if one takes a closer look at the picture sketched by the participants, journalism in Israel is highly inhomogeneous. In relation to their role as journalists and the role that their work plays within a democratic system, we had a wide range of answers. On the one hand, there is P3 who works for a more conservative newspaper. He states that the purpose of journalism is to disseminate and explain to media consumers the view of those in power:

“You have to know where to draw the line (...): I cover Israeli politics and you will never hear or read my opinion of Israeli politics on any internal issue. My job is to explain the point of view of the people who matter, of the people we elect.” [P3]

In contrast to P3’s view, P6 (as well as P5 and P2 who all work for the same liberal newspaper) thinks that *“the role of the newspapers here is to examine what the army, etc. are trying to ‘sell’ to us; to be critical towards what they hear and get from these official sources; and always to be suspicious.”* With this attitude also comes the belief that journalism as an institution has to criticize those in power. P5, for example, says the best position for a journalist would be the opposition: *“I don’t see the point in being a journalist just to applaud institutions.”* P7, who works for a moderate newspaper, agrees: *“Critique of the government is the most important role that the media have.”* P3, who thinks that a newspaper should be the medium of government officials in the native meaning of the word, obviously has a different opinion on this issue: critique should focus on topics that are not related to politics. His colleague P4, works at the same conservative newspaper, and, while staying neutral to this question, he is certain that *“any glance at an Israeli newspaper will reveal the following: journalists in Israel are extremely critical of the authorities and are free to level the harshest criticism at whatever action, policy, or body they see fit.”*

The majority of the interviewed journalists, therefore, emphasized the importance of a press that is critical of those in power. Yet, there are different levels of commitment to this principle. P1, for example, stated that it is the function of the press to make the audience aware of issues that would stay secret without journalistic efforts, even if it might be compromising to governments. He adds that *“there are sometimes issues of security or morals that will prevent publishing stories”*, although these should be kept to a minimum. P7 directly links the issue of restricted press freedom to the tensed security situation, by claiming that it has not always been possible to serve the values of journalism, *“since we are in the middle of an ongoing conflict”*. When speaking on this topic, the thought of Israeli patriotism is not far off. P6 states that in the name of patriotism (other) journalists in Israel *“tend to serve aims such as ‘national unity’”* during times of crisis. P7 makes it clear that it is a question of how patriotism:

“I can understand that some newspapers are of the view that you should be more of a patriot than a journalist. It’s their right. And the readers – at least some of them – are satisfied with it. But we need to ask: what is patriotism? If it means being loyal to values such as ‘the right of Israel to exist’ or ‘the right of Israel to be a Jewish state’, then I support it. If, to the contrary, it means that we are not allowed to criticize Israel or to reveal issues which will cause embarrassment – such as crimes that are being hidden, etc. – then I am against it.” [P7]

P5 offers a viewpoint that is pretty similar to that. Although journalists have to cope with external pressure, he argues that values of patriotism and being a good citizen become apparent through questioning the military, criticizing the government, and trying to create public opinion in order to prevent disasters – especially in times of crisis:

“The issue is that they want you to suspend your judgment as a journalist once the sirens go off and the reserve is called to the front. But these are the times when you have to extend your judgment and your criticism, because people’s lives may be lost – out of vanity, out of misjudgment, out of groupthink, out of repeating any other disasters we have gone through in the past forty years.” [P5]

Although his view on critical journalism differs from most of his interviewed colleagues, P3 sees himself as a patriot and does not think this interferes in any way with his duties as a journalist.

To sum it up, one can say that for most of the interviewed journalists a critical view of state players is necessary for journalism to function in a democracy. It is possible to state that those journalists who value the critical assessment of the system during times of crisis do question those in power, and their right to represent the sovereignty of the people. They do not define democracy as a system based on sovereignty, where the state of exception is used for its legitimization, but, idealistically speaking, define it as a system which is based on continuous questioning, discussion and communication. However, there was one participant who associated the concept of democracy with the notions of sovereignty, exception and exclusion.

It must be stated that the issue of press freedom in Israel is a complex one, and the matter is not simply black or white. Furthermore, P1 proposes a notable suggestion: “*In order to gain the public trust the leaders must make way for freedom, as much they can*”. This statement uncovers two things: first of all, that there seems to be some sort of societal consensus that a certain degree of press freedom ought to be guaranteed in a democracy. And secondly, as a consequence of this fact, that if state agents want to keep their power, they have to show the public that they are committed to this ideal. Despite the differing opinions of the participants on the role of critical journalism in a democracy, it is clear that in the example of Israel there are various mechanisms to control the press. The analysis of our second research question will offer further elaboration.

4.2 Question 2

How do Israeli journalists describe external factors restricting press freedom, and how do these factors influence their work performance?

There is a variety of external factors that limit press freedom in Israel. One, of course, is the restrictions imposed by the government. As described in our theoretical framework, the Israeli media system has been structured in such a way as to allow the government to control what can be published, or, more precisely, what is prohibited from publication. Of the participant journalists some had been personally affected by one or the other form of restriction, while others had heard about it from colleagues. The only aspects of the state's influence over coverage that played a role in our interviews were military censorship and gag orders, while the Editors' Committee was only mentioned once.

How do the interviewees describe the influence of these control mechanisms on their journalistic work? According to P1, P6, P7 the restrictions are centered on concrete factual information that is military-related and can potentially put lives or national security at risk. P7 elaborates that, "...it also only focuses on matters that deal with the army or Jews in Arab countries". As an example, he mentions a possible military mission that could bring Jews from Yemen to Israel: "*That is a very sensitive issue because you might endanger their lives*" [P7]. Moreover, according to P1 and P6, the military censorship prevents journalists from publishing detailed information on sensitive topics such as the potential existence of an Israeli nuclear bomb, or a government official's visit to a war zone. In the latter case, for example, such information could prevent the visit from happening or, worse, put that person's safety at risk. Furthermore, a few journalists informed us that restrictions on publication are limited to facts on military issues, and therefore not opinions. Only in very rare cases did the censor try to prevent critical articles from being published. As P4 states, "*criticism of the army can be, and is leveled freely in Israel. The purpose of the military censorship is to prevent the leakage of sensitive operational information, which might jeopardize national security if exposed*".

Some participants felt that gag orders, in particular, should be viewed most critically because they are often arbitrarily enforced. P7 was especially critical of the process of imposing gag orders, since the judges who do so rely on information provided by officials. He explains: "*...The judge, who has no idea if it is true or not, is scared. So he is not going to say 'no' to the government, or Mossad, or the army, or whoever. And so they issue this gag order*".

Another journalist [P3], however, does not fear the powers of the Israeli military censor and the courts, for he trusts the judgment of the officials: "*They are the ones who know what would cause harm, and I respect their judgment [...] I am in the consensus; I don't have to worry about that*". The uncertainty surrounding

press freedom seems to be unfamiliar to P3. This journalist claims that there is a consensus between journalists, officials and society about the legitimacy of limited coverage. As long as the media act responsibly and stays within the confines of these boundaries, they would not have to worry about restrictions and control.

Besides this argument, there are other arguments that also offer an explanation for the general acceptance of press restrictions by journalists. The general opinion of P4 is that military censorship in Israel is wholly unrelated to criticism of the IDF, and is not politically motivated. A similar statement is given by P7: *“So, the big purpose of the censorship is avoiding a loss of lives or a damage to any operations. It’s not to prevent humiliation or embarrassment to the army”*. It was important for most of the interviewees to clearly define the distinction between censorship and the critique of the military.

External control through state instruments like gag orders and military censorship, has therefore become a standard component of the media system, and is mostly accepted by our interviewed journalists. Just how normal this relationship between the state instruments and the journalists has become, is demonstrated in this quote from P5. He describes it as a business partnership:

“We have to send articles to the censorship authority every day. With the website several times a day. If it’s a big magazine story, some unknown story, it takes more time. But usual news stuff is coming back within a couple of hours. They know and respect your deadlines. If something happens late at night, they get it back to you in ten minutes. It’s a small office, 35 people all in all, working in shifts. And these are professionals, which are very experienced. Remember, we are only one media outlet. They get the same story from twenty other media outlets.” [P5]

Despite this normalized and accommodating relationship, our interviewees have developed ways to bypass these control mechanisms. For P4, the relationship between journalists and military censorship in Israel is like *“a constant tug-of-war”*. A common way of bypassing the instruments of control may include quoting foreign sources. P7 describes how he deals with these control mechanisms: *“If there is an operation in Gaza and it is starting tonight I can’t publish it, unless I quote Palestinian sources or something like that. I can’t publish it if it is based on military sources”*.

However, many journalists state that new technological developments in the sector of information and communication technologies, especially those linked to the internet, are making state control over media content futile. According to P6, *“the military censorship should surely adapt itself to the reality of the 21st century, in which (...) it’s sometimes silly to prevent the publication of information in [name of newspaper], which tomorrow will appear in ‘Der Spiegel’”*. The censorship system was created in a media landscape that consisted of huge organizations that processed information and news – not within the milieu of individual people fueling the information cycle via Facebook or Twitter. The interconnectedness of

the internet enables a faster flow of information and communication, which inevitably leaves the traditional ways of information control (censorship, gag orders) somewhat ineffective. According to P1, even the military censor has to realize that the quick movement of ideas and knowledge across continents means the role of censorship has to change. Whether this should lead to the adaptation of censorship mechanisms to modern information and communication technology; or to a paradigmatic shift concerning the freedom of press, cannot be said but *“the censorship establishment and the Ministry of Security themselves do understand that, and the dialogue continues”* (P1).

To sum up, one can say that the government uses several mechanisms to censor Israeli journalists. It is important to note, however, that the military is not the only institution or organization that exerts control over the Israeli media. The interviewees also mentioned influential individuals, or editorial lines of their employers as examples. Despite this, gag orders and military censorship remain the main area of control by restricting the dissemination of factual information, rather than opinion. In response to these control measures, some of the journalists recalled how they might bypass the rules by using foreign media sources. Nevertheless, agreeing to conform to the demands of the military censor, and the need to create a consensus among the Israeli media, society and politics by not questioning the actions of government, has led to the media in Israel being reticent to criticize the mechanisms of information control.

4.3 Question 3

What internal control factors can be identified, and how do they reflect the Israeli security discourse?

It is possible to state that journalists have diverse opinions on the influence of internal factors (non-institutionalized, supposedly self-imposed), which limit and guide their output. Internalized control includes a personal set of rules and guidelines that the interviewed journalists can justify. So, what do they identify as these internalized rules that determine their performance?

First of all, most of the interviewed journalists were of the opinion that they do not believe in objectivity; are aware that they are socialized subjects; and that socialization influences their work. The argument about socialization can explain why many of the journalists do not believe in the neutrality of their output, which, they say, is always connected with a particular political ideology. For example, journalists P1, P2, P6 do not believe in objectivity and they base their argument on the causes which form their subjectivity – such as opinions, various external influences, beliefs and feelings. As P6 states, *“only robots could write without being influenced from these – with or without intentions.”* Interestingly, P2 states that it is common to associate objectivity with official, mainstream positions in journalism, whereas ideological opinions are the oppositional ones. In other

words, although objectivity does not seem to exist, it is being used as a strategy when persuasion is needed.

Although some journalists acknowledged the influence their socialization had on their work, others perceived themselves as mediators – subjects who have to find the balance between their own self-regulation and external regulation. For example P4 describes himself as a bridge which links the issues, events and readers, whereas P5 describes himself as a powerful messenger without any personal opinion, who helps people gain information. Nevertheless, there was one interviewee (P3) who said he believes journalists can exclude their opinion and deliver the opinions of those who were elected objectively: *"I believe in objectivity. I believe it can be done"*. It is important to notice in this case that objectivity seems to be something that is constructed and has to "be done". In other words, representation has to be manufactured in order for it to seem objective. Since objectivity is a vague concept, it might be used in different situations in order to create an effect of neutrality, soberness, or reason.

Not only socialization and its connection to objectivity, but also fear based on geographical positioning, is another motive for journalists to limit and justify their output. Journalist P3 for example states that Israel wishes to have Western European neighbors. Similarly, P7 thinks that having Canadian or Swedish neighbors would make the situation easier than it is with Israel's current neighboring states. According to P3, they do not want Israel to *"be on the map anymore"*, and Israel is *"in a state of war [and therefore one has] to be much more cautioned of what one does"* (P7). It is important to observe how these statements about the fear of neighboring countries influences particular journalistic work.

Another factor influencing journalistic output is the financial effects certain articles might cause for the newspaper. Because consumers tend to be disinterested in serious news topics, there is a financial need for journalists and newspapers to produce entertaining articles in a quick manner. This too forces a self-induced control among journalists when it comes to critical news content. This disinterest seems to be a part of defense mechanisms of Israeli society, which tries to avoid emotionally loaded topics such as the conflict with Palestinians, and might "punish" the newspaper by not buying it. As an example P2 states that:

"The invisible censor which is the Israeli society - it is not interested in knowing about what it does and has done as power against the Palestinians. [...] I have the freedom to write but the readers don't have the duty to read." [P2]

In this context P6 tells the story of a colleague who, in 2008, wrote a story about the commitment of crimes against humanity by the Israeli Defense Forces. P6 relates: *"Readers were canceling their subscriptions because of that. People were really mad. But for a journalist in such a case, for him personally and also because of his readers, he needs to be a little bit more sensitive"*. Therefore it can

be said, that acknowledging the economic effects of one's production are limiting journalistic output.

To sum up, most of the interviewed journalists believe they have internalized particular ways of thinking, which influence their work. Through the process of socialization, objectivity does not seem possible for the most of the interviewed journalists. Most of the citizens of Israel are exposed to the continuous state of conflict the country is in through the direct experience of mandatory enlistment in the army. Thus, growing up in such context, going to school and to the army seems to create awareness amongst the journalists that they ought to think before they write. The general impossibility to be objective; the factors of conflict; Israel's neighboring countries; and sensitive audiences who might stop buying the newspapers are the important factors which guide and limit the interviewed journalists in their performance.

5. Conclusion

This research was conceptualized and executed in order to gain insight into the ability to exert control in modern democracies through the control of the media system. As an intensified example the conceptualization of press freedom by Israeli journalists under the circumstances of a continuously tensed security situation was analyzed.

As theoretical basis for the investigation of mechanisms of external control, we used a critique of the concept of sovereignty and the state of exception in liberal democracies. The theoretical framework shows how a political system based on the idea of sovereignty (liberal representative democracy being one of them) can control its members by stepping outside the system of law and legally suspending particular freedoms, such as freedom of press. The media system plays a crucial role here, since it is entrusted to act as a public guard in the system of checks and balances, in order to prevent the misuse power by those elected. We have therefore described the situation of the media system in Israel, a country where the state of emergency has not been revoked since 1948, and that has developed structural mechanisms to control the national media. The concept of the state of exception and its particular use in Israel, allowed us to raise questions around the practical non-existence of journalistic freedom, and examine the external control mechanisms inherent to the journalistic practice.

In order to scrutinize internal control mechanisms used by Israeli journalists, the subject was conceptualized as an entity which is formed through external influences, as well as his or her internal choices. Internal control here is theorized as the subject's ability to shape his or her subjectivity according to internalized rules. These rules appear through complex processes of the experiences subjects are exposed to. Therefore, the subject is conceptualized as a product of a

constructive process. Aware that the definition of subject formation in this paper is rather a general one, we use it as a frame of reference or general guideline, in order to describe the subject's ability to exert control through self-restriction or self-censorship.

The insights we gained in applying our theoretical framework to the experiences and perceptions of some journalists, are diverse. The Israeli press landscape is a rather inhomogeneous one, as we concluded from our interviews conducted with journalists in this sphere. First of all, most of the journalists think that critique is not only a central part of a democracy, but is practiced in Israeli media. Nevertheless, concerning specific military topics, journalists accept restrictions by external control mechanisms, such as military censorship or gag orders. These restrictions are not only enforced by the state, but also come readers who do not wish to read about issues of conflict. This seems to be a paradox whereby journalists praise the importance of critique, accepting censorship at the same time. However, being socialized in a specific environment and having enlisted in the army (which most of the journalists in Israel do), the subject (journalist) may become sensitive to issues of security. When writing articles, journalists are also aware of internal control mechanisms. These may include the fear of losing readers; the desire to represent a particular ideology; an inner-struggle against criticizing the army (with many of their friends fighting in the army, there is a worry that negative or incorrect reporting which may have an effect on the lives of others); or simply the fear of authority.

By applying our theoretical framework of external and internal control to the real-life situations of the journalists we interviewed, we managed to gain some interesting insights into these journalists' perceptions of liberal democracy and the concept of sovereignty. All in all, this study has shown that it is neither helpful nor possible to draw black and white conclusions. But as the state of emergency in Israel became the norm under which democracy functioned, so too did external mechanisms of state influence on the media become widely accepted. The ability to enact the state of exception that is inherent in a democracy based on sovereignty (and in the case of Israel is actualized through the state of emergency or gag orders), seems to slowly weaken the *democratic* function of the media. It keeps the journalists away from questioning the status quo and softens the will of a society to listen to those voices which are criticizing the system. While these practices are not expected to change from the inside, they seem to be transforming through technological progress: global data transfer, as well as global public spheres on the internet are starting to make external control by the state (like censorship or gag orders) harder to apply.

That being said, the insights gained here evoke further questions which we have not touched on in this paper: which role does the political economy of media organizations play in the globalized market of data exchange (enabled, for example, by the internet)? Can we still view the media as the 'fourth estate' or 'fifth

estate' in a democracy? What kind of democracy are we speaking about, when the state of exception as applied to control the media might be made redundant through the power of international media corporations; private businesses such as Facebook or Twitter; or even private citizens, like bloggers? On the other hand, as briefly scratched in this work: are we aware of the structural possibilities of democracy based on the idea of sovereignty, namely, that of the internalized mechanisms of control?

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Authors

Miglè Bareikytė is a student at the Free University of Berlin, MA “Media and Political Communication”. Her research interests are media archeology, media theory, (critique of) network theory.

Email: miglemigloj@gmail.com

Ingo Dachwitz is a student at the Free University of Berlin, MA “Media and Political Communication”. His main research interests are freedom, empowerment and responsibility in the digital age.

Email: ingo.dachwitz@fu-berlin.de

Lu Yang is a student at the Free University of Berlin, MA “Media and Political Communication”. Her research focus lies primarily in international communication and media freedom in Asia, particularly in China.

Email: Lu.Yang@td-berlin.com