



The glocalization of journalism ethics

■ **Herman Wasserman**

Newcastle University, UK

■ **Shakuntala Rao**

State University of New York, Plattsburgh, USA

ABSTRACT

This article addresses globalization's effects on journalism ethics in South Africa and India. It shows the ways in which the debates and issues of journalism ethics are being resolved through the process which scholars have termed as glocalization. Both in South Africa and India we found a two-way relationship between global and local epistemologies and practices. By using examples from each country, we suggest that journalism ethics is going through a process of resignification in the local arena. We suggest a global-to-local theoretical matrix that takes into consideration the complexity of journalism ethics in specific cultural and national contexts.

KEY WORDS ■ commercialization ■ deregulation ■ globalization ■ normative frameworks ■ India ■ post-apartheid ■ privatization ■ professionalism ■ South Africa

Globalization has impacted countries in the South on many levels, including in areas of media and journalism. Debates have been raging about the perceived homogenizing influence of the global media industry on local identities, cultures, and ideologies (Chadha and Kavoori, 2005: 85). Recent trends toward concentration of mass media ownership, deregulation and privatization of national cultural industries, and new alliances between transnational media corporations and complacent governments, have led to the consolidation of market-driven journalism. According to Shah (1998) such journalism has aimed to serve the interests of the owners of the global mass media firms because 'it rarely asks critical questions about the impact of global capitalism, the exercise of neo-imperial power, and the sometimes-grim prospects for cultural survival'. Simplistic assumptions about media globalization as one-way traffic from the centre to the periphery have largely made way, however, for more

nuanced understandings of the multi-directionality of the process (Chadha and Kavoori, 2005: 85). While recent studies have focused largely on the globalization of media products or media capital and local responses to these processes, the effect of globalization on journalistic practices has received less attention. In this article, we want to explore the way that globalization has influenced a specific area of journalism practice and 'occupational ideology' (Deuze, 2004), namely, journalism ethics. Having studied journalism ethics in South Africa and India, we have found a two-way relationship between global and local epistemologies and practices. The essay shows ways in which the debates and issues of journalism ethics form part of a process of 'glocalization' (Kraidy, 2003; Robertson, 1997).

The complexity of global media systems in the contemporary world has made it clear that older paradigms within which the processes of media globalization had been understood, e.g. communication for development, dependency and cultural imperialism, have to be rethought. Scholars of globalization are beginning to acknowledge that countries in the South provide contra-flows against western media domination and develop their own strategies to resist or subvert such homogenization (Sreberny, 2005). Deregulation and technological growth have significantly altered communication industries around the world. While policy makers are scrambling to keep satellite signals and computer network messages from freely flowing in and out of their national territories, national and local media are juggling position in a market that has suddenly doubled, or even tripled, in size. In an attempt to understand these processes, Sreberny warns against the 'slippery nature of the linguistic terms used in international communications analysis':

... 'global' rarely means 'universal' and often implies only the actors of the North; that 'local' is often really 'national' which can be oppressive of the 'local'; that 'indigenous' culture is often already 'contaminated' through older cultural contacts and exists as a political claim rather than a clean analytic construct. (2005: 607)

It thus follows that one should analyze relationships between the global, national, and local, and indeed the very meaning of these terms, by paying keen attention to the contradictions, paradoxes, and complexities that influence the making of particular communication ecologies. In this article, we focus our attention on South Africa and India because these two countries have newly emerged as two of the largest regional media centers in the world. By focusing on the journalism practices in these countries, we hope to explore how globalization works in specific locations, how national and local media industries change and integrate the emergence of transnational media, and how journalism ethics are fundamentally transformed by globalizing the media environment.

Globalization and glocalization

Globalization has been responsible for major transformations in the structure of news in the South. Privatization and deregulation have enabled cross-border flows of capital and technology. Those changes have opened new ways for media businesses to expand into international markets using output deals, virtual integration, joint ventures, programming sales, and production arrangements. Globalization has unsettled past linkages between state and capital, geography and business, the local and the global. No longer do conflicts fit into the 'national vs foreign' mould. International and domestic corporations have realized that they mutually need each other, and decide to partner in different ways. While the trend in the South is indeed towards a commercialized, profit-driven model, the results of such changes are a 'multilayer complexity posed by the sheer speed and scope of changes' (Hegde, 2005: 59).

Sparks (2000: 78–9) outlines different analyses of globalization. One theory, Sparks argues, understands globalization as a 'uniform and homogenous process spreading throughout the world', which could be likened to a 'process of bureaucratic rationalization' (p. 78). The takeover of locally owned media and other similar inflow of foreign capital could be seen as 'the progressive erosion of local media and their incorporation into, or replacement by, larger predators'. Understood this way, the aggressive entry of international companies to the South African and Indian media environments, for example, could increase pressure on local competitors, leading to an increasingly commercialized media sphere (as several critics of the post-apartheid South African media have suggested), the further marginalization of media audiences that are not seen as lucrative for advertisers (in the South African context, the poor Black majority and in India, the majority rural and lower castes), and the erosion of indigenous cultural content. In a market-driven media, as Thussu (1999) has argued, the pace of the media is set as much by advertisers as by owners and journalists. Increasing commercialization has led to the concentration of ownership, the 'dumbing-down' of content and the 'parochialization of news agendas' (Hadland, 2005: 13). A market-driven media often encourages editors to prioritize commercial goals and journalists to avoid specialized or investigative work (Harber, 2002). Harber cautions that in such a media environment 'satisfying shareholders will become more important than serving the community, entertainment and scandal will gut serious news, foreign bureaus and ambitious reporting will be considered costly frivolities' (p. 3). Sparks argues that globalization can be viewed alternatively as part of a 'dual movement' in which we find 'media organizations and regulatory structures, migrating 'up' to global forms or 'down' to local forms' (2000: 79). In this process, we can observe, as Sparks writes, 'the erosion of the power and influence of the state-based media on the

one hand, and a parallel strengthening of both the local and the global media' (2000: 79).

The impact of globalization on local media within specific cultural and national contexts could, thus, be multi-faceted. This process of strengthening both the local and the global media can be seen, for instance, in South Africa. While the demise of apartheid has opened up the country's media industry for the entry of foreign media behemoths like the Independent Group, the forces of globalization have been met with a renewed awareness of the local. One such response is the broader discourse of the African Renaissance associated with continent-wide projects such as the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) led by President Thabo Mbeki. This discourse is an attempt to reaffirm African cultural identities and values (also in the media), in the face of the spread of global culture. Increased commercialization and the demise of the anti-apartheid alternative media with the advent of democracy has led the South African government to establish a statutory body, the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA), which aims to stimulate media diversity and increase the range of community media in the country. While the media offerings in indigenous African languages remain limited, the range of media in the minority language Afrikaans suggests that the dual processes of globalization and localization can greatly benefit minority linguistic groups (in the South African case, it could be that there is a range of media in Afrikaans *because* this is an economically strong language group).

Like South Africa, India has experienced an explosion, post media deregulation in the early 1990s, in the number of vernacular press and Indian language television channels. In the North, Hindi dailies are claiming three to four times more sales than English dailies; not a single one of the English publications figures as one of the top 10 in the country (Ravindranath, 2005: 62). Multiple editions have become common given the availability of internet and fax. *Eenadu* in the South, for instance, has editions coming out from every district of Andhra Pradesh; Rajasthan's *Patrika* publishes four editions and *Malayala Manorama* issues three editions. *Eenadu* even brings out half a dozen editions for different localities in Hyderabad city. *Aaj*, *Nai Duniya*, and *Amar Ujjala* similarly publish several editions (Ravindranath, 2005: 55). Every cable package currently contains several language-based channels. In metropolitan cities such as Delhi and Mumbai, cable packages can include up to 16 regional language channels catering to a linguistically vast and diverse audience, and these channels often have the highest television ratings. Such a scenario allows media scholars to hope that globalization, characterized by multiplying audiences, does not necessarily (and uniformly) lead to cultural homogenization but, rather, reinvigorates cultural diversity in new ways.

Robertson (1997: 25) proposes the theory of 'glocalization' as a way of accounting for both global and local, not as opposites but rather as 'mutually formative, complementary competitors, feeding off each other as they struggle for influence' (Kraidy, 2003: 38). First used in Japanese literature on international agriculture and business, the concept of glocalization has come to give cultures a vocabulary for their experiences; Robertson's idea of glocalization allows media scholars to escape 'the pull of the global/local polarity' and the fear that the local is dead. Rather than pitching global against the local, glocalization hopes to break down the 'ontologically secure homes' of each and present them as interconnected forces (Robertson, 1997: 25). Robertson ultimately hopes to dispel the 'notion of homogenization of all cultures' by the forces of transnational capital (1997: 25). Glocalization is not what Thussu (2005) refers to as '*desi* globalization – when foreign business interests and media emphasize their native credentials to present a more acceptable face of globalization'. Instead, Luke argues glocalization attests that every global, virtualizing force is met by a stubborn alterity, a 'dialectical intensification of both globalism and localism' (1997: 89). While some social theorists (e.g. Thornton, 2000: 79) have attacked the concept of glocalization as being particularly apolitical, 'without any teeth or resistance to the sinister forces of globalization', Robertson calls for both understanding the global–local nexus and seeing glocalization as a tool of resistance and change.

Glocalization and journalism ethics

The effects of media globalization in countries in the South contributed to shifts in media ownership, content, and structures, but it has also wielded influence on the level of professional ideologies, ethical frameworks and practices of media workers. The 'neoliberal model of global media development' has made possible a far more sophisticated global market system and new contexts of sharing political, economic, and cultural ideas (Calabrese, 2004: 324). Journalism ethics, in such a scenario, has become a mix of the global and local.

While research (Deuze, 2005; Weaver, 1998) suggests some similarities in the way that journalists around the world are 'professionalized', there is no consensus on universal normative standards and values. Bertrand (2000: 44) links the definition of ethical (and unethical) journalistic conduct to the 'culture of a nation, its economic stage of development, its political regime'. While journalists worldwide seem to display relative agreement about certain roles, like reporting the news quickly and providing a space for public opinion, there is less agreement on ethical principles like objective reporting or fulfilling a watchdog function (Weaver, 1998: 468). Weaver (1998: 468, 473) concludes

that there is 'more disagreement than agreement' over journalistic roles and 'very large differences' between journalists from different nations, refuting the claim that universal occupational ethical values are emerging. Deuze (2005: 445) suggests that there exists a dominant global ideology of journalism, but that this ideology is interpreted differently in local contexts and in different media. The 'twin forces of globalization and localization' have led to a 'liquid modern state of affairs' in which journalism ideologies, norms, and formats are rapidly and constantly shifting (2005: 450).

The influx of new technologies, new types of journalisms, 24-hour news channels, and satellite uplinks have obliterated the pre-existing boundaries between North and South, East and West and replaced them with 'deeply fragmented and divided criss-crossing lines of power, patterns of communication activity, and modes of identification' (Hegde, 2005: 62). In such readings of globality, the epistemology and practice of journalism ethics needs to be understood as an incendiary mix of technology, culture, and morality; it both accepts modern forms of communication and competition and resists exclusive and linear western notions of ideology and identity politics. In such a scenario, Sparks' global-local dual movement (2000: 78–9) and Robertson's theoretical postulate of glocalization help us understand the discourses and practices of journalism ethics. In the next section, we explore the 'different and practical modes of glocalization' (Robertson, 1997: 41) in the journalism ethics of South Africa and India. While there are some similarities in the ways glocalization in journalism ethics is being played out in these two countries, there are also significant differences. Glocalization takes different forms in different countries and the pace may vary even from one medium to another. Our research shows both similarities and differences in glocalization of journalism ethics in South Africa and India.

South Africa

With the end of apartheid in 1994, South Africa was reintroduced to the global community from which it had been previously isolated. When the Ireland-based, multinational Independent News and Media plc acquired South African media companies, they illustrated the extent to which South Africa was being reintegrated into the global economy. Before the first democratic election, Independent bought 31 percent of the shares in Argus Newspapers Ltd. This purchase included the acquisition of *Cape Times*, *Natal Mercury*, and a 45 percent share in *Pretoria News*. In a later transaction, Independent extended its control over most of the English-language print media in the country (Horwitz, 2001; Tomaselli, 2000). The local South African print outlets owned by Independent

had to quickly become globally competitive, leading to severe cost-cutting and increased pressures for profits.

At the same time as transnational companies were buying local media outlets, local South African companies were themselves becoming transnational. The media conglomerate Naspers, founded on Afrikaner capital, and which, during apartheid, housed newspapers that provided ideological support for the minority white regime, has profited from the democratic transition and South Africa's re-entry into the world market. While it sold some of its shares to black-owned businesses as part of its ideological repositioning in the new South Africa, the company also broadened its diverse media interests into the African continent. By acquiring control over the subsidiary MultiChoice Investment Holdings (MIH), Naspers expanded its influence in the electronic media sector. It currently operates subscription digital television services and internet platforms across Africa, China, Greece, Cyprus, and Thailand. MIH also provides internet services and technologies (Irdeto and Entriq) in several African countries as well as in China, Thailand, India, Singapore, Australia, the USA, France, the Netherlands, and the Ukraine (Naspers, 2005). The core 'bouquet' of the digital service, DStv, offers 50 TV channels to subscribers, relying heavily on global media channels such as CNN, BBC World, SkyNews, the Discovery Channel, Hallmark, and others. The SABC's (South African Broadcasting Corporation) external service, SABC Africa, is similarly broadcast on DStv satellite, and provides news, current affairs, and entertainment from African countries (although South African content dominates) to 49 countries served by MultiChoice. The channel conscientiously celebrates a broader African identity, even though its point of departure remains South African (Teer-Tomaselli et al., 2007).

The process Sparks calls 'moving up to global forms', Machin and Van Leeuwen (2004: 99) term 'generic homogeneity and discursive diversity' in global media products. According to Machin and Van Leeuwen, while the formats of global media production have become homogenized, the content is increasingly localized. This dual process can be seen in South African journalism practices. As South African media move towards a profit-driven model in which journalism practices are increasingly defined in terms of market imperatives, the journalism formats have undergone radical changes. Tabloid titles 'imitating Fleet Street's tabloid-style fictionalizing and sensationalism' have mushroomed (Berger, 2005: 19). Several new tabloid newspapers, focusing on gossip, sensationalism, and celebrity news, have been launched in the last few years. While these tabloids follow the approach of the British 'red tops' they were modeled on, they have also provided localized news of interest to poor Black audiences who are excluded from the mainstream media's focus on lucrative demographics. Given the enormous commercial success of these tabloids, the

mainstream print media have also undergone a visible tabloidization in their approach, strongly focusing on celebrity news and entertainment-driven stories. As is the case in India (see next section), the use of hidden cameras in South African broadcast news and current affairs programs is one example of the combination of news and entertainment. News programs like *Carte Blanche* and *3rd Degree* often make use of hidden cameras to expose alleged wrongdoings or scandals. The format emulates those of international investigative news programs like CBS's *60 Minutes*, but is also influenced by reality television formats that have become popular. These reality series include not only *Survivor* and *The Amazing Race* imported from the USA, but also local variants of these programs, like *Big Brother South Africa*, *Big Brother Africa*, and a local version of *Survivor*.

The impact of globalization and liberalization on the print media can be seen in the blurring of the lines between editorial copy and paid advertisements disguised as editorial copy. While newspapers mark advertorials with a special heading such as 'promotion' or 'focus on', the style and format deliberately mirrors that of the main body of the publication; advertisers often take the opportunity to have their product blend in with the newspaper's editorial sections (Hadland et al., 2007). At a big media conglomerate like Naspers, whose interests span pay television, newspapers, magazines, and the internet, the crossover between advertisements and editorials is more common. As part of an official policy called synergy, the company's various media outlets cross-promote its products; a show airing on one of the company's television channels receives extensive coverage in the pages of the group's newspapers (Botma, 2006).

The influence of globalization on journalism ethics in post-apartheid South Africa meant the acceptance of international or western philosophical foundations for ethics codes. When South Africa's media shifted from a legalistic paradigm under apartheid (with a host of oppressive laws limiting media freedom) to one in which freedom of expression was guaranteed in the democratic constitution, the media adopted a system of professional self-regulation. As part of this process, an independent ombudsman (at the time of writing, he was succeeded in 2007 by Joe Thloloe) was appointed to adjudicate complaints lodged against print media companies. The ethical framework for the code of conduct was strongly influenced by models from abroad. The ombudsman, Ed Linington (2005, pers. comm.), confirms that codes from democracies around the world were used by his office to develop a code of professional practice for South African journalists. The main examples influencing the South African framework came from Europe, Australasia, and the USA. These codes, and their interpretation, continue to wield an influence over South African journalism practice. When making rulings, the ombudsman looks at decisions by

similar bodies (those that accept complaints against publications rather than individual journalists) internationally to see how similar ethical issues were interpreted elsewhere. The code of the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, the equivalent professional complaints mechanism for the broadcast media, shows some similarities with the ethical framework of the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation). Individual media institutions also seem to be strongly influenced in their ethical thinking by approaches and models developed elsewhere on the globe. The dominant ethical framework of media institutions is that of professional social responsibility. Retief (2002), for instance, points out that the guidelines put forward by the Hutchins commission in the USA after the Second World War still exert an influence on the ethical thinking in post-apartheid South African media. In a clear example, the Afrikaans daily, *Die Burger*, modeled their ethics code on the ethics code of the American Society for Professional Journalists whose main tenets are 'Maximize truth, Minimize harm, and act independently' (cited in Black et al., 1995: 22).

The other side of the coin is that globalization elicited resistance and critique against the importation of westernized professional ethics and occupational identities. Local reaction against such globalization has emerged in the discourses of the African Renaissance, in which the local has been reaffirmed in the face of the spread of global culture. In the area of journalism specifically, President Thabo Mbeki called for journalists to reintroduce African values into journalistic practices (to report 'as Africans'):

I am suggesting that the South African media has a responsibility to report Africa to the South Africans, carrying out this responsibility as Africans. (. . .) I am, of course, proceeding from the assumption that you were African before you became journalists and that despite your profession, you are still Africans. (Mbeki, 2003)

This call for the South African media to focus on their continent has recently been reiterated by South African media scholars such as Berger (2005: 21) who writes:

The understanding must be not 'South Africa' and 'Africa', but 'South Africa' and 'the rest of Africa'. One integrated body, where pain in one part is felt in another. (. . .) What's needed is for us South African journalists to see ourselves as African journalists. (. . .) 'Africa' also means giving South African audiences information on, and insight into, other countries on the continent, and not only stories that are negative. To have an African mindset implies understanding the commonalities across the sweep of the continent – and including South Africa – of similar colonial histories, peripheral economies, rural cultures, ancestral traditions . . . and also health challenges like HIV and malaria.

In the development of an occupational identity and ethical frameworks for South African journalists, the multidirectional process of glocalization can be seen in the way that global influences exist alongside local practices. The

African Editor's Forum (TAEF), founded in 2003, deliberately reinforces the philosophy and goals of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and the African Union. This forum not only helps professionalize South African journalists, but also represents a journalistic counter-discourse to the homogenizing influences of western ethical norms. The forum was established in Johannesburg, South Africa, by 120 editors from 30 African countries, under the leadership of Mathatha Tsedu, also chairperson of the South African National Editors' Forum (SANEF), and continues to meet regularly. In ways reminiscent of the New World Information Order debates (Vincent et al., 1999), the forum emphasizes the need for African media to play a role in promoting African identities, issues, and perspectives in the face of unequal globalization of communication.

During the conference where the TAEF was established, participants emphasized 'the importance that journalists tell the African story from African perspectives' and that 'African editors give prominence to publishing African issues' (TAEF, 2003). In western scholarship about journalism ethics, thinkers have tried to find ethical values that are universal or global, but editors from all over Africa decided to explore Africa-specific ethical values. Editors noted key challenges for journalists in the African continent, such as freedom of speech in the face of intimidation and harassment. They proposed drawing up 'an African media charter and/or a code of ethics' (TAEF, 2003), partly as a corrective to the prevailing western ethical values underpinning many of the discussions about journalism ethics. Such efforts to localize journalism ethics are not simply a fight against cultural or political imperialism but, also, 'criteria in terms of which indigenous groups could and should identify themselves and their values' (Robertson, 1997: 41). That this process of indigenization occurs simultaneously with the appropriation of western-based ethics codes and the mimicking of ethical practice in western nations, is an indication of glocalization of journalism ethics. This process is not tantamount to a dualism or dichotomy between the global and the local. Instead it should be understood as the rearticulation of the global in the local context and as local responses intertwined with global influences.

India

The Indian media, like the media in South Africa, have been rapidly transformed in the past 15 years. Following the breakdown of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, India faced a severe foreign exchange crisis. The government of then Prime Minister, P. V. Narasimha Rao, was forced to make policy changes which relaxed restrictions on multinationals, which then expanded and invested in the Indian market (Aggarwal and Gupta, 2001). In broadcasting,

satellite programming from foreign sources such as CNNI and BBC World, and the development of domestic channels like Zee TV and Sun TV, suddenly and explosively increased the demand for cable. Before 1991, Indian viewers received only two channels but, by 1999, they were receiving more than 50 channels (Crawley and Page, 2001: 11). Having depended solely on the state-owned TV, *Doordarshan*, to provide news, Indian audiences could choose between several 24-hour news channels after reforms (Firoz, 2005). Viewers suddenly had access not only to the major international cable stations such as CNNI and BBC World, but also to MSNBC, CNBC, Bloomberg, Star News, and Headline news. Privately owned channels such as NDTV, India TV, *Aaj Tak*, and Zee News produced domestic news. The consequence of liberalization in India has been a shift in communication priorities 'from a predevelopment to a pro-market focus' (Thomas, 2005: 83). The accent has been on state support for the infrastructures of globalization – the software economy, information technology, outsourcing and call-centers – and harmonizing the Indian communication-policy environment with externally generated global requirements.

Such pro-market globalization of the Indian media, like that of the media in South Africa, has been characterized by over-commercialization and profit-driven journalism. In newspapers there has been a shift in format and content with increased emphasis on life-style and entertainment supplements. Some of the same changes one sees in South African print media are found in the post-liberalized Indian media. The multinational Independent Media plc, which entered the South African media market, also acquired a 20 percent share in *Jagran Prakashan*, India's largest newspaper company. Among foreign broadcast companies setting up office in India, the success of Star TV, subsidiary of Rupert Murdoch's NewsCorp, tells us much about globalization in the Indian context. Adopting the blunt and partisan-style journalism used by their American counterpart Fox News, Star News and Star TV have meteorically risen in the last 10 years. The flagship network, Star Plus, has leapt from obscurity to become the country's top cable channel, largely thanks to the success of its Indian version of the game show *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* Broadcasters like Star have been helped by rapid deregulation, and the growing appetite for fast-paced, westernized programming among young Indians. Star's success is being emulated by Indian-owned media. In a turn towards a phenomenon that Sonwalkar (2002: 827) calls 'Murdochization of the by-line', a drive towards a corporate culture in the newsroom that gives an overriding primacy to marketing rather than editorial and, thus, distances the press from its social obligations, Bennett, Coleman and Co., the largest Indian media company and the publisher of the newspaper *Times of India*, for instance, has started charging money for news. *Times* began an entirely 'new brand of crossover journalism'

(Ninan, 2004) by using a strategy they call 'edvotorial' which, simply put, is paid news. *Times* charge businesses money to insert editorial content disguised as life-style news, and to place photographs in a story – publishing space for a photograph of a CEO or a business is available for as high as \$500,000 (on the front page) or a cheaper \$20,000 on the back pages (Poolani, 2004). Berger (2005: 87) remarks that the crowded media terrain and increased competition is blurring the distinction between journalism and non-journalism, and relegating the audiences to the role of spectators (rather than participants) and consumers in society and politics. During such transformations and focus on sheer commercialization, the pre-existing ethics codes (including *Times of India's* own codes, which emphasize the necessary distinction between news and advertising) are often disregarded by the owners and proprietors.

While globalization has led to the over-commercialization of news, glocalization in journalism practices in India has manifested itself in the phenomenal rise in the use of hidden cameras and has precipitated discussion among media professionals and academics about the ethics of such news-gathering techniques. In the West, hidden cameras have been historically used by journalists 'when all other alternatives to obtaining the same information have been exhausted' (Black et al., 1995: 163). Journalists have learnt to use hidden cameras 'judiciously and rarely' (1995: 167) and as a tool to be used only as the last resort. In the past few years, Indian magazines and channels like *Tehelka*, Star News, Zee News, and India TV have aggressively adopted using hidden cameras as a tool of news-gathering, calling these news-stories 'sting operations'. *Tehelka.com* (an on-line magazine) started the trend, having aired video footage that revealed professional cricketers match-fixing and taking bribes. In a follow-up story, *Tehelka* sent two journalists posing as agents from a fictitious arms company called 'West End', and tried hawking a non-existent product – hand-held thermal cameras – to politicians and bureaucrats. The journalists made the rounds of defense officials, military personnel, and politicians; they used bribes, and prostitutes, to push the deal through. They captured all transactions on a spycam and exhibited the footage at a press conference. In March 2005, India TV, a newly established 24-hour news channel, sent an undercover reporter, who pretended to be a young starlet who had recently arrived in Mumbai, India's film capital. The reporter recorded Shakti Kapoor, a well-known film personality, asking her for sexual favors in return for a break in the film industry. India TV broadcast the footage as 'breaking news' almost non-stop for two days.

Concerns over the use of hidden cameras have resulted in several journalism and academic conferences being organized by various professional organizations and universities. A new parliamentary bill is in preparation; entitled the 'Broadcasting Services Regulation Bill' it proposes a ban on the use of hidden

cameras by journalists. Some argue that the increased use of hidden cameras is part of a larger shift in Indian journalism, because market pressures are making newspapers and TV channels more 'image driven and less public service oriented' (Rao and Johal, 2006: 288). News is engulfed by, rather than separated from, entertainment, making journalists less concerned about their public service responsibilities and civic duties (Robinson, 2004). The tabloidization of news is resulting in an increase in deceptive practices bordering on entrapment. As Sanghvi, editor of the *Hindustan Times*, a major English newspaper in India, wrote following the *Tehelka* story:

As it was, the journalists had found nothing other than evidence of a willingness to sin. Put it this way, if a woman keeps offering sexual favors to a man and if a man finally succumbs then who is morally superior: the woman or the man? This was all that *Tehelka* had done and its revelations should be treated with extreme scepticism. (2004)

Many argue, however, that hidden camera tactics have allowed for more accountability in a system that is thoroughly and completely corrupt. George (2005) argues:

Why sting operations are good for India, [is] because it reports the many true stories of the day – the bribe that the police inspector extracts from the victim of a crime before agreeing to investigate and the 'contribution' that a company pays a member of Parliament before bringing up a legislative concern. Believe it or not, those in power are a lot more careful today.

Using hidden cameras and surreptitious taping, the Indian media are addressing local concerns in some unique ways. While corruption in politics and business is expected, watching high-level ministers and defense officials accepting bribes shocked audiences about the depth and breadth of the corruption. Cobrapost.com, another internet news portal, and Aaj Tak TV channel recently broadcast hidden camera footage of 11 members of parliament (from various political parties) accepting money from representatives of a fictitious body called the North Indian Small Manufacturers' Association (NISMA) for raising issues related to NISMA in Parliament. The sting operation, codenamed 'Operation *Duryodhan*' after a character in the epic *Mahabharata* who was seen as an embodiment of evil, logged more than 56 videotapes, 70 audiotapes, and recorded over 900 phone calls. The Indian Parliament accepted the finding on tape as prima facie evidence and took the unprecedented move of expelling these members.

A more powerful example of the use of hidden cameras came in the form of footage taken by the news channel, Sun TV, with the consent of a 22-year-old tribal woman, Badaik, from the district of Jharkhand in Central India. Badaik's sad tale of exploitation, common among tribal women in India, began some

years ago when she first approached the police. Her husband and in-laws had thrown her out of the house and kept her infant child. Badaik turned to the police for assistance. This was the beginning of a long process of sexual exploitation – successive men in the police pushed her into sexual servitude as she hoped to get her son back. Ultimately, she went to the Inspector General of Police in Jharkhand district, P. S. Natarajan. Natarajan was a high-ranking police officer with many political connections. According to Badaik's version, Natarajan too began forcing her to have sex with him, using a combination of threats and persuasion. Exhausted by years of sexual abuse, the woman approached the local TV representative for Sun TV and offered to videotape herself with Natarajan. The broadcast of the tapes by two channels resulted in the inspector being arrested and facing criminal charges.

Transnational transfer of technologies enter the social and cultural spheres of people in different ways and, in each location, the ethical implications of such technologies are adapted and understood differently. For example, ultrasound machines have been used liberally by gynaecologists in the West to check on the health of a fetus; in India, ultrasounds have been largely used for sex-determination tests (followed by sex-selective abortions). A recent hidden camera exposé on a news channel broadcast footage of doctors disclosing the sex of a fetus after an ultrasound, and offering abortions to decoy couples; both practices are illegal under Indian law. The audiences are positively responding to 'sting operations', with these shows getting some of the highest TV ratings. No critique of the ethics of hidden cameras in India can take away from the immediate gains made by the introduction of such new technologies to the news-gathering *mélange*.

On one hand, the commodification and tabloidization of news is a direct result of globalization; yet, globalization has also increased the availability and use of new technologies to benefit local audiences. Transnationalism has created social spaces where the conventional use of media is under threat. The accelerated pace of technological advances, international migration, and 'a rich tapestry of encompassing and bewildering array of activities' has allowed a new kind of journalism to flourish (Roudometof, 2005: 118).

In India, journalists are most familiar with two ethics codes: the Press Council of India's (PCI) 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' and All India Newspaper Editors' Conference (AINEC) 'Code of Ethics'. Unlike in South Africa, the Indian codes of journalism ethics have always been Indianized in their content and the topics they address. While the codes share much in common with codes from the West and around the world, there are significant differences. There has always been a sense among Indian journalists that the role of journalism and journalism practices differ in India from its function and practices in

the West. For instance, both PCI and AINEC codes explicitly state the importance of accuracy in the writing and production of news. Yet, unlike western codes such as that of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) where truth is constantly emphasized, Indian journalism codes make no or little reference to truth. The emphasis is more on 'getting it right' rather than trying to uncover one single version of truth. Another significant difference is the lack of emphasis on press freedom and more on restraint. The codes ask for restraint in reporting about privacy, government officials, judiciary and the parliament, violence, obscenity, suggestive guilt, social evils, caste, religion, community references, and national unity, among others. While some have argued that the over-emphasis on restraint has limited press freedom (Shrivastava, 2005), given the history of India with its caste struggles, communal riots, gender discrimination, and an evolving and fragile democracy, restraint has historical and cultural importance.

In times when multinational media conglomerates are investing in the Indian media, journalism ethics codes have not become thoroughly – and unproblematically – westernized. The trend is quite the opposite. The Press Council of India recently held an international conference on 'Globalization and Journalism Ethics in India', where the discussion among Indian journalists, scholars, and government officials displayed a mood in favor of developing an ethics code for Indian broadcast journalists. This code would measure the ethical implications of the influx of new technologies, provide ethical tools to journalists, and help them make decisions taking into account the uniqueness of the Indian cultural and social scenario.

Conclusion

Scholars realize that journalism cannot simply discard – or exist outside of – forces of globalization or the advent of new technologies. Media globalization is producing a complicated array of effects that defy easy categorization and analyses. As we have shown, both in the South African and Indian contexts, a global-to-local theoretical matrix based on mutual articulations of the global and local contexts of journalism practices helps scholars to understand the complexity of journalism ethics in a rapidly changing world. For the journalism ethics canon to undergo an expansion will require a close study of the ways globalization and new technologies go through a process of 'resignification' in the local arena (Kraidy, 2003: 36). All discussions of ethics and globalization must, therefore, capture the distinctness of the local and its epistemological and material repercussions. Glocalization theorists realize that the global-local

interaction can be unpredictable, multi-directional, and a combination of homogeneity and hybridity. While the most obvious effect of globalization, as we have described in this article, is a move towards market-driven journalism, discourses of journalism ethics are going through local transformations and show us local resistance to homogenization. Glocalization recognizes and conceptualizes, as Kraidy (2001: 39) writes, 'the technological developments, linguistic creolization, cultural hybridization, social decentralization and political fragmentation that characterize contemporary international relations'. The theoretical framework of glocalization helps us understand that the 'threat of imported media' does not necessarily eliminate local resistance to imported cultural or political ethos (Morris, 2002: 278). This essay is simply a starting point. As Couldry (2006) and others have shown, more work needs to be done in the study of journalism ethics to fully understand how journalists – around the world – are making ethical decisions and how those decisions pragmatically balance forces of globalization with local resistance. Media ethicists must increasingly reject the stark dualism between center and periphery, global and local, diversity and uniformity, and see ethics as a fusion of paradoxical forces coming together in an increasingly shrinking world.

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Biographical notes

Herman Wasserman lectures in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies at Newcastle University, UK, and is Associate Professor Extraordinary of Journalism, Stellenbosch University, South Africa. He is editor of the journal *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, Associate Editor of the *Journal of Global Mass Communication* and

editorial board member of the *Journal of African Media Studies*. His research interests include African media, postcolonial theory and journalism and globalization. *Address:* School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU, UK. [email: herman.wasserman@newcastle.ac.uk]

Shakuntala Rao is Professor of Communication and Media Studies at State University of New York, Plattsburgh, USA. Her research interests are in the areas of globalization, postcolonial theory, and popular culture. She has published numerous articles in such journals as *Journal of Communication*, *Visual Communication Quarterly*, *Women's Studies International Forum*, *Howard Journal of Communication*, *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, and *Journal for the Society of Social Research*. She is Associate Editor of the *Journal of Global Mass Communication*.

Address: Department of Communication, SUNY Plattsburgh, 103B Yokum, Plattsburgh, NY 12901–2681, USA. [email: raos@plattsburgh.edu]