

Article No. 8

Emotional Intelligence in Peace Journalism

[Section Three of a four-part paper]

Modern Media Options / Journalism Training

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Preface -- Section Three

This series of four papers undertakes to examine the benefit of linking the two relatively new concepts of 'Emotional Intelligence' and 'Peace Journalism'. The aim is to explore how media people, media interest groups and the general public, together, can influence the current media culture through an increased awareness about the impact of media productions, reporting styles, journalistic conventions, and the risks affecting journalists today, including that of becoming traumatized through emotionally challenging media work.

Sections one and two dealt with the concept of emotional intelligence and psychological trauma in the media context, the new risks facing media professionals and the new concept of peace journalism, media responsibilities and the media's impact.

Section three will build on the previous two sections as a basis for outlining existing media alternatives and new media options, as well as the development of specific training for journalists that introduces the concept of emotional intelligence on an intrapersonal level (raising journalists' consciousness about their own motivation, risks and challenges involved in their work) in combination with teaching conflict analysis tools as part of a peace journalism-oriented training perspective.

Section 3

3. Modern Media Options

"Every time they write a story they have an unmeasurable but definite responsibility for what happens next." - **Phillip Knightley**¹

"As important as empirical fact-finding and critical awareness is constructive, peace-oriented reporting. Particularly important would be to report, and thereby encourage, networks for dialogues, and concrete proposals..., not only elites and diplomats, and also when the proposals are contradictory." - **Johan Galtung**²

Section two of this series gave an impression of the active debate, within media circles, surrounding the issue of media responsibility and the impact media productions have on the state of the world. While the debate reveals some considerably divergent positions regarding the media's role vis-à-vis the public, some issues remain problematic irrespective of any specific journalistic orientation. For example, a culturally insensitive production for the benefit of higher viewer ratings at home does not fit any useful objectivity convention, or any other aspired-to media orientation, even if the addressed viewers' culture responds to different stimuli than the depicted population. Background information could provide an explanation as to why a specific

production style may be more culturally appropriate to a reported-on population. This would serve the audience's understanding of the overall situation far better, generate a more authentic rather than stereotypical interest and is likely to contribute to a more active process of reflection about (Western) policy impact on some of the world's situations.

While the previous section has addressed the media's role in presenting the effects that Western attitudes and policies have on developing countries in regard to the problematic asymmetrical power aspect, Jean-Marie Etter also refers to the media's role in empowering populations in crisis regions "*away from a fear-generated perception of self as powerless and the risk of seeing the other side as the aggressor to be eliminated*".³

Etter also speaks of the risks of escalating violence as a result of perceptions about either party being seen as the victim. He warns that a population potentially has the status of a victim so long as it is not in control of the circumstances affecting it.

In the author's view a distinction needs to be made between a factual and a perceived victim status in this context. Psychologically speaking, the subjective perception of being a victim is of far greater importance in terms of the risk of revenge or hate-based perpetrations of violence against another population, than any objective assessment of such a status.

Etter addresses the specific challenges in interethnic conflicts and points to some constructive media approaches for dealing with these issues. He says that violent conflicts tend to blur individual identities and merge individuals with groups and that "*thus the individual is locked up in a stereotype created in the conflict and for the conflict*".⁴ According to him, it is the media's role to emphasize the identities of individuals and groups - because to conceal them would be a way of reducing them - and help them recover their genuine identity instead.

Etter sees the media as having an important role in disseminating information as a prerequisite for developing "*acts and attitudes*" that convey a sense of empowerment and control, away from victim posturing, with the immediate effect of reducing the risk of escalating violence. He cites the function of peace radio as presenting a means for overcoming "*the non-recognition of the other*" which he sees as a precondition "*for the creation or restoration of mutual trust*".⁵

Etter points to the radio as an excellent media channel by which populations can actively confront leaders regarding the leader's answerability, challenging them to face their own contradictions and justify their actions. Etter sees the media in this context as a forum for developing an increased level of autonomy within communities and as a means for the "*de-sacralization*" of power-absorbing leaders.⁶

Etter refers to the Geneva based *Fondation Hironnelle*, founded in 1995, as an example of international organizations that serve a symbolic function "*as sanctuaries for peace and reconciliation*"⁷ through their impartial presence in crisis regions. The organization assists countries where it is nearly impossible to establish radio and independent media structures as result of war, extreme poverty or totalitarianism by providing crucial outside support. It sees itself as a form of "*citizen media*" and strives to assist with the provision of communication channels between individuals, groups and factions "*who no longer communicate*".⁸ Etter emphasizes the need for the organization to keep a low profile to avoid becoming drawn into the mainstream media pitfall of adapting to viewer expectations.

One of *Fondation Hironnelle's* aims is to bring know-how and experience to under-resourced areas in conflict situations and to enable local people to build independent media. Media projects are built up to full operation level so that they can be handed over to the local foundation staff who have been trained towards this goal and can ultimately have full responsibility. The organization usually chooses to be active in areas of endemic conflict situations or open hostilities, or in post- (violent) conflict regions. Some of its work is carried out

in partnership with the United Nations and the majority of journalists it employs originate from those countries where it is operating. The *Fondation* operates in such countries as Liberia, the DRC, the Great Lakes region of Central Africa, Kosovo and East Timor. It emphasizes its role as an independent organization in furthering peace “by dissipating rumours, avoiding propaganda and focusing attention on hard facts”.⁹

The organization promotes staff from different, sometimes conflicting ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds working together to encourage honesty and clearly states that it prefers “honesty to cleverness”.¹⁰ Other qualities that the organisation aspires to are tolerance and respect for ‘otherness’, including cultural differences and particularities, and the organization has a firm commitment to the universality of human values and human rights, to humanism and dignity.

The commitment to these qualities and to its described role characterises the *Fondation Hirondelle* as an outstanding example of an applied peace journalism-oriented media approach. Through the aim of personal integrity and honesty for its staff and its commitment to respecting human rights, basic needs and human diversity in any form, it is also an example of applied emotional intelligence in an international context.¹¹

3.1. Alternative Forms of Journalistic Expression

Knightley criticizes the conduct of WWI correspondents who, in his view, submitted themselves more or less collectively to the stifling censorship imposed particularly by the British government and acted instead as propagandists presenting the world with a very distorted picture of the true situation. Knightley says that most correspondents “saved their protests for the memoirs they published after the war, when it was too late”.¹²

The trend of journalists publishing their accounts of relatively recent world events in independent publications seems to be continuing. Some of these publications are compelling stories to read and are often also clearly beyond the scope of the personal impressions a journalist would normally be able to convey in the course of his or her professional duties. At the same time such accounts suggest that the current media culture is still an unsuitable forum for journalists wishing to express their personal impressions of the events they cover. Some of these emerging publications appear to be a platform for relating more emotional messages and the sense of powerlessness or personal indignation that some authors experienced in the course of their work activities.

Some valuable examples of such additional and often enlightening perspectives provided by journalists in recent times include Samantha Power’s Pulitzer Prize winning *A Problem From Hell*¹³, covering US policy failure in the context of every major conflict in recent history.

Another example is Howard French’s *A Continent for the Taking*¹⁴, which conveys a more integrated view on the African situation over time than is often presented in mainstream media publications. French’s more unique perspective of the continent concerns certain historical aspects, the current state of affairs, the impact of external influences, as well as Africa’s internal problems and also hopeful perspectives for the future.

French, an experienced African-American journalist and Africa expert, quotes Liberia’s Charles Taylor at a very tense news conference in 1995, immediately after the dictator’s arrival in Monrovia, as saying: “We must take a moment to thank God, for this popular people’s uprising was, in reality, God’s war”.¹⁵ French accounts how he asked Taylor if it wasn’t “outrageous for someone who has drugged small boys, given them guns and trained them to kill to call this God’s war?”¹⁶ and, in a courageous display of anger given the tenseness of the situation, and against common media conventions, “How dare you call the destruction of your country in this manner and the killing of two hundred thousand people God’s war?”¹⁷

French's choice, using his relatively secure position as a foreign journalist for a large media producer, to challenge Taylor in this way might have cost a local journalist his life. French's account presents the perspective of an African American journalist with many years experience of living and working in Africa. It is an example of a journalist's intervention on behalf of his less empowered local (West African) colleagues, demonstrating his solidarity and instilling courage and comfort in a difficult situation. His account conveys the impression of him having been motivated by a heartfelt impulse to give his personal sense of responsibility and indignation priority over any expectation of journalistic objectivity.

In its capacity to make a challenging journalistic situation very real to its readers, this example (even though it is an account from an independent publication) contradicts David Loyn's claim that: "*The viewer or listener does not want to know how I feel, but how people feel on the ground*".¹⁸ Loyn's statement ignores that the unemotional account of an emotional event is in itself likely to have an impact. Such a presentation risks conveying a distorted message about the actual emotional impact of the reported-on situation. Alternatively it can leave the reader with an uneasy sense of emotional incongruence, since the conveyed emotional message is incompatible with the reported-on content. The result could also be the perception on the part of the reader that they are expected not to feel anything in spite of the content. This can have a strongly manipulative effect, particularly if the presented situation has a high emotional charge. For example, this is what typically happens in situations of (state sponsored) violence against ethnic groups, where the respective other groups are systematically conditioned towards no longer responding in an emotionally authentic way to their neighbours' suffering.

Another example is Douglas Farah's, *Blood from Stones*¹⁹, which describes Farah's experience as a journalist with Western intelligence failure in the context of an international terrorism-link to the West African diamond trade. Farah highlights the intrinsic flaws in some organizations set up to protect citizens against the very terrorism-related crimes that these organizations, according to Farah's detailed account from a journalist's point of view, contemptuously ignore.

Rian Malan's book *My Traitor's Heart*²⁰, covering his experiences as a South African journalist during the Apartheid era is an example of a most insightful perspective of that era in many different respects. As a politically active journalist unwilling to subscribe to the dictates of an inhumane environment affecting large sections of his society, he insists on a balanced perspective, including pointing out failures on the side of the oppressed (while sympathising with them in a very outspoken way). Malan's account is a strong example of a journalist's applied social conscience and a touchingly honest presentation on a personal emotional level. His account also highlights the degree to which journalists are at risk of personal traumatization when they live in challenging contexts and operate under difficult circumstances.

Romeo Dallaire's *Shake Hands with the Devil*²¹ will also be listed here, even though Dallaire, as the commander of the UN peace keeping force in Rwanda during the genocide, is not a journalist. Dallaire's situation, as reflected by his vivid account, nevertheless shares many of the typical difficulties war correspondents are confronted with in crisis zones. In the course of his professional duties Dallaire was subject to witnessing the most horrific atrocities on a daily basis for a sustained period of time and was compelled to issue daily detailed reports on the situation (to the UN headquarters) as part of his duties. Dallaire experienced great difficulties in trying to convey the realities and logistical difficulties on the ground to his superiors. In regard to the sense of helplessness he felt in the face of the mission's inadequate mandate, as well as the life-changing traumatizing effects these experiences had for Dallaire, his situation is comparable to that of many war correspondents in crisis zones.

The emotional charge of frustration that went into Dallaire's account does not require interpretation; he says about his book that it is "*...nothing more or less than the account of a few humans who were entrusted with the role of helping others taste the fruits of peace. Instead*

*we watched as the devil took control of paradise on earth and fed on the blood of the people we were supposed to protect”.*²²

Written after years of battling the effects of severe PTSD, Dallaire's book also conveys the impression of being a much needed forum for airing all of what Dallaire had been unable to convey and to achieve in his desperate attempts to prevent the 1994 genocide. Dallaire's account also highlights the media's responsibilities in such contexts and the account contains many grievances about the media's conduct during his mission. According to him (and other sources), the Rwandan genocide was considered relatively low on the scale of media-worthy events at the time, matching the international community's response at large.

The variety of different journalists' independent accounts and memoirs appear to be attempts to fill the gaps between their actual reporting of events as journalists and how they wished they had been able to report differently on their experiences at the time.

While such accounts often provide well researched and enriching additional background information, the question still arises as to what it would require for journalists to provide these much broader perspectives in their official capacity as reporters.

3.2. Peace Journalism Guidelines

Many of the issues alluded to in such independent publications are captured in Lynch and McGoldrick's guidelines for peace-oriented journalists, in which they identify seventeen points based on Galtung's earlier work since the seventies.²³

One point refers to the way in which situations of escalating violence are being portrayed, emphasizing the importance of including the precipitating factors of the outbreak of violence to avoid the conclusion of a revenge (in response to previous violence) and subsequent cycle of further violence. In the same vein the authors point to the need for identifying shared grievances and resultant undesirable consequences affecting both parties, rather than implying that one party is to blame for 'starting' the problem. The same applies for the need to report on the suffering of all the involved parties, rather than distinguish between 'villains' and 'victims'.

The authors also recommend avoiding the use of victimizing terms such as "*defenseless*" or "*tragedy*," which imply that the referred to people are incapable of formulating their own views or solutions to their problems.

Another recommendation is to avoid referring to only two conflicting parties in an obvious win-lose setup. This includes the parties' disaggregation into smaller groups and the pursuit of goals towards a wider outcome range. The authors also warn against a "*self*" versus "*other*" polarization and recommend instead the identification of a specific behavioural trend on both sides of the conflict. Other recommendations include portraying the conflict in its wider consequences in terms of how and when people elsewhere are affected by it, who the outcome stakeholders are and, very importantly, what conclusions viewers will draw from the presentation, particularly in terms of future conflicts within the same or other regions.

The authors point to the importance of also reporting on the invisible effects of violent action or policy, including long term psychological damage and trauma affecting the involved parties. Another important issue is that of alerting readers to the potential of continuing cycles of violence, rather than focusing on immediate effects only, and to include the effects of a conflict on people's everyday lives. Other points emphasize the need to present grass roots perspectives rather than reporting mainly on official positions. This includes inquiring if the official positions best serve the interests of all parties and/or how they could be improved on.

They also recommend focusing on what may be the areas of common ground and compatible goals between parties, rather than concentrate on issues that divide them.

Other points warn against labelling events in emotive terms, or using terms differently to the way they are defined, which may distort the picture, e.g. the term 'systemic' for a series of grave but unrelated incidents. This also applies to the use of demonizing adjectives which imply that the journalist is siding with one party against another, thus implying the justification of escalating violence. The naming of committed wrongdoings and allegations should include those made on all sides and they should be based on appropriate supporting evidence. Equal respect needs to be expressed for the victims on both sides. Claims should not be mistaken for proof of established facts, but instead the person making the statement should be named. This also avoids being seen as taking sides.

The authors also warn against overemphasizing the benefits of official signings of agreements (e.g. for ceasefire), instead they recommend highlighting means of non-violent conflict resolution or identifying what is needed towards enabling a culture of peace in the affected area. This includes giving a voice to grassroots initiatives as well as providing a voice that speaks against established official positions on both sides. These peace-journalistic guidelines offer important anchors towards a culture change in reporting. If an increasing number of journalists started to embrace these guidelines, a new perspective of reporting would be propagated that could become more acceptable to the mainstream media over time.

The earlier cited examples of journalists' independent publications convey a sense of frustration about the fact that certain contexts, nuances and experiences cannot be published in the current mainstream media culture. There is also truth in the media's claim that there is a great demand for violence on the part of audiences, but while this fact is one of the major issues that requires addressing through the institutions of civil society, it is completely unreasonable for the media to interpret this demand as constituting a duty to present the levels of violence that currently exist.

3.3. Emotional Intelligence in the Media

A peace journalistic approach could be expected to generate greater understanding of the cause-and-effect relationships affecting world events within audiences and over time media professionals would have more permission to convey the impact that an event has on them. This would provide journalists with more license to report events in a more emotionally intelligent - namely a more emotionally congruent - way.

The conveyed effect of a peace journalistic approach is likely to coincide far more with audience perceptions of the same situations than the current style of reporting tragedies does. Journalists would no longer aim to shield themselves totally against the impact of emotionally challenging events in attempting to satisfy a perceived need for violent images. Rather, they would feel the need to retreat from such situations in time to protect themselves from any permanently traumatizing effects. In reference to Feinstein's cited research results, this can be expected to result in a greatly reduced prevalence of life-long PTSD in war correspondents.

The refusal of journalists to make themselves available to produce the demanded level or style of media-conveyed violence would also constitute an act of self-love and indicate a healthy sense of self-esteem. Section one of this series mentions the *Heart Math Institute's* findings on the effects of an individual's loving intention and of positive emotions such as care and appreciation on an intra- and interpersonal level.²⁴ As stated earlier, a focus on positive emotions assists in achieving a state of inner peace and the synchronization between the heart, brain and body within an individual. It was also said that an individual's state of internally peaceful orientation is able to be picked up by other individuals. This takes place through an unconscious form of communication involving the person's heartbeat signals and brain waves.

In the same way, an increased attention to the reporter's own emotional needs would convey itself as a message to audiences about violence being less desirable and it would result in a more conscious and responsible way of presenting violence through the media. In this sense a media culture change in this direction can be expected to contribute to a changing cultural perception of violence in society.

The media have also attracted criticism regarding the presentation of trauma and violence in other contexts. Hamber and Lewis comment on the media's focus "*on the human dramas of the victims*". They say that victims are often portrayed as people who are "*irreparably damaged and for whom there appears to be no solution and no future*".²⁵ They criticize such messages as being unhelpful, particularly because of the way they may be perceived by many unreported victims of unreported crimes. They also say that such messages deny the positive experiences of individuals who have embarked on a process of healing.

An 'intra-personally peace-oriented' journalist will not be interested in presenting such perspectives on other human beings. Such attitudes, apart from possibly being due to a potential lack of talent or skill as a journalist, warrant being addressed in journalism training and should include the exploration of a reporter's unhealthy emotional reasons for being motivated in this way.

In contrast to these criticisms of the media's conduct in the context of trauma and tragedy, Milgram et al. see a specific role for the media through serving as basic information providers for professional helpers in the process of trauma debriefing and post-trauma follow-up intervention. They say that media reports about survivors of trauma may serve as parallel narratives to encourage victims and that the media are in a position to educate the public about typical post-trauma reactions. They see the media's role in enabling greater effectiveness of helping efforts through facilitating a better understanding of these concepts. They also give the media credit for a capacity to help prevent panic in the case of extreme events by giving correct information and through dispelling myths.²⁶

Liisa Hyvarinen gives an account of her personal communication with Tom Kamilindi, a Rwandan journalist who survived the genocide. She says that Kamilindi's position of both witnessing the violence and being a victim of it has changed the way in which he conducts interviews as a journalist. For example, he tended to give interviewees more time and, if a survivor broke down during an interview, he would put this person's needs before his interests as a journalist, saying: "*I can always come back when the victim feels more up to it*", according to Hyvarinen.²⁷

Another reason why journalists need to address issues of trauma and violence with the utmost integrity is the suspicion with which they are often met by the victims of trauma. McFarlane points out that victims of trauma tend to question the motives of reporters who want to know about their experiences, resenting their interest as a "*voyeuristic fascination with their plight*".²⁸ Such perceptions may also be due in part to the victim's psychological state as a direct result of having experienced the trauma.

After one and a half centuries of journalistic misconduct vis-à-vis victims of trauma in a multitude of contexts it is nevertheless unsurprising that many people should react with apprehension at the prospect of their plight being in the focus of the media.

3. 4. New Forms of Training in Journalism

Many of the issues addressed in the previous sections sum up the need for a media culture change. Some sections dealt with the risks journalists face in the current globalized climate. Another issue was the media's responsibility regarding the depiction of violence, as well as providing background information and explaining the circumstances behind any events and crises reported on. Other sections referred to the need to acknowledge the subject of trauma,

both as a risk to media people as well as the need for sensitivity in the coverage of trauma affecting people in war and crisis situations. Media professionals need to acquire skills that have not been an integral part of mainstream journalistic training.

In the late eighties Melissa Baumann and Hannes Siebert initiated a Mediation Project for Journalists²⁹ that consisted of a series of workshops teaching conflict resolution skills to journalists. They report how, at first, many of the journalists they had invited to attend declined as they were totally unconvinced that learning about managing conflict had anything to do with their profession; that their job was to 'report the truth, the facts', and that it wasn't the business of journalists to intervene.

Baumann says that by the late nineties, the 'media & conflict' field had become a field of theory and practice unto itself, even though there still remained many cynics in media circles who claimed that they must stay 'objective' at all costs and that advocacy of any sort compromised the standards of journalism. Baumann points out that the advocated alternative paradigms to conventional journalism avoided promoting 'taking sides' in favour of any conflicting parties, but did argue in favour of taking the side of peace and peace building. According to her, journalists are already a third party in any conflict they cover, but that, "through a lack of a moral imperative", that access was not always used constructively".³⁰

New forms of training for journalists regarding these various aspects, and particularly regarding the benefits of linking the fields of Emotional Intelligence and Peace Journalism will constitute a major contribution towards the media culture change that is called for.

The following model aims to demonstrate how the concepts of Peace Journalism and Emotional Intelligence could be combined in a media training context. This programme can be seen as an example for a new training style which aims to raise the individual journalist's consciousness about their own motivation, risks and challenges and how they can impact on the situations they report on.

The objective of this training programme is to raise the awareness of a group of journalists towards a peace-enabling form of reporting as a prerequisite for their participation in a planned *Peace Building Media Exercise*. The prospective Media Intervention involves a specific outcome-agenda at the political reality level.

3.4.1. An Emotional Intelligence-Promoting Media-Intervention Exercise

A Proposal for 6 Experiential Weekend Workshops on

"Emotional Intelligence for Journalists":

An imaginary Project of the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation in cooperation with the Centre for the Research of Anti-Semitism (ZfA) in Berlin.

The programme is designed to better enable German journalists to report on issues relating to Israel's military actions in the occupied territories, or issues affecting German-Jewish life, in a more balanced way through an increased awareness of their own unconscious psychological agendas relating to Germany's National-Socialist past.

A more far-reaching and desired outcome from this workshop, which will enable a different journalistic approach, would be for Germany to take a more active role in the European Union, whereby the European Union is united in a clear and focused approach to the Middle-East conflict.

3.4.2 Programme Content-Outline

In 2002, the Centre for Research on Anti-Semitism (ZfA) in Berlin prepared a 'Synthesis Report' on "Manifestations of anti-Semitism in the European Union" on assignment from the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) in Vienna, providing an overview and analysis of anti-Semitic activities in fifteen European Union (EU) member states.³¹

Several German interest groups saw the role of the German media as particularly important in how the study findings would be received by the wider EU public. They perceived the German media's way of presenting such issues as an important factor in EU Middle-East policy development. It was seen as having a potentially weakening effect on Germany playing a more important role in the EU's mediating efforts in the Israeli- Palestinian conflict.

Germany's National Socialist past highlights the German media's specific responsibilities regarding its presentation of German attitudes on sensitive issues, particularly in the reporting of Israeli military actions in the occupied territories or Neo-Nazi related anti-Semitic/Xenophobic violence in Germany and the EU.

On request of the ZfA, and based on the encouraging feedback from the International Conference 'The Media in Conflicts – Accomplices or Mediators?'³² in May 2000 in Berlin, the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation decided to host a series of six weekend workshops for German journalists, addressing the need for a more emotionally intelligent and peace-journalism orientated approach. The goal is to help improve the EU's capacity to respond more effectively to the Middle East crisis.

The programme objectives will be addressed around three specific themes, with each two-weekend section exploring one theme.

Weekends One and Two

This section will focus on:

- personal awareness raising, both cognitive and experiential. Participants will be introduced to the concept of 'emotional intelligence', learn how the head and the heart can cooperate better and how new pathways can be formed in the brain. This includes exploring the deeper, often unconscious, motives for choosing to become a journalist
- the specific issues this raises for German journalists in view of the many collective effects that the National Socialist era has had on German society that still remain unaddressed today. Due to the psychological phenomenon of cross-generational transmission, individuals can be affected by emotional content, guilt feelings or fears which originate in previous generations. Young Germans often unconsciously carry the emotional burdens of unresolved issues associated with the involvement of their parents or grandparents in National Socialist crimes, which increases the risk of projecting them onto others.
- exploring tools for the prevention of becoming traumatised (through developing an 'intelligent heart') as a journalist³³ and for the way trauma can be processed as part of an acknowledged "duty of care" to journalists.³⁴

Self-exploratory exercises and guided visualizations will be combined with the teaching of cognitive concepts gleaned from various schools of psychotherapy, psychotraumatology and transpersonal psychology.

Weekends Three and Four

This section will explore:

- how the experiences through the workshops so far may have changed the participants' sense of responsibility as journalists
- how an increased awareness of the continuing effects of the National Socialist era on German society will affect their way of reporting (on Neo-Nazi/ Xenophobic violence, the Middle-East conflict, or conflicts relating to Arabic or Jewish inter-cultural issues)

Exercises will include role- plays and an introduction to the Transactional Analysis based function of the ego-states, explaining intra-personal communication flaws in victim/ perpetrator behaviours, ingroup/ outgroup phenomena and in demonisation/ dehumanizing attitudes towards others (e.g. relating to the Nazi era, to neo-Nazi trends in the EU or to the parties involved in the Israeli/ Palestinian conflict).

- how the positions of different parties; such as the German government, left-wing and right-wing interest groups, and NGO's, on issues related to West Bank occupation including violence, suicide-bombings and Jewish settlement are typically presented in the media
- what readers/ viewers are typically informed about and how this impacts on the conflicting parties (and which parties).

Some tools for conflict analysis/ resolution will be introduced, including exploration of their usefulness for journalists covering this complex conflict. This includes Lederach's perspective on conflicts as "long-term processes, which occur in the context of ongoing relationships".³⁵

Weekends five and six:

This section will explore:

- how to arrive at a more balanced, German history-conscious media-perspective of themes relating to Neo-Nazi, Jewish, Israeli or Palestinian issues, that would make all involved parties (all stakeholders in the conflict) feel more included in their grievances.
- how journalists can avoid taking sides while, at the same time, reporting responsibly on extremist positions and violence (on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict) and apply a peace-journalistic approach through including an analysis of the precipitating factors of the conflict .
- which reporting styles would strengthen Germany's role within the EU towards a more unified and focused EU policy on the Middle East conflict.
- how the participants' sense of their improved intrapersonal communication (based on the emotional intelligence paradigm of letting an intelligent heart make the decisions) in the context of their German heritage may enable them to become positive journalistic role models within EU media circles.

This section will also use conflict resolution tools to address the issue of how journalists can realistically apply their new awareness and understanding in an environment still guided by traditional media conventions.

3.4.3. Background Reflections and Programme Objectives

This section will provide a short history of the Middle East Conflict drawn from German and EU media coverage, in order to demonstrate the training programme's objective of strengthening the EU's role in the Middle East through media coverage that is oriented towards peace journalism. This includes exposing the tendency of the mainstream press to portray both Israeli and Palestinian societies as being ruled by (religious) extremists, and of presenting the situation as made up mostly of victims and perpetrators, whereby the conflicting parties, according to Galtung, operate "*trauma and guilt banks*" which can "*lead to trauma-chains through history*", and to "*a politics of paranoia*".³⁶

Other typical media trends will be demonstrated, such as the print media's respective left-or right-wing political leanings, according to which the victims in the Middle East conflict tend to be portrayed as either completely one thing or the other. It will be shown that the German media has been increasingly mirroring this EU-wide trend over the last few years; for example, the typical right wing trend to report on the conflict by equating Israel's right to exist with the right of the Israeli defence force to defend Israel by applying any degree of violence against Palestinians. Conflict analysis tools taught in the course of the programme will enable participants to identify typical situations of structural and cultural violence perpetrated against Palestinians in the context of the Israeli occupation. Examples include the restriction of movement of Palestinians and the unjust diversion of resources away from Palestinian communities towards tiny Jewish settler outposts.

This situation will be compared to the corresponding left wing tendency of the media to present Palestinians as exclusively victims, and of an 'anti-Zionist' position, which contributes, according to one author, to "*a gradual demonization of Jews in Europe who are called to account for the deeds of Israel*".³⁷ It will be shown that, in this context, there is often little mention of how the violence impacts on every-day Israelis, or of Israeli opinion poll results that differ from official Israeli government positions, or the legal struggles of the refusenik movement.

Some typical examples of the German media's way of portraying these positions will be given, such as the case study on "*Mid-east Reporting on the Second Intifada in German Print Media*", which concludes that "*there is often distortion in the image of Israel, a lack of context and an aggressive tone*".³⁸ in Germany's Middle East reportage. Another example is a statement by a Jewish journalist (based both in Munich and Israel), who says that "*in order to describe certain phenomena in Israel, they very often use expressions in German which come from Nazi terminology*".³⁹

In order to convey the effects of any unconscious agendas that may be involved, some psychoanalytical perspectives will be cited.⁴⁰ These will show how a paralyzing effect on German political effectiveness has occurred as a result of the collective or individual (as opposed to official) reluctance of Germans to take responsibility for the causes and impact of the Nazi era. This will be presented as an example of the unconscious tendency to project the collective 'perpetrator' aspects on to collectives of other people (e.g. asylum seekers, or Israelis) whereby the 'perpetrators' are seen in them, the others. This mechanism will be explained as serving the unconscious need to absolve one's own collective from taking responsibility for its past. Israelis as perpetrators might be perceived as particularly convenient for German projections, whereby now that the Jews have swapped roles from victims to perpetrators, there is no need to reflect on Nazi crimes against Jews anymore, according to this logic.

Examples of how such unconscious attitudes can manifest themselves in behavioural discrepancies within (German) society will be discussed; such as the construction of a gigantic holocaust memorial in the centre of the capital, which becomes the symbolic official compensation for the lack of a sense of genuine remorse and perceived need for reconciliation throughout large sections of German society. Other examples highlighting this trend include

several recent scandals involving anti-Israel/ anti-Semitic insinuations in high-profile German intellectual, political and army circles.

Such examples will be used to demonstrate the media's role in impacting on the German public's perception in such contexts, through the way in which such situations are portrayed in the media. An area of particular focus will be the potential consequences of the German media repeating EU media perspectives that polarize Israeli military policies. This repetition further reinforces the EU trend towards polarization and contributes to difficulties in establishing effective EU policies.

The alternative for the German media is to contribute to Germany playing a more important role in the Middle East conflict through focusing on some specific factors such as the following:

- **Germany contributes 25% of all EU assistance to the Middle East.**
- **Germany officially acknowledges a specific moral responsibility towards the state of Israel, which came into existence as a direct result of the desperation of European Jews to escape the holocaust and, later, of those surviving it.**
- **Germany traditionally has a positive rapport with the Arab countries (in part reinforced by the anti-Jewish Nazi ideology of WWII, but since replaced by economic interests).**

The fall of the Berlin wall provides a strong example of the non-violent resolution of a conflict of historic proportions.

A media-perspective based on the strength of these points would be shown to be aligned with the official German government philosophy, as expressed by the German foreign minister, Joschka Fischer, in 2002: *"...we have special relations with Israel as a result of our past. As Europeans and as Germans, it is in our interest that the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians does not escalate, rather that it leads to the two peoples at the very least co-existing if not cooperating."*⁴¹

This would be used to show that with a stronger, more unified EU perspective it will be more difficult to insist on extremist positions. EU allocation of resources to each party would be monitored for any utilization against the other side including, for example, the Israeli defence force's use of arms to reinforce structural violence against Palestinians, or the production of educational material designed to induce hatred through the Palestinian Authority and promoting cultural violence against Israelis.

German and EU media support of the peace initiatives of NGO's and everyday people, and less 'tug-of-war' facts reporting would be demonstrated to assist the interweaving of any peaceful efforts on both sides of the conflict. The official positions would be exposed as not really representing the majority interests of their populations and it could further be shown that media support of peace initiatives would assist in breaking the cycle of violence at a grass-roots level, increasing the chances for a non-violent resolution of the conflict.

Difficulties that programme participants may experience in the process of pursuing these objectives will be discussed throughout the training. These may result from attempting to implement their new awareness while continuing to work in their old environments. The programme will also address how such obstacles may be overcome; one option would involve networking with other journalists and addressing high-level staff in the media organization most

likely to respond sympathetically to bringing the objectives of good media guidelines back into awareness.

As mentioned above, one approach to achieving the programme's objectives will be to teach journalists some tools for analysing the historic circumstances of the Middle East conflict so that they will be in a better position to give a more balanced, rather than a polarized, account of the situation.

A further objective in achieving this goal will be to bring the previously referred to 'unconscious issues' into the consciousness of German journalists, both in terms of understanding the collective transgenerational effects of the Nazi era as well as any individual issues, some of which are perpetuated by traumatizing journalistic experiences. The programme is likely to affect individual participants in different ways, since its objectives are approached from a deep psychological consciousness-raising perspective. Its underlying philosophy assumes that a person gaining a deeper knowledge of their own motives is in itself a desirable outcome, regardless of any changes an individual may wish to make in their life as a result.

Through the described combination of awareness raising at the intrapersonal level and a peace-journalistic orientation (based on a conflict analysis consciousness and balanced approach of reporting), the programme presents an emotionally intelligent approach to achieving its core objective, which is the development of a much stronger role for the EU in resolving conflict in the Middle East.

Section four of this series will explore the public's responsibility regarding media issues. In a free market society, public demand for certain types of media productions does have an impact on what the media will produce. The public's 'right to know what is happening in the world' will be put into perspective, particularly also in view of the consequences from certain media presentations on different under-age groups. This section will also include the conclusions for all four sections combined.

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