



Social Media & Social Order

30. Nov. - 2. Dec. 2017, Oslo

Thursday, November 30

11:30 Arrival & lunch

12:30 Opening remarks

13:00 Keynote address by Jessie Daniels

14:00 Coffee break

14:30 Panel 1: "Memes, Fake News and the Far-Right Ascendancy"

- Sagorika Singha, Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi, India)

Meme Collectives and "Preferred Truths" in Assam

Social media, considered to be among the newest social groups within the larger social order in a state, inadvertently affects the structuring of local community dynamics. This influence can be particularly observed in interior, peripheral regions in the global South which is of late experiencing a growing omnipresence of social media and the Internet. The Northeast region in India which includes Assam has forever felt left out in the larger scheme of things in India - the spatial distance between the centre at Delhi and the Northeast in the periphery creeping into economic, policy and administrative decisions. The notion of centre and periphery which exists in the experience of the Northeast region in relation to the rest of the country is seen to be repeated within the region among the Bangladeshi immigrants and the locals through the use of social media to redefine the complicated social order. While social media allows the privileged in the region to have an alternate platform within the larger mainstream political stage, it demarcates a fine line between them and the others within the region itself. In this way, one might point out the continuities that prevail in spite of the transformative potential of the media. This paper traces how local meme collectives - groups creating local memes, GIFs and videos, articulate the preferred social order, thus revealing the dual nature of centre-periphery through their preference for specific memes and their circulation in various social media. The paper explores the identity-based genre of memes to study the ways in which collectives define and allocate agendas for the region and its people and thus enable us to read into the social and culture logics behind such multi-participant negotiations. This paper questions how these memes defy their normal position as social connectors in cultural practice and are redefined in a deeply divided region.

The emergence of meme collectives in Assam point to the rise of a new social group which channels conflicted past and current histories by using digital artefacts and new media in order to gain relevance. The primary questions thus are: How meme collectives drive social media agendas in peripheral regions like Assam? How that in turn affects community relations in this deeply diverse region with a complicated past? This paper explores the ways in which meme collectives within social media revive older schemas and allow sensitive, controversial political issues to flourish by presenting them as what I refer to as "preferred truths" thus challenging the social order.

The paper thus qualitatively analyses the situation by probing into the history and aesthetics of a selected specific genre of memes - Identity-based Memes. These memes refer to the complexities in terms of identities that exist within the region of Assam. These issues of identity revolve mainly around the influx of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants who first moved into the southern parts of Assam during the Bangladesh Liberation War in the 1970s and the influence of Bengali language



and culture in the state. To understand this local network formulation both traditional and virtual ethnography, and cyber anthropology will be employed to study the creation of virtual vocabulary and aesthetic employment which initiates a new texture of popular culture language.

Researching these questions will give insights into the manner in which peripheral regions tackle the changes that new technology and new objects bring and the overall impact it has in establishing the complexity of regions already having a contested position within the larger national discourse. It will also help understand the changes in public participation and the new media politics affecting the process.

- Ib T. Gulbrandsen, Roskilde University (Trekroner, Denmark)

The Resistance Brand: Is Corporate Appropriation of Anti-Trump Discourse Changing the Face of Political CSR?

“The Trump-resistance will be commercialized” (Hess, 2017). Paraphrasing political activist and artist Gil Scott-Heron’s famous title seems increasingly apt as one corporation after the other voices sympathy with social protesters and/or dismay at the politics of the White House incumbent. But how are we to understand corporate actors’ use of anti-Trump discourse? Can commercial interests serve revolutionary purposes? Or does the revolution become a means to other ends when appropriated by commercial organizations? That is, does adding corporate voices to the critical chorus enforce or weaken the revolutionary agenda/radical critique, and, ultimately, does the rise of the resistance brand challenge or re-inscribe social order? In this paper, we explore these issues as they relate to and play out in social media networks.

More particularly, we consider two interrelated issues: (i) how do corporations engage in anti-Trump discourse, and (ii) what are the public reactions to and social consequences of this engagement? We will address these issues analytically by first studying what could only be called a spectacular failure to tap into the commercial potential of resistance, namely Pepsi’s “Live for now”-ad, which in the Spring of 2017 was withdrawn after only two days of circulation. Here, we explore why and how Pepsi’s attempt to join the resistance was rejected, thereby establishing a baseline of neither commercial success nor social change; that is, ineffective and inconsequential corporate abuse of the resistance. We then juxtapose the Pepsi ad with a number of more successful examples of corporate communication that has garnered public support and/or acceptance as expressions of genuine critique, e.g. the range of 2017 Super Bowl ads that got positive reviews for their more or less explicitly anti-Trump messages (from It’s A 10’s warning of four years of awful hair to 84 Lumber’s insistence that all walls should have open gates), the ‘patriarchy-proof’ underwear Thinx’ feminist messages and activities, and Adidas’ and Nike’s respective bids for diversity and equality.

Our theoretical answers, and conceptual framework, draws on the literature on political CSR (Scherer and Palazzo, 2007) and corporate citizenship (Matten and Crane, 2005). However, we depart from a focus on discrepancies between companies’ practices and their CSR programmes (Christensen et al., 2013); instead, we focus on communicative aspects of CSR (Hoff-Clausen and Ihlen, 2015; Morsing, 2006) and the ways in which they are used by corporations for self-presentations as political actors beyond CSR programmes (Palazzo and Scherer, 2006). We will conclude that there is not one resistance brand, but a series of ways in which corporations engage with anti-Trump discourse, each of which has different potentials for upsetting/upholding the current social order.

15:45 Plenary session with talk by Nick Couldry (delivered remotely)

Social Order in the Age of Big Data: Exploring the Knowledge Problem and the Freedom Problem

17:00 Panel 2: "Cultural Conflict 2.0" Project presentation

18:15 Break

19:00 Conference dinner



Friday, December 1, 2017

9:00 Arrival & coffee

9:30 Panel 3: "Social Media and Social Interactions"

- Simone Zhang, Princeton University (Princeton, USA)

Organizational Responsiveness to Everyday Complaints and Requests on Twitter

Technological advances and consumer-centric organizational strategies have led to a dramatic expansion in mediated service interactions between organizations and individual service recipients. This trend enables service recipients to receive increasingly individualized attention and solutions. But increasing individualization brings with it potential for wider variation in outcomes. Consequently, the rise of these mediated service channels presents an important distributional question: who is best able to capture organizational attention and secure accommodation? In this paper, I address this question by examining public customer service interactions on Twitter between service recipients and four types of organizations that deliver important services to a broad cross-section of the United States: local government agencies, electric utilities, cable companies, and mobile phone service providers. Leveraging six months of records of complaints, requests, and questions directed at these organizations, I use matching to investigate what gender and race cues generate greater responsiveness. In addition, I examine whether stylistic differences in how individuals present their claims influence responsiveness.

- John Boy and Justus Uitermark, University of Amsterdam (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

Conformity and Distinction in Online and Urban Spaces

While social media have long been imagined as vectors of transformation and disruption, we propose to regard them instead as vehicles for the continuation and deepening of conservative schemas. In opposition to commentators who view social media as platforms for opinion exchange, we suggest that they are, first and foremost, stages for the expression and affirmation of status. If we want to understand the power of social media, we must study them not only on their own terms, as digital networks of communication and sharing, but as arenas where people define and negotiate their place in the social order. Doing so opens up a host of pressing questions for us to investigate: How do people define their online personas and how are they defined by them in turn? How does the urge to look and to show off generate norms and expectations? What is considered worthy of esteem and prestige, and why? We will present some of the work we have done and are currently undertaking to illuminate how social media serve to consolidate or contest social hierarchies. We draw on a series of case studies to learn how different groups of young urbanites craft their lifestyles and carve out spaces for themselves online and in cities. We employ a relational approach which we operationalize using both computational and interpretative methods of inquiry. While the computational analysis of very large network datasets shows how culture travels through local and global networks, interviews and observations provide an intimate view of the desires and anxieties induced and channeled by social media.

- Barkuzar Dubai, University of Jordan (Amman, Jordan)

Regulating the Visibility of Muslim Women on Social Media

This paper examines the ways in which social media is used to regulate the visibility of Muslim women. In collecting and analyzing comments by Arabs and Muslims in response to photos posted by Muslim women of themselves on Facebook and Twitter, I argue that social media is used as a disciplinary tool to control the production of knowledge of women's visibility and engagement in the public sphere. The absence of face-to-face confrontations which are replaced by digital communications has increased the permissible degree of broadcasting radical and sexist comments which objectify women's bodies as the object of the male gaze or as a battleground over



ideologies. Whereas it is uncommon that a man would confront a Muslim woman to criticize her appearance in a 'physical' public space, in the digital world her public Facebook photos may be flooded with aggressive messages and comments which brand her as an 'infidel' or 'slut' for sharing her photos publicly with people. I underline here that the responses of interest to this study are ideological and social in nature. It excludes verbal expressions of sexual harassment. This study will focus on communications on two social media, Twitter and Facebook. I will use some high-profile cases of accomplished female Muslim women, such as medal winners from the Rio Summer Olympics games, the winner of the Arab version of The Voice, and other Muslim women of a public recognizability or those who participated in public events or initiatives. For the theoretical framework, I will rely on gender studies, communications studies, and reception and audience theories.

10:45 Coffee break

11:00 Panel 4: "Social Media and Local Community Relations"

- Dipen Barua, University of Hong Kong (Hong Kong)

Exploring the Impacts of the Misuse of Social Media Power on Premeditated Tactics: Threats and Strategies in the Bangladesh Context of Communal Violence

In September 2012, a simple photo said to show a burnt holy Quran, the religious text of Islam, was tagged on Buddhist boy's social network site Facebook that allegedly insulted Islam triggered a rippling fury that led to the brutal destruction of Buddhist temples and houses at Ramu, a village located in the Cox's Bazar district of south-eastern Bangladesh. The antecedents and repercussions surrounding violent incidents at Ramu negatively affected the balance of peace and security in the two neighbouring countries Bangladesh and Myanmar (Burma). Although it is said that the violence in Ramu occurred due to a perceived insult to Islam, there were other contributing factors underlying the force of the reaction. Firstly, the minority Rohingya Muslims living in the neighbouring country of Myanmar have been oppressed by majority Myanmar Buddhists for a long time which builds up an underlying religious tension in the area. Secondly, minority Muslims have been victims in other countries in the region such as Sri Lanka, where hard line Buddhists often targeted both Muslims and Christians. Therefore, it is evident that the occurrence of communal violence in modern society of Bangladesh is premeditated tactics for which the misuse of social media plays a vital role.

This paper aims to address an overview of the power of the misuse of social network sites such as Facebook which is also a cause to negatively affect the balance of peace and security in modern society. With reference to the communal violence occurred in Bangladesh, this paper also addresses how the misuse of social media transforms into a political strategy which places the common people at a distinct disadvantage for which particularly minorities are under danger in Bangladesh. This paper is divided into three parts, part one addresses the occurrence of violence in Bangladesh due to misuse of social media which was influenced by the targeted violence against minority Muslims in Myanmar. Part two will explain ways to prevent violence based upon ethical considerations supported in the doctrine of nonviolence in the Buddhist perspective. Part three will propose the necessary measures to foster peace-building through which the long lasting violence in Bangladesh and Myanmar may terminate.

- Stefan Fisher-Høyrem, University of Agder (Kristiansand, Norway)

Social Media and Social Order in the Norwegian Bible Belt

Combining computational and qualitative methods, this paper investigates local social media clusters in the city of Kristiansand, asking whether these challenge or reproduce the city's social order.

- Marco Schmitt, RWTH University (Aachen, Germany)



How the Construction of Community-Like Social Orders Can Stop the Proliferation of Polarizing Communication on Social Media – The Case of Jodel

Identifying the social orders that may be challenged or reproduced by social media sites leads researchers to investigate the design decisions for the platform, the user interfaces and how these are appropriated by the users themselves. Some of these design decisions for social media sites of societal relevance like Facebook or Twitter produced the potential for creating echo chambers and thereby polarizing political communication (e.g., Bond & Messing, 2015; Conover et al., 2011), i.e. the production of attention by polarizing statements may lead to a dangerous disintegration of the public sphere: The design of both Facebook and Twitter does not allow for establishing an overall common sense for what this kind of public is produced there, because users can opt to just include information they like in their own newsfeed. We consider this as a challenge to social order as well as a form of reproduction and reinforcement of this polarized communication.

Recently, a German location-based social network (LBSN) application called JodelApp challenged this mode of communication by drawing some design decisions differently and thereby may produce a different kind of social order. These design decisions include:

- Users can post so called Jodels, which are like Tweets without identifying the user posting this
- Striving for absolute anonymity (there is no discernible user account visible to other users)
- Strong localization (users see Jodels which are close to them, mostly same city)
- Voting and deletion of negatively valued Jodels (users may vote for other Jodels and there is a threshold a Jodel must achieve to be still visible)
- Gamification (status rewards and bonuses for active participation)

These design decisions provide some mechanisms that enhance the possibility of a self-policing community. Our presentation will show some examples of these processes and the rules that get established to secure a non-polarizing public environment. The social order established and to some degree reproduced is the order of production-community for some kind of public sphere. Additionally, with regard to related work of other LBSN applications, e.g. Yik Yak (e.g., Black et al., 2016), we will also discuss some limitations for our primary explanation that the design decisions provide for the construction of localized non-polarizing publics, like user homogeneity and a possible lack of diversity on Jodel. Nevertheless, if such design decisions can lead to the establishment of quite different social orders, a thorough investigation of such decisions is an important step to identify the potential for producing a certain kind of social order in social media. Therefore, we consider Jodel an important application to obtain information on to how to stop the proliferation of polarizing communication in social media by using mechanisms from production-communities.

12:15 Lunch

13:30 Keynote address by Chris Bail

14:30 Panel 5: "Conceptualizing Social Media and Social Order"

- Alicia Wanless, SecDev Foundation (Ottawa, Canada)

Is Digital Propaganda Turning us into Propagandists?

This research paper puts forward a new theoretical model for identifying and understanding propaganda in a Digital Age, through an emerging hybrid model that is participatory, actively engaging target audiences in the spread of persuasive messaging. In so doing, this paper draws from analysis of the 2016 U.S. presidential election and the 2017 U.K. General Election.

- Knut Lundby, University of Oslo (Oslo, Norway)

Contesting Religion: The Social Media Dynamics of Cultural Conflicts in Scandinavia



This presentation draws on the edited volume by the same title, which was assembled by the collaborative research project "Engaging with Conflicts in Mediatized Religious Environments" and is forthcoming from De Gruyter in the spring of 2018.

How do media condition engagement with contested issues about religion in Scandinavian public settings? This book breaks new ground in understanding how media condition public engagement with controversies about religion. As Scandinavian societies experience increased ethno-religious diversity, their Christian-Lutheran heritage and strong traditions of welfare and solidarity are being challenged and contested. Controversies, amplified through media, provide the impetus for multi-ethnic publics and citizens to participate in public debate, renegotiate relations between religion and the public sphere, and redraw the boundaries between inclusion and exclusion. Led by renowned scholars in the field, the book reconceives mediatization theory in the light of a series of innovative empirical case studies in schools, public service broadcasting and digital media, and local civic settings, contextualized by a cross-national, comparative survey. The book offers a dynamic analytical prism for understanding the circumstances in which media can exacerbate or alleviate conflict. As such, this book has significant implications for the comparative study of contemporary contestations of religion both within and beyond the Scandinavian context.

15:45 Short break

16:00 Panel 6: "Identity and the Politics of Representation"

- Fatma Sagir, University of Freiburg (Freiburg, Germany)

Mipsters, Gummies, Britlims: Social Media and the Emergence of New Muslim Identities

In 2013 American Muslim Twitter was "all shook up". A group of young Muslims, calling themselves ironically Mipsters, shot a video with an all-female cast, moving in an urban setting along the sound of JayZ's "Somewhere in America". CNN and other mass media picked the story up. American Muslim organisations felt the need to make statements about the video's and the women's "Muslimness". International media reports followed. In other parts of the world images of young Muslims emerged, being coined by themselves or the media as Mipsters (Muslim+Hipsters), Gummies (Global Urban Muslims) or, specifically for the UK, Britlims (British+Muslims). The Mipsters incident is an excellent example for how young Muslims face not only challenges within a binary world view that suggests they are "trapped" between either a "modern" or a "traditional-religious" world, but also are confronted with negative stereotyping in mass media and popular culture.

This paper argues that with the emergence of Social Media young Muslims have found an alternative and independent platform to challenge social order where Muslim representation is merely reduced to negative images. Using YouTube, Instagram et al. these young Muslims explore questions of lifestyle, identity, religion, tradition, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, racism and their struggle to become visible other than within the context of terrorism or traditionalism, looking for different representations in popular culture and media. The author's early research findings show that for young Muslims creating own images of the Muslim self is now at the core of their agency challenging stereotypes and misconceptions.

The paper focuses on two samples in search of highlighting the above-mentioned arguments, using content analysis as a key method:

- The video „#Mipsterz – Somewhere in America“
- London based YouTuber and Instagrammer Dina Tokio

- Sarah Sobieraj and Shaan Merchant, Tufts University (Boston, USA)

Madam Senator: Political Visibility and Gender-Based Attacks Online



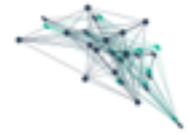
Resistance to women's public voice and visibility via street harassment and workplace sexual harassment have long constrained women's use of and comfort in physical public spaces; this gender-based resistance now extends into digital arenas. Women face extreme hostility in the form of digital sexism and racism in discussion rooms, comment sections, gaming communities, and on social media platforms. This is particularly true of women holding elected office. This paper mines @mentions on twitter to showcase the different responses faced by male and female leaders who enter digital publics, showing the remarkable patterned resistance women, particularly women of color, face when they hold positions of authority. In light of these findings, we argue that we must consider the democratic costs of gender-based harassment, in addition to the personal ones.

- David Herbert, University of Agder and Kingston University (Kristiansand, Norway and London, UK)

Social Media and Social Order: Danish and Norwegian Muslim Social Media Users' Negotiation of the Dominant Media Frame

This paper examines the implications of increased social media use for the formation and development of political culture, using data from interviews with Danish and Norwegian Muslims who are, or have been, active as Muslims on social media (e.g. posting images of themselves wearing hijab, verses from the Qur'an, comments on Islam and politics). It uses the experiences of this sub-group as an indicator of the health of Scandinavian political culture – using Habermas' (2008) concept of the post-secular society as requiring mutual learning processes between secular majorities and religious minorities - because if some groups are effectively excluded from participation by stigmatisation, then political culture will not function effectively as a forum for debate and agenda setting - with attendant dangers of alienation, social fragmentation and political radicalisation. All twenty respondents experienced a negative media frame, and a sense of heightened public exposure after a terror attack, and reacted to this with a variety of strategies, from avoidance to invisibility to modelling good behaviour in daily life (e.g. giving their place in a queue to an elderly person) and building support networks. However, it was noticeable that only Copenhagen based respondents expressed a sense of being exposed or on trial daily, and only they spoke of using social media as a tool to engage wider networks. We consider possible reasons for these differences, and what they may tell us about the differential outworking of social media dynamics in urban and rural settings.

18:30 Social hour with drinks followed by self-organized dinner



Saturday, December 2, 2017

9:00 Arrival & coffee

9:30 Panel 7: "Policing the Social Order"

- Arnoldas Stramska, Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas, Lithuania)

A New Kind of Togetherness: Police, Digitality, and the Production of Order

'People are so immersed in their work they wouldn't recognize the end of the world. [...]. There is no civic sense here'

'There is.' Halder pointed to a nearby surveillance camera. 'Think of it as a new kind of togetherness'
– J G Ballard Super-Cannes

This paper will aim to investigate the relationship between police, as a larger set of technologies of control and the fabrication of social order (e.g. Marc Neocleaus), on the one hand, and digitality as a cultural logic (e.g. Seb Franklin), on the other. Although there has been numerous critical accounts pointing out to the new practices of surveillance and control that information and communication technologies have allowed to develop to an unprecedented scale, there has been little emphasis on the history of police, in the broad sense of barely visible but essential way to organize social, political, economic, and cultural life of any given population. As important, as some more empirically driven studies of privacy, censorship, or free speech may be, largely they remain within the liberal framework and explicit or implicit ideological reenforcement of basic ideological assumptions on which the foundations of modern state rest (e.g. 'good order', decision on exception, and monopoly on force). The argument in this paper would be that some of these foundations need to be investigated – following Foucault among others – to uncover specific rationalities at work, and the larger police rationality might be among key epistemic categories, as a set of formal and informal institutions, psychosocial investments, or increasingly inescapable infrastructural and aesthetic dispositifs. As Mladek asserts, "The police not only employs the power of networks [...], it also is, despite its inscription in a genealogy of sovereignty and hierarchy, itself structured like a rhizome". When police, in the popular imagination, is reduced to uniformed patrols to ensure law and order, it escapes larger institutional and infrastructural areas which produce and reproduce social order. Repressive aspects typically associated with the police play significant but partial role. More nuanced view needs to be investigated; for example, how contemporary 'incitement to speech', participation, compulsory visibility, social scoring, or rating systems achieve much of the overall systematic metastability—a cartography of the visible, or an asymmetrical transparency – balancing subtle forms of self/censorship with 'creative' imperatives of productivity; or how tackling cybercrime spills into other areas of interest to the state, or which rationalities are used for the preventative policing using advanced algorithmic tools. The paper will attempt to 'read' and 'bridge' a relatively small but rich field of broader critical theoretical work done on police and shifts in modern governance through the lenses of digital media, big data, algorithmic governmentality (Rouvroy), and ontopower (Massumi).

- Tess Wandia, iHub (Nairobi, Kenya)

Gendered Ordering through Social Media in Kenya

Something interesting is happening on social media in Kenya, whose narrative is mainly being controlled by the youth, a subset of Kenyas men and women between the ages of 18 and 35. Young people are taking to social media to discuss with exponentially much larger audiences than most would have in their offline channels, not only about everyday happenings but even those that most in our society would deem taboo based on traditional and cultural precepts imposed on us by society. The Communications Authority of Kenya estimates that about 40.5 Million out of a population of 48.54 Million use the internet with an internet penetration of 89.4%. To take a closer look on how the internet in Kenya is gendered we will look closer at women's experience online. With only 20% of women in slums connected to the internet versus 57% of men and women saying



prices of data are 'unrealistic' it is clear we need to put in place smarter initiatives to get more women online in order to achieve gender equality. To add insult to injury, more than one in five women in Kenya also experience online harassment, which can be an obvious deterrent to women staying online, once they get connected. Kenya is one of the countries in Africa that boasts a high internet penetration rate is no stranger to instances of cyber violence, with women bearing the bigger brunt of this disaster. Earlier this year a young girl committed suicide as a result of cyber bullying. It is evident that the harassment women face online, is related to that which they bear offline, especially in a highly patriarchal society as is Kenya.

In my research I seek to understand how women use the internet, their individual experiences doing so, perceptions of digital safety, awareness and education while navigating the internet and the policy gaps and opportunities as far as safeguarding internet freedoms in Kenya is concerned. Through the course of the research we aim to understand how exactly cyber violence occurs in order to recommend initiatives that can not only result in behavioural changes in Kenyans when they go online, but to also see how policy and structures can fill the gaps existing that are resulting in the internet being a less safe space for Kenyans.

- Liat Berdugo, University of San Francisco (San Francisco, USA)

Spectral Power: Visual Rights in Zones of Conflict

A Palestinian records a border crossing. A citizen videotapes a policeman and uploads it to YouTube. A satellite looks on. We live in a society that observes and records. Recordings can be violent, oppressive, and dangerous. Recordings can also be liberatory. Recordings, more often than not, are celebrated for their pure objectivity: they help us see what is "true," or what "really happened." Therefore recordings of grave injustices or of power imbalances -- whether they be of occupation in Israel/Palestine or shootings of unarmed black persons in the US -- spawn outrage. And when this footage is put on the web, this 'citizen videography' is distributed at scale that enables mass awareness and protest. But does the mass distribution of citizen videography also enable justice?

So often, we think the answer is "yes": catch injustice camera, and you'll also catch remediation. This belief is what I call "the civil contract of videography" -- namely, that if one sees injustice captured in video, one has a political and ethical obligation to remedy it. However, I argue that the civil contract of videography, as spread through the web, is a fallacy. Before the civil rights movement, postcards of Black lynchings were circulated as souvenirs in the US. It has taken sweeping societal change for those images to signify "injustice." The images stay the same, and society must change.

Instead of civil action, I see cameras turned against cameras. Since 2013, I have been researching in the video archive of B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization that distributes cameras to Palestinians. B'Tselem has allowed me unparalleled access to this archive as an artist. On my most recent research trip, I discovered an emergence of direct face-offs between Palestinian cameras and Israeli cameras. I collected hundred of clips where the Palestinian camera was met with the camera of the other. This was where everything folded in on itself, with echoes of infinity mirrors and diagonal arguments and surveillance-turned-countersurveillance. This was what I call "shooting back at shooting back": a fight over spectral power in a zone of conflict

Shooting back at shooting back is not unique to Israel/Palestine. In the US, it manifests as police body cams peering at cell phone cameras; or as commercial drones hovering and peering at nest cams of homes. What are the impact of this surveillance and this simultaneous, echoing countersurveillance? What happens when we upload these camera face-offs to the web?

I extend these face-offs to examine how conflicts produce an inequality of visual rights. These visual rights include rights to see and rights to be seen; rights to look and to surveil; rights to be out of sight; and rights to have one's image circulated, posted, and trusted (rather than subject to a "digital suspicion" through claims of falsification in postproduction). If "the gaze that sees is the



gaze that dominates,” as Foucault has written, then the seer has power over the seen. An uneven distribution of power reaches into the realm of visibility, itself.

I argue that what is truly new in camera face-offs--in these tensions over spectral power--is that we see the exact moment when the physical conflict moves into a media conflict. The liminal state of transition is the camera itself, and we witness the fight to intervene on that state change from physical data to metadata. We witness the tension of visions colliding, in media res. As Carol Martin writes, “Everyday recordings can suddenly become acts of resistance.” Now, more than ever, it is integral to interrogate this videographic resistance -- and especially its circulation online, and its civil promises.

11:00 Keynote address by Stefania Milan

12:00 Closing reflective panel during lunch



CULTURAL CONFLICT 2.0

Shedding new light on the conditions of co-existence in urban spaces.

Cultural Conflict 2.0 investigates in what ways and to what extent social media is reshaping social relations in culturally diverse areas of large and small cities in Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands. Combining computational and qualitative methods, we especially look at how cultural conflict is created, circulated, handled and dealt with both on social media platforms and at their intersection with life in the physical city.

We have examined how local clusters of social media users tend to reproduce local processes of social stratification. In Kristiansand, a small town in the south of Norway, we find that the affirmation of places, values and images associated with prestige in the city's established (albeit contested) social order—as expressed in the city's cultural and political history, public rituals and celebrations, and official city promotion and image-building—is central for becoming visible in local social media clusters.

We have examined how groups of individuals experiencing high levels of cultural conflict on social media respond to this, interviewing ethnic Danish converts to Islam who are active on social media platforms. We found that these individuals tend to deal with critical and abusive comment by not engaging directly, but rather by posting material which sheds light on their decision to convert, and on what their life as a Muslim means to them. We also find that the strategies minorities use in navigating social media conflicts change depending on city size and the strength of pre-digital media.

We have investigated how social media reshapes users' relationship with place, building on the initial observation that many young people largely navigate the urban environment through their smartphones. By examining the spatial distribution and content of posts we have found that users tend to form lifestyle clusters, and that users in clusters with greater access to prestigious or gentrifying locations in the city tend to highlight location more often, thus enhancing both their prestige and that of the location. This is one way in which the use of a widely accessible technology may unintentionally reinforce existing social divisions.

We have also studied the formation of clusters of users in cities which form part of much larger transnational networks, such as those formed by women interested in hijab fashion. While continental Europe's largest cluster of such users is found in Rotterdam, this cluster and those in other Western cities are much smaller than the major hubs in South East Asia. This case study shows how our method can produce novel findings and suggest new lines of enquiry; for example, some of the cities with most users had not been identified by previous studies, while at a local level spatial pattern posts suggests that women in these networks do not live parallel lives in separate spaces to the ethnic majority, but rather intersecting lives with some shared spaces but distinct centres, such as restaurants and beauty parlours.

In these kind of ways the project is shedding new light on the conditions of co-existence in multi-ethnic urban spaces.

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The Research Council
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UNIVERSITY OF AGDER



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Kingston University London