

Chapter 6

Journalistic Values and Challenges in Colombia, Bangladesh, Tunisia and Norway

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It was when the head of the police department said he could not guarantee my safety that I understood I had to leave. I had to go somewhere else because in Colombia I was going to get killed for what I had written (Interviewee 57).

Today this journalist is back in Colombia, always followed by two bodyguards. In Norway, a female journalist states the following: 'I can work freely. I can write whatever I want' (Interviewee 23). These two journalists do indeed live in very different societies. Still, they have the same profession. One can but wonder if they base their work on the same set of values and have the same thoughts that give meaning to their journalism?

There is a 'widely shared understanding of key theories and methods' (Deuze 2005:442) in journalism that is recognized worldwide, although some researchers do find more differences than similarities among reporters around the globe. Core values in journalism are connected to the role of journalism in society as well as to the way journalists carry out their work. For instance, Deuze finds that journalists worldwide share a sense of being ethical (ibid).

In this chapter, I look into some of the values that are important to journalists in Colombia, Bangladesh, Tunisia and Norway. The last three are the countries in the *Shared Horizons* project, but I have chosen to also include Colombia, which is considered one of the most dangerous countries for journalists in South America. This is a part of the world where journalists find freedom of the press challenged every day, and by including Colombia I hope to broaden the perspective.

My aim is to examine the mindset of journalists in four very different countries in order to find their core values. Furthermore, I examine the challenges they face. Consequently, my research questions are: What values are important to journalists in the four countries? What challenges do they experience? To what degree do they experience limitations in their ability to work according to their core values?

The examined countries

Why these four countries? Colombia and Bangladesh are considered by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) two of the most deadly countries for journalists. Tunisia is considered challenging while Norway is deemed safe (CPJ 2015). These four countries on four different continents will hopefully give us an understanding of the values of journalists around the world. First, I start with some background information about Colombia (Bangladesh, Tunisia and Norway are all described in chapter 2).

Colombia is number eight on CPJ's list of the world's most deadly countries (ibid), and this makes it the most dangerous country for journalists in the Spanish-speaking world. 'While security in Colombia has improved in recent years, impunity is entrenched and threats and violence against journalists continue', CPJ states (ibid). Cases like that of Flor Alba Núñez Vargas, a Colombian journalist who was killed in front of her radio station in Huila on 10 September 2015, show that Colombia still is a dangerous country for journalists. President Juan Manuel Santos and the rebel group, The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), have been negotiating a peace treaty for years. On 24 November 2016 a revised peace treaty was signed after the first one was rejected by the Colombian people (BBC News 2016).

Even though they were negotiating the peace treaty in 2015, that year is described by the Federation for a Free Press (FLIP) in Colombia as a very violent year for journalists (FLIP 2016). 232 Colombian journalists were attacked in some way in 2015, and five were killed (ibid).

Bangladesh is number 14 on the CPJ's list of the deadliest countries for journalists. In 2015 there were five confirmed killings of journalists in the country. One example is freelancer and blogger Niloy Neel, who was killed on 7 August when at least four assailants entered his home in Dhaka and hacked him to death with sharp weapons. Neel had just defended minority rights and criticized Islamic extremists when the murder took place (Daily Star 2015; see chapter 10).

In Tunisia only one journalist has been killed since CPJ started compiling their reports in 1992. Even though Tunisia is not as dangerous as Colombia and Bangladesh, CPJ describe the situation in the country as 'challenging'. 'Hard-earned press freedom in Tunisia is under threat as journalists are squeezed between violent extremists and security services sensitive to criticism in the wake of deadly terror attacks', the organisation concludes (CPJ 2015). New legislation and security forces that legally harass and assault journalists are among the factors that make the work of journalists in Tunisia a challenge.

CPJ has not made a specific report on Norway, where no journalists have been killed due to their work since 1992, when CPJ started making their lists. At the same time, research done by Trond Idås and Kjetil Stormark shows that some Norwegian journalists experience threats and violence (Jensen 2013). A survey answered by 3,697 journalists and 218 editors shows that every third journalist has felt threatened in the last five years, while 100 have experienced violence.

Reporters sans Frontières (RSF) has a Press Freedom Index (RSF 2016), where the countries on the top are the ones with the best conditions for press freedom. Norway is number three on the index, beaten only by Finland and the Netherlands. Tunisia is number 96 on this list, Colombia 134 and Bangladesh 144.

Methodology

The qualitative interviews with journalists in Colombia, Bangladesh, Tunisia and Norway give extensive insights into their ways of thinking. The interviews in Bangladesh, Tunisia and Norway are part of the *Shared Horizons* project (see appendices), while I have done the interviews from Colombia as a separate project.¹

There is a total of 36 interviews with journalists – ten from Bangladesh, eight from Tunisia, eight from Norway and ten from Colombia. 15 of the interviewees are female and 21 male. All interviews were done face to face. The advantage of using qualitative interviews is that the researcher can test her own theories and hypotheses through the interviews (Østbye 2007:98).

The interview guides from the *Shared Horizons* project and the project in Colombia are slightly different. The interviews in Colombia probed the interviewees' journalistic values and asked to what extent they were able to actually work according to these values. Whereas also the interviews made in Bangladesh, Tunisia and Norway focused on core values, there were only a few questions about the interviewees' journalistic work.

For security reasons, and because we wanted them to speak freely without thinking about possible consequences, the interviewees are anonymous. The Bangladeshi interviewees are numbered 9 to 18, the Tunisians 31 to 38 and the Norwegians 39 to 47. The Colombians were given the numbers 48 to 56.

As part of the *Shared Horizons* research a survey was sent to journalism students in the three countries (see appendices). The students were asked two open-ended questions: 'What kind of limitations on press freedom exists in your country?' and 'Describe how you find the situation for freedom of expression in your country'. 406 students responded (which implies a response rate of 68 per cent), and I will use some of the answers in this chapter.

I have systematized the Colombian interviewees' answers and the answers from the open-ended questions in the survey so they can be compared and analysed.

Theoretical approach to journalistic values

According to Mark Deuze, journalistic values have been built up over time, especially through education (Deuze 2005:444). In this chapter, I will examine some of the values that are important to journalists in the four countries.

Through the World of Journalism project, Hanitzsch and international researchers (2016) investigated journalistic culture in 66 countries, including Colombia, Bangladesh and Norway. The findings indicate that detachment, non-involvement, providing political information to the public and monitoring the government are considered essential all over the world. Previously, Hanitzsch had found that journalists in developing countries were more in favour of advocacy journalism, promoting religion, ideas and views than their Western peers (Hanitzsch 2011:287).

Robie writes that journalists in Pacific countries, unlike journalists in the Western world, have a need to contribute to the democratization of the region (Robie 2013:105). On the other hand, a survey done in Bangladesh in 2006 (Ramaprada & Rahman 2006:1) indicates that Bangladeshi journalists consider libertarian functions more important than development functions, but that there is a gap between perceived importance and actual practice. Furthermore, journalists from non-Western countries tend to be more interventionist, with more flexible ethical views than Western journalists (Hanitzsch 2016).

Deuze (2005) discovered that many journalistic values are appreciated in different parts of the world. These include public service, objectivity, autonomy, immediacy and a feeling of ethics (ibid:447). Deuze is critical to the objectivity ideal, and writes that Western research often deems it to be unachievable. (Compare with chapter 3, where it was found that Norwegian students consider objectivity a hard ideal to live up to, while journalism students in Tunisia and Bangladesh think that one, as a journalist, has to be objective.)

In a survey of journalism students in 22 countries, Splichal and Sparks (1994:179) found a striking similarity in the wish to be independent and autonomous. However, several researchers claim that societies around the world are so different that it seems impossible to compare journalistic values (Hanitzsch 2011:368). It is hard to picture the same values (and especially the same working conditions), in counties engulfed in war and conflict as opposed to peaceful Western countries. The theory is based on the fact that journalists transnationally do possess some similar values, but that it might be hard to actually make a comparison.

Barry James, a Paris-based reporter and editor, states in a report by UNESCO that a safe environment for journalists is essential to a democracy (James 2007). 'The deaths, tragic as they are, are only the tip of the iceberg because they create a climate of fear and self-censorship that makes investigative journalism difficult, if not impossible', he writes (ibid:8). James also maintains that it is the responsibility of the government in every country to protect journalists and optimize their working conditions. 'Every journalist killed or neutralized by terror is an observer less of the human condition. Every attack distorts reality by creating a climate of fear and self-censorship' (ibid:7).

Core values

Interviewees in all four countries talk about autonomy as one of their most important journalistic values – that their work is not to be influenced by anyone but themselves (Deuze 2005). One of the interviewees in Colombia wants journalists to be free so they can reflect, investigate and search, without any control or censorship: ‘The ideal journalism is journalism only controlled by the journalist’ (Interviewee 52). In Bangladesh, one interviewee worries that journalists will not be able to work freely in the future. He is afraid that they will need to engage in self-censorship, concluding ‘that will be the end of journalism’ (Interviewee 13).

Even though interviewees from all four countries want to work independently, they do emphasize different values as well. Norwegian journalists, for example, stress especially that journalism needs to be accurate and they strive towards a journalism that is as balanced as possible. ‘I think journalists have a great social responsibility when it comes to providing the public with the right information’, a journalist from Norway says (Interviewee 42). Another Norwegian journalist regards scrutinizing those in power as an important task:

To challenge power is the main task, and it is also a social mission. When the citizens are reading newspapers, listening to radio, reading online newspapers, watching television, they have an expectation that those in power are being examined, and then you display what you have found, the citizens nod and think that it is a good thing (Interviewee 39).

In common with the Norwegian interviewees, the Colombian journalists relish being a watchdog in society. ‘I want to examine those in power, to uncover power abuse’, one states (Interviewee 51). Another asserts: ‘Journalists should be critical, uncover what those in power try to hide’ (Interviewee 48).

While journalists in Bangladesh also want to act as watchdogs, the most important role for them seems to be to inform the public. ‘I think informing those who do not know is the most important contribution of journalism’ (Interviewee 17). In Tunisia the interviewees do not refer to the desire to be a watchdog at all. Instead, all interviewees talk about informing and reporting on the correct facts as the most important task. As one of the Tunisian interviewees state: ‘The most important function is to inform the general public’ (Interviewee 33).

Deuze mentions autonomy, a sense of public service and the watchdog function as important journalistic values (Deuze 2005:446). Another value that Deuze stresses, the feeling of immediacy, is also important for the interviewees. While this may be the case, journalists from all four countries agree that it is more important to publish something that is accurate than to publish it quickly. ‘I try to verify the information until the last moment, even during broadcasting the news programme. If I simply fail to verify it, I will not diffuse it’ (Interviewee 33). ‘I would rather report on something

true than report on something fast', as one of the Colombian interviewees puts it (Interviewee 50). A Bangladeshi interviewee agrees:

I think there is no way to avoid cross checking in advance of deadlines. The work of reporting has to be divided in such a way that cross checking can be finished in time. Uncertain information should be avoided. It is not journalism to disseminate information without cross checking (Interviewee 15).

To journalists in all four countries, it is important to report the truth and to know that the facts they publish are correct. One Tunisian interviewee says he wants to be neutral and objective but not critical: 'Being neutral in reporting means to give pure information, without personal interpretations or criticisms' (Interviewee 33). Norwegian journalists, on the other hand, state that they strive to be as neutral as possible, but this is an impossible value to live up to. In a similar vein, Colombian interviewees state that they would like to be neutral, although 'one cannot be completely neutral' (Interviewee 50).

When talking about their journalistic values – about how they want journalism to be – most interviewees always have a 'but'. I will now look into some of the reasons for this realism.

Detachment and non-involvement

Even though the interviewees from all four countries want to work freely, it is evidently not the reality for all of them. Hanitzsch found that journalists in most countries around the world find it a challenge to monitor the government (Hanitzsch 2016).

In Colombia, *Semana* is one of the biggest newspapers. It is well known for its investigative journalism, and it is the only newspaper in the country with its own group of investigative reporters. At the same time, these reporters cannot write whatever they want. Interviewee 55 explains the situation in Colombia like this: All the big media outlets are a hundred per cent owned by powerful people who can dictate what the editors publish. The media owners often have links to politics – *Semana*, for example, is owned by the Santos family, the family of President Juan Manuel Santos. Hence, it will not be possible for the journalists in the newspaper to write anything critical about the president.

In addition, the editors are often given guidelines by the owners on what to publish. This is direct censorship, and something that easily drives the journalists to self-censorship. 'The journalists self-censor, they know what they can write and what cannot be mentioned, and that is why journalism in Colombia is not free' (Interviewee 49). One Colombian interviewee says that if he had a corruption case on a politician, he could not publish it. That is why he cannot do his work as well as he wants to (Interviewee 51).

Research on the Colombian newspaper *El Tiempo*, in 2009, found that the uneasy situation in the country made it dangerous to do critical journalism (Díaz 2009:138).

Journalism balances between publishing and holding back information, the report concluded (ibid). At the same time, *El Tiempo* and other big newspapers play an essential role in forming the population's perception of politics and important values in society. To put it in other words – those who control the media also control reality and the people.

Another interviewee wants to be critical towards the government and protect people from the abuse of power, but realizes this is just a dream. 'Censorship is so common that, in Colombia, it is impossible to be a watchdog' (Interviewee 56). I find the same tendency in Bangladesh.

A kind of indirect censorship has emerged as the biggest threat to the practice of journalism in the country in recent years. In many cases, if the content of the media goes against the power-holders, those media are closed down (Interviewee 17).

Rahman finds that during the three last decades many examples of investigative journalism have been seen in the Bangladeshi newspapers (Rahman 2014:5). Most investigative reports, Rahman states, seem to be the result of the individual efforts of reporters (ibid:9). As noted above, journalists in Bangladesh often value independence, but there is a gap between its perceived importance and actual practice (Ramapada & Rahman 2006:1)

Sadly, the same kind of observations that we find in Bangladesh and Colombia are also in evidence among the Tunisian journalists: 'Journalism is threatened by political interference and power. Power is always looking for alternative ways to control journalism' (Interviewee 35). At the same time, the professionalization of the profession might improve Tunisian journalism. As a matter of fact, in 2013 the Tunisian journalism education institution, IPSI, became the first in the Arab world to introduce investigative journalism to master students.

The Norwegian journalists do not feel censored. 'Norwegian journalism and freedom of press is not under pressure', one Norwegian journalist states (Interviewee 39). In Norway investigative journalism is highly valued as a core function of journalism, and in the Ethical Code of Practice for the Press it is actually stated that journalists should 'uncover and disclose matters, which ought to be subjected to criticism' (Norsk Presseforbund 2015:1.4). However, concerns have been raised as budgets have been cut, and according to Warmedal (Warmedal & Hjeltnes 2012) this has decreased the focus on investigative journalism.

Threats and violence – everywhere but in Norway

In April 2016 the Bangladeshi journalist, Xulhaz Mannan, was stabbed to death at his home. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ 2015) the murder was due to his work as a senior editor at the gay rights magazine, *Roopbaan*.

Threats against journalists are common in Bangladesh. 'We have to be careful what questions we ask, so we self-censor. If you ask the wrong question you could easily be

threatened' (Interviewee 13). The picture for Colombia is very much the same: 'If you write stories that different groups do not like, it is easy for them to threaten you. By doing so they can control our society, they do it by spreading fear' (Interviewee 57).

In Tunisia, journalists are to some extent under threat as they are squeezed between violent extremists and a security service sensitive to criticism. 'While Islamist militants threaten the media, the government introduces restrictive legislation and security forces legally harass and even assault journalists', CPJ observes (2015). One journalist sees threats as preventing journalists from fulfilling their role: 'A journalist who wants to expose corruption will be interrupted with bribes or violent threats' (Interviewee 31).

In Norway, in contrast, none of the interviewees report receiving direct threats. Here the risk is less direct and, obviously, of a smaller magnitude. As one of the interviewees put it: 'One rarely risks one's life and health in Norway by publishing a critical story, but one could, for instance, lose access to sources' (Interviewee 43).

In a society where journalists expect threats, they may protect themselves through self-censorship. According to my findings, journalists who have not been directly exposed to violence or threats still tend to self-censor in societies where violence or threats are common. This is what Barry James warned about – that threats and violence create a climate of fear and self-censorship that makes investigative journalism difficult, if not impossible (James 2007).

Another aspect that might affect journalists is corruption, as alluded to by interviewees in both Colombia and Bangladesh: 'There are not only corrupt powers that want to censor the media and control the editors, there are also journalists who are corrupted, who get paid to report on different stories', a Colombian journalist says (Interviewee 48). The Bangladeshi respondents in the survey observe the same feature and one of them states: 'In our country the press is corrupted seriously' (Respondent 178). Such 'internal' corruption is not mentioned in either Tunisia or Norway, but a challenge that is emphasized by a number of Tunisian students is the lack of access to information. 'The main limitation of the freedom of the press is the difficulty in accessing information' (Respondent 243).

Deuze is clear on the fact that for a journalist to feel successful there has to be freedom of the press and journalists have to feel protected against censorship (Deuze 2005:449). So, in Colombia, Bangladesh and Tunisia, is there a press freedom to talk of?

Freedom of the press

As seen above, Bangladeshi, Colombian and Tunisian journalists' report that they engage in self-censorship and some of them also feel censored by people in power. In 2011, a committee appointed by the Minister of Culture examined the responsibility of the press in Norway. In their report freedom of the press was defined as the right to publish without being affected by outside interests (Medieansvarsutvalget 2011:17).

Thus, while freedom of speech applies to anyone, freedom of the press protects the media from owners and governments.

In Colombia, one interviewee agrees with this definition. Because owners and the government manipulate journalism in Colombia, he concludes that Colombia does not have press freedom (Interviewee 51). Another Colombian emphasizes that it is important for journalists to work freely – that journalists should be autonomous. For her, freedom of the press means having a lot of different media outlets. ‘There are good journalists, and there is a lot of good journalistic work being done,’ she says. ‘It is also, to a certain extent, possible to work freely, even though the freedom has its limitations’ (Interviewee 50).

In our survey, journalism students in Bangladesh, Tunisia and Norway responded to an open-ended question that asked them to list the limitations on press freedom in their country. ‘Political pressure, lack of journalist skills, pressure from the capitalist society,’ one Bangladeshi student answered (Respondent 1). Another Bangladeshi describes press freedom as a fantasy unrelated to reality (Respondent 7). As exemplified in the following quote, some of the students also point at the differences between theory and practice: ‘In my country we have press freedom, but we have some limitations on the press such as corruption, media policy, government oppression’ (Respondent 15).

How can there be freedom of the press if corruption and government oppression affect journalists’ work? According to Hanitzsch, one of the challenges with comparing journalistic values in different nations is contrasting interpretations of terminology (Hanitzsch 2011:287). Also, as we have seen, informing and reporting correct facts are particularly important values for journalists in Bangladesh and Tunisia. This might explain why some journalists in these countries believe they have press freedom and can work freely although they face some challenges.

Some of the Tunisian students say things have changed following the revolution of 2011, and that conditions have improved over the past few years. However, that the situation is still problematic becomes apparent in the following quote: ‘Press freedom is allowed until it is going against the government or the media owners’ (Respondent 140). Another interviewee is more optimistic and points to the fact that new voices are being heard after the revolution: ‘Freedom of the press in Tunisia has been strengthened significantly after the revolution. The proof of that is that minorities live with us and share their ideas on various occasions without being assaulted or intercepted’ (Interviewee 38).

In Norway, students seem to agree on the fact that press freedom exists. At the same time, Norwegian students do see some challenges. The pressure for consensus in Norwegian society is seen as one such challenge:

Not everyone has the opportunity to express their opinions. I think that we, to a high degree, censor opinions at the extreme ends of both sides of the debate, for example when it comes to debates on immigration (Respondent 306).

The media are sometimes being criticized for being too elite-oriented. The day after the 2016 US election when Donald Trump won, Reidun Kjelling Nybø, the assistant

general secretary of The Association of Norwegian Editors, invited media outlets to look at their coverage of both Brexit and the US election, as both results came as a complete surprise to them (Johannessen et al. 2016). She asks to what degree the Norwegian media have distanced themselves from regular citizens.

Moreover, in Norway there seems to be another problem, which is also mentioned in the other countries – economic challenges posed by new media structures.

Economic pressure

A Bangladeshi journalist describes the following situation:

I would say the corporate effect is a big threat not only for Bangladeshi journalism but also for the whole world's journalism. Once upon a time the corporate organizations had some social responsibilities. But now they are buying and commercializing even the content of news like a giant (Interviewee 7).

This situation seems relevant in all four countries. Media outlets striving to give their owners the profit they want struggle economically. The economic recession following the financial crisis has made cuts necessary in media organizations all over the world, and this affects journalistic activity (Medieansvarsutvalget 2011:17). Syvertsen et al. identify 'potential disruptions related to digitalization, globalization and fragmentation', and point out how these changes, among other implications, cause challenges to media structures (Syvertsen et al. 2016:19).

In Colombia, Tunisia and Bangladesh salaries are low, and the following two Tunisian interviewees highlight the conditions that journalists work under: 'Tunisian journalists are specifically threatened by the bad material situation and a very low standard of living' (Interviewee 33). The other says, 'Tunisian journalists suffer from being under-paid, under-equipped and under-staffed' (Interviewee 34).

In Norway big budget cuts are taking place in most media outlets, which means fewer and fewer journalists are required to produce the same amount of content. A Norwegian journalist working for one of the country's biggest newspapers remarks: 'I would say that there is a declining focus on investigative journalism or that fewer resources are put into this' (Interviewee 40).

Over the last 10 years all the largest media outlets in Norway have made swingeing budget cuts. In particular the transformation from traditional printed media to digital media has led to hefty losses in income (Warmedal & Hjeltnes 2012:41). 'Not enough people are permanently employed so few journalists have the chance to be truly good. I think that is rather restrictive for journalism', one of the Norwegian interviewees says (Interviewee 40).

Helje Solberg, news editor at the Norwegian daily paper *Verdens Gang*, believes that convergence and digital developments will strengthen journalism, and she states, 'Because of the Internet we now have access to thousands of valuable sources' (Solberg

2012:255). Digital developments are seen as the future also among the interviewees from the developing countries. ‘We use social media for freedom of expression,’ one Bangladeshi journalism student says (Respondent 36). In Colombia, some journalists have established critical online newspapers. *Verdad Abierta*, which means ‘open reality’, is one of them. An aim of *Verdad Abierta* is to be an alternative to the traditional media outlets:

This is free journalism; we can write whatever we want. There are clearly challenges with this as well, but I think we can make something more interesting, more investigative. I think we can be better journalists without all the limitations our society creates for us now (Interviewee 51).

In Bangladesh bloggers get threats, and in Tunisia bloggers and social media contributed to the Arab Spring. At the same time, journalism students in these two countries fear that bloggers might ruin balanced and professional journalism. One respondent worries that politicians and people in power may restrict press freedom because of uneducated bloggers who push ethical limits. ‘Lack of journalistic skills are a threat to the freedom of the press’ (Respondent 1).

Watchdog or advocacy? How to relate to power

In Colombia there is a tradition of respecting people in powerful positions. ‘It is not a part of Colombian culture to hold the people with power accountable for their mistakes’ (Interviewee 54). The interviewee saying this also claims that this makes his work as a watchdog difficult. He is drawn between wanting to be a watchdog and recognising that his readers might be upset if he is too critical of powerful people. ‘This makes the task of protecting the weak in society hard’, he adds. Another Colombian interviewee says that the work of a journalist in a developing country is different to that of their counterpart in an industrialized country: ‘The development that European countries have experienced through the last two hundred years, we have not experienced. We are experiencing this now. We are doing well, but it takes time to change a society’ (Interviewee 56).

In his view the British magazine *The Economist* is the ideal newspaper. This is because it is critical and presents every case from all angles. ‘For Colombian journalism to be like journalism in the western world, the society has to be like Western societies’, he says.

That social reality affects how different journalistic values are being prioritized and conceived has been pointed out in previous research. Robie, for example, claims that journalists in developing countries often have a challenge reconciling the views of passive groups in society with those of people seeking change (Robie 2013:1). And, as seen above, Hanitzsch maintains that journalists in developing countries, to a larger degree than Western journalists, have a tendency to promote ideas. Journalists

in developing countries are more inclined to use advocacy in order to develop their societies (Hanitzsch 2016).

Colombian, Tunisian and Bangladeshi interviewees highlight this tendency. 'In my opinion', one Tunisian says, 'journalists of underdeveloped countries must not be neutral. They must commit themselves to defend their legal rights' (Interviewee 34). Another affirms: 'Journalism is a double-edged sword. You can both build a healthy society or you can disturb public order' (Interviewee 36). A Bangladeshi interviewee admits that he would not report on a case if it might cause harm:

If I write anything as a journalist that violates the religion and there may be indiscipline in society, considering the consequence of the news, I will choose respect for religion because I will not want to create an unstable situation in the society through my freedom of speech (Interviewee 5).

I find that journalists set different goals for their work according to their society. Limits of the freedom of expression are not the same everywhere – they are marked by the cultural and social context (Carlsson 2016:11). Also, instability in Colombian, Bangladeshi or Tunisian society would probably lead to bigger problems, such as loss of human life, than it would in Norway. Consequently, to a Norwegian journalist it is natural to state, 'As a journalist, you should be a watchdog, not a helper' (Interviewee 39).

Conclusion

Journalistic values are the values that give meaning to journalistic work (Deuze 2005:444). For journalists in Colombia, Bangladesh, Tunisia and Norway, autonomy and reporting the truth are important values, whereas the watchdog role is an important value especially for interviewees in Colombia and Norway. In Bangladesh and Tunisia, on the other hand, journalists find that objectivity and the function of informing the public are their core values.

In Colombia and Bangladesh, corruption, threats and powerful people or groups affect journalistic work. Most of our interviewees in these two countries state that they cannot work as they wish – they are censored or they self-censor. Also our Tunisian interviewees are aware of self-censorship, and independent journalism is under pressure, both from the government and powerful owners of media outlets.

In contrast, in Norway the journalists did not identify concrete threats affecting their ability to work freely, although, for sure, also Norwegian journalists face some challenges. Moreover, in the developing countries, to a larger extent than in Norway, journalists have a tendency to promote ideas and thoughts that can move society forwards.

To conclude, I would say that journalists in the four countries have some common core values, and some that are different. We see that there are challenges in all countries, and that the journalists' values and their ability to work according to them are

affected by different factors. Freedom of the press has to be fought for, and it seems the more challenges there are in a society, the harder it is for journalists to work in accordance with their values.

Note

1. I would like to thank the *Shared Horizons* researcher for the material they have provided me with.

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