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Terrorism in “European” News: What Role for Translation Studies?

This process of coming to see other human beings as “one of us” rather than as “them” is a matter of detailed descriptions of what unfamiliar people are like and of redescription of what we ourselves are like. This is a task not for theory but for genres such as ethnography, *the journalist’s report*, the comic book, the docudrama, and, especially, the novel.

(Rorty 1989: xvi; qtd. in Maitland 2017: Fol. 103; my emphasis
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The presence of terrorism in contemporary societies and the related debates on immigration, integration, security, (counter)terrorism, Islam, and Muslims make the present study highly topical. The attacks of September 11, 2001 generated a wealth of scholarship in these areas. Scholarly and journalistic works alike also affirm that the 9/11 attacks were a kind of watershed moment¹ leading to the normalization of anti-Muslim discourse in the social, political, and media arenas (see, for example, Ahmed and Matthes 2017; Bielsa and Hughes 2009; Birkenstein, Froula, and Randell 2010; Burchardt and Michalowski 2015; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Qasmiyeh 2010; Ogan, Willnat Pennington, and Bashir 2014). The propensity of “media discourse” in particular to construct “meanings and identities of Muslims as the ‘others’ in liberal societies” (Ahmed and Matthes 2017: 235) has become more pronounced. The negative views and actions of the public are apparently widespread: A YouGov poll of British adults found that those who believe that “there is a fundamental clash between Islam and the values of British society” ranged from 44 percent to 59 percent between January 2015 and June 2017.² A survey of UK school children conducted by the charity Show Racism the Red Card in 2015 found that 35 percent of respondents “agreed or partly agreed” with the statement “Muslims are taking over England,” and estimated the percentage of Muslims in the UK population

to be 36 percent, whereas the 2011 census showed this figure to be under 5 percent.³ Statistics from the Metropolitan Police⁴ show that Islamophobic hate crime is very prevalent.

Moreover, according to Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Qasmiyeh (2010: 310), as Europe grapples with the migrant “crisis” and terrorism, “religion has increasingly become a tool used by the media and politicians as a common denominator underlying new policies and the trans/formation of public opinion” in the UK and in Europe more generally. In the media, “Muslim migrants,” in particular, “are largely presented as a threat to *national cultures* (Hussain 2007),” whatever that might mean (Ahmed and Matthes 2017: 234, my emphasis). “Most have found these media stances to obstruct societal integration of Muslim immigrants” (Ahmed and Matthes 2017: 234). In sum, the media participates in a discourse of “Us” *versus* “Them” that contributes to the polarization of communities and societies. If we observe in detail how journalistic language contributes to such a stance, we can perhaps learn how to counter it.

The fact that the event in Nice was qualified as a terrorist attack very early on in the news cycle is important for this study. As Freedman puts it,

Terrorism has long been described as a ‘symbolic act’ (Thornton 1964: 73) ... Terrorism, therefore, has to be made to mean, and who better to ‘interpret’ these life-changing events ... than storytellers, mythmakers, media people, journalists? Symbol makers have a unique ability to shape the political agenda by organising the discursive frameworks through which the public comes to understand acts of violence. (Freedman 2017: 211)

It is essential to point out here that the terrorism that is “made to mean” in the European press is above all terrorism that happens *in Europe* and other so-called Western countries. Terrorism in other countries gets vastly less press. Take Nigeria: As Freedman (2017) and Owunna (2015) point out, during the same week as the Charlie Hebdo attacks, the terrorist organization Boko Haram killed more than 2,000 people in Borno State. The Charlie Hebdo events “generated more than 50 times more news stories worldwide”. Why is this important? Because violent attacks that take place in the West and are reported upon in the West take on huge significance for the Western reading public, whereas the vast majority (some estimations say up to 99.5 percent) of terror attacks actually occur in non-Western countries and the vast majority of the victims of terror around the world are Muslim. Indeed, just five countries—Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Syria—experience the majority of terrorist acts and deaths from terrorism. Thus, according to the most recent figures from the Global Terrorism Index (Institute for Economics & Peace 2019), Afghanistan, which “has replaced

Iraq as the country most affected by terrorism," saw a 59 percent increase "in terrorism deaths to 7,379 in 2018," and has seen a 631 percent increase in such deaths since 2008 (2). In stark contrast, Europe and the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region "recorded the biggest *improvement* in the impact of terrorism, with the number of deaths falling by 70 percent and 65 percent respectively" (2; my emphasis).

The fact that there is no agreed international definition of terrorism—as of 2019, the UN had spent nineteen years working on one, to no avail—means that there is all the more room for interpretation. Price (2017: 166) criticizes the fact that "the working definition of (post-9/11) terrorism, circulated by the public authorities of 'advanced' states, emphasizes certain political characteristics at the expense of other modes of interpretation," a state of affairs which led authorities and the media to avoid labeling the Germanwings crash, for instance, in which a pilot deliberately crashed his aircraft, killing all 149 people aboard, as terrorism: "the Germanwings crash of 2015 was not described as an act of terrorism, because it was not the consequence of belief-driven activities" (168). Perhaps a larger part of the explanation than the author overtly admits, however, is that "the problem lies with the tendency to amplify the cases of anyone who has an apparent affiliation with 'Islamist doctrine'" (167). In the case in question here, however, such affiliation was not unequivocally *apparent*. It was certainly not in the attacker's *background*.⁵ But Tunisian-born Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel, the man responsible for the attack in Nice, was neither white nor European. I aim to demonstrate that some of the tendencies in the linguistic, and in particular, stylistic, choices made by journalists covering the event were influenced by this fact.

Indeed, in the present study, the "Other" constitutes French society, but also Muslims or those perceived as Muslim. Why be so concerned with Muslims and Islam here? After all, I am simply studying an event that was labeled a terrorist attack. It is because my early perusal of the news about the attack suggested that the reporting might be another example of the way that terrorism and Muslims/Islam are constantly conflated in the media (see, for instance, Ahmed and Matthes (2017); Baker, Gabrielatos, and McEnery (2013); Birkenstein, Froula, and Randell (2010); Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Qasmiyeh (2010); Khiabany and Williamson (2012); Ogan et al. (2014); Piquer Martí (2015); Rane, Ewart, and Martinkus (2014)). According to the *Observatorio de la Islamofobia en los Medios*, the majority of the Spanish Press is Islamophobic.⁶ The British media's Islamophobic reporting is being blamed for the recent increase in hate crimes against Muslims (Versi 2016a). While there is little research on Islamophobia

in the news of the *Suisse romande*, I wondered whether it would be less present there by virtue of the fact that the regional government and media tend center-left. Indeed, in their study of the intersections between Islamophobia, media coverage, and political ideology in Europe and the United States, Ogan et al. (2014) found that negative attitudes toward Islam and Muslims “strongly and consistently” correlated with “political conservatism” in both regions, while political liberals saw them in a less negative light (40). In her article about the discourse surrounding Islam in French and Spanish news, Bugnot (2012: 988) observes that in multiple Spanish news sources, “the emphasis is ... placed on France’s significant Muslim population, the largest in Europe.” In Chapter 4, we will see that in European news, the emphasis is still present, is often negative, and contributes once again to conflating Islam/Muslims and terrorism; and we will see many examples of how this transpires. These processes are part of media’s “othering”; how journalistic style contributes to such “othering,” however, has not been sufficiently examined up to now.

Translation Studies and, in particular, news translation and translation criticism provide useful concepts and approaches for exploring the role of stylistic features in the news: news translation, because it conceptualizes both journalist and translator as “cultural mediators”; translation criticism, because it draws extensively on comparative stylistics and involves close textual analysis. Translation Studies have also begun broadening the definition of translation, for example, by considering cultural representation as translation (Maitland, 2017) or incorporating theories of cosmopolitanism (Bielsa, 2016a, 2016b, 2018), irrespective of whether interlingual translation (from one language to another) is involved. Where news analysis is concerned, I find the conception of translation as cultural representation, coupled with empirical analysis of style, to be more compelling than, for example, Baker’s (2006) focus on narrative strategies, because stylistic choices are the building blocks of those strategies. Therefore, in the subsequent sections, I defend the chosen approaches and conceptualizations and combine them with media research on “making terrorism mean” (Freedman 2017: 211), including the frequent conflation of terror and Muslims/Islam, to justify stylistic analysis. I also demonstrate that discrepancies between news outlets’ guiding principles and journalistic practice prove that such analysis is necessary.

Piquer Martí (2015) enumerates and describes a number of discursive strategies employed by the Spanish written news (they are certainly more widespread): (1) “the tendentious selection of topics” (142); (2) photographs (especially when photos from the archive are employed completely out of

context); (3) euphemisms; (4) metaphors; (5) headlines. I would argue that she also implicitly includes two further discursive strategies: (6) the tendentious selection of voices, and (7) neologisms.⁷ Such strategies often tend toward evaluation rather than simple recounting:

The media construct the figure of the immigrant using an evaluative vocabulary, that is, a non-neutral language that has a significant capacity to influence the opinions of readers and to shape their vision of reality. (Crespo Fernández 2008: 48) (148)

Thus evaluations, often conveyed through the choice of connoted over neutral language, are employed in news texts, despite the ostensible goal of most journalists (as attested by most newspapers' guidelines) to be "objective." In addition, the limiting of topics to, and the use of the vocabulary of, violence and conflict when Muslims or Islam are the topic "shapes readers' image" of the Muslim collective (also a tendentious concept) "as a dangerous social group" (Piquer Martí 2015: 142). As we will see, this is one way in which news about Muslims feeds "a discourse of fear" (142). At the same time, "toned down" language, such as euphemism, can also be "indirectly discriminatory" (148). For instance, Piquer Martí discusses an example from *El País* in which a writer who was actually known for being racist and xenophobic was simply described as "critical" (148).

Another contributor to the discourse of fear is the tendentious focus on "jihad" and related terms. Cembrero (2016: 160) observes that both the Qur'an and the concept of jihad which is defined and addressed in it have generated many interpretations and much debate, including among scholars and theologians. For example, for some, there are ten occurrences that are linked with violence; for others, there are just three. Cembrero explains that the term also has a "spiritual meaning," that of improving the self as one follows the path chosen by Allah (2016: 234). For the author Tarek Osman, it means "exerting the soul against one's sins/weaknesses" (personal communication). He is among those who maintain that there are just three instances of jihad in the Qur'an that are linked to violence, but unlike Piquer Martí or the *Guardian* guidelines (see below), he maintains that the distinction between a "major" and "minor" jihad was only made much later by philosophers, and is not really useful.

The easy adoption and simplification of the term by "the West," in most cases without knowing much about Islam or having ever read (a translation of) the Qur'an, are therefore questionable at best. Nevertheless, as Piquer Martí demonstrates with examples from the Spanish press, it uses *ḡihād* frequently

without ever explaining what the term means *to a Muslim*. For instance, in a 2013 news article, a *La Razón* journalist discussing a manual drafted by Al-Qaeda “takes the liberty of adding in parentheses, after the words *yihad individual*, his own definition: ‘criminal actions undertaken alone.’” While this may be a “minority group’s (Al-Qaeda)” interpretation, it is “radically different from the meaning that the majority of Muslims attribute” to the same term. “The press has transformed the term *jihad* into a synonym of *Islamic terror*” (148; emphasis in the original).

In a similar vein, the press sometimes creates extremely insidious neologisms; Piquer Martí (2015) highlights those of *Londonistán*, used in an *El País* article in 2013 that portrayed London as a “jihadist paradise” (146), and *Eurabia* in *La Razón*, used to convey the supposed threat of a Muslim invasion of Europe. Such choices are all the more insidious for the way they are sometimes combined with images. The *El País* text, biased enough on its own, is accompanied by a photograph devoid of any context, in which a Muslim man appears, praying on a rug on the ground, [supposedly] on a street. Because the image is not contextualized, one can have no idea if this particular man is in London, or if he has been radicalized; nevertheless, the association between Muslims praying, extremism, terrorism, and threats to public safety, is clearly made (146–7). In an article about France in *La Razón*—note the name of the paper, “Reason”—a picture of an armed soldier flanked by an injured man, coupled with the text, effectively conflates in a hugely misleading—one can go so far as to say dishonest—manner, French action in Mali (where the photo was actually taken) with the *internal* effort of expelling radical Imams (the topic of the article) (147). Regarding images, Piquer Martí adds that the ones chosen from the archive often show traits reflecting “physical difference (for example, the Arab style of dress) or scenes of poverty and violence,” which only reinforce “existing stereotypes of Islam and Muslims” (146).

Another discursive strategy discussed by Piquer Martí (2015: 151–2) is that of selecting who is heard (and, by extension, who is silenced). The press selects not only what and how, but who. Often, a partial and stereotypical image of “the immigrant” and “the Muslim” is provided; in addition, a voice is most often given to radical Islam rather than to ordinary members of Muslim communities, so that Muslims, whom society already considers “other,” come to be seen as not only different, but dangerous. Moreover, in practice, information selection and the choice to give a voice, in the “Us” group, only to people and bodies of power, silence the dominated, silence certain social groups, “silence immigrants in general and Arabs, Muslims, in

particular" (152). El-Madkouri Maataoui and Taibi (2006: 134) also discuss multiple ways the press effectively silences these groups.

Finally, on the topic of headlines, Piquer Martí provides various examples of glaringly derogatory and sensationalistic ones. She also discusses work by Granados Martínez (2006: 61), who found that "the headlines of Spanish newspapers insist on identifying foreigners and, what's more, quantifying them in terms denoting invasion, occupation, etc." (Piquer Martí 2015: 153). Indeed (and here she cites Granados Martínez directly), when foreigners are "news," they are such because they

cause disturbances in the neighborhoods where they live and in the places where they gather, both in the eyes of neighbors and in the eyes of local authorities. They are news because experts and political officials consider or predict that presence to be an invasion that Spanish society will have a hard time digesting. (Granados Martínez 2006: 63; qtd. in Piquer Martí 2015: 153–4)

The above has presented means of engaging in cultural (mis)representation. The next section argues that those who re-present other cultures are engaging in translation, even if there is no direct passage from one language to another.

Cultural Representation As/Is Translation

Translation Studies no longer conceives of translation predominantly as interlingual transfer and allows for conceptualizing translation as *the transfer of culture*. The burgeoning sub-discipline of news translation has played an important role in enlarging the definition (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009; Bielsa and Hughes 2009; Conway 2005, 2012, 2015; Davier 2013, 2015, 2017; Schäffner 2012; Schäffner and Bassnett 2010; Valdeón 2007, 2010; Van Doorslaer 2010a, 2010b, 2012), and in tracing the linguistic and cultural influences of cross-cultural communication (see, for example, Brownlie 2010; Conway 2010, 2012; Davier 2013, 2015, 2017; Davier and Conway 2019; Hernández Guerrero 2010; McLaughlin 2011; Muñoz-Calvo and Buesa-Gómez 2010; Valdeón 2007). In her analysis of English-language newspaper reporting on the 2007 French elections, Brownlie (2010: 32) uses "translation" in part to mean "explaining and communicating events from one cultural and political sphere to another." Conway's (2012) study of a Canadian website that presented stories about Muslim women, academics dealing with issues of secularism or immigrant communities, and an advocacy group, published in the series *Derrière le voile* by

Radio-Canada, understands “these stories as acts of *cultural translation*” (1001; emphasis in the original).

Thus, the role of translation in its contemporary, broader sense is to “provid[e] the means for the articulation of cultures and intercultural interchange” (Sousa Ribeiro 2004). What, then, is culture? The *Oxford English Dictionary* online (2017) defines culture as “[t]he distinctive ideas, customs, social behaviour, products, or way of life of a particular nation, society, people, or period. [...]” Culture is what *distinguishes* one group from another. Does this mean that it naturally engages in othering?

Not necessarily. If we, or those who provide us with information, engage in cultural translation, othering can be overcome. Maitland’s (2017) “approach to cultural translation is interested in the ethical dilemmas posed when texts, human actions and human productions exercise power over people”; it is valid and valuable, I argue, to think in her terms about the writing of journalists who inform us about cultural “Others.” According to Maitland’s conception, all of the elements of the world that we encounter and seek to understand are source texts, and anyone who engages with them is a translator. In the situation at hand, this of course includes journalists, *a fortiori* when they are reporting on an event—and therefore, indirectly, also on a population and a society—abroad. According to Maitland, who also draws significantly on Ricœur, “the process of cultural translation starts with a demand to *understand*” in the face of the “realization that others exist and that they construct the world differently.” As we struggle—successfully or not—to understand, the process allows us to “start to view the identity of groups, cultures, people and nations not as immutable substances or as fixed structures to be accepted *or* rejected, but instead as ‘recounted stories’ from which we would receive a sense of ‘narrative’ identity which is,” in fact, “mobile.” Accepting the storied nature of identity means “we renounce the idea of a fixed ‘truth’ and with it the implacability of the ideologies by which we organize our realities.” At the same time, the ethical issue at stake is that the translator, in the broader sense of the term, must achieve a delicate balance: “to navigate our anxieties of otherness by making difference accessible while also protecting the ‘other’ from appropriation.” Moreover, translation produces “‘representations’ of otherness and, as Tymoczko warns, participates in a process in which the self-same representations ‘come to function as reality.’” Therefore, translating others comes with risk and responsibility, and can also result in cultural mistranslation.

Maitland also emphasizes the ability of translation to serve as a critique of ideology. This requires that agents of translation be interpreting subjects, that

they demonstrate that their view is not the only one, and that they demonstrate why their view better merits belief. In the context of news writing, this would involve, for instance, allowing conflicting interpretations to be presented and digested, for example, through balanced and contextualized reporting. But to be effective, that is, to achieve cultural translation rather than cultural mistranslation, education and critical thinking on the part of both journalists and news readers are required, not least because "[m]apping the unfamiliar other out in terms we already recognise risks simply reproducing what we know while ignoring their specificities – which ... often constitutes an act of (colonial) violence" (Hodgson 2018). In a similar vein, Kapsaskis (2019: 4) points out that the creative appropriation required for cultural translation to occur could turn out to be not only "emancipatory," but a means of achieving "the 'wrong' goals (e.g., racist or oppressive)." "This point is particularly relevant at the current political juncture when a culture war rhetoric is increasingly being used to steer the discussion away from real issues and progressive policies, in many parts of the world" (4), and when certain minorities are being reductively and stereotypically defined as problematic, backward, and dangerous.

The Journalist as Intercultural Mediator

Enter the journalist-as-translator. D'hulst et al. (2014: 1255) place both within the category of cultural mediator, that is, "a person active across linguistic, artistic and geographical borders and as the carrier of cultural transfers." I understand journalists to be intercultural mediators upon whom it is incumbent to "optimize communication between cultures" (Chesterman 1995: 149). However, some would argue that this is more easily said than done. As Valdeón (2009: 149; also quoted in van Doorslaer 2012: 1051) observes, journalistic reporting is "heavily influenced ... by the national narratives of the writers, which permeate the events themselves and offer domestic perspectives of European and world issues." Indeed, articles are necessarily shaped by journalists' backgrounds, experiences, and worldviews, as well as multiple external factors including information sources, time pressures, "the editorial conventions and policies of the media, ... the expectations of the readership" (Valdeón 2018: 7), "real world developments, cultural norms," the political leanings of the newspaper, and "each side's skills at frame promotion" (Canel 2012: 221). At the same time, the media are expected to act as guarantors of "the right to true, just and contextualized information" (Piquer Martí 2015: 138). As we will see, the guidelines set out for journalists convey the same message. Importantly for the present study, this

right “also extends to citizens who belong to minority cultures such as, in this case, Muslims” (138).

With the above in mind, cosmopolitanism provides a useful perspective from which to examine foreign news. Defined as openness to the other, the cosmopolitan outlook is constructive and positive, as it both relies upon and fosters engagement with the foreign. Second, and importantly for someone coming from the discipline of Translation Studies, cosmopolitanism is

the product of a view of translation that implies much more than the linguistic transfer of information from one language to the other, appealing rather to an experience which mobilises our relationship to others as well as our conception of ourselves. Cosmopolitanism, understood in these terms, comes very close to a conception of translation that challenges translation as [linguistic] transfer. It puts in the centre, a view of translation as the experience of the foreign. (Bielsa 2016a: 144–5)

Can we hope for news to become more cosmopolitan?

As we have seen, many studies have found that, instead, journalists often engage in “othering” (Allan, [2010] 2014) and sometimes both rely on and perpetuate prejudices, in particular where foreign countries, Muslims, and Islam are concerned (e.g., Brownlie 2010; Bugnot 2012; Kelly 1997, 1998; Ogan et al. 2014; Piquer Martí 2015; Rane, Ewart, and Martinkus 2014). Investigating journalistic style sheds light on *how* this occurs⁸ and it may, in turn, encourage reflection and changes in practice. The work on cultural translation (Maitland 2017) and cosmopolitanism (Bielsa 2016a, 2016b, 2018) discussed above has demonstrated the value of considering media output as a means for readers to engage with the foreign.

As her audience’s interlocutor, as a purveyor of cultural knowledge, all the more so when writing about an “other” culture, and as the author of an interpretation of events, the journalist wields a certain power. In deciding who is interviewed or not, who is quoted or not, what information is included or left out, how thoroughly that information is verified, as well as in making linguistic choices which will convey images, connotations, judgments, suggestions, and so on, journalists simultaneously reflect and contribute to shaping cultural debate, public opinion, and even politics and policy. This is not to ignore other agents who wield power (government or media magnates, for example). As Conway (2010: 202) points out, “[w]hile individual journalists might not be responsible for the system of transformations under which they operate, that system and the power relations that shape it do have an influence on the stories they produce.”

In addition, "the effects of media power are cumulative, working through the repetition of particular ways of handling causality and agency, particular ways of positioning the reader" (Fairclough 1989: 54), that is, of framing events. It is in part by investigating such strategies and their prevalence that we can better understand the media's influence.

News as Narrative

Terrorism is doubly symbolic: first, because it is perpetrated for political ends and to elicit reactions—in particular, fear (Freedman 2017, p. 211); second, because the word stands in for other ideas and/or becomes inextricably tied to them in various types of discourses. Because it is symbolic, and because there is no clear, internationally agreed legal—not to mention moral—definition of "terrorism" (Kundnani 2017; Warsi [2017] 2018), it "has to be *made to mean*" (Freedman 2017, p. 211; emphasis in the original), and indeed, within the definitional void, uses (or telling instances where the term is avoided) of the term—not to mention consequences—proliferate, whether in everyday discourse, law and its application, the political sphere or, importantly for this study, the media.

Freedman (2017: 211) groups journalists with "storytellers, mythmakers," and other "[s]ymbol makers," observing that they "have a unique ability to shape the political agenda by organising the discursive frameworks through which the public comes to understand acts of violence." Terrorism is thus an event which is interpreted, rather than simply an act or a fact. Muslims and Islam, because they are commonly conflated with terrorism, are therefore also rendered symbolic. I will discuss the notions of event and interpretation further now.

According to Eyerman, individual happenings become events "[t]hrough a dialectic of actions and interpretation. Actions occur in time and space, events unfold" (note the metaphor) and become meaningful "in the interplay between protagonists, interpreters and audience, as ... meaning is attributed and various interpretations compete with each other" (Eyerman 2008: 22; also qtd. in Titley 2017: 5). Put otherwise, the process of imbuing a happening with meaning constitutes a "struggle" during which, eventually, "various accounts stabilize, with perhaps one achieving some kind of hegemony, but counter interpretations or stories may continue to exist alongside" (Titley 2017: 5).

The Nice attack was an event in this sense, and also because in the process of meaning-making, it was associated with other terrorist acts. The *Guardian* article that I have labeled TG9 shows this linkage clearly in the first phrase of its

headline: “From Charlie Hebdo to Bastille Day.” Indeed, the Nice attack is part of an “event chain” that may include, depending upon the journalist, readership and context of publication, the Charlie Hebdo events, but also the Bataclan attacks, the killing of a priest in Normandy, or the actions of Mohammed Merah in 2012, in France; 7/7 (the London bombings of summer 2005), the killing of a British soldier on the streets of London in 2013, the recent Westminster Bridge and Manchester attacks, among others, in the UK; 9/11, for these and many other national contexts.

The journalist, then, does not simply hold up a mirror to a happening to “show” it objectively and transparently, but rather constructs and conveys her interpretation of that happening (which thus becomes an event). She does not provide “the truth,” but rather begins or continues a narrative. Importantly for this study, if she reports on an event occurring abroad, her reporting has, as we saw in the discussion of Maitland’s (2017) approach to cultural translation above, a particular translational dimension, not only because of the “transediting” (Schäffner 2012; Stetting 1989) activities likely to be implicated in such work, but also because when she narrates or re-presents events taking place abroad, she also re-presents, to some degree, the country, culture, and population in question. While she may not currently be required—nor, many would argue, have the time—to engage in all the aspects of “ethical reflection” Maitland (2017) describes, one might hope that she would; some would argue that the lack of such reflection has contributed to the current, so-called “crisis” in journalism and a prevalent lack of trust in the news.

News texts are frequently discussed and analyzed in terms of framing. However, as the title of this book indicates, I will look instead at stylistic features. Why? Such features are situated at a more micro level than framing, so how significant can they really be? They are generally considered key aspects of literary texts, not pragmatic texts, not least because they are what makes a text an “aesthetic object,” in which form is at least as important as content and the “interrelation” of the two is what gives the text meaning (Culler 1997: 33). And yet, to ask how journalistic texts “make terrorism mean” (Freedman 2017: 211) is to ask, as one does for literary texts, “about the contribution of its parts to the effect of the whole” (Culler 1997: 33). Like literary texts, journalistic texts create meaning through the use of evocative language. Journalism studies have sometimes recognized the key form-content relationship in such texts, with Ettema (2012 [2010], 296) even asserting that “the formal features of news, as much as (or more than) its content, are a source of whatever socio-cultural authority that journalism retains.”

Similarly to Culler (1997) on literary texts, then, Ettema goes so far as to suggest that the aesthetic/stylistic features of the text are one source of the power the journalist wields. They are also the result of free choice. They are marked; they are remarkable. They have effects upon the interpretations that readers are likely to construct (Hewson 2011). In other words, I will argue, they are a non-negligible aspect of "making terrorism mean" (Freedman 2017: 211). Furthermore, stylistic features of news texts have been under-researched up to now, with a few notable recent exceptions—primarily involving metaphor, but mainly in financial/economic journalistic texts (see, for example, Ravazzolo 2017; Schäffner 2014).

Another key exception, where reporting on Islam and Muslims specifically is concerned, is identified by Piquer Martí (2015: 149–50): the frequent use of two types of metaphor, which also serve to sensationalize: natural disaster metaphor and war metaphor. The first type often involves "waves," and evokes "chaos, the uncontrollable" (149); an example of the second type that the author provides is that of describing the increase in numbers of Muslim residents in cities as a "time bomb" (150), a discursive choice which also claims a relationship of cause and effect between this demographic change, on the one hand, and the risk of a rise in "radicalization" and violence, on the other.

Clearly, there is a "narrative aspect of identity" (Grievies 2012: 15), and in the case of Muslims, journalists have told a predominantly negative story up to now. This is part of the violence of being rendered symbolic. In Chapter 4, we will see how this process plays out in the present corpus.

Terrorism as "Crisis"

Irrespective of the controversy surrounding violent attacks of the past few years, including those that occurred in France in 2015 and 2016, reporting on them qualifies as what is commonly called crisis communication. Indeed, according to Canel (2012) and Canel and Sanders (2010), terrorist attacks can be considered cases of crisis communication, as they involve risk and uncertainty, "an important communication dimension, and ... the reputation of organizations" (Canel 2012, p. 215).

I argue for the use of this label while also remaining fully cognizant of Zelizer's (2015) novel and convincing arguments that problematize the very term "crisis." Although she predominantly criticizes the recent trend of talking about the "crisis in journalism," her definitions and her position are also important to think about with respect to reporting on a violent event abroad. Crisis is

“[c]haracterized by some combination of perceived suddenness, disruption, urgency, loss, and the need for external assistance in order to offset helplessness and reach recovery” and thus “seems to possess an extended set of attributes” (Zelizer, 2015: 890). It is a point where “a sense of challenge looms so large that it takes over” (888). Uncertainty is a key aspect of the crisis moment, which it is in our nature to try to minimize and combat:

In Bauman’s words (Bauman and Bordoni 2014: 7), when discussing “crisis of whatever nature ... we convey first the feeling of uncertainty, of our ignorance of the direction to which the affairs are about to turn—and secondly the urge to intervene.” (Zelizer 2015: 890)

Indeed, although there are various definitions and points of view on what “crisis” encompasses, “at the heart of most perspectives is the aspiration that one can reach its other side” (890).

Nevertheless, what I am concerned with here is a type of crisis *communication*, that is, the journalistic reporting that occurs, urgently, in the context of violent attacks. Whether or not these events and their ongoing nature *should* be termed crises, for the moment, they *are*. Moreover, Zelizer’s critique reminds us of the power the press wields in its role as crisis communicator: “Though crisis is a phenomenon with material dimensions—factories close, people die, infrastructures collapse—it is shaped too by discourse: We name it, we flesh out its details with words, we give it identity through comparison and analogy and metaphor” (Zelizer 2015: 892).

Zelizer’s analysis also gives insight into how the press may play a better role in crisis communication. One way is by questioning that “extended set of attributes”:

[E]ach of them is easily debatable when probed closely: Is a crisis that ensues following long periods of neglect as sudden as we make it out to be? Why is disruption more deserving of attention than what precedes it? Do environments without the capacity to learn through mistakes or problems escape discussion about crisis? What precisely is so attractive about the promise of a noncrisis moment? These questions, and others, begin to hint at how partial and precarious the idea of crisis may in fact be. (Zelizer 2015: 890)

With regard to terrorism reporting specifically, Philip Seib (2017) highlights related questions that he believes the media is failing to ask as it reports on terrorist attacks:

[I]t became clear that for all the breathless headlines about IS-inspired terror attacks, many know little about the complexities of terrorism and Islam. Who

are these people who murder so wantonly? Why do they do it? And, most importantly, how might such attacks be stopped?

Journalists can and should ask key questions like Zelizer and Seib’s about terror-related events and about how they themselves approach reporting on such events. If they do so, they will be more likely to fulfill their role as cultural mediators. Particularly valuable is the idea that focusing on a violent moment or event may mask the fact that it was not really so sudden and impossible to predict, that previous conditions of “neglect” (890), negligence, excess, or other (societal) trends may have actually set up the current moment. In addition, as Zelizer herself highlights, they need to think carefully about the intricacies of their language, and its likely effects. Finally, while a crisis is often seen as something having gone wrong, as a problem to be solved, Zelizer points out that it can actually be a very productive moment.

“Bringing the Story Home”

Before moving on to the section on journalistic principles and guidelines, I would simply like to highlight one other characteristic of news about violence abroad that is mentioned in the literature and also present in my corpus: the strategy used by many journalists of “bringing the story home” (Cottle [2011] 2012; Freedman 2017), that is, tying it to the experience of the domestic audience so as to make it more relevant for them. As we will see in the results of the corpus analysis, this can have at least two key effects: encouraging a heightened feeling of fear and sense of threat, and portraying the home country as superior (Kelly 1998; Riggs 2019b).

Journalistic Principles and Guidelines

In analyzing the news that journalists produce, it is important to take into account the principles and guidelines that underpin—or are supposed to underpin—their work. McBride and Rosenstiel (2014) present the journalistic principles drafted by The Poynter Institute⁹ (United States) in the 1990s and widely accepted as core values, and then propose their new set of principles, which build on the preceding ones to “meld the core values of journalism with the democratic values of the digital era” (2). The original Guiding Principles for Journalists revolved around three key concepts—Truthfulness, Independence, and Minimize Harm—and were organized as follows:

1. Seek truth and report it as fully as possible.

- Inform yourself continuously so you can in turn inform, engage and educate the public in a clear and compelling way on significant issues.
- Be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting accurate information.
- Give voice to the voiceless.
- Hold the powerful accountable.

2. Act independently.

- Guard vigorously the essential stewardship role a free press plays in an open society.
- Seek out and disseminate competing perspectives without being unduly influenced by those who would use their power position counter to the public interest.
- Remain free of associations and activities that may compromise your integrity or damage your credibility.
- Recognize that good ethical decisions require individual responsibility enriched by collaborative efforts.

3. Minimize harm.

- Be compassionate for those affected by your actions.
- Treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect, not merely as means to your journalistic ends.
- Recognize that gathering and reporting information may cause harm or discomfort, but balance those negatives by choosing alternatives that maximize your goal of truth telling. (McBride and Rosenstiel 2014: 3–4)

The authors go on to present and comment on their revised version. “Where we once argued for independence, we now advocate transparency. Independence is part of that principle” (4). They see this move as a stronger guarantee of principled actions and accountability, another key principle, on the part of journalists. In addition, they re-envision the principle of minimizing harm as one of “engaging community” (5). Thus, minimizing harm goes along with “a promise to act in the interests of informing a community and upholding democracy,” as well as “acknowledging that community itself has a substantial ability”—and also a right, as was underscored at the 2019 Conference of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) in Madrid—“to contribute to the conversation.” They consider that these values elevate “respect for the

community" and, in turn, "guide us toward an ethic of diversity" (5). Importantly for the present study, they also maintain that such values lessen "the temptation to manipulate through fear and sensationalism" (5).

The code of principles of the International Federation of Journalists¹⁰ formulates similar requirements related to accuracy, avoidance of harm, and discrimination:

"3. The journalist shall report only in accordance with facts of which he/she knows the origin."

"5. The journalist shall do the utmost to rectify any published information which is found to be harmfully inaccurate."

"7. The journalist shall be aware of the danger of discrimination being furthered by the media, and shall do the utmost to avoid facilitating such discrimination based on, among other things, race, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinions, and national or social origins." Let us now look at how these principles are reflected in the guidelines of the newspapers in the corpus studied here.

The Guardian

The *Guardian's* Editorial Guidelines¹¹ reproduce the Press Complaints Commission's (PCC) Code of Practice. This body has been replaced by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO; see section "Regulation of News Outlets" below). The opening summary of the Guidelines immediately addresses concerns related to transparency, albeit in other words: "our most important currency is trust." The Code also states that journalists are responsible for protecting the newspaper's reputation for independence. Among the instructions related to accuracy in the Code are (1) "[t]he Press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information, including pictures"; and (2) "[t]he Press, whilst free to be partisan, must distinguish clearly between comment, conjecture and fact." In a similar vein, the guidelines stipulate that

If you are employed as a columnist—with your views openly on display—you may have more latitude than a staff reporter, who would be expected to bring qualities of objectivity to their work. (*The Washington Post's* Code has some sound advice: "Reporters should make every effort to remain in the audience, to stay off the stage, to report the news, not to make the news.")

The *Guardian* quotes a similar, left-leaning news source from another country, the United States, to reinforce its point. Moreover, a paragraph specifically devoted to race states:

In general, we do not publish someone's race or ethnic background or religion unless that information is pertinent to the story. We do not report the race of criminal suspects unless their ethnic background is part of a description that seeks to identify them or is an important part of the story (for example, if the crime was a hate crime).

Finally, the document stipulates that “[i]t is essential that an agreed code be honoured not only to the letter but in the full spirit.” The analysis below will show that this is not always the case in practice. Interestingly, unlike some of the other news sources (see below), the document stipulates that the guidelines do not “form part of a journalist’s contract of employment, nor ... of disciplinary, promotional or recruitment procedures.” Nevertheless, adherence to the Code is part of the terms of employment.

The *Guardian*’s Style Guide¹² addresses potentially contentious terms. For example, definitions are given for, and distinctions made between, “jihad,” “jihadi,” and “jihadists.” The document indicates that the noun “jihad” is “[u]sed by Muslims to describe three different kinds of struggle: an individual’s internal struggle to live out the Muslim faith as well as possible; the struggle to build a good Muslim society; and the struggle to defend Islam, with force if necessary.” “Jihadi” is a noun or adjective which journalists should “[o]nly use ... in the most general sense to apply to a Muslim pursuing jihad, in particular the first two kinds of struggle. *If referring to the third struggle, jihadist is preferable*” (my emphasis). The final term is defined as a noun or adjective referring to

[a] person who believes in jihadism, ie, the fundamentalist pursuit of violent jihads to defend the Islamic faith. It can be used to refer to members of formal organisations, such as Islamic State or al-Qaida, as well as those who are not. For example, *the Charlie Hebdo killers or Woolwich murderers would be referred to as jihadist terrorists*. (my emphasis)

Where available, the guidelines for problematic terms in the style guides or comparable documents of the other newspapers in the corpus are included below.

The Telegraph

Unlike the *Guardian*, the *Telegraph* is officially regulated by IPSO (see section “Regulation’ of News Outlets”). The newspaper provides its journalists with

Editorial and Commercial Guidelines¹³ based on that body's Editor's Code and includes a direct link to the full Code on the webpage. The Guidelines underscore the newspaper's "commitment to integrity" as well as "the core journalistic values of accuracy, fairness and fearless reporting in the public interest." On accuracy, the *Telegraph* webpage states, "The Editors' Code of Practice administered by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) stipulates that the press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information." The page also briefly addresses independence, transparency, and "enforcing these guidelines," a process which does not go beyond the internal level. However, the guiding principles do "form an ongoing part of training for all staff." In line with the fact that *Telegraph* content is behind a paywall, the content of the guidelines is, as the title indicates, bound up with commercial and financial situations. For instance, in the section on transparency, the webpage maintains that

[i]t is perfectly proper for journalists to write content that is paid for commercially, provided that it is clearly marked as such. In undertaking such tasks, journalists should do nothing to compromise their ability to write for our audience objectively, fairly and honestly.

Contrary to the *Guardian*, the *Telegraph's* style book¹⁴ includes no entry for "jihad" or any derivative.

Le Temps

Information about the editorial guidelines of *Le Temps* states that they constitute an "integral part of the contract that binds the publisher and each journalist at *Le Temps*"¹⁵ (3), and interns must also respect them. The guidelines insist on the need to "distinguish fact from commentary" (4) and written content from advertising content. The document states that *Le Temps* strives to uphold "liberal values," but this seems to be closely connected to economics, as its own wording suggests: it seeks to uphold "the principles of the market economy" (5). That said, among the seven causes it has chosen to uphold are the climate, and an "inclusive economy" (10). Article 4.5 states explicitly that the newspaper respects and defends the French language and will therefore avoid using Anglicisms.

Le Courrier

Here is a rare instance where stipulations about editorial principles are readily available on the homepage of the newspaper's website; in the case of *Le Courrier*, a link to the *charte rédactionnelle* (editorial guidelines) is the first one under

the rubric “About Us.” According to these guidelines,¹⁶ the newspaper is based on a “humanist vision” which includes defending “the poor and disadvantaged” and “encouraging dialogue among religions and between the religious and non-religious,” for example. It also clearly states that it is not always neutral: it takes positions on different issues when this is justified, without being politically partisan. Journalistic independence is paramount, it says; at the same time, it clearly emphasizes that “independence does not mean neutrality.” Nor does it mean engaging in “partisan politics,” however. The guidelines lay out the details of how the newspaper guarantees neutrality. One key aspect is that the editorial team of the newspaper and the overarching body in charge of it, the nonprofit organization *Nouvelle Association du Courrier* (NAC), are separate, although the former sends delegates to represent it at meetings of the latter. The Association of Readers of *Le Courrier* and some individuals are members of the NAC, demonstrating the importance and weight of public opinion. All members of the NAC must sign the guidelines, and they are appended to *Le Courrier* journalists’ contracts.

La Tribune de Genève

No information about ethical principles or style is readily available, and my e-mail and telephone queries were unsuccessful.

El País

In the voluminous style guide (*El País* 2014: 32) of the newspaper, Chapter 1 is entitled “Ethical Principles.” Key points in its “Treatment of Information” subsection include: “rumors are not news”; “the journalist provides his/her readers with information that has been verified, and avoids including personal opinions with this information”; “when content has not been sufficiently verified, the writer will avoid expressions such as ‘apparently,’ ‘it could be [that],’ ‘cannot be ruled out,’ or similar formulations unless supporting data is included.” In the vocabulary section, the entry on “jihad” (*yihad*) is as follows: “In Arabic, ‘holy war’. Should not be used without explanation of its meaning or if the context does not make its meaning clear” (528). The vocabulary section defines “Muslim” (*musulmán*) as “A person who professes Islam. Is not a synonym of Arab or Moor” (409).

Referring to the 2002 version of the guidelines, Piquer Martí (2015: 146) notes the warning that journalists should be “extremely careful when publishing

archive photos ... journalists and editors must make sure that as they are taken out of their original context, any illustrations inserted do not harm the image of the people who appear in them" (146). We saw earlier in this chapter that the newspaper does not always conform to its own recommendations.

Piquer Martí (2015) also underscored the fact that headlines are another significant and powerful discursive strategy, as they grab the reader's attention and help her decide whether to read an article. It is not surprising, then, that the Style Guide "devotes a section to this issue. The first two paragraphs include the following recommendations: 'Headlines are the prime element of information. They serve to attract the attention of the reader and impose their content upon him/her'; and 'Headlines must be unambiguous, concrete, accessible to all readers and devoid of any kind of sensationalism'" (Piquer Martí 2015: 153). However, such headlines as "¡Que le corten la cabeza!" (Off with His Head!) or "La ira del Bin Laden birmano" (The Fury of the Burmese Bin Laden) or "Vuelve el fantasma de Londonistán" (The Spectre of Londonistan Returns), appearing, as Piquer Martí points out, in the self-same newspaper in 2013, certainly do not appear to have followed these instructions.

El Mundo

According to an e-mail response I received from *El Mundo*, no new edition of the style guide has been issued since 1996. In this guide, it is Chapter 8 that addresses professional ethics. The opening paragraph indicates in bold that morality and democracy "are the foundations of journalism" (105). It immediately discusses the origins of this position:

From 1644, the year *Aeropagitica* by John Milton was published with the subtitle *For the liberty of unlicenc'd printing*, freedom of the press was the constant—albeit often disrespected—slogan of democratic development in England and, later, in the rest of the world. Its enshrining in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution is an as yet unsurpassed legal milestone. While everything that is published [in the press], except that which directly falls under crimes such as calumny, libel or defamation, should be defended according to the principles of freedom of the press, not everything that is published is journalism. This activity is distinctive not only for its freedom, but also because it comes with a civil responsibility. (106)

In addition, the Style Guide cites the Statutes of the Editorial Board and the Federation of Press Associations as effective modes of autoregulation (106; also see sections "'Regulation' of News Outlets" of this chapter and "(Regulatory)

Bodies with Teeth?” of Chapter 6). Journalists and editors have voluntarily signed up to the latter, and this requires them to respect the ethical code set out by the organization, on both a personal and a moral level. In the Style Guide, it is argued that coercive and binding legal limitations are not the answer to regulation as they can easily end up threatening press freedom, not to mention the type and quality of information that the public receives (106). The text also highlights *El Mundo*’s policy of publishing “the most critical opinions of the newspaper itself expressed by its readers” (106) and its dedication “to publishing everything that is newsworthy and unquestionably relevant to the public” (110).

Moreover, *El Mundo*’s Style Guide includes specific instructions regarding attitudes to minorities. Among its “ideological principles” is the following: “*El Mundo* is particularly sensitive to the rights of minorities” (117). Specifically,

pejorative statements about ethnicities, religions or specific groups are prohibited, and particular vigilance must be used in cases in which content that is not ostensibly racist would end up proving so in the context, for example, specifying that prisoners are ‘gypsies’ or ‘Moroccan’ in cases where the origin of those involved is as irrelevant as if they were from Aragon, blond, or Adventists. (111)

Other foundational principles include “The aim of *El Mundo* is to be a progressive newspaper” (117), and “press independence, objectivity, rigor and the non-manipulation of content are basic objectives of the Editorial Board of *El Mundo* and the fundamental rights of its readers” (118). On terminology, the Guide provides the following definitions. “*Yihad*: In Arabic, ‘holy war’. Should be written in italics. Should not be used without explaining its meaning in parentheses” (297); “Muslim: person who professes Islamism. May or may not be Arab” (252).

The above sections show that newspaper principles and guidelines, while they may differ on some points, emphasize accuracy, independence, and avoidance of sensationalism and discrimination; and that the sources do not always follow recommendations. The following section provides some brief indications about how media in the UK, Switzerland, and Spain are regulated.

“Regulation” of News Outlets

The press industry believes strongly that it should be allowed to self-regulate, and democratic governments are typically reluctant to impose reforms or other

forms of regulation for fear of being accused of limiting press freedom. This phenomenon was particularly pronounced in Spain in the twentieth century, as the development of the sector followed a history of dictatorship and change of regime, and the country subsequently defended democratic principles fiercely in various sectors. In the area of media regulation and accountability, various categories of media accountability instruments (MAIs) exist, and they have developed enormously over the last two decades in conjunction with the rapid and far-reaching changes that have taken place in the media sector. Two distinctions can be made, between "journalism-internal and journalism-external MAIs on the one hand," and "institutionalised and non-institutionalised MAIs on the other hand" (Eberwein, Fengler, and Karmasin 2019: 6). As the terms indicate, "media actors" may be held to account by "traditional institutions within the journalistic profession" (6) (press councils, ombudspersons, and codes of ethics, for instance) or by external bodies "such as media research" organizations, "NGOs or viewer/user associations" (6). However, Miranda and Camponez (2019) pinpoint the inadequacy of such categories with their critique of the frequently used category of self-regulation, which would appear to echo the "journalism-internal" mode of regulation. Indeed, according to the authors, the functioning of the UK PCC (also see below), often "presented in the literature as a system of journalism self-regulation," shows that the notions of "self-" and "journalism-internal" regulation "can ultimately be applied to describe arrangements that do not include direct intervention or the representation of journalists" (19).

The idea that regulation in the UK qualifies as "journalism-internal" "self-regulation" is faulty for another reason: according to Ramsay and Moore (2019: 85), the press sector in the UK is characterized by "the existence of powerful and coordinated industry representative bodies dominated by proprietorial interests, and a culture of close contact between political parties, governments and newspaper groups." The authors explain that these issues are behind a long history of failures on the part of the industry to improve self-regulation. For instance, when the Calcutt Report of 1990 called for the establishment of a PCC and also set a deadline for its creation, the press industry "disbanded its self-regulator and set up the PCC" (86), but the new organization was accompanied by a funding body "through which the industry exercised extensive powers over the self-regulator" (86–7), and in reality, the new system respected few of the Calcutt recommendations. Most recently, in the aftermath of the Leveson Inquiry, the recommendations were again largely ignored.

That inquiry began because “large sections of the press” (87) were engaging in illegal activity by breaching existing data protection legislation, in particular during the so-called *News of the World* Scandal. When the Information Commissioner sought “a strengthening of legal penalties to disincentivise such behaviour” (87), he was met with staunch resistance not only on the part of the press lobby, but also on the part of the PCC itself (87). As Leveson noted in his scathing critique, the body was not a regulator at all, first and foremost because it was not independent of the powerful players in, and wielding strong influence on, the industry itself (*Leveson Inquiry* 2012: 12). What little was salvaged of Leveson’s recommendations in subsequent proposals on regulation was roundly rejected by the five main publishing groups that had taken over negotiations following the Inquiry. They finally created “their own self-regulatory body to replace the Press Complaints Commission,” IPSO (Ramsay and Moore 2019: 92). These authors’ review of the scheme found that “of the 38 recommendations laid out in the Leveson Report that were directly applicable to the self-regulator, IPSO satisfied just 16” (93; Moore and Ramsay 2013: 26–40). Perhaps most significantly, “IPSO was dependent on the industry at almost every level” (Ramsay and Moore 2019: 93).

Sorsa (2019) provides more details about IPSO’s shortcomings. When it was created in 2014, it “was being entirely funded by the Regulatory Funding Company, which is dominated by a handful of national and regional publishers that write the rules which dictate what IPSO may or may not do” (Sorsa 2019: 141). In response to this, the National Union of Journalists “called for greater interaction between the public, editors and journalists in the appointment of the Code Committee” of the organization (141). Nevertheless, IPSO remains profoundly beholden to the industry as its functioning remains highly reliant on big media players. The Muslim Council of Britain (2017) and its Assistant Secretary General, who is also Executive Director of the Centre for Media Monitoring, have pointedly highlighted the inaccuracy of the adjective “independent” in the Organization’s name, given the conflicts of interest that exist due to members who are newspaper editors.

Moreover, a review of the organization, labeled “external,” was in fact set up by IPSO itself, as it “set the parameters of the review, selected and paid the reviewers, and hosts the report on its website” (Ramsay and Moore 2019: 95). As of December 2017, IPSO had “not launched a single investigation into the industry that it is supposed to regulate,” “despite evidence of patterns of reporting by IPSO members that appear to contravene the Standards Code” (95). Nor had it set up, as of 2016, a hotline that journalists could use to report

breaches of the standards (Sorsa 2019: 141). In addition, and importantly for this study, "potentially inflammatory coverage of immigrants and Muslims (Sherwood 2017)" has "been flagged by observers" in IPSO members' reporting (Ramsay and Moore 2019: 96), with, again, no investigation. Today, post-Leveson, "regulatory coverage" in the UK "is less comprehensive than it was before Leveson" (96).

Partly in response to this, another UK press regulator, IMPRESS, was established in 2016. As of autumn 2019, it regulated 131 publications, but as Sorsa (2019: 141) explains, "[i]ts members are mainly local publishers and do not currently include publishers of national publications," which suggests that its reach and influence remain limited so far. Nevertheless, it differs from IPSO in four important ways which may extend its influence in the longer term. First,

it is funded by the Independent Regulation Trust instead of the industry organisations, and is therefore free to set its own rules and a Code of Practice independently from industry intervention. Second, IMPRESS can launch an investigation when a code breach is serious *or* systemic, while breaches of both conditions are required for IPSO to launch an investigation. Third, IMPRESS appointments – from the original appointments panel to the chair, board complaints and code committee – are independent and transparent. ... Fourth, IMPRESS offers greater protection for whistleblowers, as it is not under control of the industry it is supposed to oversee. (Barnett 2016) (Sorsa 2019: 141)

As I said, IMPRESS has yet to make its mark. Moreover, as of 2017, "[t]hree legacy print publishers, covering the *Guardian*, the *Independent* and the *Financial Times*, remain outside any external system of self-regulation, and have instead instituted their own internal complaints mechanisms" (Ramsay and Moore 2019: 95). The British press remains extremely powerful and extremely under-regulated. Importantly, as the authors argue, "[t]he vulnerabilities inherent in the industry's regulatory system" also "risk further reputational damage to the principle of self-regulation," as the system fails to adequately uphold the basic principles of independence and accountability (97).

In Switzerland, the media regulation authority introduced "a semi-governmental 'Swiss model'" of regulation in 2008. It focused "on local commercial broadcasters," represented "a form of regulated self-regulation (Wyss and Keel 2009: 115; Wyss 2013: 112)" (Saner and Wyss 2019: 150), and made compulsory the establishment of an "editorial quality management system (EQMS) to obtain public funding" (Saner and Wyss 2019: 150). Saner and Wyss (151) point out that "[i]n such a co-regulatory system, the public authorities

accept that the protection of societal values can be left to self-regulatory mechanisms and codes of conduct.”

While the above appears to focus on broadcasters alone, Saner and Wyss’s study also looked at print media and presents results for this sub-sector. They found that where the development of quality policies is concerned, “the proportion in the print media ... decreased significantly” (Saner and Wyss 2019: 155) between 1998 and 2015. In terms of charters that guarantee newspapers’ editorial independence, there has also been a decline (155–6). In contrast, when they looked at ethical guidelines, they saw an “enormous and thorough increase in all types of media and in total number” (156). Both in Switzerland and in most democratic countries, “[e]thical standards and guidelines are codified by professional associations, with press councils monitoring compliance and publicly reprimanding violations of the codes of conduct” (156). Not only are such guidelines meant to aid journalists to be as ethical as possible in their professional activities, including by providing clear rules regarding “ethically sensitive decisions,” but they also exist to prevent external control (156). The researchers’ longitudinal study demonstrates, however, that in order for media organizations to actually reach the point of implementing effective forms of self-regulation, “a critical public debate and regulatory efforts are needed” so that “instruments of self-control” are properly developed and can actually become institutionalized (157). Unfortunately, the authors also observe that “[d]ue to the continuing tense economic situation of the print media, these players, in particular, are experiencing a considerable deterioration in the existence of basic editorial documents” (158). Moreover, print media allow for “institutionalized internal criticism” and agree “fewer performance targets” for journalists than their sector counterparts. Saner and Wyss (158) conclude by advocating “the extension of a government-induced EQMS regulation for newspaper newsrooms, as well as for new journalistic players on the media horizon and online media in general.” In addition, as EQMSs have been “proven to promote MAIs,” their implementation “may also have a positive effect on (perceived) journalistic quality” (158).

Development of MAIs is one of the consequences of the Leveson Inquiry, as it prompted efforts to find “alternative forms of keeping journalists and media organisations accountable for their actions” (Cheruiyot 2019: 285). Prime among these are “instruments that give a greater role to citizens (Bertrand 2000; Fengler et al. 2014).” Indeed, very recent MAIs include media journalism,¹⁷ which in our case would involve “journalism about journalism,” and social media debate and criticism. However, some very recent studies are not particularly

optimistic about the effectiveness of MAIs. Many, from scholars to researchers to practitioners, doubt the real impact of MAIs because most of them "lack the direct power to sanction any breaches of established journalistic standards" (6). Effectiveness actually varies from one country or context to another, however, as do the predominant MAIs in place.

With respect to the countries that occupy us here, we have addressed the UK; Switzerland has a national press council, whereas Spain has regional organizations (8) rather than a state regulatory body (Rodríguez-Martínez, Mauri-De los Ríos, and Fedele 2017: 61). This is part of the reason that Spanish press models also vary from region to region (Suárez-Villegas et al. 2017). As was the case for MAIs, the verdict from studies of press councils and their ethical codes (Eberwein, Fengler, and Karmasin 2019: 11–13) is often negative. For the moment, it is clear that "non-state means" of ensuring that the press fulfils its responsibility to the public are favored by the industry, as they can monitor press actions while, it is hoped, also safeguarding media independence and vitality. These days, however, the ability of such instruments to truly protect press freedom and "media plurality is often questioned," including by "media practitioners" themselves (13).

Miranda and Camponez's (2019) focus on mechanisms in which journalists *do* effectively participate provides useful information on the contexts studied here. For instance, the UK has an Ethics Council of the National Union of Journalists (EC/NUJ) whose twelve members are "nominated and elected from among the unionised journalists." In addition,

only unionised journalists may file complaints about transgressions to the NUJ's code of conduct. The EC/NUJ issues opinions on the conduct of journalists ... The council's direct sanctions involve the disclosure of decisions and warnings and it may recommend to the union's national council fines, suspension or expulsion of the offenders. (Miranda and Camponez 2019: 21)

They also note that in Spain, Catalonia has played a key role in journalism "self-regulation," establishing the first body in Spain to resemble a press council. While that organization does not solely comprise journalism professionals, the *Comisión de Arbitraje, Quejas y Deontología del Periodismo* (CAQDP), which was set up by the Spanish Press Federation of Journalists Associations in 2004 and became a foundation in 2011, "is composed only of the representatives of journalism organisations" (23). Other Spanish regulatory bodies these authors identify are the Information Council of Catalonia, and the Working Group for Defence and Professional Ethics of the Professional College of Journalists of Catalonia.

With respect to self-regulation and MAIs in the Spanish context, “leading print and broadcast media all have introduced ombudspersons since the mid-1990s, and maintained at least several of them until now” (Eberwein, Fengler, and Karmasin 2019: 9). Social media have also “emerged as an important platform for deliberation about media accountability” there (10). They certainly do not have comparable clout in Switzerland, for example (10). Social media are an example of how citizens play a role in press accountability, and this role is becoming more and more recognized and valued within the industry. Ramon, Mauri, Díaz del Campo, and Rodríguez (2019) recently presented the results of their study on “Spanish journalists’ and citizens’ perceptions of in-house traditional and innovative instruments” at the 2019 IAMCR conference in Madrid. These researchers insist on the notion of ethics and/as accountability, and consider accountability to be composed of three dimensions: transparency and self-regulation, but also audience participation. Using surveys, interviews, and focus groups in a number of Spanish regions, they looked at Spanish journalists’ perceptions of the effectiveness of MAIs used in-house, and at citizens’ knowledge of those mechanisms. The Spanish journalists clearly preferred accountability to regulation, but found the existing tools only moderately effective at best. For instance, stylebooks were considered the most effective tools, but with a score of only 5.82 out of 10. Indeed, they are valued but underutilized due to lack of time, a resource which is invaluable to journalists, but also very scarce. Furthermore, the journalists recognized that non-compliance with stylebooks is not penalized, which may explain the perceived lack of effectiveness. In addition, the researchers found differences according to age and experience: older journalists rated stylebooks and ombudspersons higher, while newcomers embraced accountability most and were more likely to find website sections such as corporate information particularly important. From the point of view of citizens, the focus groups highlighted the lack of visibility of MAIs and the need to better promote them. One approach that was suggested was to put the ethical code on the front page of print news or online news websites.

In sum, both groups were well aware that criticism is healthy. Visible, easy contact between journalists and the public is needed, and both groups recognized that this would help journalists do their jobs better. Significantly, the journalists valued reader comments, and letters to the editor in particular. That said, solutions such as chats, digital meetings, or error correction buttons were largely unfamiliar to the two groups. In the light of their findings, the researchers recommended that news outlets revise and update their MAI portfolios.

Miranda and Camponez (2019) note that the Spanish bodies whose practices they studied are better than others at taking public opinion into account. For instance, their statutes stipulate that "public representatives" who sit on the boards "must come from the areas of education, ethics, culture or law" (25; 28). Nevertheless, "sanctioning power" is "mainly of a moral nature" (28). The authors also highlight the recent efforts of Spanish journalists to "reorganise themselves into professional colleges" (32).

Finally, *El País* and *El Mundo* are both part of The Trust Project,¹⁸ whose logo appears on their websites. The Trust Project, as its own website states, is "a consortium of top news companies" that is working to develop transparency standards, called Trust Indicators, to help news consumers "easily access the quality and credibility of journalism." Trust Indicators are defined on the site as "standardized disclosures about a news organization's ethics and other standards for fairness and accuracy, a journalist's background, and the work behind a news story. Leaders from 100 news organizations" were involved in creating them. The two Spanish news sources analyzed here were among "the first to display and test the Trust Indicators."

In sum, different constellations of regulation exist in the different countries in question, including external regulation (although the label often belies the reality), self-regulation, or contribution to regulation by the public. In addition, such regulating sometimes occurs on the regional level, sometimes on the national level. Newer forms include the different types of MAIs recently developed and implemented, in particular in the wake of the Leveson Inquiry, although experts do not always agree on their effectiveness. Finally, the public needs to be made more aware of the different forms of regulation, as this will ensure accountability and foster quality reporting on the part of journalists.