

Examining the Public Sphere in Divided Societies

New perspectives and resulting
implications along the example of
Mindanao (Philippines)

TIME FOR MEDIALISATION:

Communication Research and Area Studies

08.-10. April 2010, Berlin, Hannah Neumann

Outline

1. Introduction: Why to look at Public Sphere in Divided Society?
2. Public Sphere: Concept and Challenges
3. Divided Society: Mindanao: History and Conflict
4. Connection: Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao
5. Flashlights: Civil Society initiatives

1. Introduction: Why to look at Public Sphere in Divided Society?
2. Public Sphere: Concept and Challenges
3. Divided Society: Mindanao: History and Conflict
4. Connection: Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao
5. Flashlights: Civil Society initiatives

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

3

1 Introduction: Why to look at Public Sphere in Divided Society?

TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT
ILMENAU



“The existence of a public sphere is important as it is public communication, that negotiates the constructions of reality, norms and values on which societal processes of understanding are based.”

(Pfetsch / Heft 2009: 36 translated by the author)

In divided societies “psychological and even cultural features often drive and sustain the conflict more than substantive issues.”

(Lederach 2006: 18)

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

4

1. Introduction: Why to look at Public Sphere in Divided Society?
2. Public Sphere: Concept and Challenges
3. Divided Society: Mindanao: History and Conflict
4. Connection: Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao
5. Flashlights: Civil Society initiatives

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

5

2 Public Sphere: Concept and Challenges

Mirror	Arena	Intermediary System	Discourse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public sphere: mirror of society made public Public opinion: Not being created here, maximum Agenda-Setting Function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public sphere: speakers and audience Public opinion: prevailing opinion between speakers BUT: public opinion not automatically concordant with majority opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public sphere: intermediary system with specific tasks: Transparency, Validation, Orientation Public opinion: Output of such a process: leading/orientating function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public sphere: open to all opinions and speakers, discursive Public opinion: Output of such a process, evolve argumentative pressure 
descriptive		normative	

Sources: Luhmann 2005 | Neidhardt 1994: 10 | Gerhards/Neidhardt 1990; Etzioni 1968 | Habermas 1990, 2000, 2006

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

6

2 Public Sphere: Concept and Challenges

Public Sphere (*Working definition*)

“the **space between** Government and society (...). The media are (...) the principal institutions of the public sphere (...).”

(Curran 1991 :2)

Interfering Issues: *Multi-culture / Multi-language / Political Heterogeneity*

Need to reconsider “the society”, “the government”, “the media” and therefore “the public sphere”

- Minority media
(Cottle 2000, Riggins 1993,)
- European public sphere
(Neidhardt 2006, Pletsch/Adam/Eschner 2008, Pletsch/Heft 2009)
- Public broadcasting in divided (European) societies
(Tracey 1998, Media Center Sarajevo 2008, Jusic 2004)

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

7

Outline

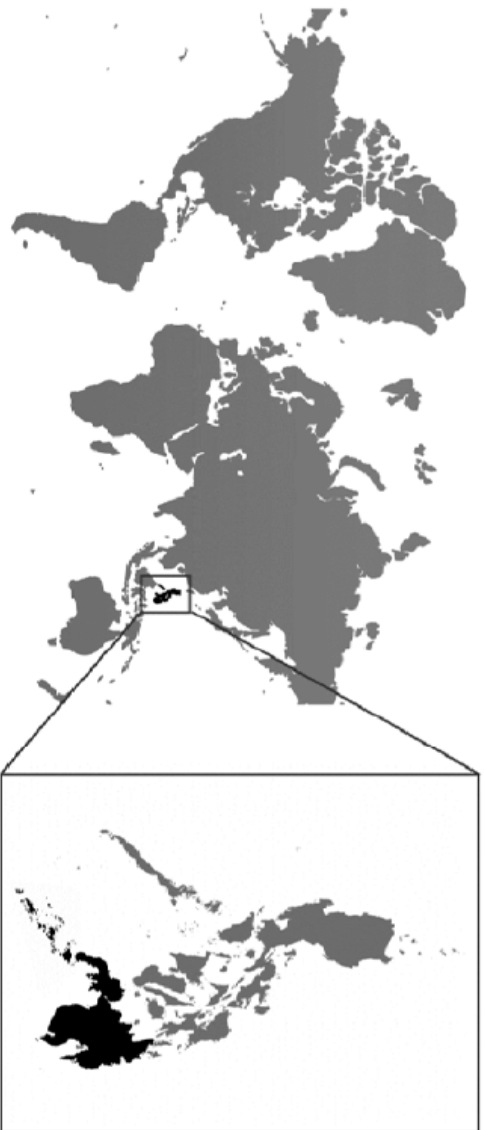
1. Introduction: Why to look at Public Sphere in Divided Society?
2. Public Sphere: Concept and Challenges
3. Divided Society: Mindanao: History and Conflict
4. Connection: Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao
5. Flashlights: Civil Society initiatives

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

8

3 Divided Society: Mindanao History and Conflict



April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

9

3 Divided Society: Mindanao History and Conflict

Philippines

Christian nation
Strong American influence
Language: Tagalog, Bisayan

Strong American and Spanish colonial
influence

Individual freedom, democracy, Catholicism
→ Symbolic exclusion of Muslims

Subsidized migration to Mindanao

One of many domestic conflicts

Mindanao

Formerly predominantly Muslim area
Strong resistance to American concepts
Language: Maguindanaon

Strong resistance to colonial concepts

Community centered, Sharia/ tradition
based, Islam / traditional religion

Marginalization of Muslims and Indigenous
(education, economy, politics...)

Central / Identity struggle for self-
determination

(Neumann 2009, 2010; Kreuzer 2005, 2006;

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

10

1. Introduction: Why to look at Public Sphere in Divided Society?
2. Public Sphere: Concept and Challenges
3. Divided Society: Mindanao: History and Conflict
4. Connection: Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao
5. Flashlights: Civil Society initiatives

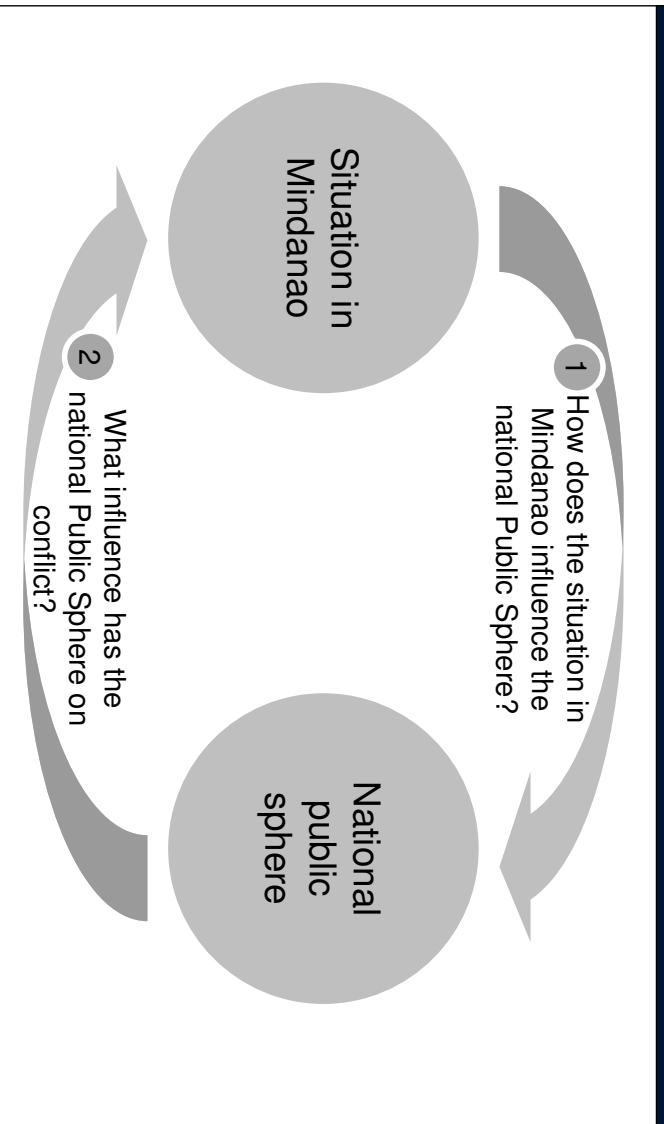
April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

11

4 Connection Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao

Connecting questions



April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

12

4 Connection Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao

Media in the Philippines

Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Television: mostly entertainment, used in metropolitan areas (reaching ~50%) ▪ Newspapers: declining readership, huge provincial press (reaching ~11%) ▪ Radio: central medium for information, central in rural areas (reaching ~90%) ▪ Internet: popular among young, mostly used in cities (reaching ~15%) pred. used for chatting, rise in blogs (Valdez 2005, Rosales 2006, Cabaero 2008)
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Press freedom: good laws – bad reality; 38 journalists killed in 2009, ban on critical media, ownership held by few elite-families ▪ Major agencies and offices: Manila based ▪ Central languages: English and Tagalog ▪ Central sources: government, news wire, police ▪ Most journalists: Catholic background (Carthrew/Behnke 2010, Cabaero 2008, Leers 2009)
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No public broadcasting ▪ Prohibits foreign ownership of mass media ▪ High entry costs, especially for radio frequencies ▪ Very competitive (strong influence of advertising industry and media owners) (Leers 2009, Vitug 2007, CMFR 2004)

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

13

4 Connection Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao

Findings

- Focus on divide between Muslims and Christians (Gaerlan 2000)
 - Muslim = bandit /murderer / kidnapper (Gaerlan 2000, Vitug 2007)
 - Terrorism driven News world (Vitug 2007)
 - Body counts, focus on military equipment instead of human suffering (Layson 2005)
 - "It is as if we are only good at being bad" (Arguillas 2009)
 - Lack of knowledge about conflict among reporters and journalists (Arguillas 2009, Vitug 2009)
 - Government as main source of information in media coverage on Mindanao (1055 articles out of 1428) (CMFR 2004)
 - Media outlets concentrated within few elite families, protection of vested interests, "business weapons" (Coronel 2000, Smith 2000)
- "The basic lack of information (...) has exacerbated the cleavages in the Southern Philippines." (Confesor 2005: 23)

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

14

4 Connection

Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao

Input / Representation

Throughput /
Production

Output / Reception

- Under-representation of minorities as speakers
- Under-representation of minority sources
- Under-representation of journalists / correspondents in minority areas
- Under-representation of minority issues
- Under-representation of minority media
- Language barrier
- Peace talks: Publicity vs. diplomatic secrecy

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

15

4 Connection

Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao

Input / Representation

Throughput /
Production

Output / Reception

- Few minority journalists and producers (patronage, education, corruption)
- Competition and marketplace pressure → majority orientation
- Time- and resource shortage → Reliance on key institutional sources of news
- Conflict / Peace portrayed as incidents not as process
- News values: ethnic minorities framed in conflict, drama, controversy, violence and deviance

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

16

4 Connection Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao



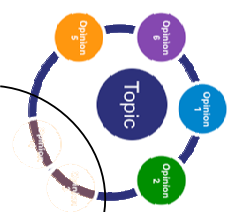
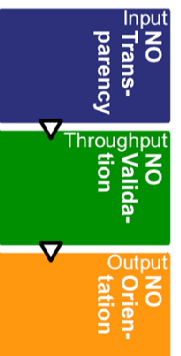
- Stereotypes, negative, problem-oriented portrayal
 - Ignorance of structural inequalities
 - Minority dissatisfaction / frustration → produce an oppositional reading / refuse to read messages at all → no feedback channel
 - Failure to create public opinion that includes minority opinion
 - Loose watchdog function (hangers-on of political=economical elite)
- **Increase asymmetry**
- **Close public arena for protest (minority)**
- **Close window for non-violent solutions (government)**

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

17

4 Connection Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao



Secrecy	<p>MoA-AD Peace Negotiations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wild speculations on both sides, Feeling of insecurity ▪ Ignorance of public sphere, Failure of process, Ruling as unconstitutional
Own media	<p>Luwaran, Bangsamoro Journal...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resource problem ▪ No access to multi-ethnic discourse, alternative (local) public sphere
Alternative channels	<p>Private networks, religious networks, mobile networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Not controllable" / not visible / unreliable ▪ No access to multi-ethnic discourse, no emergence of public sphere
CS tri-people projects	<p>Mindaneews, Bantay Ceasefire,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reach legitimacy through multi-ethnic approach ▪ Influence on local authorities / military, international monitors, Mindanawan public sphere, increasingly on national level

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

(Neumann 2009, PCIJ 2009)

18

1. Introduction: Why to look at Public Sphere in Divided Society?
2. Public Sphere: Concept and Challenges
3. Divided Society: Mindanao: History and Conflict
4. Connection: Taking the concept of Public Sphere to Mindanao
5. Flashlights: Civil Society initiatives

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann


19

5 Flashlight Civil Society responses

Input / Representation

Throughput /

Input:
**BANTAY
CEASEFIRE**

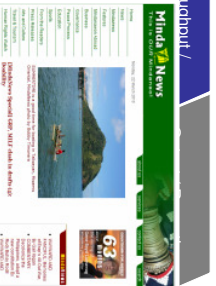


- Community based ceasefire watch and information dissemination
- Network structure, 8 people per community
- Part of Mindanao People's Caucus (MPC); reporting to Government, Rebels, NGOs and media; Cooperation with International Monitoring Team (IMT)
- Communication through mobile phones (SMS)
- Legitimacy through multi-ethnic constituents → accepted as unbiased source of information
- Decrease eruption of violence
- Increase level of information

Input / Representation

Throughput /

Input:
MINDANEWS



- Online (now also printed) newsportal
- Up-to-date news coverage on Mindanao topics plus commentary section open to protagonists of all sides
- Cooperative of journalists with clear mission to "inform, educate, inspire and influence communities" and to "practice people empowerment through media"
- relatively unbiased news coverage, focusing not only on conflict and destruction → dedicated to "peace journalism"

(Neumann 2009, Wörtz / Hahn 2005)

(www.mindaneews.com)

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

20

- Arguiar, Carolyn O. 10 february 2009. Does the Media Have a Role in Helping Deliver Lasting and Fair Peace in Mindanao. If so, how? If not, why not? UP Diliman, Quezon City: Philippine Human Rights Reporting Project.
- Bankoff, Greg und Kathleen Weekley. 2002. Post-colonial national identity in the Philippines. Celebrating the centennial of independence. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Basic Hrvatlin, Sandra und Marc Thompson. 2008. Public Service Broadcasting in Plural and Divided Societies. In: Mediacenter Sarajevo (Hrsg.), Divided They Fail. Public service broadcasting in multiethnic states. Sarajevo: Bernust Sarajevo, 7-40.
- Cabero, Maria L. 2008. Philippines. In: Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Hrsg.), Asia Media Directory. A handbook for media practitioners interested in establishing a contact network, 187-220.
- Carthew, Alastair; Behnke, Philipp (2010): The Philippines - Overview. Herausgegeben von Konrad Adenauer Foundation. Online verfügbar unter http://www.kas.de/proj/home/home/130/2/webseite_id-7265/index.html, zuletzt aktualisiert am February 2010, zuletzt geprüft am 10 march 2010.
- Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (Hrsg.). 2004. Press Freedom in the Philippines. A Study in Contradictions. Makati City: CMFR.
- Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility. 2010. Filipino Journalists Killed. http://www.cmrfrphil.org/map/index_inline.html. 09 march 2010.
- Confesor, Nives R. 2005. The Philippines: In Search of a "Transformed" Society. Building Peaceful Relations - by, for, and with People. <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egm/paper/Nieves%20Confesor.pdf>.
- Coronel, Sheila S. 2000. Philippines: Free as a mocking bird. In: Louise Williams und Poland Rich (Hrsg.), Losing Control: Freedom of the Press in Asia. Asia Pacific Press, 147-168.
- Cottle, Simon. 2000. Introduction. Media research and ethnic minorities : mapping the field. In: Simon Cottle (Hrsg.), Ethnic Minorities and the Media. Issues in Cultural and Media Studies: Open University Press, 1-30.
- Curran, James. 1991. Rethinking the media as public sphere. In: Peter Dahlgren (Hrsg.), Communication and citizenship. Journalism and the public sphere. London: Routledge, 27-57.

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

21

- Davis, Alan. 10 february 2009. Does Media Have a Role in Helping Deliver Lasting and Fair Peace in Mindanao? UP Diliman, Quezon City: Philippine Human Rights Reporting Project.
- Etzioni, Amitai. 1968. The active society. A theory of societal and political processes. London: Collier-Macmillan [u.a.].
- Gaerlan, Cris M. 2000. The Role of Media. The Mindanao War and the Moro Peoples / Internal Refugees. Paper presented to the Workshop "Media & Internal Refugees", Bangkok. http://kalilindad.tripod.com/role_of_media.htm. 10 march 2010.
- Gerhards, Jürgen; Neidhardt, Friedhelm (1990): Strukturen und Funktionen moderner Öffentlichkeit. Discussion Paper FS III, 90-101. Herausgegeben von Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1990. Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 2006. Political Communication in Media Society: Does Democracy Still Enjoy an Epistemic Dimension? The Impact of Normative Theory on Empirical Research. Communication Theory 16: 411-426.
- Husband, Charles. 2000. Media and the Public Sphere in Multi-Ethnic Societies. In: Simon Cottle (Hrsg.), Ethnic Minorities and the Media. Issues in Cultural and Media Studies: Open University Press, 199-214.
- Jusic, Tarik. 2004. Bosnia and Herzegovina. In: Brakica Petković (Hrsg.), Media ownership and its impact on media independence and pluralism. Ljubljana: Peace Inst. Inst. for Contemporary Social and Political Studies.
- Kreuzer, Peter. 2005. Political Clans and Violence in the Southern Philippines. Frankfurt am Main: Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung.
- Kreuzer, Peter. 2006. Democracy, Diversity and Conflict: Managing ethnic divisions in the Philippines and Malaysia. Occasional Paper #30-4.
- Layson, Roberto. 2005. Media Coverage of the War in Mindanao. A view from the field. Unpublished document, received through email.

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

22

- Lederach, John P. 2006. *Building peace. Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington, D.C.: United States Inst. of Peace Press.
- Leers, Benjamin. 2009. Zwischen Selbstzensur, Korruption und Bewaffnung. Konsequenzen der Gewalt an Medienvertretern am Beispiel lokaler Radiojournalisten in der philippinischen Provinz. Münster, Berlin: LIT.
- Luhmann, Niklas. 2005. Soziologische Aufklärung 5. Konstruktivistische Perspektiven: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Mastura, Michael. 10 february 2009. What is media's role on covering the Peace Process in Mindanao? UP Diliman, Quezon City: Philippine Human Rights Reporting Project.
- Mediacenter Sarajevo (Hrsg.). 2008. *Divided They Fall. Public service broadcasting in multiethnic states*. Sarajevo: Bernust Sarajevo.
- Neidhardt, Friedhelm. 1994. Öffentlichkeit, öffentliche Meinung, soziale Bewegungen. Opladen: Westdt. Verl.
- Neumann, Hannah. 2009. Friedenskommunikation. Möglichkeiten und Grenzen von Kommunikation in der Konflikttransformation. Berlin: LIT.
- Neumann, Hannah. 2010. Making sense of Democracy and Citizenship – a (not only) Mindanao struggle. Forthcoming. Heidelberg papers in Comparative and South Asian Politics.
- Petković, Branka (Hrsg.). 2004. Media ownership and its impact on media independence and pluralism. Ljubljana: Peace Inst. Inst. for Contemporary Social and Political Studies.
- Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. 2009. Multiple requests for access to info meet with flat denials. <http://pcji.org/stories/multiple-requests-for-access-to-info-meet-with-flat-denials/>. 15 march 2010.
- Riggs, Stephen H. 1993. *Ethnic minority media. An international perspective*. Newbury Park, Calif: Sage Publ.
- Rosales, Rey G. 2006. Shooting the Messenger. Why Radio broadcasting is a Deadly Profession in the Philippines. *Journal of Radio Studies* 13.
- Smith, Desmond. 2000. *Democracy and the Philippine Media, 1983-1993*. Lewiston, N.Y: Edwin Mellen Press.
- Tracey, Michael. 1998. *The decline and fall of public service broadcasting*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press.

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

23

- Tuzon, Ramon R. 1998. Sociocultural Factors as Determinants of Press Freedom: The Philippine Experience. In: Asad Latif (Hrsg.), *Walking the tightrope. Press freedom and professional standards in Asia*. Singapore: Asian Media Information and Communication Centre, 238-250.
- Valdez, Violet B. 2005. Philippines. In: Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Hrsg.), *Asia Media Directory. A handbook for media practitioners in the region interested in establishing a contact network*, 143-178.
- Vitug, Marites Danguilan. 2007. Media and Conflict in the Philippines. Excerpt from her upcoming book on the Muslim rebellion in the Philippines, compiled by Brett Mueller. <http://www.concernedjournalists.org/print/552#issues>. 13 march 2010.
- Vitug, Marites D. 10 february 2009. A perspective from Manila. How the Mindanao question is portrayed by the national media. UP Diliman, Quezon City: Philippine Human Rights Reporting Project.
- Wörtz, Tilman und Paul Hahn. 2005. Inseln der Ruhe im Rebellienland. In: Petra Gerster und Michael Gleich (Hrsg.), *Die Friedensmacher*. München: Hanser, 154-173.

April 09, 2010

Hannah Neumann

24

Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit!

Kontakt:

Hannah Neumann; FU Berlin / TU Ilmenau

hannah.neumann@gmail.com