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War Reporting and the New War Paradigm: A Critical Analysis of the UK Military's Media Operations Policies

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Abstract

The current military-media relationship, in which war reporters face greater challenges accessing operational zones, is marked by destabilisation. The key focus of this thesis is to describe the struggle of the military and the media in a British context, one that involves keeping up with the pace of massive developments in: (a) the nature of warfare, (b) the revolution in military affairs, and (c) information and communications technologies. I argue that the relationship between operational security, digitalisation, and moral obligations is vulnerable in today's conflicts — considering those aspects of journalistic values which claim truthfulness and objectivity. Grounded theory is used to analyse qualitative semi-structured interviews and official documents by employing comparative methods and coding. Research questions are grouped into three themes outlining my key methodological arguments: (1) a revolution shown in military documents in the forms of new war; (2) the characteristics of war journalism in post-Iraq War; and (3) the impact that the digital revolution has had on the role of war reporters.

My findings illustrate some implications and recommendations for military policies and journalistic practices. In theory, the military's media policy is aimed at securing journalists' safety and operational security. However, in practice, the loss of autonomy, a lack of clear objectives, and editorial restraints have made journalistic work more complicated. The analytical framework utilised has identified two emergent themes: (1) the post-embedding era recognises the struggle of the military to incorporate the media into today's conflicts because of the extent of violence in the 'War Amongst the People' (WAP); and, (2) the classic form of war reportage has become vulnerable to a new type of asymmetric threats as wars are often fought in a hybrid style. The latest typology of 'new war' has reinforced a sense of uncertainty and ambiguity in the process of war reportage, and information management, which can create instability pertaining to the role of the media in conflicts. In conclusion, the risk of uncontrollable and unmanageable media reportage can only be eliminated by the military if journalism becomes an integral part of the military's command and control structure.

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GLOSSARY

Abbreviation	Meaning
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CCS	Command and Control System
CMI	Civil-Military Integration
COIN	Counterinsurgency
EU	European Union
GB	Great Britain
Info Ops	Information Operations
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JDP	Joint Doctrine Publication
JMO	Joint Military Operations
ME	Middle East
Media Ops	Media Operations
MGC	Market Generated Content
MoD	Ministry Of Defence
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
Psy Ops	Psychological Operations
RMA	Revolution In Military Affairs
TA	Target Audiences
UGC	User-Generated Content

UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WAP	War amongst the People
WOT	War on Terror

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

This thesis represents the original work of Abdulnasser Al-Abri and is compliant with the University of Glasgow's ethical guidelines. The research on which it was based was carried out at the University of Glasgow under the academic supervision of Professor Philip Schlesinger and Professor Raymond Boyle during the period January 2015 to September 2019.

Chapter One: Introduction

The aim of my research is to investigate the evolving military-media relationship to describe the process of integrating wartime journalism into the military's media management strategies in a British context. I do so by considering significant developments in the paradigm of the new war, and a revolution in military affairs. Journalists are facing substantial challenges in reporting today's war including technological and structural aspects. Reporting conflict goes beyond the traditional practices of journalism, in which the journalists are subject to different types of control by the military. However, digital developments open new opportunities for both the media and the military to develop new tactics to incorporate the media into war effort, but it also poses challenges for the work of journalists.

My thesis seeks to explore how Western war reporters have been integrated by the UK military into the complexity of the new model of war, in situations where they are not answerable to the same socio-political structures as they used to be in conventional conflicts. This argument will be addressed in this thesis through three key research questions that will be mapped out in three chapters of my findings (Chapters Four to Six) as follows:

1. How have new tactics been devised by the military to incorporate journalism into the war effort while minimising disruptive forms of reporting?
2. In what ways has war journalism changed since the occupation of Iraq in 2003?
3. How has the development of a hybrid media ecology made the role of professional war reporters vulnerable in a fast-changing situation?

In this opening chapter, it is essential to capture the dominant concepts that are central to the research questions, such as the new war paradigm, war journalism, media-military relations, and global governance. These concepts have evolved within a complex international system since the end of the Cold War (1989), and have been affected by the 9/11 attack (2001), the Iraq War (2003), and geo-strategic developments in the global system over the last two decades. Chapter One indicates the research problem and the primary objectives to define the

parameters of this study. I shall explore the central concepts that have an impact on the practice of war journalism and, therefore, analyse these implications from the perspective of the military's media strategies. A clear understanding of the terms widely used in this research is a first step so that no misunderstanding arises when interpreting the data.

The New War Paradiem

What is 'new war'? How does it differ from 'old wars'? The term of 'new war' has emerged since the end of the Cold War to describe the changes in the environment of armed conflicts among other features of the 21st century such as globalisation, new communications technology, and the collapse of the Soviet Union (Suganami, 2002; Kaldor, 2013). The key players in this type of armed conflicts are non-state actors, who may seek to establish sovereign states (Kaldor, 2013). The condition of the 'new war' is characterised by the growth of hybridity in war actors, such as in the Ukraine crisis of 2014, which involves the use of a mixture of different tactics, the usage of proxy wars between major and minor powers such as in Syria and Yemen, the urbanisation movements as megacities become playgrounds for conflicts, and the complexity of employing Info Ops that generate new challenges for the national security (Chadwick, 2013; Dunham, 2016). It is crucial to understand that certain types of wars, such as counterinsurgency operations (COINs) become more common and ambiguous. The tactics used in COINs ensures the necessary structure of a command and control system (CCS), new military technologies, and utilising small and agile forces on the ground (Hazel, 2008; Thornton, 2015).

The concept of 'new war' is central to the analytical framework of this thesis. The logic of 'new war' operationalises throughout my research to focus on the degree of tension present in the military-media relationship and conflict management. A discussion defines the causes and consequences of the 'new war' into the work of journalism that has helped to develop an analytical approach that considered institutional roles, field challenges, and future opportunities into the structure of the military-media relationship either in strategic or tactical levels. In this

research, I provide reflections on the condition of warfare that has been presented by the British academic Mary Kaldor.

Kaldor (2013, p.vi) emphasises that new war involves a 'networks of state and non-state actors, and most violence is directed against civilians'. This definition includes a few key characteristics that distinguish 'new war' from 'old war'. In fact, organised violence had replaced traditional forms of inter-state conflict (Kaldor, 2007; Smith, 2007). To support the claim that intra-state conflicts are on the rise, we can observe that transnational terrorism and insurgents dominate military doctrines.

Additionally, we must note the claim that the digital revolution has resulted in the end of military control over information in the post-Iraq War of 2003, and that the leading actor in today's conflicts is non-organised militia and that civilians are at the forefront of conflict (Kaldor, 2007; Rigterink, 2012; Medynskyi, 2015; Merrin, 2018). Kaldor (2013, pp.23) classified today's wars as distinct from the old version of warfare, according to specific categories which include actors, goals, methods, and forms of finance. Actors: the main actors of new war are a combination of state and non-state actors which include the regular armed forces, private security contractors, mercenaries, jihadists, warlords, paramilitaries, etc., whereas on the whole old war took place between regular armed forces of states. Goals: the aims of old war were to achieve geo-political interests and to spread ideologies and values. However, new wars are associated with the rise of new communications technologies and fights for identity (ethnic, religious or tribal) and political interests. Methods: old wars were fought in particular territories through military means. In new wars, the frontline is everywhere. A typical technique to capture a territory is through political means, where violence flourishes amongst the people rather than being used against enemy forces. Forms of Finance: in old wars, states usually financed troops. New wars are financed by different means, such as private finance, the taxation of humanitarian aid, and by illegal activities such as cybercrime, terrorism, piracy, kidnapping, and the smuggling of oil, drugs, people, etc. Thus, understanding the concept of new war as a mixture of wars within the context of globalisation, global power, and revolution in military affairs (RMA) fitted into my analytical framework.

Further discussion focuses on the technologies of warfare. Developments in communications and information technologies have emerged as a result of the relationship between media and war, a relationship that has shaped a new form of warfare (McLuhan 1964; Postman, 1970; Baudrillard, 1995; Virilio & Lotringer, 2000; Chadwick, 2013; Hoskins and O'Loughlin, 2015). McLuhan's terms of 'global village' and 'the medium is the message' had sparked the thinking of the effect of dominant communications technologies, especially television, on cultural and political life (Levinson, 2000). Since Baudrillard (1929–2007) developed his theory entitled 'The Gulf War did not take place in 1991', the world has been concerned about the changes in the war paradigm, including the relationship between war and the media in the post-Cold War era. The importance of Baudrillard's theoretical work stems from his central claim that the Gulf War is a 'non-war' or 'virtual war' that was marked by the uncertainty of real-time coverage, the lack of credible news and the struggle of exercising full control over information (Baudrillard, 1995). In contrast, Paul Virilio (1932–2018) has emphasised the importance of total control of the electro-magnetic space and the speed of the weaponry which become a central strategy in Western doctrines for gaining the upper hand on information to win the war (Merrin, 2018). Virilio, who is inspired by the work of Marshall McLuhan in his theory of media ecology, considers the relationship between war, cinema and the logistics of perception are essential elements for information operations (infops) where wars are 'no longer about confrontation' but about movement – the movement of 'electro-magnetic waves' (Armitage, 2001, p. 3). His primary interest was on the impact of intelligent, smart, and advanced weapons on influencing people's perception of new wars besides the damage that unauthorised images about war can do to the reputation of the armed forces (Armitage, 2001; Merrin, 2018). As such, it can be argued that the concept of a new war poses a fundamental challenge for the military and the media concerning access, technology, and information control.

War journalism can be conceptualised in relation to the military's media management strategies within the context of Kaldor's perspective on the new war. The next subsection will highlight how the term 'war journalism' can be situated

in a wider context that describes the evolution in the military-media relationship since the Iraq War of 2003 regarding accreditation, access, and censorship.

War Journalism

War reporting in the old, liberal school of journalism was viewed as an essential component to strengthen democracy, social responsibility, and good governance. Liberal theorists attributed the press with the role of safeguarding freedom of expression, as the existence of a responsible and independent press was considered vital to the process of democracy (Norris, 2008; Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2014; Barnett & Townend, 2015). Although liberals advocated that the role of free press was to act as a watchdog on the government (Ward, 2014), in recent years relations between the press and the military have often fluctuated due to restrictions made by military forces in the US and UK to control the flow of war news after the Vietnam War (1955–1975).

There has been a debate over the role of the press to influence public opinion about the war effort: consider the anti-war messages surrounding the Vietnam War compared to those supporting the military's war efforts, such as the interest in reporting war activities in the post-Cold War era since 1989 (Boylan, 2011). The role of the media in the Vietnam War was a product of many issues around, the institutional role of embedded reporters, information control, and censorship (Spector, 2018). Spector (2018) claimed the Vietnam War had not been directly censored by the US military, but what made the Americans and the media less supportive regarding this war was the increased number of American casualties. It has been estimated that 57,939 members of the US armed forces died or were recording missing, and around 1.1 million North Vietnamese and Viet Cong fighters died (Spector, 2018). Since the Vietnam War, great attention has been given to the role of war journalists during times of conflict, and their battles over gathering information from war zones. British restrictions placed on reportage of the Falklands War in 1982 inspired the US military to limit journalists' access to the frontline, unless they were attached to military forces (Morrison & Tumber, 1988; Knightley, 2004; Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2014). The policy of journalists' attachments has taken place when war correspondents have agreed to align with

aspects of American and British battlefield policy. This established an 'information vacuum' in the Falklands War in 1982, a 'press pool' in the First Gulf War in 1991, and the 'embedded system' in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in 2003, which gave the military more control over the flow of information in order to secure operations.

Media and conflict studies literature has questioned the practice of war journalism in regard to its positive/negative influence, whether the press is war-or peace-oriented, the hierarchy of influence at work, and the professionalism of journalism (Larson, 1988; O'Heffernan, 1991; Cohen, 1994; Rees, 2001; Galtung, 2003; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2013). For some researchers in media and conflict studies, the perspective of the military in managing the media in contemporary conflicts has been affected by a dramatic transition in the post-Cold War era as an aftermath of the 9/11 attack. The media has been the subject of debate amongst academics, military thinkers, policymakers, and practitioners, essentially asking whether the media play an active or passive role in safeguarding people's right to information (Hallin, 1986; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Larson, 1988; O'Heffernan, 1991; Cohen, 1994; Robinson, 2001). For other researchers in media and conflict studies, the military is driven by the significant influence of the media on public opinion, propaganda that can influence the success or failure of military operations (Rid, 2007; Jensen, 2014). Because war reporters face great challenges on the frontline in contemporary warfare this study aims to understand the existing concept of military media management policies, as they have been challenged by several factors in war zones. Some challenges, for instance, involve educating a global audience about war victims, immigration, violations of international law, physical conflicts, and the process of peaceful settlement. Indeed, whether war journalists are attached to military units or have restricted access by working independently, it seems that the classic concepts of mediatisation, centralisation, and media management are being disrupted by the digital age (Maltby, 2012a; Livingstone & Lunt, 2014; Corner, 2018). Indeed, Kuhn and Nielsen (2014) claim that the emergence of competitive digital news networks has closed the gap between politicians and people because top politicians have engaged either with the media and the people through their personal and official accounts on many social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and weblogs.

In my research, I argue that the term 'new war' provides three main thrusts of criticism on the practices of war journalism and military's media policies: Firstly, the struggle of the military to integrate the media into the war effort due to the growing challenges of controlling the information space during today's conflicts. Here, I will question the impact of media operations (Media Ops) has as the core challenges in the 'new war paradigm' where the military has witnessed the end of full control over the information space since the Iraq War of 2003 (Merrin, 2018). This can be done by several methods. A reflection on some of the UK military's documents will be provided as well as an analysis of the perspective of selected professionals in Armed Forces on the revolution in war-fighting tactics and communications under a centrlised command and control system (CCS) as a means to investigate how media ops are evolving. Secondly, the increasing centrality of Information Operations (Info Ops) compared to the decentralisation of war actors has an impact on how wars are being reported and perceived. The institutional role of embedded reporters provides insights into war reporting regarding the loss of journalists' autonomy, the policy of denying access to the frontline, and a lack of diverse accounts because of censorship. Finally, the difficulty of bearing eyewitness in a complex hybrid media ecology can destroy the credibility of war reporting as information becomes a weapon for influence and disinformation. The idea that there is no need for embedded journalists because war can be shot either by soldiers or the military's media teams themselves has affected the role of war reporters to report the truth.

 For this research, the terms 'war reporter', 'war correspondent', 'broadcaster', and 'wartime journalist' are used interchangeably to make the content easy to understand. Certainly, usage of one term cannot increase clarity and precision in my subject area because all of these terms are often used by media researchers to describe the acts of a person who reports on the war from the scene of action.

A clear distinction will be made in the following section about the role of the media in military doctrines.

The Military-Media Relationship

The focus of this thesis, when considering civil-military relations, is the role of media in military doctrines, and how military doctrines have been defined, outlined, and managed in real conflicts. This thesis examines the perspective of official documents that include policies, guidelines, and regulations, regarding the natural line of communications and a hierarchy of command and control systems in armed conflicts. Also, this thesis presents the views of military experts, who have significantly augmented their role in the production of several military documents that outline the armed forces' approach in managing the media at war, such as Media Operations, Information Operations, Psy Ops, and Strategic Communications.

The involvement of the media in the foreign policy decision-making process is complex, but it is acknowledged as a valuable source of information for decision-making, and as a platform that leaders or elites take into consideration at the time of taking decisions (Naveh, 2002). Dandeker (2000, pp. 38–40) suggests that media-state-military relations must be built on mutual trust and not be subjected to manipulation by any side. He asserts that journalists are capable of supporting military policy and maintaining public support for current military activities at their time of deployment with the armed forces, and of gaining full access to updated information. Dandeker (2000) has described the relationship between the two institutions during the colonial wars as being adversarial on both sides, shaped by suspicion, and distrust. However, the relationship between the media and the military has demonstrated some improvement in the post-Cold War period, as military professionals became more aware of the role of media to influence public attitudes towards soldiers on the battlefield.

Relations between UK Armed Forces and British society have shown some developments since British forces allied with US ones in the War on Terror (WOT); notably with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan 2001 and throughout intense operations in Iraq 2003 (Rid 2007; Jensen 2014; Hines et al., 2014). The UK Ministry of Defence's (MoD) attempted to bridge the civilian-military gap and make their various audiences more understanding of the armed

forces' business. Evidence for this includes the decision to withdraw British forces from Afghanistan in 2014, the low profile deployment of forces in the civil war in Syria, and after the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) suffered a vital defeat in Mosul, Iraq (Hines et al., 2014; Jensen, 2014; Cockburn, 2018a). However, these types of Counterinsurgency Operations (COIN) have also destabilised the relationship between war reporters and joint military commanders at an operational and tactical level. One reason for this is that military operations are mainly conducted covertly by special units which are trained to operate independently during this kind of confrontation. There is less military support offered to journalists, and because of that the risk of a journalist being detained, tortured, and killed is becoming higher. A report by Reporters Without Borders indicates that 702 professional journalists have been killed in the past 10 years, and 80 journalists were killed worldwide in 2018 (RSF, 2018). The world's deadliest country for journalists and media workers in 2018 was in Afghanistan with 15 killed. In Syria 11 were killed, and 8 were killed in Yemen. However, for the first time since 2003, no media fatalities were recorded in Iraq in 2018 (RSF, 2018). Additionally, there is a lack of communication, particularly at a strategic level (The Prime Minister, 2015), that affects how a war is presented when there is a division in public opinion about the act of war. The proposition of new war facilitates grounds for both regular and irregular war actors to utilise the media, especially the new media for their benefit to exert an influence over vast, heterogeneous audiences that would not be reachable within the limited scope of the Western mainstream media.

Considering these developments, my study will provide a distinctive approach to explore various relations between military's media management strategies and wartime journalism. I focus on significant events that have shaped world politics since 9/11 in 2001. These events have been shaped by the rise of global media and the internet in the 21st century. Significant examples will include the post-Iraq War (from 2003 to 2011), the war in the Ukraine (2014 until the present), and the civil war in Syria (2012 until the present). The institutional work of Journalim goes under developments regarding organisational context and culture. This included the emerging of new actors, new methods of collecting information and new forms of engaging with audiences (Harris & Williams, 2019). War reporters

while embedded during their assignments at the forefront of these conflicts, experienced a great variety of circumstances with the troops. They shared the same food, slept in tanks or ships together, and exchanged information, snapshots, and views with each other through such social media networks as Facebook, YouTube, and weblogs. Yet journalists were also subjected to the tightest restrictions on their movements and broadcasts. They were forced to sign a contract that all their reports should be reviewed by the military before being broadcast, and that they should be guarded and protected by the military, and might be dismissed by the government at any time (Lindner, 2009).

A rising level of intensity in the era of new war synchronises with a transition in the central role of the state in emerging global governance and security systems.

Changes in the Global System

It is a common observation that a tremendous transformation has taken place since the end of the Cold War in 1989 in the structure of the global system. A transformation regarding both ideology and practice, which has brought new complexities, vulnerabilities, and uncertainties to foreign policy, global security, media studies, and international relations. In fact, this transformation is threefold, including (1) the fragmentation of power in international systems, (2) changes in the role of the state, and (3) advances in communications and information technology. Navigating such a structural transition is essential to understand how the media fit into this complex set of power transformations.

Since the end of the Cold War, we can identify three main points in the international system regarding the notion of shifting global power:

1) The growth of US economic and military power that dominated the international security paradigm, the rise of China, and the re-emergence of European Union (EU) as economically powerful but politically divided (Ikenberry, 2008; Friedman, 2013) were the main features of transition in the global system since 1989. In particular, the primary debate of this feature has been about what kind of grand strategy the USA should apply, and what kinds of strategy the other great powers should pursue. In fact, the US, China, and the EU are currently the leading players

of the global system. The choices made by US administrations since the 1990s have been made between those who recommended a policy of 'primacy', that dealt with contested zones unilaterally by use of US physical power, and those who recommended a policy of 'selective engagement' that promoted cooperation and active diplomacy (Posen, 2003, pp.5–46). The EU is facing significant challenges. The CRS's (2018) report indicated that the most prominent challenges in EU are the United Kingdom's departure from the EU or 'Brexit' alongside issues on integration, migration, and a heightened threat of terrorism. In contrast, given its one-party state, China appears more able to implement domestic and international policies under the current leadership of Xi Jinping. For instance, China has promoted its future growth prospects as well as expanding international business (Gill, 2017).

2) Globalisation affects the role of states in the 21st century. The state actor is no longer the only active player in economic and political systems, as other active and non-state players have emerged, who have restated their roles and positions. For example, paramilitary forces, NGOs, media organisations, and corporates (Karaca, 2011; Breslin & Nesadurai, 2018). However, the state remains a critical actor in dealing with domestic and international arenas, particularly concerning national identity and security, despite the widespread assumption that the state is losing its sovereignty (Bertucci & Alberti, 2001).

3) Information and communication technologies that are affected by digitalisation have offered new types of production and consumption. Owen (2011) indicates that massive developments in communication, information technology, and the globalisation of the new media have made the world more connected, interdependent and, consequently, decreased the dominance of Western media organisations in covering international events. Additionally, these technological developments permit the live and faster production and transmission of reports, putting more pressure not just on governmental decision-makers but on all management sectors around the world (Hulme, 1996).

I will now briefly address the research questions alongside methodological considerations.

Research Objectives

This thesis focuses on integrating wartime journalism into the UK MoD's strategies for media management. My research has relied on a qualitative approach, which has benefited from a grounded framework. Through my research I aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- Identify the UK military's strategy and techniques in managing and incorporating journalism into the war effort to minimise disruptive forms of reporting.
- Reflect war journalists' views in reporting complex, unstable, and changeable armed conflicts such as Counterinsurgency Operations (COIN), and to explore the concerns of war journalists regarding objectivity, professionalism, self-censorship, and their own safety.
- Draw academic insights from qualitative research, in order to maximise the depth of data collected to describe the lived experiences of journalists and the military's media staff in reporting contemporary wars.
- Develop an analytical framework in relation to the media-military perspective on the massive developments in military affairs, global governance, and digitalisation, with respect to their impact on the role of media in conflicts.

This project seeks to contribute to a gap in the academic literature, by combining and contrasting the perspectives of war correspondents and military media staff at the UK MoD. This enables us to understand how the military and the media have responded to developments in the war paradigm, as well as information and communication technologies.

The intention for this research to contribute to media studies and military policies, drawing on notable interviewees representing several leading British media outlets (the BBC, *The Guardian* and Channel 4), as well as the collection of updated versions of military documents across the UK, the USA and NATO. A qualitative approach within the guidelines of grounded theory enabled genuine reflection on the extensive personal experiences that war correspondents and

military media staff encountered while negotiating their roles and resources within the typology of the 'new war'.

The following section outlines the organisation of this study.

Thesis Structure

Chapter One provides an overview of the research paradigm, the methodology, and the research questions. It begins by conceptualising the fundamental themes of this research, countering common criticisms, and reviewing literature that has examined the war-media debate. Additionally, it proposes research strategies, objectives, and goals, suggesting an appropriate framework for analysis by focusing on the area of military-media policies within the typology of 'new war', it helps to identify the method of collecting data and, finally, what type of analytical tools need to be employed to tackle these issues. In this chapter, I address the gaps in the research, my study's contribution to knowledge and its limitations.

Chapter Two engages with various arguments emphasised in the existing literature on war journalism and the military-media relationship. These are outlined in three central themes describing in depth how the media have adapted to changes in contemporary conflict. Part One examines the war paradigm debate, analysing how the 21st century introduced a new form of warfare due to a revolution in military affairs, so that the media became a central component in its structure. Part One also asks whether this 'new form' of warfare is just a modified version of the old industrial model. Part Two establishes a connection with the role of media in the process of decision-making. In fact, this relationship is essential to understand the different positions that media scholars have taken to analyse the relations between the state and the media on various issues of national security. Part Three investigates the line of communications between war reporters and the military, particularly at an operational level, and whether this facilitates more access to information in the form of embedded programmes, or poses more restrictions and complexities to maintain the security of operations.

Chapter Three provides a guide to the methodology, research design, and data collection used in this thesis. Based on a multidisciplinary approach, this research has analysed the military, media, and journalism using a qualitative methodology. Research questions were designed to provide a comprehensive approach to both media and military policies, incorporating trends and existing challenges that have questioned the classic concept of war following the typology of the new war. Chapter Three aims to show the emergence of challenges, ethical codes, and cultural norms – including objectivity, fairness, lack of strategic communications, professionalism, and the real practice of war reporters and military doctrines in the digital revolution – mainly when nations are politically divided over the use of their military forces to support humanitarian operations and democracy.

The analysis is carried out in Chapters Four to Six. In Chapter Four, I discuss my findings around military tactics which incorporate journalism into the war effort as much as possible, and which aim to minimise disruptive forms of reporting. Chapter Four makes a connection between the military's media doctrines and journalistic work in a British context. Chapter Five presents war reporters' reflections on the way that US and UK Armed Forces handled the media during the Iraq military operation, and the implications of the 'embedded system' used. Following changing world politics and the digital revolution that warfare is experiencing, Chapter Six describes the formation of a new milestone in this transformed relationship between war journalists and the armed forces.

Finally, Chapter Seven gives a comprehensive discussion of what has been presented in this research. It emphasises the central arguments, research problems, methodology, and findings.

Conclusion

Aside from the complexity of war as a social phenomenon that engages other domains in a country's social, economic, and political life, war entails multi- and interdisciplinary methods to study it from diverse viewpoints. Tracing the interplay of the challenges of military media management strategies and journalists' reflections on their experiences in war zones requires more attention

to be paid to the broad context of media-government relations, the international relations system, the professional paradigm of 'new war' journalism, and the framework of media doctrines.

The shock and horror of 9/11, and the aftermath of the War on Terror, opened the way for the USA, the UK, and their allies to mount military responses, which have tightened restrictions on enabling war reporters to gain access to the frontline and to classified information. Have these tactics been justified as 'unquestionable'? And to what extent should armed forces have such power to restrict information in the context of the 'new war'? This thesis argues that the implications of the 'new war' paradigm, primarily in the post-Iraq war period, are evident in the methods and manner in which current conflicts are reported in traditional and online media.

The next chapter, Chapter Two, will review the main arguments in war journalism that have featured in media-war literature among journalists, politicians, and scholars since the Vietnam War. The majority of studies of state-media relations raise concerns over the media's performance in a democratic system (Althaus et al., 1996) and reveal the importance of the nation-state in the new world system. However, the interconnected and interdependent global system and the emergence of the non-state actor (transnational advocacy networks) challenge the idea of that governments should have a monopoly on news (Aday & Livingston, 2008). In fact, there is a lack of an explicit cognitive model for the relationship between the media and the military with respect to the role of the media in the new war – a digital revolution that has been accompanied by an explosion of information and communications technology. In a digital revolution the classical model of wartime reportage is disrupted and challenged by the notion of a network-user content-centric approach, which I will discuss in more detail under War and Technology in the next chapter.

Chapter Two:

Conflicts, Military Doctrines, and War Journalism

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the relevant academic literature regarding developments in the war paradigm, such as the military-media relationship, war journalism, revolutions in information and communications technologies, and military doctrines. Existing media studies concern the future of an embedded journalism system that has been constructed by the military to secure media access to battlefields and operational security. My review critically considers the consequences of the UK's military media operations strategies, especially in the post-Iraq War period (from 2003 to 2011). The post-Iraq War marked a new milestone in the military-media relationship, when the classical fight against Iraq's dismantled armed forces, and other militia groups in the Middle East, was transformed into a counterinsurgency operation.

This chapter is composed of three major parts. I begin by introducing the main features of journalistic work in the 21st century, such as those concerned with institutional roles and communication technology. Then, I discuss moments in contemporary relations between the state and the media at a strategic level, how these arguments began and developed, and what areas of conflict between the state and the media remain in dispute – in respect of war reportage. The last part explores the latest dimensions of the 'new war' paradigm that, since the end of the Cold War 1989, have offered a new space for the military and the media to exercise their advanced capabilities for influencing audiences. The military and the media have developed certain types of influence to control access to information, but inadequate space has been offered by the military to allow integration on a tactical level. In the concluding section, I discuss the implications of integration policy and its impact on the practice of war journalism.

I shall first outline an approach by reference to previous research to illustrate the challenges that war reporters are facing in conflicts. Then we will observe the

critical aspects of media management strategies that have been designed to structure media access to the frontline.

Reporting War

Reporting war is a part of reporting global crises. The literature on media and conflict studies emphasises the role of the media as one which constructs the reality of war and global events in our cognitive processes. This construction becomes apparent when we consider aspects of journalistic ethics which aim to provide balance, objectivity and credibility in war stories (Hallin, 1986; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Larson, 1988; Morrison & Tumber, 1988; O'Heffernan, 1991; Cohen, 1994; Zaller & Chiu, 1996; Rees, 2001; Galtung, 2003; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2003; Norris, 2008; Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2015). The significant role of journalists – whether you call them foreign reporters, war correspondents, war junkies, parachute journalists, local producers, stringers, citizen journalists, or bloggers – is at the heart of live broadcasting. Such media events present suffering, violence, political policies, and combat efforts, from distant locations by providing specific meaning, context, and values in their news (Galtung, 2003; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2003; Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2014).

However, uncertainty exists around journalistic ethics as to whether the media play a positive or negative role in war reporting while attached to military units. Some researchers/journalists in this area of study argue that it is a 'mediatised war' where war and media go hand in hand to influence, construct, and communicate military actions for local and international consumption – in terms of enhancing the communicative power between top politicians, military, and local and international audiences (Cottle, 2009; Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2015). For other researchers/journalists (the liberal school), journalistic codes are essential for democracy by freeing journalists from any obligations or alliances that affect their accountability, freedom, and independence (Berry, 1990; Wolfsfeld, 1997; Robinson, 2001). To be precise, liberal journalists believe that they should be observers and not participants in any events they are reporting (Ward, 2009).[1]

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[1] Ed Vulliamy of *The Guardian* gave his testimony before the International Criminal Tribunal about the atrocities during the war in Bosnia in 1990. However, other journalists refused to be part of the investigation,

Considering the complicated situation of organising media-military cooperation, such as embedded and post-embedded systems, to understand the intersection between war journalism and the military's media policy within the typology of new war is vital, especially considering the above-mentioned areas, which remain in dispute.

Therefore, what has changed in military thinking to propagate engaging traditional and new media in combat?

Journalism in the 21st Century

If we think about the framework of global transformation that occurred after the end of the Cold War in 1989 that has influenced the state-media relationship today, the nature of the international political system affects how journalists report conflicts. Changes in world politics do not need to be seen as a radical divorce from classical models of warfare, changes are a part of the governance system and the role of journalists in modern warfare, but it would be better to examine this from the perspective of the evolving military-media collaboration in the 21st century to manufacture an institutional role, regulations, and identity according to standard ethical norms in the liberal political system. Indeed, these changes in world politics explain areas of conflict and overlap in the relationship between war journalism and the military particularly when conventional and new media are presented in the era of new war as a governmental weapon for influence, commercialisation, manipulation, entertainment, and disinformation (Singer & Brooking, 2018).

Ascertaining the interaction between war reporters and military media teams under a centralised military command and control system is essential for understanding the fundamentals of wartime journalism that operates in a rigidly controlled political-economic culture. As we are mainly concerned with the latest challenges of today's war journalism, the literature on media and war is broken down into two segments: first, the institutional role of independent journalism is

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for instance Jonathan Randal of *The Washington Post* who didn't appear before the ICT in 2002 for the same case.

vital for democracy, and for the success or failure of combat operations – regardless of whether the media are being viewed as an influencer in political decision-making or being criticised for being manipulated by governments. Secondly, war journalism in military documents is being treated either as a weapon to support combat operations or as a threat to national or friendly forces due to its capacity to reach global audiences. Journalists in a post-embedding system within the context of the new war paradigm are faced by stressful situations where they lack access, funding, and security. In what follows, I will present these two perspectives in more detail.

Institutional Roles

The literature on journalism studies has generated much debate around journalistic practices in terms of professionalism, global values, and ethical obligations (Deuze, 2005; Hanitzsch, 2007; Hanitzsch et al., 2011; Willnat et al., 2013). Deuze (2005) illustrates that the role of journalists in society is crucial for practising real journalism without restrictions in the context of multiculturalism and multimedia by providing contrary sources to facilitate public debate, and its implications for the exercise of professionalism as a legitimate representative of the people. Threats to today's journalism comes in various forms as an industry and a profession. Althaus et al. (1996) pointed out that practising good journalism is vital for freedom of expression within the context of Western professional norms by empowering public debate around issues that are fundamental for their lives. To do so, Deuze (2005) indicates that free journalism must protect free speech and the right 'for people to know' all the available information about an armed conflict. He insisted that journalists must enjoy editorial autonomy, freedom, and independence in order to be impartial, neutral, objective, fair, and credible within a liberal political system that ensures stability and fairness in their work (Deuze, 2005). Journalists deploy to the deadliest countries, and place themselves in dangerous situations in order to enact their values regarding reporting the truth and disclosing wrongdoings. Consequently, they are imprisoned, hijacked, face harassment, abuse, and intimidation, and are even executed in front of the camera for doing their job (Wahl-Jorgensen et al., 2016). States have to protect journalists' safety as they could be targeted whilst reporting on sensitive issues

like corruption, terrorism, organised crime, and violations of human rights (Pedersen, 2015). However, the rights to protect the freedom of the press have never been absolute. For example, Stone and Volokh (2019) claim the First Amendment of the US Constitution has protected freedom of speech and the press, but governments have the power to restrict freedom of speech in certain circumstances, such as confronting threats to national security, false statements that damage a person's reputation, hate speech, blasphemy, etc.

Journalistic values bequeath journalists the legitimacy and credibility to defend their professional identity (Rees, 2001; Deuze, 2005). In reporting global crises, journalists struggle to preserve their value-neutrality in the long term, falling between objectivity and subjectivity in their commentary. Wahl-Jorgensen et al. (2016) indicate that there are institutional threats to journalism. The status of foreign reporting is in decline due to economic factors since the global recession of 2007 (Cottle, 2009; Wahl-Jorgensen et al., 2016). This has implications for the quantity and prominence of international news coverage in the media, and results in the reduction of the number of foreign reporters who report from a fixed international office (Willmott, 2010). Wahl-Jorgensen et al. (2016, p. 802) state that the economic crisis of 2007 led to the 'demise of some of long-established and well-regarded institutions, [which] includes most recently *The Independent* in the United Kingdom and the *Tampa Tribune* in the United States'. Thus in an era of globalisation and information credible sources are being challenged. Based on a study across 9 Western countries, Newman et al. (2016) indicate that the public's trust in news media and social media is falling due to bias, spin, and agendas that favoured powerful people's political or economic interests, rather than being representative of ordinary people's opinions. However, those who have trusted the news media in the past appreciate the role of journalists in 'checking sources, verifying facts, and providing evidence to back up claims' (Newman et al., 2016, p.5).

Despite variations in demography, working conditions, values, trends, and global or local challenges, the ethical role of journalism in societies has been spread across the globe, perhaps as an effect of globalisation and digitalisation (Cottle, 2009; Willnat et al., 2013). The results of a 31-nation comparative study on

competence and professionalism in journalism showed that incompatibility exists between journalistic ideals and practices that makes journalists feel that they are less professional, especially when they lack confidence and integrity in doing their job (Willnat et al., 2013). Another study by Hanitzsch et al. (2011) of 1800 journalists from 18 countries demonstrated the difference between Western journalists and their counterparts in other countries in terms of values. On the one hand, Western journalists are generally less supportive of the active promotion of particular values, ideas, and social change, and adhere more to universal principles to guide their ethical decisions. Journalists from non-Western contexts, on the other hand, tend to be more interventionist in their perceptions, and more flexible in their ethical views (Hanitzsch et al., 2011, p.1).

Securing safety and logistical aids in battlefields are a central concern of conflict reporting because journalists put themselves at risk while deployed with local forces, militia or aid agencies in areas of military violence (Markham, 2010). War journalism-based practices focus on violence, a reactive stance, while peace journalism-based practices are more attractive for journalists as they focus on people, a proactive stance, avoiding ethnic differences and promoting peaceful solutions (Galtung, 2002; Lee & Maslog, 2005; Lynch & Galtung, 2010; Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2014; Neumann & Fahmy, 2016). Its treatment of news forces war reportage to be sensationalist and commercial (Seaton & Allen, 1999). Coverage of violence has dominated the news in some non-Western countries. Also, the greater the lack of balance in international news, the less chance of receiving media coverage. For instance, conflicts in non-Western countries, such as those in Africa and Asia, have received less attention from the Western mainstream media because of political and economic interests in the West. As Harvey (2012) indicates, Israel-Palestine conflicts, between 1987 and 2007, and the war in Kosovo, in 1999, received 50 times more coverage by the Western mainstream media than all of Africa's humanitarian emergencies combined. Lee and Maslog (2005) studied 1,338 stories from 10 newspapers in four Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines) involved in regional conflicts at the turn of the century. Their analysis reveals that war reportage is dominated by a war journalism frame. Lee and Maslog indicate that the three top most indicators of a war journalism frame are: the focus on an escalation of violence

on the ground, an elite orientation, and a people-oriented image (good or bad). In contrast, according to the Institute for Economics & Peace's report which analysed the output of 37 TV news and current affairs programmes from 23 networks in 15 countries, positive peace journalism made up just 2.4 per cent of coverage globally over the past 12 years (IEP, 2018). The IEP's report (2018, p.3) states 'without peace, it will not be possible to achieve the levels of trust, cooperation, or inclusiveness necessary to solve these challenges, let alone empower the international institutions and organisations necessary to address them. Therefore, peace is the prerequisite for the survival of humanity as we know it in the 21st century'.

With regard to social media, it seems that traditional war reporters are fighting for their identity in modern warfare. The increasing availability and accessibility of social media has created new threats to traditional war journalism and, from a military perspective, to operations security. But social media have also offered influential platforms for groups, non-state actors and individuals to interact, recruit, spread ideologies, and disseminate sensitive information, away from the traditional methods of direct censorship. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc., used to be reserved for communication tools between people around the globe, but more recently have been widely used by politicians, insurgents, NGOs, and non-state actors for elections, advertising, and social mobilisation. Patrikarakos (2017), who reported on the Ukraine and Gaza conflicts, gives an account of the power of social media in determining the strategic ends of military campaigns in 21st century wars. For example, he talks about a seven-year-old girl, Bana Alabed, from Aleppo in Syria, who tweets about airstrike attacks on her city by al-Assad's forces and her call for peace in Syria. Her tweets as evidenced by 332K followers on Twitter had more power than the official propaganda run by the state. She was offered a book deal to tell her story to the world (Goldman, 2017). She tweeted on her account on Twitter (Alabed, 2017): 'I am happy to announce my book will be published by Simon & Schuster. The world must end all the wars now in every part of the world'.

Thus, technology has disrupted the government's monopoly over conflict reportage. Although technology provides satellites, smartphones, drones, and

social media with sufficient space and power to access information and reach a global audience, violations of human rights are not decreasing. In fact, human rights violations are increasing with the use of complex weaponry systems in today's wars, so I will now focus on war and technology and their connections to war journalism.

War and Technology

War and technology have always been connected to each other. Technology defines warfare. It drives innovation in weaponry systems and increases our understanding of the tactical usage of the 'principles of war', such as intelligence, surprise, the fog of war, friction, manoeuvres, command and control, terrain, etc. (Roland, 2009). The relationship between war and technology has evolved throughout history in terms of planning, executing, evaluating, and managing conflict. In today's wars, 'technology' refers to the collective usage of precision weapons, hybrid warfare, asymmetric warfare, drone aircraft, spy satellites, agile ground forces, and real-time communications networks (Shachtman, 2007). Interestingly, some fundamental changes in the 'revolution in military affairs' are in the form of information management.

Technology has improved communications, changed the way people exchange ideas, and affected the way the media represents wars within the context of media ecology theory. Ecology in this context refers to the role of the media as educators and providers of moral orientation in which the environment of communications requires looking at the complex message system regarding its structure, its content and its effectiveness on people's perception (McLuhan 1964; Postman, 1970; Baudrillard, 1995; Virilio & Lotringer, 2000; Chadwick, 2013; Hoskins and O'Loughlin, 2015). Postman (1970) was influenced by the work of the founder of the media ecology theory Marshall McLuhan. Postman's development of the media ecology is based on the idea of the effect of the media on education and culture (Gencarelli, 2000). His interest was on 'how technologies and techniques of communication control the form, quantity, speed, distribution, and direction of information; and how, in turn, such information configurations or biases affect people's perceptions, values, and attitudes' (Postman, 1979, p. 186,

cited in Gencarelli, 2000). In other words, every medium in Postman's perspective changes and biases the message itself. Changes in information ecology followed by changes in how information is being monopolised to distract people from seeing the truth in order to evoke a particular kind of response. Postman indicated that technological innovations in the media had altered people's attention span for information, entertainment and misinformation, so the people are willing to change their definitions of family, childhood, education, intelligence, knowledge etc. to accommodate the demands of new technology (Rubin, 2001).

Baudrillard (1995) provides interesting thoughts regarding war, technology, violence and the media in his work *'The Gulf War did not take place'*. He argued that the Gulf War was a false war in which the major TV networks such as the CNN played an important role in transforming the images of war into a real-time model of simulation that can end the war without resistance (Baudrillard, 1995). He pointed out that the coalition forces during the First Gulf War exploited technological means to gain information superiority. These included excluding the role of the enemy, so the armed forces can operate by their strategy to defeat an enemy with minimal resistance and limited casualties (Merrin, 2018). This side of the argument divides into two dimensions: (1) the reality of fighting appears to be imperfect and fragile in the eyes of global audiences because of the western technological superiority that has transformed the enemy into a computerised target due to the logic of 'revolution in military affairs' (RMA), and (2) in the face of the huge flow of information and news about conflicts, the latter becomes captive to the news. Thus, it has become difficult to gauge its actual reality.

Today, the risk of the digital revlotion goes beyond the effect of television in shaping people perception about war reporting. In fact, the media – whether radio, television, internet, press, or social media – have become constitutive of war rather than a mediator. In Cottle's words (2009, p.110), 'war is being conducted in and through the news media as well as being *communicated* by it. This is a *mediatised* world' (italics in original quotation). New war has emphasised the notion of mediatised war, a form that spreads fear and hatred as a result of humanitarian catastrophes, and becomes conflict-oriented, systematising violence through the brutality of war actors (Kaldor, 2003; Cottle, 2009).

Chadwick (2013) argued that changes in media environments due to the rise of digital media can be understood through the lens of hybridity. He suggests that the new media is better to be seen as a hybrid of newer and older media in which the media in general is 'bundeled of cultural, social, economic, and political practices' (Gainous & Wagner, 2015). Chadwick (2013) indicated that the interaction between new and old media can be characterised by journalistic practices which represent the work of a multiple social actors. This included journalists, activists, and politicians who operate into the new hybrid system to acquire power by an attempt to control the flow of information.

Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2015) use the term 'arrested war' to describe the involvements of media in creating symbolic events that have been designed to influence politics and global crises as the world has passed through broadcast and defused phases of mediatisation in the last two decades. The term 'mediatisation' in Hoskins and O'Loughlin's (2013) approach refers to changes in globalised media, as a consequence of the rise of the media's influence that is part grounded in theories of media ecologies and part in multi-methods that integrate interviews with policy-makers, journalists and other elite actors, and content and discourse analysis of actual reporting. Hoskins & O'Loughlin (2015) claim that the 1990s marked the final stage of a broadcasting war, as satellite television, and governments played a pivotal role in providing real-time coverage. This enabled their control over information through the introduction of the military's pooling system for organising the media access and the growing usage of real-time streaming devices such as robots and drones. It is through the media that the perception of war is constructed, defended or challenged (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2013). The broadcast phase is defined by the idea of a CNN effect in which Western satellite television and global audiovisual each was reinforced through the military's media operations (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2013). However, 9/11 and its aftermath in the War on Terror (WOT) allowed for the emergence of Hoskins and O'Louhglin's second phase: 'diffused war' (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010). Diffused war refers to 'a new paradigm of war in which the meditization of war makes possible more diffuse causal relationship between action and effects, creating greater uncertainty for policymakers in the conduct of war' (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2013, p.3). This phase is defined by the advent of the digital media (Web 2.0), a

weaponization of media with more government control, and a rise of regional (pan-Arab) media (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2013). In this phase, digital content is easily documented, searched, shared, and indexed (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010). In other words, the media become part of the practices of warfare in which wars are shared through a complex web of communications technologies. These technologies, I suggest, create a confusion in our perception of the war and media relationship in the era of new war, affecting views on proximity, immediacy, credibility, and time, and space. The consequences for the practice of war journalism will be presented in Chapter Six.

The third 'arrested phase' of the mediatisation of war involves collaboration between the military and the mainstream media in managing media operations (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2013). This phase enables both military institutions and mainstream media organisations to exercise their monopoly on the media content for the purpose of influencing local and international audiences about the military's actions (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2015; Boyle, 2016). The arrested phase is marked by confusion over dominant military doctrines that are primarily designed to fight counterinsurgency operations instead of conventional combat (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2013). Related to the arrested phase, the findings of Boyle's study demonstrate that mainstream media 'continue to exhibit the re-arresting of agenda setting capabilities that were previously disrupted by the emergence of unintended content' (2016, p 1). As such, methods of war reportage are influenced by an unfolding debate about the emergence of 'new war', 'hidden war' and 'asymmetric war' compared to classic concepts of war such as 'old war', 'total war' and 'limited war' (Cottle, 2009, p.114).

The implications of the 'arrested phase' critically reflect the nature of information that has flooded to heterogeneous audiences across the globe. Indicators of the third phase – among military, insurgent, and civilian user groups since the Iraq War – include consumers (user-generated content [UGC]) and marketers (market-generated content [MGC]) who operate widely on web platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and blogs, and criticise the economic and social values of available social media content (Fiore-Silfvast, 2012).

This thesis focuses on the British context, where the editors of UK newspapers are concerned with reputation, trust, and legal liabilities that remain complications of accepting UGC and MGC contributions (Hermida & Thurman, 2008). One challenge is aligned with the risk of becoming involved with double standards, in reporting global events such as wars, because of the negative impact of the influx of citizen materials through social media. Negative in the sense that they disrupt the relationship between audiences and military leaderships. For example, BBC policy insisted on avoiding trading down the quality of content by publishing unsourced materials because one associated risk is that of losing the license fee payers' support (Bennett, 2011, cited in Gagnon, 2015, p.3). Some evidence indicates that the BBC war correspondents who were attached to British forces in Iraq in 2003 avoided releasing images that contained violence to British television (Wells, 2003). Audiences in the UK, who watched programmes produced by large media outlets such as the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, and Sky News alongside hundreds of international news networks such as CNN, Fox News, Al-Jazeera, etc., have been concerned with the right of the individual to watch, listen, and read factual, impartial, informative and exciting media coverage (Gunter, 2009). For example, Choi et al. (2006) found that opponents of the Iraq War recognised internet accounts as inconsistent with the official pro-government narrative line, and subsequently viewed these internet sources as more credible than pro- and neutral-government positions.

In summary, this section discuused three key features caused by the technological revolution of 'mediatising' war: (1) technology shapes war and determines the course of military action, (2) it affects the way media represent wars, and, (3) it makes finding information out more accessible to people and has quickly become central part of their life.

In the next subsection, I will address why it is essential to explore literature about military strategy in engaging with the media in areas of conflict; namely, because it is necessary to balance the public's 'right to know' with the risk of publishing sensitive information which might endanger national security.

Military Media Management Strategies

Each modern military force has developed an approach to deal with the media in times of war. The strategy of military media management in modern warfare is proactive, in accordance with the media's activities and its demands. It attempts to orient military performance in contemporary conflict as a means of engaging with the press, to avoid any criticism among war journalists by denying access (Maltby, 2012a, p.35). It has been argued that war reporters struggle with their dissatisfaction about the way the military has handled information on the frontline, as they experience much tension and have sceptical relations with the military (Maltby, 2012a). For example, the military have ensured access for the press in the limited operations that the US military, the UK military, and NATO were involved with in the second half of the last century outside North America and Europe, such as in Central, and Latin America, North and East Africa, and the Middle East. Indeed, the Iraq War marked a new milestone in this military-media relationship that introduced an 'embedded programme', one which legitimised the presence of war journalists, photographers, and freelance journalists in military units.

Reviewing the military's media policies in US combat operations forced the Pentagon to accelerate introducing a 'pooling system' in the First Gulf War in 1991, and an 'embedded programme' in the Iraq War in 2003. Steuck (1992) pointed out that the 'pooling system' organised by the coalition forces to facilitate journalists access in the First Gulf War in 1991 failed to build trust between the military and the media, particularly around logistical problems, censorship, briefing delays, and access difficulties. The US military decided to fix this tension between the military and the media by offering more incentives for war reporters to integrate the media into war planning by attaching them into military forces, known later as the embedded system.

The concept of 'embedded journalism' characterised a new dimension of military-media collaboration, particularly during a time of war and peace-building operations; however, embedded journalism was not a post-Cold War invention. Some researchers argue that it can be traced back to the First World War;

nonetheless, embedded journalism became more important during the war against Iraq in 2003, as more than 3000 journalists registered to cover the war, of whom over 500 were attached to coalition forces (Tumber & Palmer, 2004, pp.1–2). The British government had prior experience in embedding journalists in their naval fleets during the Falklands War in 1982, having adopted a new strategy of cooperating with journalists – unlike the American government's unsuccessful dealings with the American media during the Vietnam War (1955-1975). Information management was used effectively by the British government under the term 'operational security', which gave the military the right to delay and censor information, and conduct deception operations (Tumber & Palmer, 2004b, pp.1–2). The Task Force Group selected the journalists who would embark on the naval fleet; even the British MoD was worried about the negative impact of transmitted images from the battlefield, which might harm the troops and their families (Tumber & Palmer, 2004a). Ultimately, the military strategy of managing warfare information conflicted with demands from civilian officials in Westminster. These officials wanted to counter enemy propaganda whereas military officers strove to limit the dissemination of operating losses (Schlesinger, 1989).

The embedded system raises ethical issues concerning media independence and accountability. Through this system, although journalists enjoyed access to the frontline and protection, there were limitations on their movements and broadcasting. Conflicts of interest were a major concern. Journalists argued with unit commanders, as they had to sign an agreement that gave the military the right to check on any materials before they were broadcast and this often led to disagreements (Froneman & Swanepoel, 2004). The US/UK argument of protecting national security was used widely by governments after 9/11 to attack the public's privacy and suppress freedom of opinion and expression (Taylor & Cobain, 2013).

To conclude this section, a review of the literature reveals that modern warfare has two critical dimensions: the revolution of military technology and the advance in communications technology. Both have serious impacts on how war is conducted, and the way it is reported both in the traditional and social media. Although the military have experienced different types of media management

since the Victorian era, in order to avoid interference in operations, from either journalists or the enemy, it has been observed that there has been an attempt in US and British military approaches since the Iraq War in 2003 to foster reciprocal relations with the media. The implications of these relationships have challenged journalists in war reporting, as they have had to balance the public's 'right to know' with the risk of publishing sensitive information which might endanger national security (Kampf & Liebes, 2013).

The next section provides a critical review of the complexity of discourse on the state-media relationship through the lens of three trends that have shaped the debate about the media's effect in the process of foreign policy decision-making.

Media and State

The debate over the relationship between the media and war is centred on three trends of thought within the context of state-media relations: (1) the active player, (2) the passive player and, (3) the neutral player. Drawing on previous research, I argue that these three models are in conflict over where the media should be positioned in the decision-making process. Yet the models demonstrate an agreement on the media as powerful entities and their persuasive influence in public perception about security events (Bennett et al., 1982; Glišic, 2008). The outcome of this review will help to explain which model arguably fits this study.

Media Influence Model (Active Player)

The first trend of thought views the role of media as an active one in setting foreign policy agenda. Livingstone and Lunt (1994) indicate that Western societies enjoy the benefit of having several types of media and the free flow of information, providing a forum for voices, diverse opinions and ideas, and a diversity of multicultural expression through print, radio, and broadcasting. The notions of 'citizenship' and 'public sphere' dominated the debate about the involvement of ordinary people in democratic political communications to express

their opinions and to question established power (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994).[2] Can the mass media provide a positive public forum that can be exploited for critical discussion of national security issues particularly around foreign policy and the act of war?

The active role of media in the foreign policy decision-making process, and the media's high degree of professionalism when performing as a watchdog for the public in mediating, collecting, and monitoring the government's behaviour and policies is a widely-shared ideal. However, a main threat to media pluralism is the issue of media monopoly beside the commercial and entertainment elements of media productions (Peruško, 2013).

For a long time, policymakers have realised the powerful presence of media, especially television, in covering local and international relations both in times of peace and in times of war. Cohen's statement (1963) that the mass media 'may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about', may explain to what extent scholars defend their arguments about the active role of media in setting news and foreign policy agendas in the US (Perloff, 2013, p.122). Cohen's statement is highly quoted in most of the media literature when referring to the impact of media on policy and public opinion. His statement opened the window for Maxwell McCombs to produce his approach on 'agenda setting', when he hypothesised that the media have the power to reflect the political content and order the priority of issues in each political campaign (Naveh, 2002).

It seems that the impact of the media on the foreign policy process tends to be more active as further advances in media technologies are developed. An argument began over the effect of real-time coverage on the political agenda

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[2] The work of Habermas (1984) on the 'public sphere' provides a critical theory of the role of the citizen in social life and modernity. Habermas (1984, p.49) illustrates that 'by "the public sphere" we mean first of all a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body'. As a result of changing communications environment in the era of information, Habermas's concept of the 'public sphere' has lost much of its original meaning from a platform of social and political participations to a realm of commercialisation, entertainment and advertising (Boeder, 2005).

when Cable News Network (CNN) provided real-time coverage of the Tienanmen Square demonstration in 1989 (Hoge, 1994, cited in Balabanova, 2007). Moreover, the remarkable presence of 24/7 news in the Gulf War (1991), Kosovo (1998), Afghanistan (2001), and the Iraq War (2003) that may have offered intelligence information, is significant in the debate about the effect of CNN and other news channels in provoking reactions from domestic audiences and political elites to international crises (Robinson, 1999; Gilboa, 2005).

The term 'CNN effect' describes the power of the media to influence the formulation of foreign policy (Robinson, 2013). CNN effect refers to how policymakers seem to lose control of international policy because of the significant impact of the media on public opinion (Hammond, 2007, cited in Franco, 2012). Livingston (1997) provides three variations of this effect: (a) agenda setting as a reflection of news content; (b) policy impediments that affect the operation of security and may undermine morale; and, (c) an acceleration of decision-making by shortening the time of response. He indicates that these variations may apply to different types of intervention, ranging from conventional warfare to consensual humanitarian operations.

It can be argued that the media have forced democratic governments to be accountable for solving humanitarian crises (Jacobsen, 2000), as well as elite decision-makers' loss of policy control to news media (Livingston & Eachus, 1995, cited in Srivastava, 2009). Jakobsen (2000) argues that the CNN effect is only relevant to small cases, but the media could apply additional pressure when the decision about the use of force is not on the top of the Western government's agenda. Jakobsen shows that the direct influence of the media is limited during pre- and post-conflict periods because the media are more likely to focus on actual fighting during the war. Therefore, it is understandably difficult for people to support any military action needed because the success stories of conciliations, international negotiations, and humanitarian aid are neglected, and news is almost always concerned with violence, death, and destruction from the perspective of the war-oriented model (Jakobsen, 2000). Gibbs (2000, cited in Gilboa, 2005) studied the intervention in Somalia by applying a realist approach and found that the USA's own national interest, to secure the passage of US oil

tankers through the Bab-el-Mandeb strait was behind the government's decision to intercede in Somalia, not the CNN effect. Additionally, Zingarelli (2010) found no CNN effect regarding American policy towards the war in Gaza. For other researchers, the media may have a visible impact on national policy. Shaw (1996, cited in Gilboa, 2005) indicates in his study of the coverage of the Northern Iraq-Kurdish crisis that the British print and electronic media had a significant impact on public opinion, by representing the victims of violence. Soon after 9/11, CNN and the BBC were challenged by the rise of the 'Al-Jazeera effect', as the Qatari network channel (Al-Jazeera) attempted to replace the Western media for the first time in reporting wars by holding the advantage of information and exclusive images (Franco, 2012, p.168).

The second school of thought, 'passive player', portrays a different account of the role of media in foreign policy and conflict management.

The Manufacturing Consent Model (Passive Player)

The second trend views the media as a passive player in the foreign policy sphere, falling into the hands of the government's monopoly. Several scholars in media studies view the US media as 'no more than a pawn in the political game played by the powerful political authority and establishment in Washington' (Chang, 1993, cited in Malek, 1997, p.5). Robinson (2001) divides this 'passive player' trend into two versions: the *executive* and the *elite* (italics in original source). In the *executive* version, the media are not expected to stand against the executive official policy and agenda lines of the government/military, and therefore, will not influence National Security Policy.

The *elite* version considers that influential members of society influence the media, whether or not they are part of the executive or represent other key groups in society. In his seminal work *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam*, Hallin (1986, p.4) points out that the relationship between the media and government during the Vietnam War was a conflict that changed the dynamics of the war. The term 'national security consensus' that Hallin referred to in his study played a hegemonic role in framing government activities and presenting to the

audience an official discourse of countering communist expansion in South Vietnam. Hallin explained that the media turned against the official government when some government members expressed their disagreement with the war. This division in the US administration encouraged the media to criticise the US government for the rise of casualties in the US troops. The lessons that the US learned from the British policy in the Falklands War pushed the US administration to adopt a tight policy towards war journalists in war zones, and excluded the media from the war on Grenada in 1983 (Hallin, 1986, p.5). Referring to Cohen's argument about the great influence of the media to persuade people about what to think, Entman (2007) claims that the elite want people to act and behave in certain ways in order to secure their own political agenda. The framing of political news is essential to achieve this goal; as Entman (1993, p.53) indicates, media framing focuses on parts of reality through selection, giving them salience in order to 'define problems', 'make moral judgments', and 'suggest remedies', through a process of 'making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences'.

Accordingly, an official leadership is keen to be presented by the media in a positive way, through many editorial features such as transmitting an official storyline, the means of disseminating issues, the framing of cases, the selecting of information, and emphasis and tone (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, cited in Segev, 2003). Because of their contributions in explaining how mainstream media content is structured, Herman & Chomsky (1998) argue that the news in the 'Propaganda model' or 'Manufacturing Consent model' is filtered by money and power, so that elites can sustain control via maintaining their economic and political interests and increase profits (Gilboa, 2005). The media 'serve mainly as a supportive arm of the state and dominant elites, focusing heavily on themes serviceable to them, and debating and exposing within accepted frames of reference' (Herman, 1993, p.25, cited in Gilboa, 2005). Therefore, the government acts as the primary source of propaganda materials, having the ability to set the agenda, because of its advantageous position to monopolise information sources.

Schlesinger (1989) argues that the above model is flawed because Herman & Chomsky assumed that the US media functioned like its counterparts in communist

countries. The US model is not controlled by one single party, as in a totalitarian system, but rather by the influence of the government and agents of power such as political, economic, and cultural entities operating as primary information sources, and the dominant mass media firms.

Similarly, Robinson et al. (2010) found that the notion of patriotism acts as a more essential driver of supportive coverage than relying on information from the government in the context of war. Even if anti-war newspapers were more critical towards progress on the frontline or government policy, the media needed to show support and sympathy towards the soldiers and their sacrifice. This finding connects with Zaller and Chiu's claim (2001) that culture and patriotism are more critical driving factors of the news media's support for official elites than indexing news. Indexing is a theory of news content and media-state relations according to the US political system. It refers to the 'norms used by news organizations to select news sources and frames' (Bennett, 2016, p.1). Wolfe (2013) indicates that other sources may appear in media coverage, such as foreign sources as opposition voices, but that journalists have no choice but to marginalise these non-official sources when a positive consensus on government's policies is dominated.

The third school of thought has proposed a neutral position to construct its arguments about the relations between the media and war.

The Policy of Uncertainty Model (Neutral Player)

Both models discussed thus far (media influence and manufacturing consent) have distinct views on the media's position and responsibilities in terms of a National Security Strategy. The third trend advocates that the media-government relationship is neither an active nor passive player in the policy-making process. Berry (1990) argues that both media and government are not working hand in hand to manipulate public opinion, because journalists have developed comprehensive knowledge throughout their careers about foreign policy and its processes, so they are aware of the government's intentions to manipulate their beliefs and become fully capable of resisting that manipulation. He concludes that journalists reflect

in a story what they have seen on the field without intervention or guidance from the government, yet they lack sufficient power to influence foreign policy.

The press aims to inform and update their audience on the progress of foreign policy. Wolfsfeld (1997, p.2) asserts that news media became a critical factor in political conflicts. He studied the mutual relationship between government and media in different types of conflicts, such as the war in Bosnia, the conflict in Somalia, the Gulf War, and the Palestinian Intifada. He argues that each antagonist within the conflict has their own explanation and interpretation of using a particular media framework in order to achieve their goals and gain public support. Robinson (2000; 2001; 2002, cited in Segev, 2003) developed the 'Policy-Media Interaction' model in order to better understand the role of the media in the foreign policy process. He criticises both the CNN effect approach that views the media as an active player in foreign policy, and the 'propaganda model' that claims that media is a passive player in foreign policy-making. Robinson (2000) identified four factors that determine the role of media in such a complex environment: elite consensus, elite dissensus, policy certainty, and policy uncertainty. He argued that when there is a consensus among the elite over a certain issue, it is difficult for the media to oppose this consensus, but if there is a confrontation in the elite over a debate then the media will have a major opportunity to contribute in that debate by aligning with one side over the others. In addition, uncertainty over a policy will make policymakers less likely to influence the media.

Robinson (2000) applied his model to two cases: the US intervention in Bosnia in 1995 and in Kosovo in 1999. Robinson (2000) indicates that the media succeeded in affecting the US's decision to deploy forces in order to protect the Gorazde safe area in Bosnia when uncertainty in policy was visible. However, in Kosovo critical media coverage could not alter the Clinton Administration's air-war policy to protect Albanian refugees when a particular policy line was already taken. In short, media coverage may influence the process of decision-making, particularly with cases of humanitarian intervention when uncertain policy exists but media coverage does not work effectively in uncertain situations.

To conclude, this section has engaged with the literature to outline the state-media relationship debate, and the possibility of media influence in Western foreign policy decision-making processes and security issues. The consequences of wars as 'good business for media' (Taylor, 2000, p.183, cited in Balabanova, 2007, p.145) have been a matter of concern for many scholars about the role of media in setting foreign policy agendas. The CNN effect claims the influence of reporting round-the-clock from battlefields regarding the national government policy is supported by new technology, while the Manufacturing Consent model argues that the media are controlled by money and power. The validity of the CNN effect and Manufacturing Consent model in different political, economic, and social contexts has been examined throughout different military campaigns over the last few decades (Balabanova, 2007, p.145). The Policy of Uncertainty model offers an interactive account, claiming that media coverage can affect military intervention when uncertain policy exists, but media influence is unlikely when established policies are considered.

Indeed, this thesis acknowledges the significant role of journalistic practices in shaping people's perception of military action during times of conflict. However, it does not look at the role of the media from the perspective of the CNN effect or the Manufacturing Consent model. It is more supportive of the Uncertainty model, which has argued that the influence of the media on the decision-making process depends on the political context. The media may or may not influence military intervention decisions for humanitarian efforts. Journalists, while attached to troops in traditional conflicts, are aware of the consequences that being under military control has on their freedom, independence, and credibility. I will discuss in this thesis the journalists' concern about the impact of the military control has had on their journalistic practices in situations where they were embedded by established forces in the form of conventional conflicts such as the Iraq War. I compare this with the emerging dynamics of reporting today's conflicts. Indeed, war reporters have developed in-depth knowledge on how the media might be considered as an asset within the structure of the military's command and control system. However, new technology and the nature of today's wars make journalism a dangerous job which enables other players such as bloggers, activists, and non-state actor's media machines to shape war stories.

Understanding the connections between the war paradigm and the media directs attention to the structure of military media management strategies in contemporary war.

Making Connections with the New War Paradigm

Due to the changing face of war and the evolving nature of communications, the current term 'military media management' may no longer reflect new types of 21st-century conflict. I propose to use, instead, the term 'modern media operations and national security' to describe this new form of relations between media and military during contemporary conflicts. In addition, this description provides a broad framework for how military communications interact with other instruments of national power (e.g. diplomatic, economic, and media). As the communications network seems to be disrupted in contemporary warfare, due to the complexity of violence in counterinsurgency operations (COINs), there is a gap between people's perceptions of the war effort and the challenges of national security. My research explores such consequences through examining the friction between the military and the media in COIN, concerning the war paradigm and media doctrines.

The New War Paradigm

The strategic execution of the military campaign in contemporary warfare is to be understood by reference to the paradigm of the 'old war', and the shift to 'new war' school of thought (Kaldor, 2007). I will review how a classic war theorist like Clausewitz described the concept of war in the Napoleonic era, and then explore the concept of new war in the 21st century. Clausewitz stresses in *On War* that war is the continuation of politics by other means (Clausewitz, 1989), which essentially means that the end state of going to war is to securely govern a country, not simply for the aim of achieving victory (Gray, 2005). Clausewitz claims that military campaign is an 'act of violence to compel our opponent to fulfil our will' (Clausewitz, 1989, p.12). The centre of gravity (COG) in Clausewitz's old model of industrial warfare refers to physical objects such as the enemy's military power which is considered as a source of strength (Echevarria, 2003).

Clausewitz states that the four elements of war are danger, exertion, uncertainty, and chance (Gray, 2005). As Clausewitz indicates, each era has its own style of war (Potter, 2013). Modern military forces such as the US, the UK, and NATO have expanded Clausewitz's concept, offering a comprehensive approach to this battle compact system. Of course, elements of war remain relevant in today's conflicts whether the battle takes place in the air, on land or sea, or any other physical space, because the final desired mission of any military campaign is to destroy the enemy's capabilities by any means (Fowler, 2002). The military's attempt to influence people's perception through the structure and the process of information and media operations doctrines is among these means of war.

However, massive developments in military technology have awarded the concept of new war more weight in war literature since the end of the Cold War in 1989 (Rigterink, 2012), a period that is associated with the emergence of a new world order, the rise of globalisation, and the rise of transnational terrorism. While nuclear weapons were a significant feature of the 20th century, a revolution in military affairs (RMA) driven by developments in new technologies, communications, and military doctrines are what influence today's conflicts. The character of war has begun to change since the end of the Second World War (Kaldor, 2007; Rigterink, 2012), as the number of inter-state wars has decreased, while intra-state conflicts have become more frequent (Medynskyi, 2015). To be specific, the Cold War ended the war between developed countries because of its implications for both the democratic system and those countries' economic interests. Indeed, the focus of military doctrines has shifted from the concept of old war to the notion of new war, especially in the aftermath of 9/11, developing an analytical model during wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to include asymmetric techniques – especially the use of disproportionate force in combat operations (Suganami, 2002). Certainly, the WOT and other military operations against non-state actors – such as military operations in Afghanistan, North Iraq and Syria – provide examples of how military forces aim to accomplish military objectives and produce decisive results by minimising the risk of human casualties or the waste of military resources.

The perception of threat and its consequences to Western countries has changed since 9/11 followed by bombings in several European cities such as London, Brussels, and Paris, bombings that were named 'terror attacks' which have been driven by political and ideological factors (Goodwin et al., 2005). The level of response to imminent and perceived threats and engagements with other war actors has potentially changed along with the media and audiences (Thussu & Freedman, 2003). Recently, it is noted that state-to-state conflict is in decline as international trends show an increase in confrontation and conflict in the last few decades (Thussu & Freedman, 2003). Smith (2007) indicates that industrial warfare, where war took place between state armies, is no longer in existence as the 'War Amongst the People' (WAP) can engage organised violence of non-state components in a complex political context. The WAP in Smith's proposal does not follow the sequence of the old paradigm of conflict: peace-crisis-war-resolution-peace, but rather is comprised of continued confrontation and conflicts. To be more precise, WAP is characterised in Smith's (2007) proposal by five features:

1) Military action does not end with the destruction of the enemy but continues through the process of political mobilisation, such as negotiations, economic sanctions, and humanitarian operations.

2) People become military targets; either, because they support the enemy or stand against the state's forces.

3) Conflict tends to be timeless; possibly unending, because of the idea of continuous confrontation.

4) The military commander strives to preserve his forces rather than accomplish his combat action at any cost.

5) The revolution in military affairs allows powerful countries to arm their forces with high-tech weapons, which may not be used.

Nations are more likely to fight as a multinational force under the umbrella of international or regional organisations, such as the United Nations (Gulf War), NATO (Kosovo, Libya), informal alliances (ISAF in Afghanistan), Western and Arab coalitions (Syria, Iraq and Yemen), and national groups allied against non-state groups, whether they are Hamas, Hezbollah, the Taliban, or the IRA. Because the old concept of conventional war had failed to achieve a decisive end to the war in Iraq in 2003, the governments of the USA and UK developed specific military

counterinsurgency doctrines against any adopted enemy who fights in an insurgency and also adopted asymmetric methods (Kilcullen, 2005).

Relating to my first research question – to investigate the revolution in military thinking – it is important to have an awareness of the existing literature that has been written on military policy. The following subsection will discuss the changes in military policies that have had a significant impact on military intervention into other countries.

Military Policy

There are several changes in the nature of intervention strategy in modern war, which include: the 'Pre-Emptive Strike' strategy in the US National Security Strategy (Bush-Doctrine), changes in the NATO Strategic Concept from 'one of flexible response to one of flexible intervention', Revolutions in Military Affairs (RMA), and the emergence of asymmetric warfare against non-state actors (Kutz, 2013).

Although the US military budget has been limited by many constraints since the 2011 Budget Control Act (BCA), American strategy focuses more on particular challenges than others (Cancian & Harrison, 2015). It is important to remember that the USA has shifted its overall strategy to enforce its presence in the Pacific region and to assist NATO in countering the Russian threat and defending the Baltic States (Cancian & Harrison, 2015). For instance, although the *2018 National Defense Strategy* indicates that countering terrorism is not a primary concern for the US, the complexity of the global security environment, characterised by the digital revolution, inter-state strategic competition, new concepts of warfare, and increased global disorder are central concerns (Mattis, 2018). Additionally, *The National Cyber Strategy* document recognises fundamental threats from the US's strategic adversaries, such as Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, which are capable of challenging US security (USNCS, 2018).

From the perspective of the USA, mainly since 9/11, the US military has adopted a 'Pre-Emptive Strike Strategy', which takes into consideration the possibility of

rogue states or terrorist organisations using weapons of mass destruction as their first choice (Haine & Lindström, 2002). Accordingly, the Pentagon has been using these strategies as a justification for raising and expanding military expenditure (Friedman & Logan, 2012) to secure its territory and to be prepared to counter any threats before they reach their borders. This is what is meant by conducting asymmetric warfare against state or non-state actors. Asymmetric warfare is an old technique, but the modern version has predominantly evolved since the beginning of the Cold War, which required operating in small, covert groups, and engaging in lethal and violent activities (Long, 2008).

The US military information doctrine stresses the impact of the media in the surrounding information environment. It acknowledges the capabilities of both state and non-state adversaries to utilise their communication technology to gain information superiority (USINFO, 2014). However, the doctrine addresses the importance of information management and advocates acquiring information superiority (USINFO, 2014).

The NATO Strategic Concept places greater emphasis on the geographical dimension, expanding its scope to deal with a diverse set of threats away from central Europe and beyond the NATO borders, particularly around the Euro-Atlantic area (Lesser et al., 2000). Therefore, the Mediterranean regional crises that might affect the European security agenda have increasingly become part of NATO's agenda (Larrabee et al., 1998). The Information Operations (Info Ops) doctrine of the NATO military sets a framework for NATO forces in operating with other NATO partners and NGOs (AJP-3.10, 2009). The doctrine also identifies the role of Info Ops in supporting NATO operations. NATO adopts a US definition by identifying Info Ops as a 'military function to provide advice and coordination of military information activities in order to create desired effects on the will, understanding and capability of adversaries, potential adversaries and other NAC approved parties in support of Alliance mission objectives' (AJP-3.10, 2009, pp.1–3). A revolution in military affairs (RMA) took place in the early 1980s, and was mainly about the effect of modern technology on the battlefield and how to conduct warfare in four dimensions – length, breadth, elevation, and time (Hauschild, 1999). The high capabilities of RMA have been evident on the ground

since the Gulf War in 1991, which allowed the coalition forces to accomplish their tasks with a high degree of confidence and within a set timeline, because of higher efficiency, while reducing the risk of collateral damage using smaller forces, and the ability to conduct precision strikes with the use of active information distribution systems (Ibrügger & Rapporteur, 1998). Highly capable information systems have been identified as another dimension of modern warfare, although information has been acknowledged as critical since ancient times, information systems are being used heavily in contemporary warfare to disrupt adversaries' information assets, and for physically destructive means (Ibrügger & Rapporteur, 1998). Accordingly, Western armies, particularly the US and the UK, have become smaller, more agile, and professional, to deal with small groups in irregular warfare in different and remote locations, like Al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan, and ISIS in Iraq and Syria (Thornton, 2015).

Information has always been regarded as a valuable weapon on the battlefield. The Chinese thinker Sun Tzu (~400–320 B.C.) emphasised in *The Art of War* the importance of knowing one's enemy by obtaining information dominance, which is the crucial factor in winning a war without fighting battles (Cavelty, 2008). Therefore, how have the British military doctrines addressed conducting information operations (IO) during times of conflict?

Historically, the British Armed Forces have much experience in the production of counterinsurgency operations (COIN) doctrines. The traditional UK COIN doctrine can be traced back to the 1890s (Hazel, 2008). Since the end of the Cold War, the UK's primary goal has developed from the defence of the homeland into more engagement with allies, and the international community as part of multi-lateral missions (Hines et al., 2015). This development has driven the Armed Forces to review and update the COIN several times in different periods to meet the operational challenges in war zones. In fact, one of these missions is to conduct COINs into other nation's territories that have experienced domestic insecurity issues. Issues caused by several potential factors, such as political and economic problems, instability and humanitarian crisis (Uzun, 2014). As a result, the British Armed Forces published a 2008 version of COIN, by a new generation of military practitioners, to understand the challenges of global insurgency (Hazel, 2008).

The period between 2001–2007 was crucial for COIN because of the previous belief among military scholars that the classical form of 'the use of force' is no longer valid in modern warfare (Dixon, 2009) due to the complexity of war and the decline of inter-state conflicts. Understanding the operational lessons of putting COIN doctrine into practice in several operations outside of the UK's territory – mainly in WW2 1945, Malaya 1960, Dhofar 1976, Northern Ireland 1995, and Sierra Leone 2001 – has provided the British government with other elements to support civil-military coordination over the division in domestic opinion on the latest conflicts such as post-Afghanistan 2001 and Iraq 2003 (Hazel, 2008).

To conclude this section, the period of transition in the global system since the end of the Cold War has had a significant impact on military strategies and journalists' ways of thinking and dealing with high or low intensity conflicts far from their countries.

Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to build and construct arguments from different disciplines, such as war studies, international relations, politics, journalism, and media studies that all analyse current trends in media and war. This chapter has provided a review and critique of the existing work on the media and war within the context of war journalism, with the aim of creating a conceptual structure for this thesis.

The key argument that I am drawing from the previous media and war literature is the growing concern regarding the shifting nature of mutual relations between media and government – with regard to the transformation in both military affairs and war reporting in terms of intent and execution. Studies of the relations between the media, government and military had two aspects: (1) the media are a major player in modern warfare and have great influence in the process of decision-making in security and foreign policy issues, and in shaping the public's perception of war. Therefore, the military has adopted new strategies in information operations, within the compact strategy that considers cooperation with war journalists, in the field or at home, as one of the elements of a war

campaign's plans, which are exposed to a series of measurements and evaluations during different phases of a war. Furthermore, the military introduced the 'embedded programme' to facilitate their access to journalists on the frontline, and to control as much as they could of a war's content and photography. Traditionally, as the secrecy of operations shapes successful warfare, governments expected a high degree of support and compliance from the media during periods of tension with other states or non-state actors, while the military enjoyed its monopoly over the stream of information by imposing a set of guidelines to restrict journalists' movements on the frontline, and enforcing censorship over their content. Interpreting the implications of the state-media relationship models have helped to design a framework of analysis which enables examination of the friction within journalism and war relationship in spaces of democratisation that widely promote notions of diversity, the plurality of information, and multiplicity of voices (Barnett & Townend, 2015). My framework of analysis will consider development in the UK military's media doctrines since the Iraq War of 2003 that includes the war paradigm, the integration contest, and organisational structure, which will be discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis in the part entitled 'War journalism in a Contested Military Space'. (2) The emergence of new styles of war such as asymmetrical warfare, insurgency and counterinsurgency, and cyber warfare, sometimes in the absence of total war, make war journalism risky to operate without the help of the government either to access information, or to provide logistical and administrative support. Here, the media found themselves contained within military supervision over their content and movements unless they chose to work independently.

This comprehensive reading of the literature will help in formulating the key three research questions of this thesis and planning the study. This research aims to provide new insights into the challenges that war correspondents are facing in modern warfare within the framework of the new war. It focuses on how war correspondents have responded to the threat of the revolution in military affairs (RMA); the impact new media have had on redefining the relationships between war and the home front since the end of the Iraq War of 2003; the challenges new technology has brought to the narrative of war reporting; and which factors have redefined the boundaries between journalists, including those between bloggers

and the military, as well as journalists' concerns about objectivity, professionalism, self-censorship, and their own personal safety within war zones.

The next chapter will outline the methods used in this thesis.

Chapter Three:
Research Methodology

Introduction

This research looks at various implications of the new war paradigm that has, in turn, brought about a new form of evolving military-media relations, regarding significant developments in military thinking, and digitalisation. I have aimed to investigate the intersection of a centralised UK military's media operation policy with the practice of war journalism since the Iraq War of 2003. Additionally, I will present a comprehensive perspective on war reporters who have represented major British media outlets by examining how they have accommodated themselves into the latest imperatives of the new war.

Much of the debate in the existing literature is centred around the broken relationship between the media and the military since the end of the Cold War of 1989 due to political, economic, and technological developments. As Chapter Two outlined, the classic model of organising media access to frontlines such as the embedded programme was adopted to incorporate the media into state-to-state conflicts, but has been less suited to the new era of warfare. To fill the void in the literature, this thesis will provide a better understanding of the impact of changing the war paradigm has had on journalist autonomy in situations where war journalists are forced to operate in non-conventional warfare by powerful entities which have some leverage in war zones whether they are regular or irregular forces. Further concerns arise where war correspondents struggle for free access to the frontline, ensuring balance in war stories, by being able to freely talk to paramilitary groups and civilians, by responding to the demands of real-time coverage, by reporting the suffering with less military control, and by ensuring their safety in war zones. Other concerns capture reputation, trust, and legal liabilities that remain unfolding challenges.

This chapter employs a qualitative research methodology to investigate how the military and the media have adapted to the changes of the new war paradigm in

the 21st century. I will engage with both the research questions and the research paradigm through the lens of grounded theory. The process of data collection was facilitated by using qualitative semi-structured interviews as well as document analysis.

This chapter is divided into three sections: (1) research design, (2) data collection; and, (3) data analysis. I shall begin by outlining the research design.

Research Design

The aim of the research design is to explain how all key parts of the research work together to articulate the research questions. This includes the research sample, data management, and the analytical framework. The way research questions are addressed is vital to identify philosophical approaches and to address the central research problem. The research design provides 'a framework for the collection and analysis of data' (Bryman, 2012, p.46), therefore it must be robust, accessible, relevant, ethical, and concise, with practical strategies for collecting and managing qualitative data in an iterative process (Creswell, 2014; Green & Stoneman, 2016). Gubrium and Hoolstein's phrase 'method talk' (1997, cited in Travers, 2001, p.9), is a useful tool to describe the rationale of the epistemology of this study. For instance, choosing philosophical viewpoints provides a useful approach to construct an analytical framework, and offer a rich and inclusive interpretation of the data through the lens of peoples' experiences.

In the first part of this chapter I will give a brief summary of the methodological concepts that have been applied to this research.

Qualitative Methodology

As previously mentioned in the introductory chapters, the work presented in this thesis is based on a qualitative approach. This research method offers insights into aspects of human experience, to seek an in-depth understanding of the particular social phenomena of war journalism and military policy from the perspective of the people who are being investigated via multiple systems of inquiry (Langdridge, 2007; Hennink et al., 2011). The quality of any qualitative study is primarily

determined by choosing applicable methods that fit the task, data, and analytical framework of the thesis. The design for this study was systematically developed with the following question in mind: what type of pieces of evidence do I need to collect to support my arguments to ensure the research design 'deals with logical problems and not a logistical problem' (Yin, 1989, p.29). The principal method of my fieldwork was a qualitative. Note that a 'qualitative approach is well suited to investigating work practices and managerial styles and carrying out organisational research' (Doyle & Frith, 2004, p.6) and therefore suited this research topic by allowing participants to narrate their stories, experiences, and comments in a structured process.

Bryman (1988, p.61, cited in Prior, 1997, p.64) states that 'the most fundamental characteristic of qualitative research is its express commitment to viewing events, actions, "norms", values etc., from the perspective of the people who are being studied'. However, other sources are useful to employ in qualitative research, such as academic literature, observation, and official documents, to better understand the social phenomenon being studied. Indeed, one justification for qualitative research is that it is generated from the meaning which emerges from the data, unlike a quantitative approach which utilises a numerical method to test a hypothesis or questions deduced from theory (Wilmot, 2005). For some, qualitative methods are often described as 'a naturalistic, interpretative approach, concerned with exploring phenomena "from the interior"' (Flick, 2009, p. 3, cited in Ritchie et al., 2013). Such methods seek to understand what respondents think and how they feel, aiming to address 'how?', 'why?' and 'what?' in order to provide valid and reliable data on respondents' emotional and contextual aspects (Dongre et al., 2009).

This research's focus begins with the query of 'how can I explore the ways that war reporters have developed to engage with the complexity of armed conflicts within the context of transformation in the characteristics of new war in the 21st century?'. War journalists have experienced multiple challenges based on the circumstances that affect their personal judgement as eyewitnesses to conflict events. Emerging questions arising from this complex experience will look at other factors that have had an influence on war journalists' field practice, such as

emergent trends of war in the period after Iraq War (2003), the role of military doctrines in managing information strategies in modern warfare, and the power of new communication technology which has influenced how wars are conducted and reported. The process of data collection will be demonstrated in Section Two of this chapter. The findings of the data are supported by reviewing the challenges of the practice of war journalism and the impact of new technology on war reportage in the period of post-Iraq War 2003, a period that has marked a new milestone in the military-media relationship. Additionally, the civil war in Syria and other conflicts in the Middle East region, such as Libya, North Iraq and Yemen, and the conflict in the Ukraine, were chosen to further support the research questions by providing an in-depth understanding of new trends in war journalism practice, and the military's media management policies.

The interpretive paradigm of this study therefore seeks to collect subjective interpretations about the social action in war zones (Snape & Spencer, 2006, cited in Hennink et al., 2011). In general, these interpretations will be obtained by looking at multiple approaches that have attempted to investigate gathering knowledge about the social world. A qualitative approach has been applied to media research to emphasise the unique experiences of war journalists across cultures and synergies with other professionals (Scannell, 2006).

In addition, by acknowledging reflexivity in the process of data collection, my position should be understood as being part of the social world that I have investigated (Hennink et al., 2011). Consequently, examining the practice of journalism in the frontline leads us towards broader issues and rich insights on factors that play vital roles in journalists giving meaning to war stories, such as the role of values and ideology, human interest, the hierarchy of media organisation, media routine, communication skills, identity, and the challenges of competitor market factors.

The critical point here is to develop a conceptual framework to conduct qualitative research in alignment with grounded theory.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory originated in the work of Glaser and Strauss in 1965, 1968 and 1970 when they proposed systematic methodological strategies to analyse death and dying in hospitals (Charmaz, 2014). Corbin and Strauss (1990) state that grounded theory is a research method used to collect and analyse emerging data that is derived inductively through the process of studying the social phenomenon. At a time when a qualitative approach was losing its momentum in the US, Glaser and Strauss proposed their analytic framework to move the research process beyond description, which included data collection, and building codes and categories from emerging data by employing constant comparison methods and memo-writing techniques to define gaps and select samples for theory development (Charmaz, 2014). Thus, grounded theory provides an analytical tool to direct and manage data collection and construct original analysis (Charmaz, 2006, p.2).

Charmaz offers a balanced perspective between those who advocate on objectivist grounded approach to quantitative studies and constructivist scholars who demand grounded theory should be used for qualitative studies (Riessman, 2006). Charmaz (2014, p.12) claims that 'constructivist grounded theory adopts the inductive comparative, emergent, and open-ended approach of Glaser and Strauss' (1967) original statement'. Indeed, people construct their images and perception of events according to their interpretation of what their senses tell them. Single events become connected to other events. For example, some of the unembedded war reporters and media researchers have described the embedded system with the US and UK militaries as a bad agreement that has spoiled the notion of credibility of the Western mainstream media during the Iraq War in 2003 (Tumber & Palmer, 2003a; Cockburn, 2010). However, the US and UK forces have conducted a counterinsurgency operation in Northern Iraq and Syria since the fall of Iraq in 2003 which made the establishment of an embedded system unlikely possible in the frontline in such circumstances due to the extent of violence in the battlefields. In this sense, accessing frontlines has become more complicated for war reporters without the logistical support from states' professional military forces such as those of the US, UK, or NATO. Developing cumulative knowledge

about the social world is based on our self-reflection rather than only on our lived experiences (Ormston et al., 2014). Unlike classic grounded theory that gives more weight to emerging data to discover a theory, Charmaz (2014, p.17) indicates that 'we construct our grounded theories through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives and research practice'. Therefore, it has been argued that many shared memories are documented and communicated through language, which can be analysed in order to understand the phenomenological context of an individual's social practice (Matheson, 2005, p.4).

Interestingly, working in a complicated situation such as the theatre of war that is dominated by powerful agents who are capable of limiting the flow of information, explores the dilemma of the act of the war reporting. Here, I will describe the significant conflict between ethical journalistic values and reality. Grounded theory was selected for this project because the conceptual categories can be identified, refined, and integrated throughout the process of analysis to establish a relationship between categories to construct theory 'grounded' in the data itself.

This project has benefited from a constructivist grounded approach, which aims to explain the phenomena under investigation rather than relying on a pre-existing theory. Choosing grounded theory for this project has the following benefits (Stern, 1994; Glaser, 1998; Charmaz, 2014):

- It provides flexible guidelines, rather than structured models to identify knowledge gaps, make sense of the data and identify the implications of the research. Sensitising concepts such as new war, control, disinformation, values, bias, etc. should work as a guide to develop ideas but should not control the assumptions of the inquiry. The term 'sensitizing concepts' emerges 'when the observer discovers something worth problematizing, "addressing" the concept to the objects of investigation, producing precise and accurate evidence of chosen phenomena' (Faulkner, 2009, pp.82–86).
- Researchers are urged to be reflexive while observing the phenomena, including what they record, and how they record and organise first-hand information throughout the process of data collection and transcription.

- It simultaneously allows the coding and categorising of data from multiple sources during the process of data collection.
- It helps the researcher to develop a research strategy by focusing on distinct viewpoints, as the researcher improves their knowledge about specific details and particular situations.
- It helps the researcher to restate the qualitative research problem as emergent data appears while interviewing and gathering documents.
- It provides a feasible approach to analyse documents that are associated to the field study.

Qualitative analysis employs different methods such as observation, interviewing, ethnographic fieldwork, document analysis, discourse analysis, and textual analysis (Travers, 2001, p.2). Due to the limitations of this research, I applied a mixed method approach that included interviewing and document analysis. Employing mixed methods allowed the findings from different and multiple sources to be checked, thereby reducing systematic bias in the process of data collection.

Interviewing

Social science scholars take different approaches to deal with issues of how to interpret the data that has been collected in interviews. On one side, positivists propose that the 'pure interview' serves as a 'mirror of reflection' to an objective understanding of reality in the social world. On the other side, radical social constructionists have voiced scepticism regarding knowledge obtained via interactive interviews, which are constructed by both participants (interviewer and interviewee) to describe 'out there', according to their roles in constructing their own narrative of the social world (Miller & Glassner, 1997). This research cannot provide an absolute reflection of war journalists' social world, as positivists claim, due to its limitations such as sample and geographical challenges, but it does attempt to reflect their experiences on the frontline. Although an interview is itself a symbolic interaction, the possibility of gaining knowledge from practical accounts is feasible (Miller & Glassner, 1997).

Therefore, in order to document journalists' experiences, I employed qualitative intensive semi-structured interviews to achieve a depth of mutual, interactive understanding. This type of interview is situated between structured and focused interviews, where the researcher has the freedom to generate questions beyond the interviewee's answers, and expand on issues as they are raised (May, 1999). A semi-structured interview employs methods, techniques and processes that reflect a subjective approach; one which analyses the implications of knowledge produced from the social world and focuses on the constructed reality of people's understanding of their social world (Sarantakos, 2005). During an intensive interview the combination of focused attention and open-ended questions are vital for grounded theory, focusing on the emergence of conceptual categories and the interpretation of qualitative data (Langdridge, 2007; Charmaz, 2014). I aimed to provide an authentic insight into respondents' lived experiences through semi-structured interviews (Silverman, 1993, cited in Miller & Glassner, 1997). Thus, my task was to present respondent perspectives in a fair way and describe the work aspects that were shaped by their subjective political views and cultural understanding. Dealing with multiple and fragmented discourses occurs through a long process of conducting qualitative interviews, starting from the moment of identifying research coding and categorising units of analysis, scheduling meetings and, finally, transcribing, and analysing the findings of the data gathered.

Reflexivity is important throughout the research of this study. Hennink et al. (2011, p.20) indicate two aspects of reflexivity that may influence data created from qualitative research: personal and interpersonal. As part of a human being, 'personal reflexivity' can be recognised in a researcher's behaviour, attitude, and personal values such as social background, experience, and assumptions. However, 'interpersonal reflexivity' deals with the general atmosphere of the interview setting, as a participant may feel uncomfortable in an interview.

I will explain in the section of Data Collection the process of recruiting participants for this study. However, it is vital to mention that this research grouped its research population into two categories: (1) distinguished war reporters who work for major media outlets in the UK; and (2) media operations experts at the UK's Ministry of Defence. The first phase of my data collection was

to select a representative sample of veteran war journalists who had covered more than one conflict. I did so via snowball sampling (Dongre et al., 2009). The overall purpose was to describe their perspectives, expectations, and perceived challenges as a result of their involvement in war reporting. The research population incorporated a mixture of full-time and freelance journalists, and ones who represented newspapers, broadcasting, and news agencies in the UK. Social media users such as activists, bloggers, YouTubers, Twitter users, etc., were excluded from this study as the primary focus was on those who represent the traditional media in newspapers, broadcasting, and news agencies.

The second phase of my data collection was to approach the UK Ministry of Defence. The aim was to meet key military media officers with long-term experience in planning, producing, and managing media operation policies in the UK Armed Forces, particularly in joint military operations. I assumed that the bilateral relationship between my country (Oman) and the UK, which has a long history based on mutual strategic interests, would facilitate access to the military headquarters in Northwood or other military units. In fact, I had the opportunity to work with the UK Armed Forces in September 2001, while 9/11 took place, as Oman and the UK conducted the military exercise 'Swift Sword 2' in Oman. However, none of those assumptions were helpful because my contacts were not able to help.

In the following subsection, I shall talk about the second method I employed for this research: document analysis.

Document Analysis

Documents provide rich, substantial, and generous data, but also can be too subjective, time-consuming and lacking sufficient data (Bowen, 2009). Organisational documents, such as yearly reports, doctrines, books, instructions, guidelines, etc., offer important details just like other sources for evaluation and interpretation. Documents help to extract meanings that are rigorously tested, as they produce factual data that helps to support theoretical and empirical research (Labuschagne, 2003; Rapley, 2007; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Bowen, 2009). As

grounded theory developed through the process of generating themes that emerge inductively out of data (Morse and Field, 1995), the rationality of employing document analysis in qualitative research is to investigate convergence and corroboration as a source of evidence by triangulating data collection. In effect, this method minimises the risk of being biased, such as when the study relies only on a single source (Bowen, 2009). For the purpose of this research, I was keen to support my findings with UK military documents (e.g. doctrines, reports and guidelines) alongside other military publications from the US and NATO such as the National Security Strategy of the United States, National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, and NATO Military Public Affairs Policy. Appendex (1) shows the list of military and governmental documents used in this research.

It is important to mention that the documents in question contained text, images, visuals (charts and graphs), definitions, quotations, and specific discourse appropriate to the military community. Therefore, the process of coding the language being used in these documents focused on drawing relations between concepts, objects, and the process of incorporating war reporters into the war efforts as well as constructing positive images about military business (Rid, 2007; Maltby, 2012b). Fowler (1991, p.10) claims that 'anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position: language is not a clear window but a refracting, structuring medium'. Thus, documents represent an author's perspective, aimed at achieving specific goals in a certain time. As Charmaz (2014) has also argued, documents are not just a record of events or policies, but a discourse to be read in the right context; whether aiming to explore, justify, or to explain actions in relation to structural and situational context.

As part of this research, as I was concerned with the structure of the military-media relationship in a British context, relevant documents were selected based on criteria being given by the UK military. The functionality of media operations policies within the military's structure is linked to other military doctrines, such as Info Ops, communications, cyber warfare, Psy Ops, and other government publications that are relevant to the national strategy. As I adopted an outsider approach, my literature review was helpful at the beginning of this research to

determine what type of documents I should consider and how they could be accessed. Navigating previous empirical studies on the military-media relationship in the post-Iraq War of 2003, particularly in the US, the UK, and NATO, was the first step to generate a list of documents needed for this project. Soon after I gathered all the required information, the Google was used then to check the availability of the documents I had identified on the internet. Fortunately, the major documents I listed were available to access online, except for some classified notes that have restricted access or were not posted, but document availability did not affect my findings in general.

One of the most crucial tasks of research design is how to formulate simple, concise and answerable questions: these are usually derived from previous reading, media reports, personal experience or observation (Green & Stoneman 2016, pp.45–47). The next subsection highlights the process of articulating the research questions.

Research Questions

As I have been engaged with the process of conducting social research in the doctorate programme at CCPR, University of Glasgow, since Autumn 2015 I have been driven by personal motivation, alongside long-term experience comprised of more than 22 years spent in media operation activities in the Royal Navy of Oman and Oman's National Defence College. Therefore, the research questions reflect my interest in formulating a critical appraisal of the practice of war journalism in war zones, and in military media management strategies. Although I approached this field broadly, with little knowledge of the relevant literature, I was able to develop my research skills as I joined more than 22 academic workshops, attended CCPR research sessions, and became involved in regular supervisory meetings, and local, and international conferences. The end goal was to maintain a high level of motivation and enthusiasm throughout research as studying such sophisticated issues became more challenging and demanding.

Blaikie (2000, cited in Green & Stoneman, 2016, p.51) suggests that there are three types of research question: the question of *what* provides descriptions of

social phenomena, the question of *how* concerns the process, and the question of *why* aims to understand causes and reasons. As the central focus of this research is to describe the process of integrating war reporters into military culture, a mixture of these three types of questions: *what*, *how*, and *why,* were employed in respect to the research objectives, and data collected.

The key three research questions of this thesis were structured in three analysis chapters as follows:

Chapter Four: How have new tactics been devised by the military to incorporate journalism into the war effort while minimising disruptive forms of reporting? This question seeks to describe the current relationship between the military and media in terms of the new war in the British context, such as the revolution in military doctrines, organisational structure, and information management strategies. Additionally, it aims to discuss the limitations of incorporating local and international journalism into the UK military's war efforts because of changes in the war paradigm and the nature of war tactics.

Chapter Five: In what ways has war journalism changed since the occupation of Iraq in 2003? Through this question, the aim is to describe the character of wartime journalism as a practice after the invasion/occupation of Iraq, when US, and UK forces implemented an embedded system for organising press-military relations. Indeed, looking into individual perspectives is vital to map out a set of codes related to practising war journalism, as the characteristics of war have changed since the post-Cold War era. The findings identify a set of challenges that war correspondents encountered in war zones in terms of changing circumstances (performance, events and effects) and social interaction (structure, functions and social system) either in the form of embedded journalism with military units, or in the form of unilateralism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

Chapter Six: How has the development of a hybrid media ecology made the role of professional war reporters vulnerable in a fast-changing situation? This question looks at the third argument of this project by analysing how the revolution in digitalisation has affected the ethical role of wartime journalism. Certainly, the

results of the two previous questions will help to articulate the struggle of war reporters who represent the UK's traditional media to mitigate the risk of carrying out frontline coverage in 'new war' environments.

The next subsection outlines the research approach that has been taken in this study.

Challenges of Fieldwork

The key point here is to review methods and strategies that have been applied to the collection of field data. What emerges from this journey can be divided into three phases, which include planning, executing, and reviewing the collected information. As I was about to embark on conducting interviews with selected journalists who were directly involved in war reporting over the last two decades, I had to ensure that the list of the journalists contained a mixture of staff and freelancers who worked for British media outlets. In the meantime, I approached the UK's Ministry of Defence to facilitate meeting with military media officers who played a substantial role in the production of media operations policy, and had been on the frontline associated with military units in running information management strategies over the last 20 years.

The process of data collection was divided into two stages: the first stage aimed to produce a list of war journalists and to collect their data to ensure their names met the purpose of the thesis. In this stage, I adopted an outside-in approach. My outsider status offered a general understanding of the complexity of the current military-media relationship in a British context. Despite the lack of knowledge on the diversity of the UK media culture, as Robson (2002, cited in Gallais, 2003) suggests I spent considerable time exploring the '*environment of the study*' (italics in original) the better to know my 'strange' world. Certainly, this approach provided me with some reflexive tools to avoid bias while collecting information about targeted participants. For instance, to avoid labelling them according to their organisation, positions, political orientation, ideology, ethnicity, colour, age, and sex. It also provided more opportunities to access a wide-variety of media institutions across the UK, instead of being constrained with a few limited media

establishments. As such, I was confidently able, at that moment, to suggest some names representing major media outlets in the UK, such as veteran journalists who worked for the BBC, *The Guardian*, *The Times*, Sky TV, Channel 4, and other distinguished freelancers.

However, as a person from outside the local community, I experienced feelings of anxiety, tension, and waves of panic because of the lack of available information about British war journalists. I approached several research centres, which were supposed to have access to data, such as Chatham House, and the Frontline Club in London, but their response was negative as they indicated that British law protects the disclosure of personal information. Thus, I rethought my options and approached the official sites of my participants' organisations to ask them for help. Day after day, I was surprised by the information I gathered through this method – which provided me with much personal satisfaction.

Initially, when considering this option, I was worried that the participants I had targeted would treat my invitation as spam or a junk mail. I realised from the beginning that my participants' busy schedule would be a significant obstacle and lead them to reject or ignore my emails. I sent 29 invitations, I conducted 19 interviews. Two of the respondents even apologised for not being able to take part in this research because they thought their contributions would no longer be beneficial to the research, as they had already talked about their experiences of war reporting in their own publications, or left the profession some years ago. Appendix (2) shows journalists interviewd for this project.

The hardest and longest part of my work was establishing contact with the UK Ministry of Defence. Here I adopted several strategies to approach the designated military units. Initially, I had to brief them about my projects' objectives, which university I represented, and what kind of support I was requesting. I utilized my military background for the purpose of building trust with my participants by explaining that I had connections within the UK Armed Forces and some strategic studies centres in the UK such as Chatham House and the Frontline Club. Similarly, I sent an official letter to the Oman Military Attaché at the Embassy of Oman in London, asking him to officially approach the UK MoD to get access to some

military units that look at the media and information operations responsible for producing, monitoring, and running media operations, especially after the Iraq War in 2003.

Unfortunately, after more than year and a half of continuously contacting the person who was appointed to facilitate my research requirements, their response was inefficient because of poor information provided by the liaison officer. Additionally, the MoD's think tank, the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC), rejected my application to talk to their staff without providing more details – despite the fact that I had relied heavily upon the healthy relationship between Oman and the UK especially in defence and military training perspectives. The moment I realised that all official doors were closed to establish a reliable contact within the MoD, I had no other options left but to make a personal call to a senior officer in the British Army who I used to know. I hoped to use this connection to break through the inflexible bureaucratic system that was providing a barrier to the research. Therefore, an approach to a retired General, David Richards, was very helpful to the fieldwork. Baron Richards of Herstmonceux used to be the Chief of the Defence Staff, and served as a commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Southern Afghanistan between 2006 and 2008. I have known General Richards since 2014 when he gave a series of presentations about national security at the National Defence College in Oman. He certainly welcomed my invitation, offering his personal support to the project by introducing me to some media officers in the British Army, as well as contributing to the thesis by reflecting on his personal experiences as an army commander in confronting the media in several conflicts, particularly in Sierra Leone and Afghanistan. In fact, his arrangements with the office of General Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter, Chief of the Defence Staff, to get support from designated military departments was very helpful. All correspondence and arrangements for meeting Baron Richards included getting a security pass to enter the Peers' Entrance at the House of Lords was arranged through his executive assistant, Charlotte Smith, who was very professional and cooperative. Our correspondence began in November 2017 until the actual day of meeting which was on Wednesday 6th February 2018.

The second stage of data collection concerned organising my travel to London in a way that would help, within the limited span of time we had and within the limited access to their units, to arrange inclusive interviews with war correspondents. However, the engagement process took more extended time and effort than anticipated, and I was under pressure to schedule several meetings, arrange travel and secure access. It worked successfully sometimes but, on the other hand, it was frustrating as some journalists were travelling because of their commitments abroad. I made five visits to London. Each visit lasted between one to three days because I was a single parent, at that time, and I couldn't leave my two children on their own in Glasgow so childcare arrangements had to be made to cover each visit.

I will now explain the data collection stage in more detail.

Data Collection

The objectives of this research were to analyse individual and institutional perspectives to fully reflect complex, unstable and changeable armed conflicts, in an ambiguous and uncertain political environment.

The data collection process included sampling and ethical considerations. I shall start this section with the method used to select respondents, which includes approaching candidates, describing the challenges of fieldwork and explaining the rationale behind recruiting research participants.

Participant Recruitment

It is important for qualitative research practices to achieve fair and robust results by designing and developing a well-constructed sampling strategy that applies an unbiased, accurate reflection of the researched population, and a robust framework. As previously described in the section above, I prepared a list of names, addresses, contact numbers, and emails of the perspective respondents (see Appendixes 2 and 3). The research utilised snowball sampling driven by the respondents. This is a method of non-probability sampling where existing participants nominate other potential participants to take part in the study;

participants who share similar characteristics, meet the eligibility criteria, and whose contribution to the study are considered potentially significant (Dongre et al., 2009).

I realised from the beginning that the number of participants was going to increase in size as more connections were made, but I decided to avoid using a larger sample, and focused on a small and select group of professionals which would enable me to reach data saturation based on the quality of the interviews, and to accomplish the research objectives within the available time span and resources (McCracken, 1988; Marshall et al., 2013). I decided on an overall target of 20 to 30 respondents due to saturation and to 'facilitate the researcher's close association with the respondents, and enhance the validity of fine-grained, in-depth inquiry in naturalistic settings' (Crouch and McKenzie, 2006, p. 1). Glaser and Stern (cited in Charmaz, 2014, p.33) claim that small samples do not affect findings because the purpose of grounded theory is to create conceptual categories that explore relations between categories and discover their properties. In the early stages, I began by looking for details of war journalists on specific websites, such as the BBC, *The Guardian, The Times,* Sky News, Channel 4*, and* also at research institutions in London. For example, Chatham House, the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), the International News Safety Institute (INSI), the Frontline Club, the Institute of War, and the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). Although I discovered how poor these websites are, regarding the availability of updated information on how to reach war reporters, it was relatively helpful because I made direct contact with the front desks in each organization. In this way I was able to asking them to provide me with specific details, such as the names of people who performed war reportage beside their official or personal contacts. It was very stressful and time-consuming but, in the end, using this method I succeeded in collecting important data about my participants.

The first call I made was to Caroline Wyatt of the BBC who was the first person to agree to talk about her experiences as a BBC former defence correspondent. Caroline was well known for her reports during the Iraq War in 2003 when she was attached to several British Army units. To make my first visit to the BBC beneficial,

Caroline introduced me to her colleagues Jonathan Beale and Paul Adam. Both of them served as defence correspondents at the BBC between 2003 and 2018. Following this first meeting, recruiting more participants became much easier than at the early stages of the research due to snowballing.

Certainly, I received a positive response when I referenced the BBC interviews with potential correspondents, aiming to build trust with my participants and offering flexible methods of interviewing: face to face, if possible, or by Skype, phone call, or email. Eleven of my interviews were conducted between November 2016 and February 2018. These interviews lasted 30 minutes to 1 hour. I made two more visits to the BBC in London on November 2016 and February 2017 to meet Lyse Doucet and Jeremy Bowen. Despite the fact that Lyse Doucet is a Canadian, her position as chief international correspondent at the BBC was too valuable to the research findings to pass up. In fact, her experience was invaluable in terms of how she faced multiple threats when, wearing a male uniform, she sneaked into tribal communities ruled by radical clerics like the Taliban in Afghanistan, to talk to the people in the late 1980s. David Pratt, a journalist of *The Herald*, also entered Afghanistan surreptitiously in the same period but by wearing a traditional Afghani women's outfit.

The next subsection looks at the ethical concerns from a theoretical and practical perspective.

Ethical Considerations

This project was submitted to the ethics committee for approval in accordance with the University of Glasgow ethical policy. As Weber (1946, cited in Silverman, 2014, p.140) stresses, almost all research is influenced by the values of the researcher and, as such, one ethical dilemma is to treat the people being studied and their stories with appropriate care and responsibility. Hammersley (1999, p.18, cited in Edwards & Mauthner, 2012) points out that researchers in the past were more ethically concerned to set boundaries on their research techniques, carrying out the process of the research in terms of the quality of information that they produced. However, since then a researcher's ethical concerns have

expanded to involve other factors during fieldwork, such as participant treatment and knowledge itself, political aims, and personal perspectives (Gillies & Alldred, 2012). The data was analysed by maintaining a balance between the interviewee's personal and professional perspectives regarding their experiences in practising journalism in times of conflicts. Debates on ethical research demand that the researcher retains their sense of moral deliberation, choice and personal accountability throughout the entire research process (Edwards & Mauthner, 2002). The ethics of epistemology have been a focus amongst researchers driven by general principles such as honesty, responsibility, justice and respect (Edwards & Mauthner, 2002) regardless of contrast and tensions between diverse ethical approaches.

In order to develop a constructive ethical framework, I created a set of goals to achieve during the research process:

a. To ensure objectivity, impartiality, and responsibility throughout the research process by building good relationships with respondents and positively engaging with them from the early stages of the research.

b. To ensure mutual trust with the people studied, by focusing on the value of their contribution to the research.

c. To protect people's identity and their points of view.

d. To avoid any harm to respondents or contradicting their ideologies during the interview process.

e. To be aware of biases occurring during analysis.

To achieve these goals, I ensured that the respondents had all the details they needed with regard to the nature, aims, and questions of the research. Furthermore, the respondents were informed about their rights during the interviews, such as data protection, recording, and cancelling or withdrawing from the interviews at any time before being asked to sign a consent form.

In addition, to my ethics procedure, the next section will shed light on the principles and mechanisms of the data collection.

Data Analysis

It is recommended that qualitative data collection should be an 'ongoing' or 'iterative' process, which is achievable by combining several data collection methods (Dongre et al., 2009). Employing such logically sequenced methods aids the researcher to explore and display the strengths and limitations of each selected method, and consider whether the chosen method is feasible for particular questions. Indeed, data analysis provides the desired knowledge for the research project, and is not only cost-effective, adjustable to the resources available at a given time, but also based on the overall strategy of the study and its conceptual framework (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

The data analysis for this study begins with interview transcription. Creawell (2006, cited by Remler & Ryzin 2011) indicates that analysing qualitative data employs three strategies: organising the data, creating codes, and describing themes in narrative form. The process of data analysis integrates analysis with the collection of interviews and other forms of data until we feel the data reaches a saturation level (Remler and Ryzin 2011). Additionally, data analysis involves being immersed in the data to identify the exclusive experience of participants' contribution and develop a theory based on people's perspectives (Hennink et al., 2011).

In fact, my approach to qualitative data analysis was based on the inductive strategies of grounded theory. In this section, I will describe the process of building the analytical framework, coding, and ensuring the reliability, and validity of the research.

The Process of Analysis

This research was extremely focused on exploring the new landscape of wartime journalism to study what has emerged in war reporting phenomena in the digital age regarding the structure of relations, functional, and technological developments. The information requested from participants provided generous answers to the set of questions I asked, such as 'What happened on the warfront?', 'How do reporters plan for their journey?', 'What are their motivations?', 'How

do they experience distance from their home and family?', 'How do they manage to get out of the dead zone?', 'What are the fundamental challenges while attached to task forces in foreign assignments?', 'How do they respond to contemporary issues such as the pressures of news deadlines, competitive media culture, and the implications of 24/7 news?', and finally, 'What are their concerns about safety?' These collections of queries were important at the beginning of my journey when I was about to embark on setting up interviews and schedule meetings with my interviewees. The questions were selected to shape our conversation with a set of questions that helped participants to recall memories about their opinions and attitudes. Moreover, the questions examine how reporters are able to present a kind of broad and accurate representation of what is going on the ground as it is despite the numerous players in combat zones. Indeed, the testimony of my interviewees and their autobiographies provide more insights into war reporting so as to understand how this experience could affect the strategic behaviour of the state/military in dealing with media operations during a time of war – as I will show in the chapters that follow.

Document analysis was employed to provide more insights into the practice and ethics of war reporting, and to avoid the risk of interviews lacking depth in their perspectives of contemporary war journalism and emerging issues in the digital era. I was aware of the subjective discourse that might arise from individuals' testimonies, and their psychological attitudes towards their experiences and political ideology. So I decided to remain objective in asking questions and avoid engaging in unending debates on sensitive issues. However, in a few cases I asked interviewees for more details when I felt their feedback lacked balancing or contextual information.

I have to admit that most of the participants showed a willingness to help and support my project despite their busy daily lives. Some of them generously offered to introduce me to their friends and colleagues, and facilitated my admission to their organisation – as most of them required an official pass to get in. One of the veteran journalists offered an interview at his house which reflects the high level of trust that he awarded to me. Moreover, I originally arranged to meet one of the defence correspondents in Manchester, as he lectures at the University of

Manchester, but because of a sudden commitment which I couldn't postpone, he agreed to an interview by telephone which I really valued and appreciated.

Following my supervisors' advice, I armed myself with a backup recorder and notebook to take the main notes while conducting interviews. Also, I knew from my previous experience that technology sometimes betrays researchers, so before each meeting I checked both recorders to make sure that they were functioning. Moreover, I documented my interviews by taking selfie pictures with my participants at the end of each interview as evidence that the interview took place between us (see Appendix 4).

The next subsection discusses how the analytical coding was constructed.

Constructing Codes

Coding is the primary method of analysis in grounded theory. It clarifies 'the ongoing process of assigning conceptual labels to different segments of data in order to identify themes, patterns, processes and relationships' (Gilbert, 2008, p.87). Coding entails a combination of constant comparative methods and researcher engagements to discover the relationship between emergent themes and lived experience (Charmaz, 2014, p.321). The process of coding includes two types of qualitative data analysis: data reduction and the coding itself. Miles and Huberman (1994, p.11) identify data reduction as 'a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organises data in such a way that "final" conclusions can be drawn and verified'. My coding procedures took different approaches throughout this project. Coding began during earlier research stages, when the central themes of journalism and war reporting (Chapter Two) were identified and enabled me to design and determine the scope of the research. Corbin and Strauss (2008) state that the coding process consists of three levels of building codes: (a) open coding; (b) axial coding; and, (c) selective coding. In all three stages, the researcher compares data, understands connections, and chooses the core categories that fit his/her analysis (Kolb, 2012). At an organisational level, coding helps to explore participant meaning, to understand new actions, and to discover patterns and contrasts (Charmaz, 2014). In addition,

it describes what happens in the data by separating, sorting and synthesising these data into themes during qualitative coding analysis (Charmaz, 2006, p.2).

With regard to this thesis, my set of research questions are sorted into two categories: the first category looks at the general challenges that war reporters have experienced while operating with or without military units, particularly in Afghanistan in 2001, in Iraq in 2003, and the war against ISIS in Mosul in 2016. The second category emphasises the current challenges that staff correspondents and local producers face during the ongoing civil war in Syria, Northern Iraq, and the Ukraine. All of these questions aim to answer the major research questions outlined at the start of this chapter and in the Introduction. Thematic analysis was established to understand personal and media outlet arrangements which facilitated the access of military teams to war zones and the journalists' views towards their safety and the safety of their team while operating with the professional military or getting support from local fixers on the ground.

Interpreting meaning and actions in the data, by employing thematic coding and sensitising concepts, can help to pinpoint the common threads that can be obtained throughout a set of interviews (Bowen, 2009). I generated a set of analysis codes and divided them into themes, categories, and subcategories (see tables 5 and 6). Sensitising concepts provide the researcher with a 'general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances. Whereas definitive concepts provide prescriptions of what to see, sensitising concepts merely suggest directions along which to look' (Blumer, 1954, cited in Bowen, 2006, p.2). Sensitising concepts includes 'action, meaning, process, agency, situation, identity, and self' (Charmaz, 2014, p.117). Indeed, the whole set of open-ended questions used in the interviews was designed to encourage participants to self-reflect on their personal experiences from the front line. As advised by Charmaz (2014, p.114), the purpose of coding is to help researchers to remain vigilant to all emerging theoretical directions that are revealed by engaging with the data; directions that might be different from the initial plan or grant proposal. Therefore, one goal of using thematic themes is to create a matrix of patterns and interrelationships from the data. As such, sensitising concepts were used to shape the conceptual framework as they emerged.

Although reliability and validity are more attached to quantitative research, the following subsection explains why it is important to use these two terms in relation to qualitative research.

Reliability and Validity

In qualitative research practice, reliability, and validity are important issues to ensure that the research is considered to be objective, accountable, and achieves inclusiveness in its recordings and transcripts (Perakyla, 1997, p.201, in Silverman, 2014). Questions of reliability and validity for this research are relevant to this research, as I have employed semi-structured interviews with a number of professional journalists, military personnel, and document analysis. Testing the gathered data paves the ground for describing it as reliable and valid. Unlike testing reliability in quantitative research projects through pre-catagorised results that ideally show the same reading on repeated trials, reliability can be achieved in qualitative research in the following two ways: ensuring transparency of the research process, and ensuring theoretical transparency, so that the research methods can be assessed and repeated by others (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006, cited in Silverman, 2014, p.83). Silverman (2014, p.90) stresses that reliability can also be achieved by comparing the results of several researchers. Thus, it is necessary that the researcher makes his research process and theoretical approach clear for other researchers as well as for respondents. For my thesis, I tested the reliability of the findings by ensuring transparency in the process of collecting data. For example, I allowed my participants during interviews to positively interact with the research questions and answer them according to the framework of analysis used for recording an emerging codes and creating a structure for the data that have been developed based on the main research questions. Furthermore, I paid close attention to the quality of technical equipment used in recording and transcribing, whether using video or audio recording equipment, conducting telephone interviews, or analysing written documents.

Validating the data of a research project can be achieved by checking if the researcher was able to be authentic in asking correct, relevant, and appropriate questions (Perakyla, 1997, cited in Silverman, 2014). This point raises concerns about the generalisability of the research findings. How can a result that represents only a small community be generalised? (Perakyla, 1997, p.201, cited in Silverman, 2014). For my thesis, I tested the validation of the findings through respondent feedback. As my respondents were considered as highly educated professionals in their field it was a valuable exercise to check whether my initial findings reflected their own experiences (Silverman, 2014). Primarily, military policies in managing media in current conflicts provided other windows to validating my findings, as the documents enabled me to compare similarities and differences between each document, especially regarding the treatment of information and communications in different military campaigns.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the exhilaration of looking for answers in undertaking this research journey. In this chapter, I discussed the methods applied, the ethical considerations, and the process of research chosen to address the research questions. The research is based on a multidisciplinary approach by combining the common tools of the military, media, and journalism with a grounded theory approach. I developed an epistemological analysis approach to identify, qualify, and elaborate on emergent data, which was based on grounded theory. Constructivist grounded theory methods are concerned with an inductive, comparative, emergent, and open-ended approach to data analysis (Charmaz, 2006, p.2). The core objective of this research is to provide a relevant critique of the practice of wartime journalism in a UK context (in the 21st century), taking into account the changeable ecology of journalistic work, developments in military affairs and warfare, and the implications of communications technology.

Based on semi-structured interviews and document analysis, my analytical framework has been designed to explore how the military and the media have adapted to changes in the war paradigm, military doctrines, and communications technologies. This will help to identify challenges that war journalists face during

foreign assignments, and how they deal with the absence of direct military support at a time when an embedded program is not really activated on the ground. In addition, the analytical framework will describe the rationale behind existing rules and regulations for media operations set up by the UK Armed Forces. As briefly mentioned, reflexivity is important in any type of qualitative research where researchers wish to improve their professional practice and constructive critical approach, as reflexivity involves the researcher presenting a high level of awareness in employing their research methods, research questions, a participant recruitment strategy, ethical considerations, and subjective perspectives that may have an impact on the data being analysed (D'Cruz et al., 2007; Langdridge, 2007). Samples used in grounded theory are usually small, aiming to explore the relationship between themes, categories, and codes rather than to define the data's properties (Langdridge, 2007, p.85; Charmaz, 2014, p.33).

In the following three chapters, I review the findings of this research, connect it to the existing literature, and describe emergent war reportage trends of significance for the relationship between war correspondents and military media organisations. The first findings chapter, Chapter Four, will explore evolving military thinking as a result of changes in the 'new war' paradigm, such as information and communications technologies that have influenced the relationship between the military and the media in what has been termed 'War Amongst the People'. I will examine the new tactics that have been devised by the UK military to incorporate journalism into the war effort as much as possible, and to minimise disruptive forms of reporting. Chapter Five will explore the role and character of war journalism after the invasion/occupation of Iraq in 2003, Chapter Six will address the development of a hybrid media ecology that has been making the role of war reporters vulnerable in fast-changing situations in today's conflicts, before concluding the thesis with suggestions for future research about incorporating the mass media into the era of the new war.

Chapter Four:

Beyond a Military Media Operations Doctrine

Introduction

This chapter addresses the first question of the thesis: how have new tactics been devised by the military to incorporate journalism into the war effort while minimising disruptive forms of reporting? Here, I consider a selection of existing Defence and Armed Forces publications by the UK MoD – for example, military doctrines, media projects, leaflets, and digital products concerning relationship management, services, and policies that have been structured by the UK military to integrate military media strategies into the new war paradigm since the Iraq War of 2003. The analysis in this chapter draws on original interviews with key personnel involved in the implementation of military media strategies and examines other nations' and organisations' doctrines carried out by the UK's Armed Forces in overseas deployment campaigns, such as those organised by the US and NATO.

Chapter Four therefore focuses on the most recent developments in today's wars: Info Ops, Media Ops, CCS, and communications technologies that have been influencing the relationship between the military and the media in what is termed 'War Amongst the People' (WAP). In the WAP, armed forces fight a mix of conventional and non-conventional warfare – including insurgency, terrorism, cybersecurity, and irregular style of non-state actors – under the scrutiny of public opinion, and traditional and social media (Smith, 2006). Despite the vital role of the media in communicating what occurs in battlespaces for local and global audiences, the military's policy of organising media access to the frontline pooling system in the Gulf War of 1991 and the embedded programme in the Iraq War of 2003 have affected every aspect of journalistic practices. The control of the military over news sources leads to a lack of diversity in reportage, and essentially a lack of autonomy and freedom of expression for war reporters.

This chapter is comprised of two distinct but related sections. Each section of this chapter supports finding out the answer to how the military have dealt with incorporation and minimising disruption of war reportage. Section one discusses challenges to the adoption of the typology of 'new war' in the military's media doctrines, incorporating the changing war paradigm, and the military's strategic context as well as an organisational perspective. Section two examines changes in the military's Media Ops landscape, concerning policies and structure within a British military context.

In what follows, I scrutinise the friction in the military-media relationship in situations where journalism is challenged by a changing war paradigm, and I will also consider the integration process and an organisational perspective.

War Journalism in a Contested Military Space

This section aims to describe the impact the 'new war' paradigm has on the UK military's media management doctrines in the Iraq War since 2003. A military doctrine is 'the fundamental set of principles that guides military forces as they pursue national security objectives' (Rand.org, 2018, p.1). It provides a set of general guidelines, definitions, concepts, and structure for forces and stakeholders in the strategic, operational and tactical levels related to the use of forces during times of war and peace. The key purpose of the UK military's Media Ops doctrine is 'to communicate the principal themes and messages to the appropriate audiences in pursuit of the desired effect whilst remaining sensitive to media interests' (JDP 3-45.1, 2007, pp.1–3).

The significance of 'new war' is that it offers both opportunities and challenges for journalistic work that operates in a contested and highly-demanding environment. As the nature of war has evolved, ways of collecting and transmitting news have also changed, considering the use of rapid innovations in satellite telecommunications, video and image transmission, smartphones, military technology and databases (Maltby & Keeble, 2007; Rid, 2007).

This analysis discusses issues around the fractured state/military-media relationship in the 21ˢᵗ century. To do so I will consider developments in the war paradigm, information technology, and organisational structure. From a military perspective, information is a substantial asset in today's wars. Information has to be cautiously exploited when the military incorporates traditional and social media into their war efforts (Rid, 2007; UKMoD, 2018a). For journalists at the frontline who confronted a top-down military culture; ideological clashes, disinformation and multi-sourced materials are examples of the day-to-day challenges they experienced during the post-embedded system (Kellner, 2008; Risso, 2017). Audiences targeted by the military and the media are central to these developments because audiences which have been empowered by an active role in generating their perspectives on content, are contributing, to some extent, to the war stories those that the military wants to present (Harrison, 2013; Sacco and Bossio, 2015; Patrikarakos, 2017).

The first subsection investigates the impact of the new war paradigm on military doctrines and on the media.

War Paradigm

The main goal of military forces in combat is to divide the enemy and their political leadership by establishing a comprehensive Command and Control System (CCS) (Smith, 2016; Bassford, 2017). The CCS provides a safeguard for troops and military activities. However, the new model of war has added another dimension to the classical war paradigm. The new approach states that the war does not end with the destruction of the enemy's CCS, but it continues through other non-lethal means, such as diplomacy and economic sanctions (Kaldor, 2007; Smith, 2007). Indeed, 'new war' refers to the willingness of military leaders to commit to the use of force within a complex political context, and to confront non-state actors who adopt irregular style of fighting under the gaze of the global media (Kilcullen, 2005; Smith, 2007). A key component of traditional and online media in this type of confrontation is the struggle to access information while maintaining the freedom to tell the full story. Thus, the implications of a centralised CCS are that it weakens the role of journalistic work because of the evolving security threats.

A shift in warfare paradigm has led to a massive transformation in the structure and focus of military doctrines to deal with 'fourth generation warfare' (4GW) that is marked by the rise of non-state actors and the shrinkage of the role of states/nations on today's war (Lind, 2004). Hammes (2004, cited in Echevarria II, 2005, p. 1) defines 4GW as an 'evolved form of insurgency that uses all available networks—political, economic, social, military—to convince the enemy's decision-makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit'. This scope of changes in the 4GW stresses that single nations are not capable, on their own, to counter global organised violence, as the objective of combatants in warfare is to capture the will of their adversaries and their civilians (Smith, 2006). At this point, the media take the battle into living rooms all over the world, through virtual spaces on the internet and social media. Because insurgents aim to weaken the legitimacy of the government to gain political power and claim control for themselves over certain areas, COIN, Media Ops and Info Ops provide a framework for forces (at strategic, operational and tactical levels) to counter the insurgents' narrative and propaganda. However, why do military doctrines continue to treat the media within the context of traditional warfare? Indeed, how do modern forces deal with this transformation, particularly in the use of media and communications technology, when countering unforeseen threats, such as terrorist attacks, cyber warfare, rebellions, civil war, counterinsurgency, and guerrilla warfare?

It would be impossible to include all of the strategic concepts utilised in warfare into my analysis. However, to consider those that interlink the media with the developments in military thinking about recent conflicts, Table 1, below, developed based on my findings and the literature review, provides an overview of emergent issues in the military-media relationship that overlap with the changing new war paradigm.

Table 1: Friction Within the Military-media Relationship in Counterinsurgency Operations (War Paradigm)

Main Themes	Categories	Military (Media Ops)	Mainstream Media (Print and Broadcast)	Social Media (UGC)
War Paradigm	Main goals	Breaking the enemy's will is key to achieve military success in new war, therefore, information is a prime asset to the MoD. No compromise is made with operational security, but communications are flexible enough to provide sensitive information to achieve the Info Ops' goals.	The primary goal of mainstream media is to inform the public about military affairs by educating them about war and its implications, and to be received as a credible source. Breaking news is important for commercial purposes, but does not require violating operational security and national interests. It is based on a 'one-to-many' approach, which is vulnerable during war to the influence of countries, political parties, or insurgents' militia.	Social media are a platform for political, economic, social, and entertainment potential, which offers accessible content and effective communications to a, potentially, global audience. Content is based on a 'many-to-many' approach that is either created by firms or individuals; however, it is vulnerable to commercialisation, disinformation, fake news, trolling, and violence.
	Objectives	Imposing a denial-of-access policy by holding control over media movements (e.g. pooling system, embedded programme) and applying restrictions on war reporters' work. The military exploits traditional and social media to serve its integration process, campaign planning, using counter adversary Info Ops, and for gaining politicians, allies, and public support.	On the one hand, in the embedded system wartime journalists negotiate their roles on the frontline to gain access to fulfil their obligations as they to strive for the 'right for the public to know'. On the other hand, unilateral journalism is another way to observe a conflict from non-military viewpoints.	Flourishes in the form of the 'War Amongst the People', insurgency operations, uprising, and military coups, as civilians become influential news sources for day-to-day violence.

The above table indicates different lines of communications between the military and the media concerning their treatment of critical issues in the COIN. The COIN operates via a mixture of old warfare procedures and a modified version of insurgency operations. It is not surprising that the gaps between military leadership and media actors have increased in this type of conflict (Hines et al., 2015). The strategic discourses between the military and the media during the

post-Cold War period have created disagreements between both institutions concerning access to information and operational security (Tumber & Palmer, 2003b; Rid, 2007; Boylan, 2011). Therefore, the media are likely to be seen as an arm of the state rather than as the fourth estate, tasked with telling the truth during this transformative historical period in terms of globalisation, communications, and warfare.

To accomplish a mission under military stipulations entails dealing with uncertain conditions in contemporary war and, this, an 'effect-based' strategy by all military means, ranges from defence diplomacy to the physical destruction of the enemy (Taverner, 2007). Operations security is key factor to protect the mission and keep troops safe. As traditional media work in a 'one-to-many' or mass communications approach (Jensen & Helles, 2017), during times of war they can influence the state, political parties or insurgents, and as consequence war reporters, whether embedded into regular forces or the opponent's side, can be treated as a military target when violating operation security. However, online journalism has an advantage over the traditional way of reporting day-to-day conflicts because of the proximity of multiple producers to the frontline. It is based on a 'many-to-many' or networked communication approach, but online journalism is vulnerable to commercialisation, disinformation, fake news, trolling, and violence (Jensen and Helles, 2016). Certainly, social media offer a diversity of information and opinions for paramilitary groups, non-state actors and individuals, for interaction, recruitment, spreading ideologies, and disseminating sensitive information away from the influence of direct censorship.

To be strategically effective, the military exploits traditional and social media for the integration process in joint action. The *British Military Doctrine* defines joint action as a 'deliberate use and orchestration of the full range of military capabilities and activities to realise effects' (JDP 3-45.1, 2007, p.2). However, imposing a denial-of-access policy by controlling media movements (e.g. pooling system, embedded programme) and applying restrictions on journalistic work has affected the military-media relationship. Social media flourish during the WAP, insurgency operations, uprisings, and military coups as civilians become influential news sources about day-to-day violence. For example, the implications of tactics

used by the military in the WAP have driven non-state organisations, such as Hamas in Gaza, Hizb Allah in Lebanon, and Alhoothy in Yemen – with support from state powers like Iran and Turkey – to invest much of their effort, not simply in developing their insurgent capabilities, but in targeting international media to further their cause through information and deception operations (Rid, 2007). The changing war environment is catastrophic for regular forces, which struggle to achieve their political objectives. For instance, Israel, the US, and the UK have not lost any war on the ground in the last three decades; however, they have failed to resolve confrontations by military means over the long term: either in wars against non-state militia as in Gaza (2004) and Lebanon (2006), or in conventional conflicts such as the Gulf War (1990) or the Iraq War (2003) (Smith, 2006).

The following subsection will investigate the strategic context surrounding the integration of journalism into war efforts that support civil-military cooperation.

The Integration Context

Civil-military integration (CMI) has become an essential element in defence and security doctrines in order to collaborate with other instruments of national political, social and economic power. CMI does so whilst taking into account rapid changes in security, economic, social and global systems (The Prime Minister, 2016). In a democratic system, the defence industry views itself as a legitimate institution acting on behalf of the people: either to protect them from threats or to defend the nation's interests. However, ethical concerns over a lack of public consensus increases the gap between the military and the people (Hines et al., 2015), particularly when public opinion is politically divided.

In military doctrines, understanding target audiences is vital for the success of operational campaigns and for preserving troop morale when they are exposed to an adversary's propaganda fed to them through their adversary's military machine (USNCS, 2018)). In this instance, a battle employs different combat styles, such as conventional warfare, counterinsurgency, counter-terrorism, and humanitarian operations, which require communicating different messages to different target

audiences. Does the military have much choice in how it incorporates the media into COIN Operations? Table 2 provides an overview of the emergent issues in the military-media relationship that overlap with the changing new war paradigm.

Table 2: Friction within the Military-media Relationship in Counterinsurgency Operations (Strategic Context)

Main Themes	Categories	Military (Media Ops)	Mainstream Media (Print and Broadcast)	Social Media (UGC)
The Integration Context	Audiences	The media are used as a means to influence public opinion, secure defence spending, and support foreign policy. *Media Ops* target five distinct groups: UK citizens, international actors, allied forces, local people (citizens), and their troops.	The media target local, regional, and international audiences. They fall into two schools of thought: a) the media continue to have a strong influence in political decision-making, and, b) are a tool of governmental communications and security strategies.	Social networks based on web-based services. State and non-state actors reposition themselves on either public web sites or hidden applications for spreading information intelligence, ideas, ideology, and propaganda.
	Culture	A rigid culture which aims to protect national security and promote stability and solidity.	Flexible to meet emerging challenges in war zones.	Online producers practice beyond traditional borders with limited centralised authority are being illuminated to spread news/information/visual materials, or being debunked as disinformation to enhance media literacy programmes.
	Values	Credible and reliable information with a set of values and codes of conduct, however, there is a thin line between information and propaganda run by Info Ops.	Credible and reliable information when news is supported by evidence and attempts to be impartial. However, pro-opposition actors tend to rely on the internet and social platforms for their news.	Interactivity in online discussion offers the online community the ability to expand on mainstream media stories and create new stories.

The nature of an insurgency requires a different approach and a different mindset from previous forms of warfare. Insurgents usually adopt an irregular approach to deal with trained, qualified combatants – utilising decentralised mission commands – because they lack sufficient resources (JP 3-24, 2013, 2018). In COIN, staff must unify their message, reinforce crediblity of military efforts through actions and assessments of an environment operations approach, which includes 'realistic, achievable objectives' and to 'properly align ends, ways, and means' (JP 3-24, 2013, p.xii). While the tactics of insurgency, terrorism, and organised crime may overlap to achieve their ultimate goals, we should not consider them together. The reason for this is that, on the one hand, terrorism and organised crime employ various combinations of regular and irregular approaches to conduct, low to intensive operations to target non-combatants and civilians, and justify their violation of local and international law as a means to an end. On the other hand, insurgents use whatever tools are available to conduct large-scale operations so as to control power and mobilise people, such as diplomacy, information, social, military, and economic power (JP 3-24, 2018). Counterinsurgents' operations enforce combinations of coercive and consensual methods to deter the risk of insurgency. Among these available tools is the use of 'weaponised narrative' to place emphasis on the legitimacy of the current authority (Allenby & Garreau, 2017). The updated version of COIN has replaced the phrase 'counterinsurgency environment' with 'operational environment' (JP 3-24, 2018). The distinction between insurgents and terrorism and organised crime is important here, particularly when insurgents present themselves in the international media as freedom fighters, revolutionaries, and activists.

Failure to integrate media into military operations and secure journalistic access to the frontline can be critical in combating efforts that allow insurgents to gain advantages.

The potential for a weaponised narrative has increased in the new form of war. How does this form differ from old-fashioned propaganda or Psy Ops? This can be understood if we look at how a weaponised narrative builds on the classic model of propaganda and disinformation, which aimed to use information technologies to weaken and subvert its adversary's capabilities. Allenby (2017) explains how a

digital mining firm like Cambridge Analytica exploited the weaponised narrative to seek to influence public opinion in the US and the UK. He claimed that it is not unlikely that the company, which has been associated with both President Trump's election campaign in the US and the Brexit campaign in the UK, possesses customised digitally-sourced data mainly from social media platforms such as Facebook for influencing voters' preferences.

The narrative of war has changed from traditional fighting to 'new war'. In conventional war, operational security is the top priority of the unit's commanders, who will not compromise their mission with the considerations of journalists. An operation's planners take any negative media coverage associated with reports of casualties among civilians and soldiers into serious consideration (Barrera et al., 2017). Psy Ops aim to persuade the enemy or the targeted audience to think and act in a manner that will support the operation's objectives (UKMoD, 2008).[3] The narrative of military actions reported by war journalists therefore depends on those journalists' knowledge of conflicts and the main players involved to be able to give the audience a balanced perspective (Barrera et al., 2017), and to avoid being ensnared by the military media machine.

Unlike the traditional form of war, to master 'new war' Psy Ops units in the military bring social media into their virtual domain to win hearts and minds (Flint, 2015). Given the risks of social media as a platform for intelligence, disinformation, and recruitment, few Western militaries have invested in social media to engage in asymmetric warfare. This underutilisation of social media indicates a clear gap within defence organisations to exploit them with the intention of engaging a targeted audience in non-lethal warfare. For example, the British Armed Forces realised at a late stage – by which I mean behind the US, Israel, and Russia – the role of social media in conducting non-lethal operations. The British armed forces created the 77th Brigade on Facebook in April 2015 to

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[3] The UK Psychological Operations Group (PSYOPS) states that it carries out 'planned, culturally sensitive, truthful and attributable activities directed at approved target audiences within the Joint Area of Operations in order to achieve political and military objectives' (UKMoD, 2008).

shape their war narrative (Bradshaw & Howard, 2017; UK Army, 2018).[4] The 77th Brigade is 'an agent of change; through targeted Information Activity and Outreach we contribute to the success of military objectives in support of Commanders, whilst reducing the cost in casualties and resources' (British Army Website, 2018, p.1). This approach is partially a result of the lessons of counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan, hybrid operations in Ukraine, and the war against ISIS (MacAskill, 2015). However, the US, Israel, Russia, China, and other non-European countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, are heavily engaged in funding cyber troops to manipulate public opinion (Bradshaw & Howard, 2017). The Israel Defence Forces have been very active in social media since Operation Cast Lead in Gaza in 2008 – including Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram platforms – and have operated in six languages (MacAskill, 2015). State actors like Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Iran, have been heavily engaged in an online information war to influence regional and international public opinion since the Arab Spring anti-governmental protests in 2011 (Caywood, 2018). In addition, ongoing conflicts in Syria and Yemen have dominated cyberspace news over the last few years. The news which has focused on the growing threats of terrorism and extremism in the Middle East (Caywood, 2018).

These engagements in cyberspace impact on the organisational relationship between the military and the media.

Organisational Structure

In order to achieve established goals and objectives for the media and the military, organisational processes allow specific collaborations in journalistic practice to occur regarding access to information, credibility, and operational security. Table 3 defines the boundaries of the working relationship that has been agreed on between the military and the media in the context of new war. The proliferation of the internet and social media have altered the structure of

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[4] The primary task of the 77th Brigade is to 'challenge the difficulties of modern warfare using non-lethal engagement and legitimate non-military levers as a means to adapt behaviours of the opposing forces and adversaries' (British Army Website, 2018).

relationships between the military and the media in an era of globalisation and technology.

Table 3: *Friction Within the Military-media Relationship in Counterinsurgency Operations (Organisational Context)*

Main Themes	Categories	Military (Media Ops)	Mainstream Media (Print and Broadcast)	Social Media (UGC)
Organisational Structure	Institutional role	A comprehensive CCS is essential to provide a safeguard for troops and military activities. It incorporates all military utilities under single command and control system. The military has agile and dynamic forces to integrate its hegemonic culture over current changes in war and communications technologies. Lacking coherence and rationality in a war narrative has a negative impact on strategic communications and people's perceptions of military actions.	The role of the media in warfare is considered a significant factor, among others, which determines the success or failure of counterinsurgency warfare. The 21st century makes war reporting much more manageable as it provides a means of transmitting to and reaching broader audiences in different geographical locations as an event unfolds. Reality differs from an ideal situation, so the media struggle in COIN to access the frontline due to high risks and unpredictable threats.	Opened new threats to traditional wartime journalism and operations security, but offered influential windows/platforms for groups/non-state actors and individuals to interact with and recruit others, spreading their ideologies, and disseminating sensitive information aside from the traditional method of direct censorship.
	Authority	A top-down model. A tactical commander is authorised to exercise his control over non-militant organisations and war actors for security reasons.	A bottom-up model. In newsrooms, journalists experience a hierarchy of relationships in day-to-day operations with editors and top-level management that affects their autonomy. While embedded within military units, journalists follow military regulations and in accordance with the instructions in the UK MoD's Green Book.	A network communications model designed to be decentralised and non-hierarchical. The use of non-military instruments in today's conflicts is a crucial factor in military planning.

Military doctrines emphasise the structure and the quality of the CCS (network approach, mission command, and an effects-based approach) to preserve dominance over all dimensions of the battlespace in air, land, maritime, and space domains, and information environment. *The British Army's Land Operations Doctrine* (2017) indicates the impact a proliferation of information has had on the

public's perceptions of military activity. The public are being influenced by different active players, including the national media, allies, and adversaries. At this juncture, the military is eager 'to build a form of trust among social networks to acknowledge both formal and informal information that provides a safeguard either to the troops or military activities, in order to achieve desired goals' (UKMoD, 2014, p.35). The primary concern of Steven Jolly, the Director of Defence Communications at the UK MoD from 2015–2016 – currently the Executive Director of World Services at M&C Saatchi (an international advertising agency network) – was to ensure that the military acknowledged changes in the media ecology: the shift from the hands of traditional media to decentralised networks of individuals and social media. He claims:

> I think what I want to say is that the media has never been more important than it is in times of war, but that does not necessarily mean we are talking about the traditional media. So, I think that the ubiquity of smartphones and of the ability to record everyday events has fundamentally changed the balance and power between those who manage and disseminate the news, and those who are the subjects of the news. (Interview, London, 7th November 2017)

Steven Jolly's argument considers the role of the new media in today's warfare to be a significant factor in influencing public opinion compared to the classic part of the traditional media in conventional warfare. Military media documents outline a set of rules to manage the media and audiences, and to make them behave and act in accordance with established operational goals. Certainly, the need to combat non-state actors, such as terrorists and insurgents, and to secure the homeland from any unpredictable threat, leads national security strategists to place more emphasis on winning the 'war of ideas' (The White House, 2019) rather than combating physical targets. The classical concept of protecting 'the centre of gravity' in conventional warfare (defined in Chapter 2, under War Paradigm), was usually performed by the traditional media, and is a process which would be accelerated today through the use of social media. As Lord David Richards, former Chief of the Defence Staff, indicates:

Now, they won't always be met [the Media Ops] the same as in conventional operations. I mean, what I'm saying is, you get to create your plan around the requirements of the media, often because you are now using, if not the speed of light, certainly the speed of sound. Your enemy can receive news through social media messages that will upset, distract and confuse them, quicker than any bullet which has only a limited range – these have a range of thousands of miles. So you've got to see it in a different way and you should be organised. (Interview, House of Lords, London, 7th February 2018)

The enemy in the US's National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (The White House, 2019) is neither a person nor a single regime, but terrorists or criminals regardless of their ideology or ethnicity. An enemy is one who strives to use violence and fear as a means to break the rule of law and attack civilians. Therefore, combating terrorism and organised violence can be executed by harsh military or non-military actions, including acting pre-emptively to counter a future threat (The White House, 2019). In this instance, the military takes control over many agencies in times of conflict, including the media, so as to attempt to win the hearts and minds of the people and politicians, for instance, by subjecting war reporters to strict policies governing their movements and broadcasts. In this uncertain environment, policies on war coverage and media management programmes create tension in the military-media relationship.

Professional war reporters encounter personal challenges and organisational constraints when reporting on high-intensity conflicts from the frontline. These challenges range from a denial of access to the theatre of operations because of working in a hostile environment where there is a high possibility of being attacked as military targets. While embedding with the military units, journalists follow military regulations and conduct themselves in accordance with the UK Military's Guidelines (e.g. the Green Book). For example, Steven Jolly indicates that the high intensity of violence in Syria, and the absence of troops on the ground, prevented the military from providing support to journalists who travelled unaided

into occupied territories controlled by irregular forces, such as rebels, local tribes, and extremist groups:

> If you look at some of the cities [in Syria], then even the charities can't get there – the donations. It's a bloody awful civil war, so do they expect the British to put a battalion there to keep check on a few journalists? I think it is unrealistic. I think we are not on the ground there in any numbers; we are overflying Northern Syria attacking ISIS. I don't know where their missions will go, given recent events. There were people going into the rebel-held areas, indeed there were people going amongst the Yazidi, and there were even people smuggling staff out of ISIS occupied territory. This is nothing to do with the British government that I am aware of. (Interview, London, 7th November 2017)

The military has to distinguish between multiple actors whose participation is important to the success of the mission, and those who have less involvement but nevertheless have a consistent relationship with the troops and feel they are entitled to be fully integrated (JDP 3-70, 2008). Integration is certainly achievable at a lower level by moving down the chain of command and authority. The structure of authority defines the type of relationship inside an established organisation and other actors. Hall (1991, cited in Brogan 2006, p.41) indicates that organisational values are found in 'the efforts of the actors, the judgment criteria of the decision-makers, and the participation and perception of the stakeholders, and obedience is accepted as being in service of a common goal'. The top-down hierarchal style of the CCSs present in military organisation gives authority to the central command to exercise control over multiple actors, both domestically and on the frontline.

The *Battlespace Management document* (JDP 3-70, 2008) identifies three factors which enable joint forces to enjoy full integration: coordination, synchronisation, and prioritisation. Integration brings the military and the media together into an effective relationship, enabling a respectful coordination and synchronisation of their activities in accordance with a precise set of priorities (JDP 3-70, 2008). Interestingly, the dynamics of media, information, and communications are

recognised as effective actors across all dimensions of the hierarchy of the CCS. Lord David Richards advocates establishing a CCS, not just to deal with the media, but also to take responsibility for military and security affairs:

> I think today they need national command and communications centres or headquarters where the traditional activities of the commander would have military responses and security responses are fully integrated with the information campaign. (Interview, House of Lords, London, 7th February 2018)

The military and the media have exercised different lines of authorisation since the Crimean War (1854–1856). This war is regarded as the first instance of war reporting in the age of mass communications, the first to be covered widely by the daily newspapers, and the first to be telegraphed (Figes, 2010). By the end of the 20th century, several changes had occurred in the military's hierarchy of authority. On the one hand, the rise of globalisation and the massive revolution in communications and information in the 21st century make war reporting easier to transmit and reach wider audiences in different geographic locations as events happen; but on the other hand, the same technology makes access to the frontline more difficult. The military has developed a new type of relationship with the media, to provide journalists with more access to war zones by introducing the 'pool system' in the Gulf War (1990), and the 'embedded program' in the Iraq War (2003). However, a lack of trust between the military and media, access difficulties, copy review delays, and logistical problems were the major challenges to war journalism in both programmes (Steuck, 1992; Johnson & Fahmy, 2010; Maltby, 2012a). Steven Jolly says:

> I would argue that there are advantages and, as you said, disadvantages, because if you are with the military, you obviously need that protection and, at the same time, that means they control you. From the military point of view, controlling journalists is not necessarily about that idea. You don't want them wandering around causing trouble or getting into trouble. (Interview, London, 7th November 2017)

The following subsection discusses a number of limitations concerning the integration of the media into counterinsurgency operations.

The Limitations

Every military campaign is different either via its means, ends, or objectives. At this point, what affects the process of integration amongst the three components of war (the military, the traditional media, and social media) in 21st-century conflicts? This analysis identifies two lines of communication in military-media collaboration occurring during counterinsurgency operations: at strategic and tactical levels. Table 4 indicates each level faces challenges in function and structure.

Table 4: Friction Within the Military-media Relationship in Counterinsurgency Operations (Limitations)

Main Theme	Category	Military (Media Ops)	Mainstream Media (Print and Broadcast)	Social Media (UGC)
Limitations	Strategic and tactical levels	Wars are fought between people, so the domestic audience becomes an essential component of the *Media Ops* doctrine which must meet the consequences of the new type of warfare such as terrorism, cyberwarfare, organised crimes, and immigration.	The embed system, counter-terrorism operations (asymmetric combat), and the emergence of UGC constrains professional wartime journalistic work.	An increase of fake news, lies, and non-verifiedmaterials puts social media and other domains on the internet under pressure to secure coherence, legitimacy, and credibility.

At the strategic level, the media industry became vital for a government communications strategy that provides more space for political actors to create a consensus about security issues, such as terrorism and immigration, that have been presented as an imminent threat to the state and, therefore, affect decisions that have to be taken in terms of protecting the safety of the people and national security (Vultee, 2007; Dolinec, 2010). Today's conflicts are fought amongst the people, so both domestic and international public opinion becomes an essential

component of the military doctrine. This has implications regarding the control of materials and press freedom in times of war.

At a tactical level, the armed forces need to embed Info Ops teams within their troops to analyse local feeds on traditional and social media, and to identify strategic targets, such as communications towers and cyber networks, as their adversaries are willing to use sophisticated information tools in a military context (Pomerleau, 2017). In conventional and non-conventional warfare, war journalists usually operate in a multi-agency environment under rules set by others, and regulations which control their networking power. I regard these organisations as independent agents who have strategies, cultures, structures, values, and interests, just like the military, local governments, and non-state actors. The media can either accept being attached to these organisations, such as in the 'embedded system' with the military in the Iraq War 2003, or they can choose to operate independently with the maximum support they can obtain from other players in the battlespace – such as embedding with coalition forces against ISIS in Northern Iraq and Syria since 2011.

In the next section, I look closely at the UK's military Media Ops, considering policy principles and policy opportunities.

Integration in the Military-Media Relationship

This section aims to examine changes in the military Media Ops landscape at a micro level that concerns policies and structures within a British military context. I bring together the perspective of professionals and senior military officers, to elaborate on the process of achieving a fully integrated system where wartime journalism is located in today's military media policies and doctrines in conjunction with the principles and guidelines of national strategy.

I shall begin by describing the impact the media operation doctrine has in the development of war reportage.

Media Operations: An Overview

It has been 13 years since the UK MoD issued the *Joint Doctrine Publication 3-45.1 Media Operations (Media Ops),* which was a result of operational lessons learned from conflicts that the British forces were involved in by themselves or with their allies in the last three decades, such as the Gulf War (1991), the Afghanistan War (2001), and the Iraq War (2003). It sets out British military strategies including the definitions, structure, principles, challenges, and the techniques of implementation.

The *Media Ops document* has to be read in conjunction with the *United Kingdom Defence Doctrine (UKDD)*, and other military doctrines such as *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015, Information Ops, Joint Doctrine Note Strategic Communications, Understanding and Intelligence (*JDP 2-00,3rd Edition), *Allied Joint Doctrine for Psychological Operations (*AJP-3.10.1), and the *MoD Green Book*. Ultimately, these doctrines define the target audience, the characteristics of the media as a profession, and planning and execution processes throughout the three combat levels: strategical, operational, and tactical.

Conducting information and Media Ops in a complex war, such as the WOT and its counterinsurgency operations, involves two sets of goals (JDP 0-01, 2014): (1) the significance of designing a comprehensive information management approach to reach a much wider audience, either in times of conflict or of peace; and, (2) the goal of media and information doctrines aims to secure the combat commander's objectives to achieve influence over targeted political decision-makers and media outlets. Moreover, a political directive is usually given by the UK's National Security Council (NSC), which establishes a national strategy within the context of the state's instruments of power: diplomacy, economics, military, and information (MoD, 2016). The efficiency of the CCS, and its proactive engagement with media personnel and other actors in war zones, may influence the conduct of military operations, since the distinct contributions of Media Ops within the direct lines of a combat campaign are crucial in modern warfare, to secure public support within a system of powerful democratic governance that seeks to

demonstrate transparency to the people about their military operations (JDP 0-01, 2014).

The *Joint Doctrine Publication 3-45.1* defines Media Ops as 'that line of activity developed to ensure timely, accurate and effective provision [through the media] of Public Information (P Info) and implementation of Public Relations (PR) policy within the operational environment whilst maintaining Operations Security' (JDP 3-45.1, 2007, pp.1−2).[5] While my analysis has accepted this definition to a certain extent, it has also taken into account emerging limitations regarding the execution of integration that may affect the functions of military media approach in conflicts. Here, I discuss some implications and challenges concerning the implementation of these policies, in both state-to-state conflicts and counterinsurgency operations. Additionally, my analysis takes into account other factors that may constrain the integration process, with the press and their audience, and lead to poor coordination and inefficiency, such as having inadequate CCSs, a lack of communication strategy, and taking into account the growing risk of cyber warfare.

Before identifying the barriers that constrain the military's ability to enhance their relations with the media, it is worth specifying that the *Strategic Communication Note* states that 'recent experience in Afghanistan and Libya has shown that it can not afford to think about influence and information as a separate line of operation' (JDN 1/12, 2012, p. v). If the Media Ops group attempts to embark on media policies within a disputed political space under military operational objectives (Maltby, 2012a, p.49), how do they accelerate the process of integrating their policies into a changed information sphere in a way that does not affect operation security? I have analysed this document from different perspectives, taking into consideration multiple internal and external factors that influence the decision-making process, to provide a better understanding of how established thinking should be integrated into the complexity of the WAP.

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[5] The *Media Ops* doctrine aims to 'provide factual information to a number of audiences via the media to support the aims of the UK Information Strategy' (JDP3-45.1, 2012, pp.1-2).

Next, I discuss the role of the Media Ops doctrine in securing coherent narratives, a comprehensive approach aligned with the operational objectives, and safeguarding troops.

Outline of Media Operations: Execution and Implications

Media Ops is grounded in achieving superiority over Info Ops and intelligence in modern warfare. This analysis provides a critical view of established documents in the UK Armed Forces, by proposing policies and procedures which construct a robust bond with the media, the audience, military personnel, and political leadership. Of course, my analysis is not intended to provide a complete analysis of all existing documents, but to enable me to elaborate on the most important strategic themes, key players and messages that the British military has to consider when dealing with wartime journalism. It helps to break down the core themes into specific categories or elements, which provide a greater overall understanding of this document.

Based on Table 4, I have included the following arguments in my analysis, to give more depth to the practice of military media management – further supported by personal evidence provided by interviewees.

Policy Principles

Since 9/11 Britain has involved itself in conflicts through its close alliance with the United States in the WOT, and with NATO and the United Nations on several humanitarian, counter-piracy, and peacekeeping operations. The effective involvement of the British Armed Forces in most conflicts since 9/11 has ensured that the *Media Ops* approach has been implemented and tested. The *Media Ops* document insisted on the importance of preserving a positive attitude throughout operations with local, allied, international, and adversary audiences, but advises troops to remain vigilant for unpredictable threats (JDP 3-45.1, 2007). Interestingly, *Media Ops* doctrine was experienced for the first time during the joint military exercise Saif Sarea 2 (Swift Sword 2) between the UK and Oman in 2001, where I participated with a Media Ops team from the Omani side.

Angus Taverner, Staff Officer 1 (SO1) Director News (Policy and Plans) in the UK MoD from 2000–2004, discussed the period when Taverner and I served together in the same media cell at Joint Headquarters in Shafe in the Sultanate of Oman:

> I was the author of the first UK media doctrine (JWP 3-45) and, interestingly for you, [Exercise SAIF SAREA] was really the first time we used the doctrine to push into practice in a systematic way; to see what would actually work, in terms not just of military media operations officers talking to the media, but in terms of the much broader understanding of the importance of not only how the media is reporting on military activity, but also in terms of things like information released by authorities at the speed which you need it to be responding. (Interview by telephone, 13th February 2018)

The execution of Media Ops policy is based on a set of standard principles whereby the military has to ensure that the process of implementation is exercised in a coherent and coordinated manner within the context of its organisational culture. The success of Media Ops in a conflict must combine these following elements: (1) an effective CCS, (2) respect for security, and (3) engagement and understanding audiences – key themes in constructing a war narrative.

1. An Effective Command and Control System

A command and control system (CCS) is a central part of any conflict. It incorporates all military utilities and procedures in a practical framework, such as logistics, intelligence, media, electronic warfare, and administration, by giving them responsibilities, meaning, and a line of authority (Hahn, 1998). The military operations doctrine plays a central role in the UK MoD's strategic communications. The doctrine has gained significance in the structure of CCS, as it provides people and the media with reliable and accurate information about security challenges in 21st-century conflicts.

Ironically, a shift of focus towards communications technology with the rise of the internet – particularly in cyber and social media – has had consequences for

carrying out a sophisticated media campaign. The gap between people's perceptions and operational realities can confuse audiences when military strategy lacks coherence and rationality (UKMoD, 2012). In the lead up to the Iraq War, public opinion in the UK was politically divided towards international conflicts (Travis, 2003). People have certainly not been convinced of the geo-strategic benefits of military engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq for the future of their armed forces (UKMoD, 2012). The British *Strategic Communication Note* indicates a series of problems within the UK MoD, especially after the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, with regard to a lack of a coherent communications strategy with their audiences through traditional and social media (JDN 1/12, 2012). As a consequence, the impression of division has continued in other international military interventions: for instance, the Libya crisis of 2011 and the UK's military forces involvement in airstrikes against ISIS in Syria. The debate over both crises was around the lack of transparency when using forces for peacekeeping operations which are exempt from parliamentary scrutiny, potentially causing a lack of accountability when an operation has no clear objectives, and a lack of public support for large-scale military actions particularly after the Afghanistan and Iraq wars (Mills, 2015; Knowles, 2016). For example, on 29 August 2013 the House of Commons voted against military action in Syria, however, British planes took part in the airstrike against ISIS in Syria in 2015 (BBC, 2015). This division in British politics about the deployment of British forces for peacekeeping operations reflects an ambiguity in the public sphere over what type of forces the UK needs. Thus, the absence of a fully integrated strategy – either within the UK Armed Forces or their allies – has challenged Media Ops to operate at peak efficiency to fulfil their responsibilities.

Lord David Richards emphasises the importance of having an effective CCS that can facilitate these processes:

> I think it's important to fully integrate information operations, such as the media and everything else you are talking about, into the overall campaign. Then you have to have a command and control system that allows that to happen, and a planning process which allows that to happen. I've said for a number of years, from my experience in operations, first and foremost is [that]

professionals take command and control, then logistics and then tactics. If you don't get the command control right, which now includes how you are using the media and how you're going to exploit social media, it doesn't matter how good your equipments are or how good your soldiers and sailors and airmen are, you're going to lose, and that happens all over the place. (Interview, House of Lords, London, 7th February 2018)

The *Media Ops* doctrine encourages military staff to engage with the media at the earliest possible opportunity, and to be as positive and proactive as they can be in their thinking and functioning at all levels (JDP 3-45.1, 2007). However, the moral obligations of the military towards their key stakeholders in war must be shaped by trust, accountability and respect, to achieve strategic goals besides having a comprehensive CCS. In small-scale operations such as peacekeeping, it is too easy for media officers to get to know every journalist by name and build a strong relationship with them, by having some time to catch up at the hotel bar or the military camp. However, when there were 775 journalists embedded with American and British troops in the Iraq War in 2003 (Rid, 2007) it was impossible to maintain this form of symbiotic relationship for long. Tony Cramp, a retired Media Ops officer, who currently works for Shell Aircraft in the Netherlands, says:

> What I did find was a lot of media outlets used to send similar teams at the beginning of those conflicts. And I hardly got to know the guys in successive operations. So, people that I had met in East Timor then turned up in Sierra Leone. […] If you establish a relationship, be honest with them off the bat or straightaway, then that relationship becomes very positive going forward. And I made sure that I gave them as much information as I could. I did that honestly as I could, and I think they respected that. (Interview by telephone, 11th February 2018)

Next, I outline the implication of the Media Ops in operational security.

2. Respect for Security

Wartime security reviews meant the introduction of procedures in operations; for instance, to review news before transmission to avoid the possibility of legal penalties (Badsey, 2009). However, the media-military relationship can not be described as a static structure in times of war, but it is an effective means of cooperation which functions for the benefit of both organisations. Because of post-9/11 trends, there has been a shift to place more effort in countering asymmetric threats, resulting in small units like special forces being unable to accommodate the press while operating at high tempo in covert operations. Steven Jolly states:

> I think what I'd say is whenever you have sharp and pointed forces, special forces involved, obviously levels of discretion have to be significantly higher. You do not want advantages of stealth or secrecy disrupted, and being exposed in the press can jeopardise operations and risk lives, so I really would not favour, for instance, if you were talking about irregular warfare – meaning the uses of special forces – because it is not appropriate to have journalists with those people, since they are not going to help you. (Interview, London, 7th November 2017)

Old forms of censorship have become less effective in asymmetric warfare, with the rise of satellite TV and the internet. Therefore, the military has put more effort into reorganising their communications strategy doctrine to integrate it with public relations techniques, rather than exerting direct control over publications (Badsey, 2009). Indeed, most senior officers have become more conscious of the role of media in managing the reputation of their units. However, at a tactical level, junior officers need to have confidence in striking a balance between transparency with the press and the decision to ban access to sensitive information.

Angus Taverner, formerly of the UK MoD, indicates that the British military leadership was aware of maintaining a consistent military strategy for frontline

reportage, so the only area where the press officer had to take action was when military strategy was breached risking the security of the operation:

> The only thing that we are checking is for operational security, so if for example a journalist doesn't like the commander or thinks the commander's judgment is wrong, I can't change that, that was not in the rules. But if he says that HMS Arrow are going to start shelling tomorrow at the airport tomorrow morning then I can stop them because that is breaching the operational security. So, there is no control if I called in editorial tone, any things that we exercise power over was the big argument about the security. (Interview by telephone, 13th February 2018)

Certainly, as long as war journalists' primary job in the war zone is to investigate fresh information about day-to-day fighting, to feed to their agencies and the public, the risk of being independent is considered too high when this means a loss of protection by trustworthy forces in conflict areas. Consequently, many war reporters compromise their relative autonomy to secure access to operations (Briant, 2011). Certainly, wartime reporters have the freedom to operate independently in war zones, but in this instance, the military will not be required to provide these journalists with protection. Tony Cramp argued:

> So, you have to be careful If you give journalists access so they can be embedded within military units, as with the soldiers they're going to come across information that could be very sensitive. So, there've got to be a lot more controls on that to make sure that information doesn't get into the wrong hands. If the journalists want their freedom, then they can have it, but that just means they can't be embedded and have protection from the military units. (Interview by telephone, 11th February 2018)

One of the most important principles of military operations is to gain the consent of the public for military operations and maintain their continuous support on all levels, which is also crucial to the media.

3. Engagement and Understanding Audiences

While many critiques have centred on the insufficient approach of the coalition forces in civic engagement post-conflict, such as in Afghanistan and Iraq (Jensen, 2014; James & Krakar, 2015), the media doctrine indicates that they do not expect a public audience to be homogeneous, since the public's responses fluctuate according to the volume of information they have acquired from a wide range of local and international media sources (JDP 3-45, 2007). In fact, *Media Ops* targets five distinct groups: local citizens, international audiences, joint and regional forces, homefront, and military troops (JDP 3-45, 2007). Each of these groups are presented with significantly different messages, but these communications may overlap in certain situations. Certainly, the capacity of the military to directly reach local and international public opinion is limited. However, established British media organisations – print, online, and broadcast – remain powerful players in shaping people's perceptions about how they feel about military performance in war.

Angus Taverner stresses that public attitudes towards military actions are crucial to UK military planners:

> I think that we recognised that maintaining public support for operations in the UK was crucial. The people [political leaders] giving us [the military] direction often got a lot of what they understood about what is going on from the media, and we need it for own benefit to be able to deliver the operations we are trying to deliver. Therefore, how we engaged with the civilian audience in places like Iraq or places like Afghanistan, was becoming very important to us, and that again was a matter of military engagements. (Interview by telephone, 13th February 2018)

The *Media Ops* document has little to say about how to affect public opinion about an adversary, or their allies. However, it is held that all means can be legitimised when used to influence an enemy's political and military leadership, armed forces and their people. This is critical when the adversary can use insurgent methods,

and are capable of using sophisticated information and communications to target local and international audiences (Jensen, 2014).

One of the British military's tactics to reach local people was to approach news channels that could be classified as the mouthpiece for terrorist groups or British adversaries, such as Al-Jazeera. For example, the British forces moved into Basra and Southern Iraq in 2003, where they fought heavy guerrilla warfare against a strong local opposition, with a lack of troops in a city ruled by Shia militias (Cockburn, 2015). The British Army received an intelligence report indicating low morale amongst the defenders of the city who had fought for Saddam Hussein's regime, and that they were uncoordinated (Crown, 2013). Therefore, it was hard to reach local people without establishing contact with popular satellite TV channels in Southern Iraq, such as Al-Jazeera.

Non-Western mainstream media, such as Al-Jazeera and other Arab satellite channels, have provided an alternative perspective to the military operation in the Iraq War of 2003, and have expanded the news agenda for other crises in the Middle East (Bessaiso, 2010). Both US and UK militaries have shown less engagement with Arab reporters during the Iraq War in an attempt to win Arab's hearts and minds and hoping to conduct a surgically clean war. Arab reporters were excluded from embedding either with US or UK troops and were denied access to the daily briefings (Mackinlay, 2006). The only Arab media representative who was welcomed by the UK forces as an embedded reporter was the former British soldier, Alex Gardiner, who worked for Abu Dhabi TV (Ackerman, 2007). Al-Jazeera channel received most of America's attention because the journalists, particularly on the talk show programmes, enabled the voices of extremists and insurgents to reach a wider audience in the Arab world (Mackinlay, 2006). This evidence is why Al-Jazeera was considered to be an enemy station in the eyes of the US administration. Despite the fact that American forces bombed Al-Jazeera offices in both Baghdad and Kabul, killed and arrested its staff (Taylor, 2004), the British military approached Al-Jazeera to deliver their messages to Iraqi citizens in Basra. Tim Purbrick, an Army Reserve staff officer, provided an example where such an approach was used to engage the

transnational broadcaster such as Al-Jazeera, instead of local media that operated in Basra in post-conflict Iraq:

> When I was in Iraq in 2007 as the head of media operations – I was only there for only a very short time – it was very obvious we couldn't engage with the local media, because if they printed any story in the media that remotely reflected our view, and the view of the allied forces in Iraq, then those journalists would be taken and killed. However, we identified that there was an excellent route to engage with the local people by Al-Jazeera, so I put an Arabic-speaking press officer down to the Doha Media Village, and he appeared as a guest of the week on Al-Jazeera. I did it on a useful platform because Al-Jazeera is very well covered in south-eastern Iraq, and you're able to get messages out to the people in Basra. So, it was a useful and practical way of communicating in an environment where engaging with the local media was impossible, not that they wanted it to be impossible, but it was impossible for them because it would have put them in a very difficult personal security perspective. (Interview, London, 7th February 2018)

Purbrick's interpretation of the method used to reach local people means that the British forces have employed distinctive tactics to engage with the media and its audiences. Utilising transnational media appears to be a sensible method from the perspective of the Media Ops team as long as it achieves combat objectives. Whether the military and the media are in conflict or allied in 21st-century wars, handling a coherent communication strategy has become essential for both sides, regardless of the political system, to win the support of targeted people. To be more comprehensive we should not forget to mention Christian Hill's book '*Combat Camera: From Auntie Beeb to the Afghan Frontline*' in which he highlighted the tactics of the British Army's Combat Camera Team (CCT) to show the production of their own films or photographs. Hill (2015) claimed that the British military hoped the mainstream media would use their exclusive videos and footages as another way to attempt to promote their narrative in this 'new war paradigm' and to show the world the progress that been made in securing

Afghanistan. For example, the BBC broadcast the UK MoD's documentary television series *Our War: 10 Years in Afghanistan* to mark the ten-year anniversary of the war in Afghanistan (BBC, 2011). This documentary programme used audiovisual footage techniques taken in real operations in Afghanistan between 2007 and 2009 by fixing cameras to soldiers' helmets. The UK MoD states (cited in Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2013, p.1327) the aim of the videos was to 'offer viewers, for the first time, the chance to see as close as possible front line action through a soldier's eyes'.

Certainly, today the media are highly critical and will not accept one-sided propaganda because of multiple news sources located on the battlefield (Scholtz, 1998). The *Media Ops* document stresses the military's obligation to provide audiences with authentic and accurate information about military business (JDP 3-45, 2007). Tim Purbrick recognised the importance of connecting with UK audiences because it is a national obligation, and a means of promotion and recruitment:

> We have understood the obligation to connect with audiences to our own people. We've trusted our people so that they are permitted to do that kind of engagement with the local audience and troops. People find it very interesting because they can hear directly from people doing various things – whether flying the new fighting jet in America, whether it's the commanding officer of the new Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carrier doing sea trials, or the commanding officer at the Marine Helicopter Unit, doing their snow training in Norway. (Interview, London, 7th February 2018)

The challenges of counterinsurgency operations and WOT have opened the doors to discuss the inadequacies of the military's tactics in targeting audiences with the help of technology because the adversaries are capable of using sophisticated information and communications system to target local and international audiences.

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the first question of this thesis: how have new tactics been devised by the military to incorporate journalism into the war effort, while minimising disruptive forms of reporting? Overall, I have aimed to analyse the revolution in military doctrines regarding military concerns around insufficient organisational procedures being in place to integrate traditional and new media into the new war paradigm. Additionally, exclusive interviews with senior officers in the British Armed Forces provide an alternative interpretation of the current military-media relationship from their perspective.

I found a key challenge of this analysis was how to describe the struggle of the military and the media to keep pace with massive developments in (a) the nature of warfare, and (b) communications technologies. The greatest challenge for the military in the new typology of war is to involve themselves in a mix of conventional warfare, terrorism, and irregular conflicts against non-state actors. Conflicts seen by the public through the eyes of traditional and new media occur during real-time coverage. Counterinsurgency strategies may succeed in achieving operational objectives, but because of the limitations that surround the WAP it can be difficult for armed forces to ensure the safety of war reporters in today's conflicts. However, the demands of 24/7 news, a fractious relationship with the military, and coercive competition among traditional and new media outlets to access exclusive materials have forced war reporters to negotiate their roles in the war zone; specifically by adhering to the rules that were set up by the military to protect their safety.

The analysis in this chapter has shown the military's limitations in engaging the media with their new war practices while considering journalists' autonomy, operational security, and press freedom. For the military, eliminating the risk of uncontrollable and unmanageable media reportage can only occur if journalism becomes part of the military command and control structure. Currently, the media are being used as a means to influence targeted audiences, protect national security, and support foreign policy. The strategic objective of the military's media operations doctrine is to provide the public and the media with reliable and

accurate information about the security challenges in 21st-century conflicts. The military addresses social media risks in strategic and tactical communications, offering limited space for service personnel to interact, blog, post images, and videos on social media and the internet. Nevertheless, it keeps an eye on their "trolling" to avoid any damage to the UK national security.

In the next chapter I will address the second question of the thesis: in what ways has war journalism changed since the occupation of Iraq in 2003?

Chapter Five:

War Journalism in the Post-Iraq War

Introduction

In this chapter, I address the second question of my research project: in what ways has war journalism changed since the occupation of Iraq in 2003? This chapter aims to describe how the new war offers both opportunities and significant challenges for the practices of war journalism. This chapter will consider different aspects of the military's media policy that has been structured for incorporating the traditional and new media into the military strategies. In particular, drawing on original interviews it explores journalists' perspectives regarding their experiences in covering conflicts while they were embedded by an established military in traditional conflicts such as the Iraq War of 2003 or deploying with local or paramilitary groups in counterinsurgency operations (COIN) such as the war in Syria since 2012.

This chapter will argue that war reporters have struggled to bear witness to contemporary conflicts because of the complex processes of attachment troops and layers of censorship established by the military, or the complexity of securing safe passage to some areas in conflict zones controlled by the enemy or paramilitary groups. This side of the argument is developed in two ways. Firstly, a background of the ethical role of embedded reporters including free access to information, journalistic values (fairness, accuracy, freedom of speech), editorial constraints, and issues around building bonds with soldiers is illustrated. I questioned whether the embedding system has worked, given the ethical basis on which journalists report by attempting to freely tell the audience what they can see and know. Have journalists comprised their objectivity by reporting the reality of war through a deal with the military sources which gives them security and safety? Finally, I ask whether the role of embedded journalists has changed. Secondly, evidence is provided of various challenges facing war reporters while attached to irregular forces in the new war compared to the classic model of embedding with regular troops in conventional warfare such as power diffusion,

the growing threat of extremism, and the shift in the concept of embedded system due to changes in journalist's perception of news production, the rise of ruthless violence in new wars, and the growing interest among war reporters and audiences in the humanitarian stories. The conclusion considers the implications of the emerging challenges for the practice of war journalism. Table 5 describes the format I designed to generate codes that helped to understand the changes in war journalism in the post-Iraq War.

Table 5: A comparsion of two types of embedded journalism used in combats

Theme	Concepts	Categories	Sub Categories	Coding
War Journalism in the Post-Iraq War	Embedded journalism	The ethical dimension	Frames of reference	fairness, accuracy, and freedom of speech
				losing impartiality (conceal or exclude more than explain)
				conflicts of interest
		Access vs operational security strategies	Systems for press access: implications and goals	limited access to civilian, censorship, propaganda, elite sources
				Mutual benefits
				Building bonds with soldiers
		The role of the embedded journalists (sets of values)	Ethical obligations	Security, access and information
				legitimate role (independence and seriousness)
				Balance, Identity, and subjectivity
	Post-embedded journalism	The new war	The emergent trends in warfare	- Power diffusion. -The growing threat of extremism and radical people.

				- Involved in covert operations.
			Old journalism beyond new war	- shifting in the concept of war journalism. -Journalist's perception of news production. - Ruthless violence in new wars. -Human interest stories
		Access vs reporting violent extremism	The rise of global extremism	- Organised crimes. - Decline of ISIS.
			Frontline access	-The risk and lack of field's experience. -Limited choices. - Pressures of the reality of war coverage
			Embedding with irregular forces	- Counter extremism operations. - Cultural sensitivity. Embedded with local forces. - Challenges of reporting from the rebel side

I shall begin by discussing the impact of the embedded system has on the ethical role of war correspondents in reporting conflicts.

Embedded System

In Chapter Two, I indicated that the Western media had to fight a significant battle with American and British troops after the Afghanistan War, 2001, to gain access to military units when both countries were in the process of invading Iraq in 2003 (Shanker & Sanger, 2002). Both countries eventually agreed to attach journalists to their troops because they believed that it would be difficult to control the

access of war reporters to the combat zone as some of them were in Afghanistan before the arrival of coalition troops. America and Britain also realised the difficulty of fully controlling the flow of information, and to counter the capability of the adversary to run disinformation campaigns in an era of information and communication (Shanker & Sanger, 2002).

Much of the debate in the existing literature remains controversial and problematic on the ethical role of war reporters, for example their responsibility to provide balanced war coverage between telling all and respecting the safety of troops, particularly when their country is involved overtly in wars (Dodson, 2010; Lindner, 2009; Tønnessen & Kolstø, 2012). War reporters were subject to different types of restrictions, such as mobility and editorial restraints, and have had to adhere to the same rules of engagement as the military and their media operation policy while operating with troops (Cockburn, 2010).

This chapter will provide evidence that journalists' access to the war zone is the most challenging feature of traditional and new wars. I will demonstrate war journalists' concerns about how their foreign deployment with troops might influence their journalistic values as independent journalists by breaking down this argument into two parts that consider the ethical dimensions and access versus operational security.

Ethical Dimensions

In this part of the chapter, I consider how an embedded system corresponds with war journalists' ethical grounding. Generally, the ultimate interest of newspapers, TV networks, and radio stations is to preserve their reputation as credible and reliable sources. They are therefore committed to practising ethical journalism in armed conflicts (Butler, 2005), which may conflict with national grand strategy or violate the security of operations (JSP 580, 2013). The ethical code of journalism in reporting war has sparked a debate about journalists' responsibility when finding themselves in a situation they have to be a participant in, instead of just reporting the unfolding violence in front of them (Olsson, 2017). This includes understanding the principles and codes of their responsibilities in

the theatre of war, by considering political and structural limitations such as their own country's interests, the editorial policy of their organisation, and their individual role (Rees, 2007; Serrano, 2013).

In embedded journalism, multiple emerging challenges have been influenced by the evolution of technology, military thinking, and the rise of the new media as an alternative and influential method of news sourcing. The UK military asked applicants to sign an agreement before being deployed with their forces. All the terms and conditions of this agreement are explained in the military document *The Green Book* (JSP 580, 2013). Many war journalists' critiques concern the impact of this agreement on practising professional journalism: challenges to liberal values, such as the degree of access, frames of reference (fairness, accuracy, freedom of speech), as well as editorial interference, losing impartiality, and conflicts of interest with the military and other war players.

Jonathan Beale, the BBC's defence correspondent since 2017, had spent two years as the BBC's Brussels correspondent as well as covering the 2006 midterm elections in the US and the Guantanamo military commssions in 2009. Beale explained why the embedded programme had a significant effect on freedom of speech during a war:

> I think the problem with embedded journalism is if you're with the British or Americans, you have to abide by strict rules. Which for example, they will ask to see your material for operational security reasons, to make sure that you don't compromise [their troops]. The British make you sign something called *The Green Book*. And *The Green Book* is, to be honest, you are signing your freedom away because they take control. They will dictate as to what you can film and cannot film. They will want to see edited items, which the Americans would never do. The Americans would never ask to see the end product. The British would. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

Beale suggests the embedded programme effects freedom of speech because of the sensitive issues surrounding operational secrecy, and because the British

military media policy was more complex and strict in scope compared to their American counterparts. As Britain was heavily involved in the Iraq War, and before that took part in several global conflicts in different geographical locations and circumstances, such as the Falklands, Afghanistan, and small wars and peacekeeping operations (Badesy, 1996), different degrees of censorship were implemented.

Although both America and Britain defended their policies of not embedding journalists in Afghanistan to protect the secrecy of operations, both took serious steps before the Iraq War to establish a 'media boot camp' to train journalists who would cover frontline units in Iraq (Shanker & Sanger, 2002). The BBC's chief international correspondent, Lyse Doucet, indicated that the military had lost control of the narrative of the war since the Afghanistan War because many independent journalists had to get their information from other sources. Doucet, who is Canadian, has covered all major wars in the Middle East and had a close relationship with the former Afghan president Hamid Karzai (Doucet, 2014). She talked about her experience when she worked close to Mujahideen groups in some parts of Afghanistan in the Soviet–Afghan War (1979–1989):

> In Afghanistan, I did a bit of embedding, but mostly with the Afghan side, so I didn't really depend on the military or the Afghan government for getting information because I can go and talk to the people straight away. I understood the military's points of view and their national duty on providing protection to the troops by avoiding any unexpected threat by being into the frontline or through mines fields. (Interview, London, 14th November 2016)

Considering Doucet's concerns of the little chance of embedded journalists had to talk to the citizens has implications in presenting an impartial view towards the conflict. However, maintaining impartiality in war reportage does not mean that a journalist must be neutral in talking about troops or war victims. Impartiality is more about seeking multiple methods of collecting information while being embedded with the army (Cockburn, 2010). Failure to present diversity in evolving conflicts can result in incomplete and biased stories. Therefore, journalists are

urged to present balanced perspectives on a conflict. However, it is impractical for journalists to cover both sides of a war at the same time.

A few Western reporters did report from the enemy side but in exceptional circumstances, like Peter Arnett of CNN who was in Baghdad during the Gulf War in 1991, and Robert Fisk of *The Independent* who has covered most of the conflicts in the Middle East over the past 40 years, and was one of the few journalists to have interviewed the former Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden (Schmitt, 1996; Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018). Sean Smith, a filmmaker from *The Guardian,* joined the 101st Airborne in Baghdad while American forces conducted the *Dog Days' Operation* in 2008. Their work 'Inside the Surge', which recorded the heavy fighting with the Mahdi Army in Sadr City and Shulla, Sean and Teresa Smith revealed what soldiers thought of military occupation (*The Guardian*, 2008). The film pointed out that independent journalism in times of war should question every action being taken by the military, and report the facts as much as it can, otherwise it cannot be considered as real journalism. Sean Smith reflected:

> If you're trying to cover the actions of the military, you can either see yourself as part of that mission from a patriotic point of view or loyalty to governments, or because you think it's a just cause. I would say as a journalist that's not really journalism. Your job is to question everything, and to try and get as close and observe and report truthfully. Obviously, whether it's in a militia or a large power like America or Britain, if you are with them reporting, they are wanting you to report things that make them look good. That does not mean to say you have to do that [laughs] or you have to go along with that. (Interview, London, 6th February 2017)

Both the military and the media may create disputes over strategic and critical issues in situations of uncertainty and division. For example, after the fall of Baghdad and the capture of the former Iraqi president Saddam Hussain in December 2003, the situation changed from war into counterinsurgency operations and the British media continued to put pressure on their government about the rationality of waging this war, as no evidence of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were found (Moorcraft & Taylor, 2008).

Transparency is key for the military to gain the trust of the public and the media. However, embedded journalists were subject to different layers of control and censorship by coalition forces (Moorcraft & Taylor, 2008). In the case of the Iraq War, a lack of transparency had devastating effects on the future of military operations and media management when the conflict did not end at the fall of Baghdad but continued when it was deemed necessary to counter radical and extremist groups.

Like most war journalists, David Pratt, a foreign correspondent of *The Herald* had moments of uncertainty when deciding whether to work on his own or join the troops, especially the Americans. Pratt is an author and broadcaster with a particular interest in the Arab and Islamic world, who previously worked for Reuters and the Institute for War and Peace Reporting. He said about his experience of the Iraq War:[6]

> At the beginning of the war, I was actually offered an embed with the Scottish regiment, the Black Watch, in Basra. And I actually turned it down. Because I wasn't a believer in embedding. I thought it was contrary to good journalistic practice. So I went in unilaterally. […] it was very difficult if you were operating unilaterally, because you were kind of ostracised by, not so much the British, but the American forces. Their view was you're either with us, or you're against us. (Interview, Glasgow, 6th December 2016)

Is independent journalism then crossing the line between journalism's patriotic duty and expectations of the public? Conflicts of interest concern wartime reporters when joining troops in foreign deployment. War reporters were offered food and accommodation with officers and soldiers in military camps as part of the embedding agreement that may have affected some journalists' objective judgement. The BBC's Caroline Wyatt, who was

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[6] I interviewed David Pratt on 6th December 2017 in Glasgow, Scotland, just a few days after he returned from covering military operations in Al Mosel, Iraq. He was attached to the Peshmerga forces.

embedded with British troops in the Iraq War, stressed that a successful relationship with the military in the battlefield must involve a high degree of trust and respect from both sides to achieve mutual interests, despite the complexity of negotiation strategies:

> In order for us to get the story to tell the audience as much as possible, we would always try and agree where we would be, which unit we would be with. We would try to be with the people doing the most interesting things. But it is a trade-off if you embed. It is always a trade-off. It is a bargain; it is a deal. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

Since journalists agreed to accommodate themselves with the embedded system and to be hosted by the military, the following part of the chapter will discuss the implications for journalistic values in relation to securing access and operational security.

Access Versus Operational Security Strategies

Here I consider whether journalists compromised their objectivity in reporting the reality of war whilst making a deal with military forces. The interviewees agreed that the most important feature of the embedding program is that American and British forces agreed to accept embedding during the Iraq War: there was then little chance of war reporters acquiring the perspective of civilians because of their restriction in mobility. The BBC's John Simpson, who reported from more than 120 countries, describes his disagreement with any type of embedding by saying, 'I don't want to spend my whole time with people to whom I owe my safety, my protection, my food, my transport, and then be expected to be completely honest about them, because there's always that sense that you're betraying a trust' (Moss, 2010, p.1). Thus, it was important for some big media organisations, such as the BBC, CNN and *The Guardian,* to have several reporters; each of them covering different parts of the war.

Jonathan Steele, an author of several books on international affairs and a freelancer who used to work as a senior foreign correspondent for *The Guardian,* spoke about this experience while he was covering the Iraq War:

> Let me give you what happened. *The Guardian* had three reporters who were covering the invasion. One of them was in Kuwait and travelled not as embedded, but sort of just following behind the frontline of the Iraqi troops. The other colleague was in Erbil in Northern Iraq and was waiting for Saddam Hussain's resistance to collapse and then to come down to Baghdad. I was in Amman by the border with Jordan and Syria waiting for the official resistance to collapse to move in. Actually at the end, the man from Kuwait went first to Bagdad because he followed the Americans. We were blocked at the border and the one from Erbil was also blocked because Saddam Hussain didn't collapse on the frontline until very near the end. And we had two people who were embedded with the British force; coming in also from Kuwait; one of them was with the Royal Navy and the other was with the army. So the main reporters myself and two others, were not embedded but we obviously we talked with our colleagues afterwards. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

Certainly, the embedded system was criticised in that it limited journalists from exercising their professional judgements as to what to report under the direct control of the military. Lindner (2008) indicates that embedded journalists during Iraq War were more able to present the military experience of the war due to their proximity to soldiers compared to those independent journalists who were stationed in Baghdad, Amman, or other major cities. In this sense, embedded journalists became socialised into military culture (Stockholm Syndrome) in which they developed compassion towards the soldiers (Dodson, 2010). Indeed, this embedding with the military was the most compromising circumstances war journalists had to offer for reporting conflicts. Jonathan Beale of the BBC stresses that the close relationship between embedded journalists and soldiers during combat operations has nothing to do with what is called 'Stockholm Syndrome'.

Nevertheless, he urged war reporters to respect the lives of people who protect war reporters by not jeopardising the security of operations. He said:

> The question you have to ask yourself is, 'if I report this, will that affect my embed?' So there is [...] people call it Stockholm Syndrome. I don't think you suffer Stockholm Syndrome, but I do think you worry about access and how reporting an incident will affect your relationship with the people that are meant to be looking after you. You have to think about that. But you also have to think about, 'is this an important story where people have got to see and what's really going on?' So you have to make that balance. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

However, embedding helped both the military and the media to achieve some of their goals, despite the fact that journalists tried to resist information control by different means. Journalists legally agreed to accept the rules of engagement set by the military, yet this interactive relationship caused tension and disagreement among journalists while deployed with military units. Caroline Wyatt of the BBC described this as a 'deal with the devil'. She said:

> Because you sign *The Green Book*, you say, 'we agree to embed' and as a result of that agreement, we agreed to abide by the rules that are set down by the military, which means that they have the right to see something before it's broadcast. They won't necessarily change it, but they have the right to see it, to make sure that we don't compromise security. It was quite a difficult relationship because there were quite a lot of reports about equipment failure, not enough helicopters, things that were going wrong. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

The UK MoD issued general guidance in *The Green Book*, which enables attached journalists to report on operations. The first version was published in 1958. The latest version published in 2013 engaged British media outlets in

the process of its production (JSP 580, 2013).[7] Interestingly, this policy treats war correspondents as civilians who are not allowed to carry arms when attached to British forces (JSP 580, 2013). Although the document stated that correspondents are free to look for information in the area of operations, 'they have to submit all press materials including written scripts, voice items, video recordings, and photographs related to combat activities for security checking before broadcast' (JSP 580, 2013, p.12).

Additionally, some requirements of this agreement were difficult to meet by journalists. David Pratt of *The Herald,* a foreign correspondent for over 20 years, was surprised that categories classified journalists in accordance with their level of training:

> There was a medical criterion. There was the levels of preparation in terms of hostile environment training. Various grades run by the MoD. So if you'd done an independent hostile-environment training course, then that often didn't match the MoD's specifications or standards. Because, if my memory serves me correctly, it was on three levels. The lowest level means that you barely leave Camp Bastion or one of the big bases. The second level maybe pushes you out into the field. And then the final level would allow you to be on frontline duty with the forces, which was very, very, very, very rare, and very difficult. (Interview, Glasgow, 6th December 2016)

Pratt indicated above that all journalists operating in an unpeaceful area of the world whether deploying with troops or travelling in their own should attend a hostile environment training course. These courses aim to equip journalists with the potential knowledge and skills for dealing with critical issues such as personal safety, operational security, mental health, and reaction to hostage and rescue operations in a dangerous zone.

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[7] As stated in *The Green Book,* this document is the result of 'continuing dialogue between the MoD and media organisations and representatives and takes account of lessons learned from past and current operations'.

The Green Book indicates the media are provided with an accredited briefing, access, security, and other facilities including the chance to live with the soldiers and accompany them into war-fighting operations (JSP 580, 2013). Lyse Doucet of the BBC talked about the importance of war reporters being with soldiers on the frontline, where they might emotionally connect with the soldiers by employing their feelings, impressions, and emotions in their stories, which eventually has a significant impact either on soldiers' morale or on the genre of war stories:

> When you embedded you get an access you wouldn't get otherwise: you'd be close to the frontline, you'd spend nights and days with the soldiers, they will end up telling you new things; so you have bonding going on between soldiers and journalists. You end up seeing what the people are fighting for. Are they motivated? What drives them? You will hear what is their sadness, what happened when they lose one of their soldiers. It is a kind of an emotional well which is an important part of the story. (Interview, London, 14th November 2016)

Despite the advantages offered by the embedded system based on Doucet's testimony, the role of journalism is often influenced by this dependent relationship between journalists and soldiers. In fact, there are concerns surrounding the loss of journalistic values while attached to troops, such as autonomy, objectivity, and accountability.

The BBC world affairs correspondent Paul Adam, who was based in US Central Command (Centcom) in Qatar in the Iraq War, pointed out that this form of reporting offered journalists certain degrees of security, and in the meantime offered the military the opportunity to justify to the world their military actions. He said:

> It is kind of a bargain, stuff in which each side gains something and compromises with something else. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

Jonathan Beale of the BBC agreed with his journalist colleagues that the embedded system have affected the core business of war journalism: as journalists agreed to compromise their values with other incentives such as access, accommodation, transportation, and protection during the Iraq War. It sounds a contradiction in practising good journalism, but journalists were forced to make some concessions by their organisations to meet the demands of 24/7 news. However, these constraints did not stop journalists from obtaining different perspectives. Jonathan Beale claims:

> So you are somewhat compromised, because you are getting the picture from a group of the people who you've decided to be with. And you have to ask yourself whether it is worth that compromise because of the access you're getting. But it doesn't mean that you don't report what you see. You will always report what you see. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

From the military perspective, building trust between the military and the media is a key factor in the modern war to enable a more productive military-media relationship, one that influences public opinion by effectively engaging the media in military operations (English, 2005). Jonathan Steele indicates that journalists have a legitimate role to play on the battlefield just like other government and non-government actors, so the military has to recognise the evolving role of the media in conflicts and support their work:

> Most of the independent journalists are not doing public relations or cheerleading for any groups in the war zone, so the military or the government, or other parties involved in the conflict, have to trust those journalists and facilitate their mission by allowing them to collect their information within the limited scope of security restrictions. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

Therefore, war reporters have to fight a constant battle to maintain a balance between preserving the general standard of journalism at war with what military strategies aim to achieve. Jeremy Bowen, who became the BBC's first

Middle East Editor in 2004 and the first British journalist to interview the former Libyan president, Muammar Gaddafi, in 2011, admitted that:

> So what I try and be is what the BBC calls 'impartial'. And the way I interpret that, essentially is about being fair. Try and show all the different perspectives if you can, or the main perspectives, but you don't say, 'two plus two equals four'. You don't say, 'he says that and he says this'. The truth lies somewhere in between. (Interview, London, 8th February 2017)

Without doubt, journalists' identity is one notion that war reporters are keen to preserve in times of conflict, as they act as mediators of information to the public (Tønnessen & Kolstø, 2012).

War correspondents while accompanying the troops, particularly in times of post-conflict, have committed themselves to record the voices of local people relating to international efforts to help them recover from hostilities, prevent the escalation of engagements, in building trust to sustain peace, and to restore effective governance (Orgeret and Tayeebwa, 2016). For example, when the war was over in Iraq and the British troops handed over (Basra) to the Americans, Caroline Wyatt indicates that the BBC were able to commission some local freelancers to do stories in Basra, while they accompanied British troops to film what they were doing. She said:

> So the local journalists almost entirely got negative views from local people about what had happened. We almost entirely got positive views because we had gone there, and we were with people in uniform. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

Wyatt's interpretation above showed that in some circumstances embedded reporters have an advantageous opportunity for accessing territories that were controlled by their armed forces or friendly forces than their counterparts. Has the role of embeds changed? This analysis showed that journalists recognise themselves as a legitimate player in the war zone who must be given accredited access, information, and protection. Since conflict situations are complicated, it

is challenging for a reporter, whether attached to regular or local forces to provide an unbiased story in war reporting because embedding with the military provides them with a stable and peaceful method of reporting.

The participants mostly agreed that the embedded system with the Americans or the British in 2003 tended to worked well in terms of access and obtaining up-to-date information. However, war reporters were required to sign an agreement while joining troops in the combat zone. The following section sheds some light on the challenges that journalists have experienced in gaining legitimate access to conflict areas in the post-embedded era.

The Post-Embedded Era: War, Terror, and Journalism

This section discusses the ethical role of war reporters in reporting conflicts in the post-embedded era. This period is marked by the fall of Baghdad in 1 May 2003 until the present in which the war in Iraq of 2003 has transformed into a new form of warfare. This analysis aims to understand how war journalists position themselves and their ethical practices in reporting 21st century's conflicts. In particular, it will clarify various differences between the classic model of embedding journalists with regular forces in conventional warfare, as discussed above, and deployment with irregular forces in contemporary counterinsurgency operations (COIN). I question whether the classic model of embedding in conventional warfare can possibly be employed in other types of wars to meet the changes in the ecology of modern warfare.

In this context, the days when war reporters could go to warfare wearing short-sleeved jackets and carrying only light equipment, such as cameras, ID cards, note books, etc., have passed. Today, reporters need to attend comprehensive combat training before deployment, they have to wear bullet-proof vests, ride in Humvees (Multipurpose wheeled vehicles), hire bodyguards, and obtain life insurance (Ketz, 2018). Thus, identifying emergent trends in the concept of war will help us to understand why war reporters have struggled to deal with the 21st century's conflicts.

The media have been deeply integrated within military strategies and tactics such as major military operations, counter-terrorism, insurgency operations, the use of drones, and hybrid and Info Ops (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010). This type of involvement has exposed the media to different kinds of threats while operating without cover in complex conflicts (Carr, 2012). For example, since 2015 neglected civil wars like Yemen provide evidence of changes in the world's perspectives towards human rights violations, increased risk of famine, and targeting civilians under the eye of the international community (Mundy, 2018). Angus Taverner, formerly of UK MoD, claims:

> I think Yemen is a fascinating access illustration of what happens when you do not talk to the media, and I strongly believe that Saudi and the UAE have lost international support over things like famine and cholera, allegations of bad targeting and so on. I'm actually talking about taking the media into Sanaa (Yemen) or other places, and showing them what they were doing and showing them how carefully they were working on the targeting, and the Emirates maybe spending $1.5 billion on relief. All that is completely missing because they are not talking to the media, and I think it is a good illustration of what happens when you just don't talk, you end up on the wrong side. (Interview by telephone, 13th February 2018)

Taverner's interpretation of the absence of military-media cooperation in current conflicts, for instance in Yemen due to a complex situation on the ground, provides insights into the role of the media in today's war. Unlike other current conflicts, such as Syria, Iraq, and Ukraine, the absence of official data and security challenges have made many international media organisations reluctant to go to Yemen (Malsin, 2015; Dessi, 2018). For example, a crew from the BBC only managed to stay for a short time in the southern city of Aden in April 2015, but other news organisations preferred to cover the conflict from neighbouring countries such as Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Eygpt, or Lebanon (Malsin, 2015). The BBC's Lyse Doucet agrees with academic scholars that the nature of war has

changed because of many non-state actors involved in asymmetrical warfare. Doucet states that the BBC has issued a policy to stop sending its staff journalists to hazardous areas because of the threat to their lives:

> The problem now is that we have gone from a kind of classic warfare, which is from a fixed position in the trenches. No one goes to the frontline to wars which been fought street to street, house to house, and we say now it's not just women and children who are on the frontline, they are the frontline, so everyone comes under attack. (Interview, London, 14th November 2016)

Her experience illustrates that it is difficult for Western journalists to report from the frontline in new war, as the risks of being in the midst of the battlefield are becoming more dangerous.

In new war, the state is more concerned with projecting a positive image about its foreign policy to win public trust and mobilise forces in its own interests (Curran & Seaton, 2003). Accordingly, governments, especially the US, struggled after the Cold War to invest in soft power to promote public diplomacy; there is a thin line between propaganda and information (Nye, 2010). Nye (2008, p.94) defines soft power as the 'ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes one wants through attraction rather than coercion or payment. A country's soft power rests on its resources of culture, values, and policies'.

Middle power countries, those that have sufficient size and capacity, such as Canada and Norway, also participate in niche diplomacy on the international stage (Henrikson, 2005). Western military doctrines explicitly admit their desire to shape public opinion so as to justify their military action as part of Info Ops. However, the difference between the strategic objectives and war outcomes can damage the relationship between the military and the media and can create as many problems between policymakers and operational commanders. For example, the US government projected the invasion of Iraq of 2003 as a 'trigger for a democratic transformation across the autocratic Arab world' (Khalaf, 2013, p.1). In addition, NATO's intervention in Libya of 2011 was presented as a mission which encompassed humanitarian protection (Fermor, 2012). Reflecting on the results

of both interventions, both combat operations in Iraq and Libya have failed to achieve their promises after both countries have fallen into a sectarian conflict and counterinsurgency operations (Cordesman, 2016). Moreover, the involvement of Western forces, covertly with no clear end-state objectives such as in Syria, the war against ISIS, and the war in Yemen, denied journalists the freedom of reporting the complete story to their audience.

Lindsey Hilsum of Channel 4 News, has covered major conflicts of the past two decades including Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the uprisings in Egypt, Bahrain, and Libya, and has reported extensively from Iran, Zimbabwe, and China. Hilsum claims:

> As the nature of warfare changes, Western involvement in foreign wars changes, so that it becomes this remote thing of drones and air strikes and Special Forces. We as journalists find ourselves less and less able to cover what our own forces are doing, or the forces from our own country, I'm talking about Western journalists. Our job as journalists is to inform the population, the citizens. And I think we're not doing that. So in many ways I think that's the biggest challenge we face. (Interview by telephone, 13th March 2017)

Next, I have identified several major driving forces that motivated war reporters to take the risk of reporting organised violence as a career in the current globalised era — and recognised the potential threat to good journalism those forces can present in the new war.

Journalism Beyond New War

Journalists' perceptions of their semi-detached role in reporting ongoing events shapes their motives, ideologies, and perspectives in selecting news, and how they act as gatekeepers in the chain of news production (Rees, 2001). Therefore, what drives a war journalist to go to war despite the ruthless violence they witness? Is it due to national duty, or to be there as a witness in crucial moments of human history?

Interviewees have emphasised their personal motives to present their version of truth, while deployed with regular or irregular forces, reflecting on their struggle with several players on the ground such as citizens, victims, combatants, and politicians. Truth-telling is what motivates war reporters to put their lives and the lives of their teams in danger to acquire an exclusive story.

Amongst several factors, Fonneløp (2015, p.63) found that personal appreciation of journalism is related to a high feeling of responsibility, accountability, and maintaining positive relations with the public – the latter being a superior motivation for war reporters to enter the profession. The BBC's Middle East Editor, Jeremy Bowen, states that 'I wanted to report the worst things that were happening in the world. I liked being a witness, sometimes to what seemed to be important historic events. But the excitement never went away. I liked living on the edge' (Bowen, 2014, p.1). Additionally, they have described what has changed in the atmosphere of new war journalism in both structural and contextual aspects. Maggie O'Kane of *The Guardian,* who was awarded the accolade of European Journalist of the Year in 2002, explained the reason for this shift in the concept of war journalism, especially for women, by saying:

> I spent my time as a foreign correspondent mainly between 1990 and 2002. And that was a period which I would say was like a tea party, compared to what's happening now. The two key things, I think, first, was the war crimes tribunal, in which journalists were seen as threats to the protagonists. And that happened as a result possibly of the Bosnian War. Bearing witness meant that you could be a danger. Whereas prior to that you were seen as a kind of novelty. Particularly for women, who were not seen as a threat and generally tolerated. I think it's completely different now because of the war crimes tribunal. And secondly, is ISIS, and the kidnap value and the propaganda value of kidnapping or killing journalists. So for both these reasons, I think, Anthony Loyd who's been kidnapped, would say it's become impossible to work. (Interview, London, 6th February 2017)

O'Kane argued that restricting access to armed conflicts can be seen as a major threat to journalism in the new war context. War reporters are concerned with accessing both coalition-controlled and rebel-controlled territory without being embedded with local fighters or with the help of fixers (Dessi, 2018). However, personal motives for going into conflict zones aside, what drives journalists to take the risk? Other factors, such as international politics, ideology, interests, religion, gender, and culture, are not far from their concerns while embarking on their adventurous journeys. Jeremy Bowen of the BBC describes his motives by saying:

> My job, as I see it right now, is explaining what's going on in the Middle East. Now a lot of that involves wars, in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya. But it doesn't just involve that, there's a lot of politics. There's the whole business of religion, and there's the intervention of foreign powers. (Interview, London, 8th February 2017)

The new wars have attracted many war journalists to challenge their political and geographical obstacles and put greater effort into human-interest stories. Despite the fact that Livingston's data shows 'no correlation exists between the number of people at risk of dying and media attention' (2007, cited in Bajraktari & Parajon, 2007), Lindsey Hilsum of Channel 4 News, talked about her interest in reporting on guerrilla warfare rather than war between regular forces. She insisted that her passion was to question government behaviour and convey the voice of people and their struggles. She said:

> But pure military combat is not what I find the most interesting thing. What I find most interesting is the broader impact of war on people, and the behaviour of governments under pressure, and officials and other people under the pressure of war. And in many ways I'm more interested in guerrilla wars and informal wars than in the actual wars which are fought by standing armies. I'm more interested in people who are out of uniform or in half a uniform than in people who are in a very smart uniform. (Interview, 13th March 2017)

These kinds of moral responsibility make life harder and more risky for war journalists – similar to the challenges that war journalists have experienced since the Crimean War (1853–1856). Reporting conflicts has always had a degree of hazard in the battlefield. In an opinion piece in *The Herald*, David Pratt recalled memories of his early journey to Afghanistan in early 1980:

> As far back as the early 1980s, during my own baptism of fire, I was promptly left with no illusions about the risk-taking required in my chosen profession; not that it troubled me much then. Being young and seemingly indestructible, I revelled in the exotic, high-octane experience of my early wars. (Pratt, 2016, p.1)

Locations that have dominated the news of violence in the last two decades, such as Libya, Gaza, Yemen, Crimea, Iraq, and Syria, are recent examples of places where war journalists couldn't get information in areas lacking a clear frontline. Because of frontline challenges, the idea of broadcasting from hotels in Baghdad, Mosul, Kabul, and Damascus is not really aligned with the challenging business of war journalism (Cockburn, 2013) while other actors, such as local producers and extremist groups, easily accessed social media, and the mainstream media as well (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010). Sean Smith of *The Guardian* reporting from the heart of an unclear frontline zone noted the enormous challenges for correspondents and photographers under heavy fire:

> In Tripoli, Libya, if you'd never heard gunfire and you were locked in your flat because you're frightened to go out, and there's some firing, it could seem like rain. Sorry, it's really raining, raining bullets, you're going to know about it. There was a lot of heavy fighting. Trouble is, in the absence of people having access now, and then when they did get access and then coming in from the end of the fall of Tripoli, people wanted to hear a narrative when you saw people zip-tied and executed outside the compound. (Interview, London, 6th February 2017)

Therefore, what has changed in terms of reporters gaining access to today's conflicts? The following sheds further light on the challenges that journalists have experienced by gaining legitimate access to areas of conflict.

Access Versus Reporting Violent Extremism

This part of the chapter explores the correlation between the rise of radical groups like the Jihadis and the growing threat to the lives of war reporters that find themselves in situations of high intensity violence. Accordingly, my focus here is to clarify the impact of jihadist groups on the characteristics of war, and how this manifests itself in wartime journalism. I approach this by considering the rise of global extremism, frontline access, and embedding with irregular forces.

The Rise of Global Extremism

Globalisation and extremism share something in common: believing in a world without borders. The term 'jihadism' in Islamic culture, which has been widely used since 9/11 in the mass media, remains a political term. We can understand global extremism as a radical ideology within the context of political crisis; an extremism that shifts its perception of 'the enemy' from local to global, and through which groups expand theirs goals and aspirations by establishing their own regime (Aslan, 2009). Al-Qaida, ISIS, and other radical groups are examples of organisations that have adopted this kind of ideology to achieve their goals.

What type of challenges have war correspondents encountered while deployed with irregular forces in the fight against powerful organisations, such as ISIS or other extremist or rebel groups, in places like Syria, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Lebanon, Gaza, and Iraq?

Frontline Access

There is no doubt that the military depends on the efficiency of its soldiers in addition to the efficiency of weapons and equipment. Although paramilitary forces like ISIS cannot be categorised as regular forces, they can be described as effective hybrid forces that combine terrorists and former army personnel,

especially from Iraq, and which operate with an estimated $2.38 billion in cash and assets (Gerges, 2016; Bennett, 2017). These hybrid forces have been used to control ISIS territory (in North Iraq and Syria) with a high-tech weaponry arsenal such as 'tanks, vehicle mounted rocket launchers, anti-air stinger missiles, Howitzer artillery, MiG Fighter Jets and, more recently, weaponized drones' (Bennett, 2017, p.1). As ISIS started to lose its status as a regional power in the aftermath of the Battle of Mosul in 2016, terrorist groups adopted other forms of decentralised militant approaches (Clarke & Ross, 2016). These approaches include carrying out terrorist attacks outside of their territory, such as the attacks in Paris in 2015, Brussels in 2016, and London in 2017.

Due to the growing risks of travelling into extremist-controlled territory, it would be hard for Western journalists to cover all sides of a war in a manner that gives all parties equal weight – as used to be attempted in former times of conflict. In addition, a lack of experience in countering the risk of being in the midst of large-scale conflicts without enough training, combined with a lack of protection, are reasons why war correspondents – especially young journalists and freelancers – have lost their lives in conflict zones. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 1337 journalists have been killed since 1992, including 299 journalists killed in combat and crossfire (CPJ, 2019). Because of a lack of Western military protection in contemporary wars, such as Syria and Northern Iraq, Paul Adam of the BBC claims that it would be harder for war/defence journalists to see the full picture from different sides because journalists can't gain access to witness ongoing military operations. He explains:

> You are not going, for example, to embed with the Free Syrian Army, probably. People have done trips with the Syrian Army, but that was not a kind of embedding exactly, but it was a kind of escorting the task forces in specific operations, like Cleaning and Sanitising Operations. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

According to Jonathan Steele, a journalist has to decide which part of the war to cover, particularly in a complex conflict like Syria, where access to both sides of the conflict is an issue:

> If you managed to get access then the next problem is getting reliable information, like in any places you are reporting from, as you have to talk to different people and judge what they are saying to you. I have been to Syria about 5 times. It was in Damascus. I am sure you know that if you have been to the Damascus side, you have to get a government visa, and you will not be very welcome on the opposition side, and in fact, you might be in considerable danger; kidnapping or some other threats. Similarly, reporters who work with the opposition side are only allowed to work on that side and they can't get a visa to get to Damascus. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

Many of Steele's concerns reflect the basic role of journalism to report violent extremism to the public. Lindsey Hilsum of Channel 4 News pointed out that journalists are not expected to report both sides of the conflict equally. Therefore, being embedded with military forces can be seen as an obstacle to realising the whole picture. She said:

> So on the whole, you're with one side and then on another trip you're with another side, or you're on one side and your colleague is on another side. It's a silly argument, people say you shouldn't be embedded because you don't see the whole picture. You never see the whole picture. It is not possible to see the whole picture. You will never see the whole picture. You will only ever see a slice of what's going on. (Interview, 13th March 2017)

Hilsum argues that embedding does not prevent journalists from seeing the whole picture of the conflict because other circumstances prevent journalists from being able to move around freely. As such, each type of war, requires different strategies and suitable networks to deal with the heavy demands of information management. I will now discuss embedding with irregular forces in unconventional warfare to explain how it differs from embedding with regular forces.

The threat of radical groups has grown recently. A US intelligence report states that extremist groups in some parts of the Middle East, Africa, the Russian North Caucasus, Southeast Asia, and South Asia have been affiliated with ISIS in Iraq since 2015, although their relationship remains symbolic in most cases (Coats, 2018). To stop the spread of ISIS's ideology, the US and the UK have worked individually and, sometimes, with local forces in Iraq and other countries, in a long strategy to counter extremist networks. Has this strategy worked well on the ground for war reporters?

A report published by the UK parliament indicates that there is no obvious integration of the UK Government policy instruments to achieve the ultimate goals of its military operations in Iraq and Syria (The Prime Minister, 2016). For researchers, these insufficient strategies are what facilitate the grounds for minority groups, such as the Shia, extremists and clerics from the ISIS and Al-Nusra groups, to rise into the political system (Aslan, 2009; Gerges, 2016).

Cockburn (2010) claims that the root of this failure originates from the Iraq War when occupation forces lacked the knowledge and understanding of the mosaic of Iraq's unique culture, and because information warfare strategies were implemented to restrict the flow of news from the frontline. Therefore, the UK Government's misinterpretation of important phases of these conflicts created a vacuum in regional politics. The lack of an efficient and united strategy following the Iraq War has increased polarisation in reporting conflicts, has failed to give a voice to minority groups, and has uncovered hidden issues that people would rather not confront, such as the distinction between Sunni and Shia in Muslim countries, which have then fuelled other ethnic conflicts (Bajraktari & Parajon, 2007; Mertens, 2016).

Muna Mahmood, a filmmaker for *The Guardian,* highlighted the sensitivity of raising ethnic or sectarian issues among Iraqi people who consider themselves to be united by the notion of the Umaa (nation):

Just before the war in Iraq, let's say a couple of weeks or something [laughs], the media were so careful to ask the question, 'Are you Sunni or Shi'ite?' Because that was a very sensitive question in Iraq. No one would talk about it. The moment the war started, and Saddam had gone, they started to ask people, 'Are you Sunni?' They didn't ask that question just because of Saddam, but people didn't accept it. (Interview, London, 6th February 2017)

David Pratt of *The Herald* agreed that it is crucially important to have a degree of cultural sensitivity, even in terms of gender, dress codes, and different customs:

It's also a gender issue, I mean I'm not picking on my female colleagues here because I've seen male colleagues ride roughshod over cultural sensitivities. But I've also seen female correspondents working in Islamic cultures who are unaware of the needs, in terms of dress codes or whatever. The more experienced obviously do understand that. But it remains an issue, I think. *(*Interview, Glasgow, 6th December 2016)

What does a lack of governmental policy instruments have to do with the attempts of war journalists to find their way into war zones with irregular forces? And is this type of embedding similar to what war journalists have experienced with American and British forces?

Since the outbreak of the war in Northern Iraq and Syria, several war reporters who are funded by their own organisation have no objections to being deployed with regular forces and militia, as long as by established military. For the freelancer, the risk is much higher, even when hired by large media outlets, because they don't receive the same benefits as their veteran counterparts, such as expense accounts, security, or insurance (Caesar, 2014). David Pratt was attached to the Iraqi security forces and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters like other veteran journalists and freelancers during the battle for Mosul against ISIS in 2016. He indicated that choices were limited while embedded with militia forces during

the fight against extremist groups in Iraq and Syria. He talked about a kind of discrimination in joining these forces:

> Obviously the other thing is there's a favouritism as well. If a paper is seen to be sympathetic or at least non-critical, then quite often in terms of the selection procedure, some correspondents will get that priority position. If they can only take six correspondents into a certain place, and give them access, then they're going to be looking at who will give us the widest possible exposure, so that means the big media operations who can put more pressure on. The other criteria would be, 'who's with us?', 'who has a sympathetic ear to our position here?', I think. That's the crucial thing. (Interview, Glasgow, 6th December 2016)

Gabriel Gatehouse of the BBC was attached to Kurdish forces in the Battle of Mosul in 2016. He insisted that it would be impossible for UK forces to run an embedding system as it did in the Iraq War in 2003. He said:

> The most serious challenges are to gain access to the ground and get an accurate representation of what is going on the ground. The involvement of the British military on the ground has been very minimal and mostly covert, and that's the reason we don't have an embedding program. But I should also say that straight military embedded journalism, which I have done several times, would be very limited in this scope. (Interview by phone, 22nd November 2016)

The choices are limited for war reporters to document counter-insurgency fighting in Iraq, Syria, and Libya, without full protection from skilled and well-trained forces.

Consider the experience of the CNN senior international correspondent Arwa Damon deployed with the Iraqi special forces in the attack against ISIS on the 8th November 2016 (Damon & Laine, 2016). Damon and her photojournalist colleague Brice Laine documented the huge offensive by both sides as their convoy was

leading the operation through narrow roads with low-hanging electrical cables, leaving soldiers and civilians in a terrible situation. Similarly, Gabriel Gatehouse of the BBC indicates how important it was to be with NATO forces to witness crucial moments in capturing the former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi which changed the course of war. He describes how horrible it was to see the remains of Gaddafi's convoy smashed by French airstrikes:

> During 2011 in Libya, when the rebels captured and killed Muammar Gaddafi, we didn't witness the catching of the colonel, but we saw the remains of the convoy he was travelling in, that had been hit by the French airstrike. Very disturbing scene, people sat burned in their cars. Those images remain in my mind, and brought me to think of the difference between what decision-making strikes look like from the perspective on the ground, and what they look like from the perspective of black and white TV footage put out by the military. (Interview by phone, 22nd November 2016)

War journalists have encountered challenging issues reporting from government and rebel sides. In fact, their stories reveal how their valuable news sources, backed by the US and Britain, turned into threats against their lives.

The veteran war reporter Anthony Loyd of *The Times* was abducted, beaten and shot at by a Syrian rebel gang, before managing to force open a car boot and escape with his life (Williams, 2014). In Tal Rafat in 2014, Loyd and his colleague, photographer Jack Hill, were on their way from Syria to Turkey after covering the situation in Aleppo. Loyd (2014) spoke about his abduction and escape story and how he was betrayed by his friend Abdelhakim al Yaseen, a local subunit commander with Liwa Tawhid, one of the largest rebel brigades in Northern Syria. Additionally, Austin Tice of the US newspaper publisher, McClatchy, has been held captive somewhere in Syria since August 2012. He was abducted by unknown groups in Syria on his way from Daraya, near Damascus, to Beirut in neighbouring Lebanon and his whereabouts remain unknown (Greenslade, 2016). The risk of being present in this type of conflict is growing in a way that makes it impossible

for journalists to report, unless they enjoy full logistical support from trusted military forces. The BBC's Jonathan Beale admitted:

> I think modern conflict, if you think about Afghanistan, if you think about Libya, if you think about Iraq, there are threats that will always be there for journalists, such as roadside bombs, IEDs, indirect fire, mortars, and sniper fire. Things that you cannot control. You can mitigate the risk, but there will always be risk. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

Conclusion

This chapter offers an answer to the second research question of this study: in what ways has war journalism changed since the Iraq War in 2003? I explored the emerging character of journalistic practices in war, including journalists' ethical role in an embedded system in both classic and new war, with more emphasis on the distinctive crisis in the Middle East since the Iraq War. My findings were derived from interviews with senior war reporters who represent major British media outlets, and one also worked on a freelance basis. I found evidence of emerging challenges in journalistic practices in terms of reporting non-conventional war, compared to the old structural relationship with armed forces in conventional war.

Overall, these findings tell us much more about the environment of war reporting and the challenges that wartime journalists face in getting in and out of combat zones. War journalism in the form of the embedded system like in the Iraq War of 2003 and other types of embedding structures gives rise to two emerging themes: (1) the ambiguity of the concept of 'embedded journalism' due to the uncertain condition around journalistic ethics; and (2) the complex situation in recent wars that impairs the ability of journalists to report from the frontline.

The embedded system was a result of operational lessons within military thinking in the US, the UK, and NATO during the post-Afghanistan War period. Through embedding the military aimed to strategically engage the national and allied

media into the war effort as much as they could as part of their troops to minimise the risk of unpredictable challenges. Certainly, this approach was not like previous forms of the military's media management approach, such as the 'information vacuum' in the Falklands War of 1982, the 'pooling system' in the Gulf War of 1991 and other attachments as in Kosovo, and Afghanistan. Embedding was comprehensively structured according to an agreement between both sides to engage the media into military doctrines.

The findings from my interviews show that my participants agree with most academic studies of media and war that there is a period of transition in the relationship between war and the media, with regard to access to the frontline, communications technology, and the growing threat of radical groups. The interviewees also agree that it would be difficult to carry out embedding as accomplished in Iraq in 2003 because of the risk of getting killed or kidnapped by task forces that operate in the field; especially in the aftermath of the Syrian War, the war against ISIS in Northern Iraq, the civil war in Libya and the crisis in Yemen. However, some journalists were attached to NATO forces in Libya, and some joined local forces such as the Peshmerga in Northern Iraq for the purpose of countering terrorist operations and documenting the ongoing fight against ISIS.

The following chapter will outline the impact of developments in the war paradigm and communications technologies on journalistic work.

Chapter Six:

The Ecology of War Journalism in the Digital Age: Information as a Weapon

Introduction

This chapter addresses the third question of this thesis: how has the development of a hybrid media ecology made the role of professional war reporters vulnerable in a fast-changing situation? The media industry, as a whole, has been affected by the consequences of a changing media environment in the digital age. One of the key changes is the use of the internet, and social media in particular, not only as a global means of mediation during armed conflict, but also as tools for complex information warfare. This includes advertising, organised trolling, computational propaganda, mobilisation, and framing politics with the malicious intent to influence the public opinion. That makes the work of war correspondents vulnerable and risky to acquire information dominance due to challenges of bearing eyewitness in the new forms of conflicts.

This chapter is divided into two distinct main parts as shown below in Table 6. I argue, firstly, that the digital revolution has caused drastic changes in the reporting of today's conflicts and that this brings with it new ethical dilemmas for war reporters in relation to war journalism's credibility. The case of the current civil war in Syria will highlight the major challenges that war correspondents have encountered on the ground. Secondly, the massive developments in communications technologies affect journalistic work and enable individuals and groups outside the mainstream media to have a voice in the era of the new war. Weaponisation of information is the term I used in this chapter to describe the tactics of using internet resources and digital networks for combat purposes either from the perspective of the British military or from the standpoint of war reporters. Information as a weapon will be analysed by looking closely at the current crisis in Ukraine to describe how information operations have been managed in the cyberspace domain.

Table 6 the ecology of war journalism in the digital age

Theme	Concepts	Categories	Sub Categories	Coding
The Ecology of War Journalism in the Digital Age	**Crisis in news credibility**	The balanced reporting of war news	Loss of trust	The role of gatekeepers
				Inaccurate information, bias, post-truth, and infotainment
		Digital revolution	Eywitnessing and Disinformation	The consequences of fake news, and the audience perception of disinformation
				The decline of Professional Journalists
				Syria War
	The future of information operations	The military and information	Media Ops doctrines	The use of defensive language, lack of access to information, and lack of logistical support for war reporters
			The quality of war reporting	The loss of veteran war reporters, netwar and non-verified materials, building a symbiotic relationship with the media, and changes in the military culture
			Weblogs	Reliability, citizen journalists, cyber troops, and information/disinformation
		The media and information	Weaponisation of information	Fake news and propaganda, polarisation, fact-checking, and bias
				Decline of professional reporters, local reporters
			The User-Generated Content (UGC's)	Accountable journalism, Text and visual posting from soldiers, personal life and experience
				The Ukrain Crisis

I begin with a discussion about the lack of credibility in war reporting that has occurred within a newly changed media environment.

Credibility in War Journalism

This section incorporates interviewees' perspectives and a review of media literature about how developments in communications technology can affect the quality of war journalism. Audience perceptions of war reportage involve a complicated process of measuring news credibility, such as whether consumers accept various unverified material. Media scholars indicate that the components of news credibility (in traditional and new media) are believability, accuracy, trustworthiness, bias, and completeness (Flanagin and Metzger, 2000, cited in Abdulla et al., 2002). This section will question the credibility of newsgathering in today's conflicts by looking at how war correspondents have tried to provide a balanced reportage of each side by being eyewitnesses to day-by-day events in the war zone. Additionally, credibility is at risk due to the deliberate manipulation of information. Evidence from the ongoing civil war in Syria will indicate the struggle of undertaking accurate eyewitness reporting.

The Balanced Reporting of War News

Balance is a fundamental component of good journalism, yet balance doesn't mean giving each side equal coverage, space, and time, but rather how to report accurate and fair judgements of the truth (N.L., 2012). In journalism in general, balance is costly and time-consuming to obtain. This section will examine war correspondents' concerns on the loss of trust due to challenges of bearing eyewitness in the new forms of conflicts.

Over the last three decades, the internet has become an efficient interactive platform for people to share knowledge, information, emotions, advertising, and recordings of real-life events, which have challenged conventional media. Abdulla et al., (2002) indicate that fairness and accuracy are associated with newspapers and television, however, readers also judge online news credibility for trustworthiness, timeliness, and bias factors. In particular, intrinsic features of the internet offer online users with the ability to establishing constant, interactive communication with organisations and individuals in social media platforms that provide public and private rooms for discussion such as Twitter and Facebook.

They can argue, challenge, share, and comment regarding the complexity of war reporting. Similarly, the active presence of war correspondents in social media enables them to interact with their followers and accessing sources to deliver accurate information to gain trust. However, Sacco & Bossio (2015, p.73) argued that 'reporters also have to face the drawbacks that go with fast, multi-medium and multi-sourced information, especially in terms of verification of information and contextualisation'.

Thus, professional journalists may act like the old model of gatekeepers in the traditional media to verify the information and pinpoint their view. For example, Alex Crawford of Sky News was criticised for her biased reporting of the current Libyan crisis because of a claim made by a Libyan citizen on her account at Twitter on 18 April 2019 that Alex and her team did not report from big cities such as Benghazi which had fought the war against ISIS. Alex Crawford tweeted on the same day that she has reported from Benghazi several times when Khalifa Heftar's (the head of the Libyan National Army) forces were fighting ISIS there. This online interaction has encouraged other professional war reporters, who are reporting on the same crisis, to engage with this open dialogue.

Lindsey Hilsum of Channel 4 News has defended the bravery of her counterpart Alex Crawford and her team who operate in a difficult time in Libya. She noted on the same platform 'Libya people: @AlexCrawfordSky and her team are doing their best to report from Tripoli which is very dangerous and difficult. She is not biased. She has spent time in different parts of the country. There are many versions of events. She is an eyewitness on the ground' (Hilsum, 2019). Balanced reporting lies at the very heart of war journalism. Lyse Doucet of the BBC indicates that balanced reporting cannot be achieved without being physically present to monitor the escalation of these conflicts from different perspectives:

> In war reporting the truth is the first casualty, the fog of war has always been a problem going back since war reporting began. In the heat of the battle, how do you know how many people died, who started the conflict, and who won the conflict? And then if you were reporting only from one side like in the Vietnam War with American troops: how you do really know what it is

happening with the Vietcong, how do you present a full picture of the war if you only do it from one side? You just don't know because you aren't there. So for us being there this is about journalism, being there on the ground. (Interview, London, 14th November 2016)

According to Doucet's reflection above, the lack of trust in the media has become the major concern among war journalists in the era of digital communications who could not be eyewitnesses to day-to-day fighting. According to the 2017 Edelman Trust Barometer, trust is in crisis in four key institutions – business, government, NGOs, and the media (Edelman, 2017). The Edelman report claims that the whole social system is falling apart, resulting in a decline in trust as concerns grow over major issues such as the pace of innovation, corruption, inequality, immigration, eroding social values, and globalisation (Edelman, 2017).

According to Edelman's (2017) report, trust in critical journalism is threatened by the increased amount of inaccurate information, fake news, bias, sensationalism, alternative truth, and hoaxes. These disrupt the core of the democratic system, as can be seen in the aftermath of the US presidential election in 2016, and the debate over the implications of Brexit for the economies of Britain and the EU. David Pratt of *The Herald* claims that the current debate on post-truth has impacted the role of war correspondents in reflecting diverse views on war news:

> There is a lot of talk at the moment about the post-truth and fake news and whatever. And I've always been of the view that there will always be journalism. We will always need journalism. The formats will change. It will have to be readdressed. A lot of these things are often almost cyclical in a sense because people will become very aware of fake news and the post-truth. I hate that term. Basically lies, and lies have always been around. Lies have been around as long as journalism's been around. And the job of journalism is to get behind the lies and beneath the lies and through the lies. So the format will change, the need for journalism will always be there. (Interview, Glasgow, 6th December 2016)

Pratt's argument about his disagreement of the misuse of the phrase post-truth across the mainstream media shows that evidence-based information is crucial for war journalism to claim accountability for telling the full story. The phrase of "post-truth" suggests that world politics are fuelled by emotive statements rather than facts (Coughlan, 2017). The Oxford dictionary defines post-truth as an 'adjective relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion that appeals to emotion and personal belief' (Oxford dictionary). Post-truth was named the word of the year by Oxford dictionary in 2016 because of the frequency of its usage, which increased by 2,000% in 2016 over 2015, following the international debate on Brexit and the US presidential election (BBC, 2016). The world has become concerned about today's warfare as a battle for information, communications, security, intelligence, surveillance, disinformation, cyber, and electronic warfare associated with the prevalence of CCS.

For some journalists, the backdrop of trust is a global phenomenon rather than a problem of journalism. Greenslade (2008) of *The Guardian* claims that a journalist is not the person to hold responsible for the current crisis facing the traditional media concerning the digital revolution and the financial crisis. It is a global phenomenon, and out of journalists' control. The BBC's Gabriel Gatehouse rejected the claim of a decline in the efficiency of war journalists in contemporary conflicts, despite the growing risks in areas of conflicts. He said:

> No I don't think so. The nature of many conflicts needs reporters on the ground. It is becoming harder to work on the ground because of the proliferation of the broadcast technology and basically everyone with a smartphone can be a broadcaster. But I wouldn't call it 'decline'. It is additional challenges. (Interview by telephone, 22nd November 2016)

Considering Gatehouse''s statement above, the fundamental role of a war reporter is to act as an eyewitness by giving an accurate account of day-by-day tragedy without being partially sighted. Yet another critical challenge for war journalism

is to effectively educate people about matters that are important to their nation (Fuller, 2010), and to supply critical reporting about the suffering of civilians, and the direction of the conflicts.

Jonathan Steele of *The Guardian* claims that both the media and the audience react differently to war compared to natural crises like earthquakes:

> War reporting is about politics. We know that war is the most destructive thing, the terrible tragedies and we should report the suffering. The outside world needs to know what is going on? But it is not just an earthquake. In an earthquake you don't blame anybody. Some people are unsafe, some people are trapped under buildings, some have lost their husband or children. An earthquake is an earthquake, but in a war you need to know why it is happening? Who is fighting whom? Who are the dominant groups? Is there any chance for political settlements to stop the war? It is political things. (Interview, London, 14th November 2016)

Considering war journalism as a primary source of information in times of conflict, the best way for the mainstream media to obtain the full picture of a story is to have several correspondents in different places in a conflict zone. It would be hard for a journalist in current conflicts to provide a full picture from all different angles by himself or herself unless he or she has a secure connection with the conflict's actors, someone in the military, or other journalists or freelancers. Lindsey Hilsum of Channel 4 News argued:

> You can't clone yourself, and you can't be in more than one place at once. So, for example, in Fallujah, I was with an American Marine unit in the Battle of Fallujah in 2004. And I said before, it was a very, very intense combat but obviously, we did not get the story of what was happening to the civilians in Fallujah, apart from the ones we saw, the ones who were killed. Well, they weren't mostly civilians, they were the men in half-uniforms, the fighters. And then we saw people with white flags and so on. (Interview, 13th March 2017)

Hilsum refers in her account above to those war journalists who travelled with the US and UK Armed Forces in tanks and armoured personnel carriers during major combat operations in the period of post-Iraq War. Beyond the US and UK militaries' effort to secure the safety of war reporters in territories that were controlled by insurgents and extremists such as Baghdad and Fallujah, war reporters have gained a better understanding of the growing risk of operating in severe emergencies. War journalists have responded effectively to the complexity of today's wars.

Despite the growing risk of being in dangerous places like Syria, Libya, Yemen, and Iraq without having full military support while reporting from the frontline, journalists still show confidence in challenging direct threats to their lives. Journalists have established reliable networks with the key players in warzones, such as local reporters, fixers, translators, drivers, and other media actors, to facilitate their mission and help them talk to local people. Caroline Wyatt of the BBC emphasises the importance of skilled foreign correspondents to report contemporary wars who are highly trained and strive to provide a more balanced perspective with a high standard of discipline in choosing sources and quoting people accurately:

> But one reason why we have foreign correspondents is to tell stories from a perspective that our audience will understand. So much of our audience is not in Iraq or in Afghanistan, they are people who watching here, at home, from France, Spain, Italy or wherever. And I suppose what we can do is bring them a different perspective. All you can hope to do is to tell as much of the truth as you can. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

The Syrian crisis brought up the contested relationship between the media and the military regarding the media's potential role in the process of decision-making about military action during humanitarian crises (Doucet, 2018). I will provide evidence in the next section about war reporters' concerns on accessing war zones, talking to reliable sources, and securing their safety and the safety of their team.

The unfolding civil war in Syria provides an excellent example of how information about the reality of today's conflict is processed by the media and social media. According to the UN Refugee Agency, seven years of fighting in Syria resulted in more than 300,000 people losing their lives, and approximately 11 million were displaced from their homes (UNHCR, 2019). Three main combatants' groups are fighting each other backed by outside forces in Syria. Each of them claims the right to control their territories: (a) the rebels who are backed by the US, UK and some Sunni countries; (b) the government who are backed by Russia and Iran; and, (c) numerous insurgent and militant groups. Each major power operating in Syria – Turkey, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the US – has its interests and agenda. Therefore, it is quite comprehensible that each side fabricates and exaggerates war stories about the others, while denying any crimes carried out by their forces.

The complex situation in Syria since 2012 has raised journalists' concerns about the failure of the international community to stop what they described as 'the most devastating conflict in this century' (Doucet, 2018). Journalists also raise other concerns around accessing the frontline, gathering reliable data, and online disinformation. Due to a lack of sources in some areas held by rebels and other extremist groups, in the east and west of Aleppo in Syria most of the Western media moved into the conflict area with the permission of the dominant insurgents. These armed opposition groups operate in the same style as Al-Qaeda, including the Ahrar Al-Sham rebel group and the Salafi-jihadi groups – for example, Jabhat al-Nusra (Cockburn, 2017, 2018b). Other journalists preferred to operate with a valid visa in government territories to be sure of their safety. Jeremy Bowen of the BBC pointed out:

> If I'm in Damascus, I always go on the regime's side, with a visa. I don't go into the country illegally, like people used to do to go to the rebels. But now that's too dangerous and hardly anybody does it. So if I want to go to Latakia, for example, I have to get special permission. We don't always need someone in the car with us when we're driving, but the driver needs to have a piece of

paper with all our names on. (Interview, London, 8th February 2017)

David Pratt of *The Herald* considers their safety and the safety of their team to be as important as the job they are doing. He claimed:

> It is always my top priority, because it's a top priority in terms of personal security, security of those around you, the security of fixers and translators, who people frequently tend to forget about and who are putting their lives on the line. And they're often from that country, so when I go home, they're still there. And if they're seen to be stepping out of line because they're assisting you, it puts the fixer and translator, and their family, under tremendous duress and pressure. (Interview, Glasgow, 6th December 2016)

Considering the consequences of this restricted access, financial implications and diffused, dispersed, multi-dimensional threats on the ground have constrained wartime journalists in eyewitnessing events (Arquilla & Ronfeldt, 2001). As a result, the circulation of unverified or false information without proof or evidence poses additional challenges for war journalists when operating under the condition of uncertainty in which this information can cause confusion among the audience, even after it has been discredited. Emotions such as anger and anxiety may push people to respond in a partisan manner when exposed to inaccurate information about politics (Weeks, 2015). Greenhill and Oppenheim (2017) indicate that people who are living in politically unstable conditions are vulnerable to receiving unverified information due to heightened threat perception compared to people living in peaceful environments. As such, misinformation about incorrect events damages the media's reputation and, therefore, has negative influences on people's beliefs and attitudes about controversial political issues – if not backed by substantial evidence (Nyhan & Reifler, 2015). For example, the picture of Omran Daqneesh, the young Syrian boy whose picture travelled around the globe as an icon of the brutality of the Assad regime in the Aleppo battle during August 2016, spread across the internet and got the world's attention (Sanchez, 2017). The boy who appeared in the image was sitting on a chair with his face covered in blood and dust. His father talked about the attempts of rebel groups and the

international media to use his son to attack the Syrian regime (Sanchez, 2017). The BBC's Lyse Doucet describes this picture as an example of a 'misleading issue':

> Last month you had the picture of Omran Daqneesh in the ambulance in Aleppo, filmed by the opposition group, and that one travelled around the world. The little boy stained with dust and blood. So the Western journalists used it. Isn't this terrible! Everyone tweeted and retweeted this picture. The Russians and Chinese said, 'It is fake'. This stuff was put on his face, and they started to investigate its sources. They found that the same photographer who took this picture had taken selfies two weeks ago with some Jihadist fighters with beheaded [Abdullah Issa] 12-year-old child. They said: 'How can we trust this photographer!' Even Bashar Alasad said, 'This is a hoax! This is not true'. So you have one picture, which nobody can agree on its sources. Everyone has his view on it. (Interview, London, 14th November 2016)

Doucet argued above that the use of unverified information can create a storm of criticism from journalists, politicians, and social media users. In this case, David Pratt of *The Herald* indicates that supporting indigenous journalism is vital for providing multi-dimensional views of war, but it has to be based on constructed ethical norms; even though local journalists might be inextricably tied up with what is going on because of their proximity:

> So I think the way forward, you know when I worked for the Institute of War and Peace Reporting, a great deal of our work was about re-building or supporting indigenous journalism. But that indigenous journalism has to have professional standards, constraints, ethical priorities, positioning, that any other journalism should have in that way. And that's why I think there's nothing wrong with a Syrian reporting on the Syrian situation, but they have to understand that it's the journalism first, really. And that's a big demand to place on anybody. (Interview, Glasgow, 6th December 2016)

For Jeremy Bowen of the BBC, it is essential to coordinate with the local government or the military to facilitate access to the frontline and to report without any kind of disturbance. Bowen wrote in an article in *the Radio Times* about the most challenging types of war reporting, and why the war in Syria kept pulling him back: 'Damascus is surrounded by frontlines. I have crossed them from time to time. But it's getting harder. Going out of town is more complicated. Trips to the frontline, as in most countries, have to be carefully coordinated with the military' (Bowen, 2014, p.1).

In short, this part of this chapter has discussed the impact of the digital revolution has on the practice of war journalism in the era of the new war. In war journalism, providing fair, accurate, transparent, and reliable information is always attached to ethical codes when journalists put themselves at risk while deployed with local forces, militia, aid agencies in areas of violence, or operate independently. The ongoing war in Syria has provided evidence that the rise of citizen and web journalists who have access to record injustices, violence, and tragedies at a time when staff journalists are not able to access some cities controlled by insurgents has brought a potent threat to the mainstream media.

In the next part, I will explore under which conditions information is being used as a weapon in the context of the new war. The implications of developments in military doctrines and communications technologies in the practice of war reporting will be outlined.

Information as a Weapon in the New War

The information revolution has changed the way wars are waged and reported. The aim of this part is to describe how the military and the media have responded to the dramatic impact that the information and communication revolution has had on their business. On the one hand, the military doctrines recognise the potential capabilities of the digital technologies to acquire the control on the flow of information during military operations. Although the new media challenges the old model of Info Ops which becomes irrelevant for today's conflicts as the

character of war has changed, it provides new ways of thinking about the realistic methods of supporting the integration system with the traditional and new media. An information operations policy is crucial for constructing realities, shaping attitudes to actors and audiences towards conflicts, and effecting information security (Waltzman, 2017). On the other hand, the mainstream media have to balance between providing the public with reliable and accurate information about the security challenges and the potential risk of using unverified information circulating on the internet and social media which may be intended to manipulate war reporters. Information is being used in digital domains as a weapon for military purposes. Thus, the aim of the mainstream media is to stabilise their business offline and expand their online consumer base.

I will begin by giving more insight into how military doctrines in the British context have addressed the issues of changes in reporting new forms of warfare and the process of mitigating the risk of information management.

The Military and Information

The military has acknowledged a shifting media space specifically in the new form of warfare because the strategic narrative of war has gained more value in the eyes of combat commanders than its physical dimensions (Patrikarakos, 2017). Indeed, the narrative of war is considered as an effective tool to promote strategic communications and to engage with significant audiences according to the Media Ops [local citizens, international, joint and regional operations, joint operations area local, and military troops] on an operational and tactical level (JDP 3-45.MoD-UK, 2007; Maltby et al., 2015).

As modern wars have become more complex, certain military's media policies may not work for all cases. For instance, the use of defensive language in media doctrines, difficulties in educating war reporters about the dynamic relationship between war and the media in modern warfare and getting audiences to understand military behaviour about combat efforts throughout the war. Despite the remarkable progress of the Media Ops to address the main issues that concern war journalists, the threat of the heavy usage of new technology in

communications and information transmission may affect the conduct of military operations, and the means of preserving a positive image of military performance. Lord David Richards claims that today's war is being reported, shared and shaped by combinations of conventional and new news media in which required different tactics to be incorporated into the military effort:

> Well, we need to target those people. I'm not getting into the message that you have to create an environment in which what the extremists are doing through social media is unacceptable for the majority, and again it can be both a combination of social and conventional media. So, you might take military-style actions to knock out a particular social media vehicle. (Interview, House of Lords, London, 7th February 2018)

It is important to bear in mind, that incorporating the media into war effort requires a complete understanding of the media's role in conflict areas, including access to information, freedom of movement, and educating journalists about military culture. To do so, the military has to push the integration process forward to provide access and protection to wartime journalists in war zones, similar to the embed system, and to educate soldiers and provide skills at military colleges and schools on best practice concerning communications technology, particularly social media. For Tony Cramp it is more about building relationships over the long term, which depends on the quality of the media outlets:

> It depends on the type of media as well, so if you're talking about the high-end journalists, the broadsheets, the TV companies and the rest, I've got a lot of respect for them and their integrity. In their role, they all look to the long term well often. So they're looking for that long-term relationship and trust is easy to find. I think. But when I have exposure to some of the other media outlets – the lower end, some of the tabloid journalists – then I have to be a lot more careful. (Interview by telephone, 11th February 2018)

The economic crisis has affected journalistic routine in the traditional media industry. The military regards the media industry as being in decline in terms of distribution and content in the traditional media.

The restrictions being made by the UK MoD on their service people when communicating via offline and online media have had an impact on the role of media in covering military activities. Angus Taverner expressed his frustration when he noticed some young reporters arrived in the conflict zone knowing absolutely nothing about military business, which may have had a negative impact on the troops' morale:

> I think the other thing which has been an important factor has been a loss of expertise among the media as well. The old days when Max Hastings and Robert Fisk spent their lives covering defence and military activities, knew commanders personally, attended their weddings and so forth, they're gone. I am pushed to really think of any defence correspondents who have in-depth links to and understanding of the way the military does its business. (Interview by telephone, 13th February 2018)

Traverner's interpretation of the absence of veteran journalists is that the reporting of military activities has been subjected by young reporters who lack the same level of knowledge to deploy to the frontline. This has some substance. For example, the British freelancer Christian Stephen became a war reporter at the age of 16 (Pfeiffer, 2018). He has produced several films about wars in different parts of the world over the last few years, such as Iraq and Syria. The best of his work is a film, for which he travelled alone to Aleppo in Syria; it is widely recognised as the first virtual reality documentary inside a war zone 'With VR coming in' (Pfeiffer, 2018). Stephen, who was embedded with Iraqi Special Operations Forces in 2016 to take back control of the city of Mosul from ISIS powers, states about his deployment 'when I get on the plane I'm dead already, and I have to think that way' (Pfeiffer, 2018, p. 1). He managed to record a group of Yazidi women who had escaped from the tight control of ISIS in Northern Iraq in 2016 in a film called 'The Sun Ladies' (Pfeiffer, 2018). Interviewees who had experienced embedding with troops spoke about the challenges they had

concerning access and freedom of expression. British journalists like Robert Fisk, who works for *The Independent,* and John Simpson, who has covered more than 30 war zones for the BBC, prefer to operate independently from military terms in conflict zones.

On the one hand, the hunger for information is what drives journalists to take risks for a better story. On the other hand, the military aims to control what information journalists share with the public (Smith, 2007). Lord David Richards claims it is a form of symbiotic relationship, but with different interests and cultures:

> Well, I think this is all to do with training. Actually, if I am an example, I have many friends in the media to this day because I demonstrated an understanding of their predicament and their needs, and they can come to me, whether I'm commander or in some other role, to discuss things. I don't think it's impossible. You have to accept that these terms are a symbiotic relationship. (Interview, House of Lords, London, 7th February 2018)

Despite the fact that military culture seems rigid, it has demonstrated that it can replace its old-fashioned style with an approachable method. A good example of how the military has shifted its mindset with regard to its relations with the press can be seen in how the media have been integrated into the military's operations environment, particularly from 1983 to 2003, which began with a 'denial-of-access approach' in the Falklands War in 1982, and progressed to hosting war reporters within the embedded programme in the Iraq War (Rid, 2007). In a survey conducted in the US on embedded journalists' perceptions of the embed programme, journalists could understand the rationale behind the military's desire to protect the security of operations and the lives of their troops (Johnson & Fahmy, 2010). Tony Cramp indicates that it is a beneficial relationship for both parties:

> I think a good principle is that the more you trust other people, the more they trust you, and then you can have a much more beneficial relationship. I think the more walls, the more

difficulties you put in there, then people become frustrated because they're just trying to do their job as well. (Interview by telephone, 11th February 2018)

The growth of blogs, particularly among soldiers, is fuelled by increased access to the internet and low-cost software. As such, how do bloggers who are interested in conflicts, intelligence, and national security, approach information which may not directly form part of their professional expertise? The availability of digital media technology has made the UK Armed Forces create policies and structures to manage the use of social media among soldiers and officers for both official and private objectives. Although the British Army encourages their workforce to blog, post tweets, images, videos, and articles online, it regards social media as risky, unpredictable, uncontrollable, and an unmanageable entity (Maltby et al., 2015; UK ARMY, 2018).

The UK Army instructs its workforce to be conscious about the risk of exposing their online accounts either to the public or to the media, which may affect the national security of the UK (UK ARMY, 2018). However, the UK Army also aims to narrow the gap between the military and the public by offering free space to their workforce to engage in debate with digital audiences on multiple issues in relation to army activities, as well as military strategies concerning defence capabilities, soldiers' morale, recruitment, and entertainment (Maltby et al., 2015; UK ARMY, 2018). Tony Cramp highlighted the potential risks of social media for military operations and troops, especially when dealing with unverified materials at a tactical level, which may affect troops' morale and target planning:

What you are saying is efficient warfare through the media. Then if you look at the military: is there a risk? Are there threats? Absolutely, whether it's the use of social media by your own troops or staff and the risk of information getting out, all of them being affected by what they read and hear in social media, which can be used as a means by your enemy. Getting to our troops. I guess this is a big problem, because your soldiers come from a society that uses social media, they do not want them to be cut

off from it, and you don't want to cut them off. (Interview by telephone, 11th February 2018)

However, a substantial finding by Maltby et al.'s (2015) research into the UK Military's DUN Project indicates that the UK MoD intervenes in the techno-economic online structure of data mining, and that sharing on social media is inadequate. The 'techno-economic' term is about the exercising of 'control' by experts over the individual – as opposed to the technology to ensure active management of online content. Indeed, Maltby et al. (2015) indicate that the UK MoD has a limited understanding of the role of new media for the UK Armed Forces because of the remarkable gap between senior officers and younger personnel in accessing social media. The DUN Project is an 'ESRC/DSTL-funded project investigating the conceptualisation, operationalisation and measurement of risk within strategic communication initiatives in the defence sector' (Maltby et al., 2015, p.1276).

The project was based on recommendations from the Blackett Review, which was published by the British Government Office for Science in 2018, regarding how to identify and assess social media risks on people to avoid strategic surprise (UK MoD, 2018b). The review urged government departments to 'enhance their warning systems to better detect early signs of low probability high impact risks as a mitigation measure to avoid strategic surprise. In doing this, it should make the best use of work and capabilities in government, academia and industry' (UK MoD, 2018b, p.7).

The *Military Guidelines* leaflet clearly warns service personnel of the potential risks of breaching operations security by sharing locations, giving sensitive information, posting fake content or stealing someone else's content (UK MoD, 2012). Failure to act in accordance with guidelines of acceptable behaviour results in disciplinary action. A study conducted by the Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research (PaCCS) on the influence of social media in the armed forces revealed that the British military has recognised the importance of giving their enlisted soldiers access to online social platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram, while on operations (Smith, 2016). This approach

enables soldiers to maintain strong relations with their families, taking into account the distractions that can be created by feelings of intimacy with their partners (Smith, 2016).

Established think tank blogs provide diverse perspectives on current socio-political environment ranging from 'global security in a post-9/11 era to regional alliances to violent conflicts between civil and non-state actors' (American University, 2014). To name a few: the Atlantic Council; NATO Source; Center for a New American Security; The Agenda; Federation of American Scientists; FAS Strategic Security Blog; International Security Information Service Europe; and the Small Wars Journal. Other blogs that are administered by individual bloggers – such as Blogs of War, Slashdot.org, and Brown Mosesare – face fierce competition from other social media platforms like Twitter, which have over 335 million users (Recchia, 2013).

Generally, it is difficult to measure the impact of weblogs on national security, Info Ops and mainstream media, as there is a lack of empirical studies in this field. To what extent can war blogs be regarded as important or reliable for military Info Ops and traditional newsgathering in the mainstream media? Although powerful states tend to give more attention to the anti-hegemonic narratives by social media activists toward security events due to its capabilities, bloggers' accounts may not necessarily conflict with government views. Knudsen and Stage (2012) indicate in their study of the use of YouTube as a democratic space of commemoration after the death of Danish soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq, the 28 videos of their sample presented a kind of endorsement of Denmark's national security. Hellman and Wagnsson (2015) highlight in their study about Swedish blogging concerning the participation of their forces in ISAF in Afghanistan that bloggers aligned themselves with the strategic narrative of their military. John Little the founder of Blogs of War claims:

> Throughout my blogging career, I've made it clear that I am not here to attack the state. I am not going to publish classified U.S. government information in search of a scoop. (Recchia, 2013, p.1)

However, the new war paradigm recognises the role of active weblogs during wartime, and raises concerns over the state's effective monopoly over media content, not just in authoritarian regimes but in democratic countries. We have seen this in the debate about the role of cyber troops in manipulating public opinion through social media. One study investigated 28 countries and revealed that almost all those countries manipulate political opinions targeted at domestic and foreign audiences (Bradshaw & Howard, 2017). These countries included Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brazil, China, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Germany, India, Iran, Israel, Mexico, North Korea, the Philippines, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Korea, Syria, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States, Venezuela and Vietnam (Bradshaw & Howard, 2017). The study pointed out multifarious activities carried out either by governments, political parties, or organisations to create and support their social media content, such as sponsoring accounts, web pages or applications, and in many cases creating fake accounts and computational propaganda (Bradshaw & Howard, 2017).

Considering the growth of using social and digital media in mobilising, informing, and influencing public opinion, I will now outline the traditional media perspective on the usage of information on today's conflicts.

The Media and Information

In the form of the new war, a sort of 'weaponisation of information' has emerged, employing words and images instead of bullets and lethal weapons to shape people's perception of information. Each component in today's conflicts within the form of 'weaponisation of information' is vulnerable to the emerging threat of destabilisation by non-lethal means to generate a state of 'complexity, confusion, and political and social schisms' (Allenby & Garreau, 2017, p.5). Wartime journalists labelled 'weaponisation' as a buzzword that was being widely used by the military to achieve the war purposes in which includes a mixture of propaganda, fake news, and disinformation. Propaganda has always been part of the combat operations. Therefore, each side involved in a political and military campaign can make claims of his version of the truth by attacking his dissent's

political discourse and denouncing the media of causing misinformation and spreading fake news. Lindsey Hilsum of Channel 4 News distinguishes between fake news and propaganda in war reporting:

> It is stuff that somebody makes up, and often it's for a political purpose. So we see these websites from Macedonia and so on. So that's the sort of direct fake news. And then you've got propaganda. And governments and rebel groups have used that since the beginning of time. There has always been propaganda. And it's just that the ways that you can disseminate propaganda are cleverer now than they used to be. Everybody makes mistakes, and particularly when you're reporting in a war which is a fast-changing situation and sometimes you misunderstand things or you get something wrong. It doesn't mean it's fake news, it means you got things wrong. That's completely different from fake news. (Interview, 13th March 2017)

Fujii (2010) indicates that much of the discussion in media studies concerning the value of reporting conflicts is about to what extent we should trust people's testimonies about their experience of political violence when they are displayed in politically sensitive contexts. Under these conditions, Sean Smith of *The Guardian* pointed out the importance of checking facts, such as war casualty figures, military statements, and other political narratives, before sending them to news agencies. Smith said:

> So even if it's fighting against ISIS now, people say 'look, they're cutting off peoples' heads and putting them on poles', you still have to question everything. You are not part of whoever's fighting them. You have to question […] you're not trying to be horrible to the people doing the fighting, but you're questioning the narrative, the political narrative. (Interview, London, 6th February 2017)

Smith argued above that there is always another side to every story. So, the possibility of influencing public opinion is higher when the media only resonate

official statements without any evaluation. Massive developments in online journalism and the active role of online users have provided channels for alternative views. Traditional media are urged to effectively merge with multi-media platforms on the internet to enhance interactive communications with active digital audiences (Barnett, 2011).

Engagements with online users provide traditional mass media with access to information and sources, a vast distribution of content, and the power to influence public opinion (Barnett, 2011). Kevin Bishop of the BBC attributed user-generated content (UGCs) the role of active agency participants in digital culture with the emergence of social software or Web 2.0, but he admitted that a specific news coverage on wars needs authentic sourcing, in-depth analysis and accurate information:

> I think the box has been opened and you're not going to put it back in. First-hand accounts of conflict are now part and parcel of news coverage, as they are in many other areas. This can only add to the overall picture. Evidently, any use needs careful sourcing and accuracy checking, but I can only see this increasing in future. A colleague I spoke to recently said one report from Paris after the attacks there in 2015 used about 90% UGC material in his 10 o'clock news piece. I think Syria has taken this to a new level, especially in the reporting Channel 4 have been doing from Aleppo using civilian reporters in the city. (Interview by email, 21st August 2017)

Bishop indicated above that witnessing conflicts is important for accountable journalism and verify the information. First-hand accounts of conflict gives the journalist confidence to talk to the soldiers and to the victims on the ground as long as he or she can maintain a detached relationship with his credible sources. In some circumstances such as in humanitarian crises, journalists may act unethically in gathering information when they have barely limited time, less experience or could not get the consent of victims to share their stories (Marc, 2015). This impacted on the ethical role of journalism. The advancement of technology enables other users outside the mainstream media to have a voice in

their wars, aiding war journalists with up-to-the-minute news, exclusive footage, and live video clips. The BBC's Gabriel Gatehouse said:

> I think it has been a huge transformation in the world since the presence of the internet and the usage of the camera phone in news broadcasting on air. If you think about the kind of massacre incidents that happened in Hamah, Syria in 1980 which didn't get enough reporting; it wouldn't happen these days because of the internet and the smartphones which provide a real-time picture from the fighting scene. (Interview by phone, 22nd November 2016)

A key feature of user-generated content (UGC) is the strong communication network established by the users: either to cooperate and collect intelligence or to disrupt and spread propaganda (Fiore-Silfvast, 2012). Jonathan Steele of *The Guardian* claims:

> Obviously, what they tell you on Facebook or Skype may be propaganda, may be being exaggerated, may be untrue, giving you part of the story which makes their side looks good not the bad part. So you'd be very suspicious of these people. (Interview, London, 14th November 2016)

This is why big media organisations such as the BBC have a special unit to check on materials generated by local journalists or activists prior to broadcasting. This policy is not a matter of achieving a scoop on war stories, but rather about preserving accountability when informing the world about an ongoing conflict. The BBC's Lyse Doucet explained why the BBC has to check everything that emerges from the battlefield, including footage, videos, and reports from the government and the opposition, such as the videos of the airstrike killing more than 11 children in Aleppo in Syria on the 26th August 2016:

> The BBC has whole units to check the videos that come out. Are they true? Are they not? So for the children's video they will check: do we think this a real attack? Do we think the ambivalence is weird? Can we believe what we have seen? So we have to verify

everything. If we got something from the media centre from the government side or oppositions we should make it clear who has sent the video. Where is it coming from? We have to be honest with our audiences. (Interview, London, 14th November 2016)

Richard Norton-Taylor, who worked as security editor for *The Guardian*, indicates that the media now devote less time and space to hard news due to a decline in revenue (Loeb, 2010). He considered himself an old-fashioned foreign correspondent, and commented that 'the great thing about being a foreign correspondent was that the further away you were from the base, the better it was. There's no news desk, there are no bureaucrats on top of you, you can do pretty much whatever you like' (Loeb, 2010, p.1).

Most significantly, reports have found a dramatic decline of professional foreign correspondents to want to report conflicts over the last 30 years (Moore, 2010; Anderson, 2012; Rasmussen, 2012; IAB, 2016). Maggie O'Kane of *The Guardian* stresses that the classical scenario of sending Western journalists to other countries to report, instead of building up a network of relationships with local journalists based within those countries, 'no longer functions' in modern warfare:

We can no longer have the traditional Western foreign correspondent reporting on the Middle East, it no longer functions. And we need to recognise that and enable people on the ground much more. And they would probably do a much better job than we do. (Interview, London, 7th February 2017)

O'Kane suggests above to encouraging Western journalists to trust the work of the local journalists.

Note that not all information being broadcast has the same level of quality, as a significant amount of content contains incorrect information, fake images, rumours, and lies that cause panic in audiences (Gupta et al., 2013). Greenhill and Oppenheim (2017) indicate that rumours can be utilised, in some conditions, as a trigger for enflaming violence that included riots, ethnic conflict, genocide, and war. They pointed out that rumours can be adopted as truth to justify

violence. For example, rumours had a significant impact during the Kenyan presidential election in 2008 that had caused violence across the country in which around 1,000 were killed and a half million of people were displaced from their homes (Greenhill and Oppenheim, 2017). People are motivated by other factors such as emotion and curiosity in their selection of news sources. For instance, the internet emerged as an alternative source of information in the war against Iraq in 2003 compared to the media coverage of the Gulf War and the Afghanistan War (in 1990 and 2001, respectively) which were only reported in the traditional media (Steuck, 1992; Gupta et al., 2013).

Media consumers migrated to the internet as they realised that big media organisations like CNN showed bias in the selection of events and stories as well as the ways they are reported (Choi et al., 2006). Unsurprisingly, Lyse Doucet of the BBC pointed out that the BBC's policy of supporting local reporters and encouraging them to report the developments in war enhances the credibility of the BBC and improves its image locally and internationally. She said:

> When someone says to me 'what the strength of the BBC coverage is?', I said we have six ex-Pakistani correspondents and six Afghan correspondents who have worked here for 20 years, so we are not coming to Afghanistan for the first time but we lived there, we know the language, and lots of people. (Interview, London, 14th November 2016)

Reporting reality is a challenging vocation. The Ukraine crisis explains how the traditional practices of war journalism has been challenged by emerging unstructured cyberspace domains.

The Cyberwar in the Ukraine Crisis

It is hard to understand the rationality behind Russia's behaviour towards Ukraine as it revisits the world's woeful memories of the Cold War. For some, Russia's behaviour reflects what E. Wayne Merry called the Russian 'philosophies of state sovereignty and interstate relations', particularly in relation to the EU and former Soviet Union countries (Wood et al., 2016, cited in Lain 2016, p.85). Merry (Lain,

2016) claimed that Russia does not accept the idea that all countries should have equal sovereignty; therefore, all bordering nations originally in the Soviet Empire are to be subject to Russia's control. He argues that countries such as Ukraine, which signed the EU Association Agreement, have the right make their own economic development decisions without consulting Moscow. For other researchers, it is not just about trade with the EU and the continuing ideological conflict between the two nations, but about Russia's geo-strategic agenda. An agenda that changed Moscow's geopolitics in the Crimea (Trudolyubov & Wood cited in Lain, 2016, p.86). Such strategic goals allow President Putin to restore his image as a hero who can freely move outside of international law by annexing Crimea by force as a defensive reaction to the US and NATO, which, he said, wanted to transform Ukraine into a bastion (Motyl, 2015).

What implications does all this have for the media coverage of the Ukraine crisis? What is the interest of Western journalism in this type of conflict? My analysis tackles three central themes related to reporting in Ukraine, whether pro-Russian or pro-Western reporters which have framed the situation: (1) press freedom, (2) intimidation and (3) propaganda. All three themes have implications for news coverage in the Ukraine conflict. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) issued a report on *Propaganda and Freedom of the Media* in the context of the conflict in and around Ukraine. Throughout the report, the aim was to explore 'the relation between Article 19 (on freedom of expression) and Article 20 (on banning war propaganda and incitement to hatred) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and its interpretations by the UN Human Rights Committee (UNHRC)' (OSCE, 2015, p.4).

The OSCE report (2015, pp.4–5) urged the international community to condemn war propaganda, hate speech, and disinformation as an inappropriate norm for the democratic system, which provides the legal assurance of freedom of expression, the right to report facts, and to enforce media plurality. Are these global principles being respected in Ukraine? Kevin Bishop, who is a journalist and sports lecturer and was the BBC's Moscow bureau chief, describes the significance of reporting on Ukraine crisis:

I think it was one of the first major conflicts in the former Soviet Union that gained a lot of reporting attention in the social media era. Twitter, especially, as a tool for journalists was still in its infancy and thus open to abuse. Both sides in Ukraine were exploiting social media as a source of information dissemination, with varying degrees of accuracy on both sides. This coincided with the increased spread of use of smartphones and tablets for access to news by the Russian and Ukrainian public, and the popularity of news sources such as LifeNews and Hromadske. (Interview by email, 21st August 2017)

Journalists reporting from Ukraine are well aware of the complex situation between Russia and Ukraine and the consequences for the violation of freedom of information. In fact, whether journalists were pro-Russian separatists or anti-Russian Ukrainian groups, they encountered various types of intimidation while covering Ukraine crisis, such as several attempts at murder, hostage-taking, and being detained for spying, physical attacks, deportation and so forth (Greenslade, 2014). Since Ukraine was classified in 2014 as one of the top five deadliest countries in the world for journalists to work in – just behind Pakistan, Syria, Palestine, and Afghanistan – it has shown some progress.

In 2018 it was ranked 12th worldwide according to the Global Peace Index (GPI) report (Gutierrez, 2016; The Institute for Economy and Peace, 2018). The report ranks major countries around the world based on 23 factors including security, murder rate, terrorism, and deaths from internal conflict. The BBC's Jonathan Beale claims:

You are more likely to get caught up in fighting between two sides pro-Russian rebels and the separatists, and the Ukrainian forces. And you may find it harder to get to the frontline as well, because unless you have permission to go to the frontline, often you will be stopped. So if you don't have somebody who can open the gates for you, then you will be prevented from doing your job. You won't get a close look at what's going on. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

Based on a report by Reporters Without Borders (2015), several journalists were exposed to different types of harassment in Ukraine while covering clashes which erupted between militant nationalists and security forces – for instance outside the parliament building in Kiev on 31st August 2015.[8] The report of Reporters Without Borders (2019) noted also that 'Ukraine "information warfare" with Russia has had negative consequences that include bans on Russian media and social networks, the blacklisting of foreign journalists and treason trials'. Jonathan Beale of the BBC recalled his memories in Ukraine:

> In Ukraine, I was arrested by pro-Russian rebels, who put guns to my head and accused me of being a spy and then took our camera. (Interview, London, 3rd November 2016)

The Russian information campaign was designed to target Western countries' interests in Kiev, who were trying to move the Ukraine to the West, and exaggerate the threat of emerging fascism among anti-Russian Ukrainian people (Khaldarova & Pantti, 2016). Audience of Russia's Info Ops includes the Russians, west and east Ukraine, non-NATO audience, and the EU (Szwed, 2016). Of course, tactics and themes are differ among targeted audiences. Cyberspace becomes a battlefield for an organised trolling such as abusing, bullying, blackmailing, labelling, disseminating false information etc. between conflicting parties in Ukraine. It is a weponisation of warfare as explained in Chapter One. Understanding the consequences of the weaponisation of the internet and social media in the context of the Ukraine crisis, which is fuelled by both pro-Russians and anti-Russians groups, will provide an interpretation of the impact of Russia's information warfare in Ukraine (Stern, 2014).

There is a broad perception in Ukraine and other parts of the world that Russia's intrusions into the information system in Ukraine were done by several methods:

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[8] To name a few of journalists who were captured in Ukraine, Dmytro Bolshakov, a cameraman with TSN; Antoine Delaunay, a French photographer working for the Associated Press; and Maksym Voloboyev, a reporter for 5 Kanal TV, and his cameraman, Mykola Lebedev. On 25th February 2015, two pro-Russian government journalists working for TV stations – Elena Makarova of Pervy Kanal and Andrey Grigoriev of NTV – were detained by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU). They were covering the March of Truth in central Kiev when they were arrested and subsequently deported from Ukraine (Reporters Without Borders, 2015).

such as accessing discussion platforms on the internet and using the Russian media to attack the EU (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2015). From one perspective, information warfare in Ukraine aims to provoke the Ukrainian people and influence their perception of Russia's behaviour towards the Ukrainian crisis. For example, Info Ops were carried out through intensive propaganda campaigns that employed a mixture of Ukrainian values and Russian culture, such as notions of identity, history, language, and the actual threat of Western conspiracy (the war between West and East). Szwed (2016) indicates that Ukrainian soldiers are described in some discussion platforms as fascists who are fighting only for the government side, which proves how the pro-Russian narrative has more influence in comparison with the pro-Ukrainian one. In addition, Russia was portrayed as a victim of the Western establishment in which had the right to reacting to the Western's hostile actions (Szwed, 2016). From a different perspective, the Western media advocate a discourse of democracy and freedom in Ukraine. Watanabe (2017) reveals that Russia's narrative about Ukraine was largely circulated by some Western news agencies, such as Reuters, The Associated Press, and Agence France-Press, which demonstrates the vulnerability of the media to bias. Szwed (2016, p.43) shows that the pro-Ukraine narrative portrayed Russia as an 'aggressor, empire building state, directly or indirectly interfering with issues in and the function of Ukraine and other countries'. Kevin Bishop of the BBC explains:

> I was in charge of the BBC team in Eastern Ukraine on a couple of occasions – about 2 to 3 weeks each time. My role involved sending teams out into the field to gather news. Often based on what story threads were leading that day, or needed further investigation. I was then based in a Donetsk hotel and would use social media to guide teams on story developments. I recall several occasions where reports of helicopters being shot down or bombing raids that were circulated on social media proved false. On one occasion a claim of a helicopter crash near Slavyansk (I think) was in fact video of a crash in Syria. (Interview by email, 21st August 2017)

To sum up, the second part has incorporated the perspective of both the military and the media on how developments in communications technologies make the role of war reporters vulnerable in today's conflict. My interviewees have indicated that the crisis in information management are associated with three emergent themes in the digital era, which are: (1) information is being mobilised politically for military purposes; (2) eyewitnessing defines accountability and accuracy; and (3) the lack of trust in online content due to the rise of unverified materials. The case of the Ukraine crisis has provided evidence that war reporters are concerned with the competitive atmosphere of the news market industry, considering the unprecedented challenges that professional journalists can face in their work compared to what local producers and user-generated content have been encountered in war reportage.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered an analysis of the changes in the conditions for reporting conflicts in the information era. I have aimed to investigate how the development of a hybrid media ecology made the role of war reporters vulnerable in a fast-changing situation. My analytical framework has centred on the credibility of war reporting and the implications of changes in information war tactics in a situation where the military-media environment is fragmented.

This chapter has agreed with existing studies that a fragmentation in media platforms (broadcast, print, and online) exists regarding sources, content, and audiences due to new communications technology, globalisation, and power transition. Seeking credibility in reporting conflicts has become a battlefield for journalists' in their struggle to preserve journalistic values. The weaponisation of information is being widely exploited in today's conflicts for war purposes.

Economic factors after the financial crisis over the past two decades has caused the media industry to reorganise its international reporting and apply strict policies to downsize its staff. In addition, the mainstream media offer more space for local producers to find alternative ways to report conflicts, especially from

affected areas like Syria, Ukraine, Libya, Yemen, and Iraq, to meet the demand of 24/7 news reporting where journalists may try to enter conflict zones with the support of local governments, politicians, military forces, and aid agencies. The strategic objective of the military's media operation doctrine is to provide the public and the media with reliable and accurate information about the security challenges in 21st-century conflicts. The military addresses social media risks in strategic and tactical communications, offering limited space for service personnel to interact, blog, post images, and videos on social media and the internet. Nevertheless, it keeps an eye on their trolling to avoid any damage to the UK national security.

The 21st century has witnessed the rise of social media, which have brought additional threats to the classical form of war reportage such as disinformation, and unverified materials. In addition, social media have empowered a new generation who produce their own user-generated content, to some extent shaking practices. The traditional tactics of warfare, such as intelligence, surveillance, sabotage, propaganda, and deception, overlap with the new hybrid condition in modern battlespaces, such as Info Ops, cyberwarfare, social media, and new military technology. In this context, telecommunications technology disrupts the classical form of the state's monopoly in the CCSs of the battlespace. Active social media users such as bloggers, Facebookers, Tweeters, YouTubers, etc., either work individually or report to an established organisation to some extent enjoy a powerful influence over local and global audiences.

The final chapter pulls together the key findings from the thesis.

Chapter Seven:

Conclusion

Introduction

This thesis has addressed the evolving relationship between the military and the media in a British context. It discusses the current structure of relations between the UK Armed Forces and war correspondents in contemporary warfare while considering changes in military doctrines, the war paradigm and communications technology. What has been termed the 'new war' has been disruptive, making the UK military's decision to incorporate the media into its war efforts much more complicated, particularly at a tactical level.

The aim of this research is to provide a significant analysis of the centralised UK military's media operation in conjunction with implications of the post-embedding system, which has resulted in a new form of relations between the military and traditional and online media in today's conflicts. Despite the strategic and tactical benefits of the embedded system to a military operation's objectives, it is time to drop an old model of media doctrines to manage today's war journalism because we live in a quickly changing world of information and communications. War correspondents have been struggling to secure their safety in a situation of consistently ruthless infighting that has taken place in fragile security situations, such as Syria, Libya, Ukraine, Yemen and Northern Iraq, areas where wars are being controlled by a mixture of regular and militia groups with fluctuating political interests, ideologies, and ethnicities. What also has been focused on in this research is the impact of information technology has on the role of war reporters regarding access to the war zone, the level of autonomy and aspects around journalistic work. To do so, I have questioned to what extent developments in the ecology of the digital media have reinforced a sense of uncertainty and ambiguity in the process of war reportage, and in information gathering which can create instability in the various roles of media in conflicts.

Throughout this thesis, I have been concerned with understanding the policies that the UK military have implemented to engage the media into the complex new type of war considering the previous models of organising the media's access in conventional conflicts such as the 'pooling' and 'embedded' systems. Accordingly, the framework of the analysis of this thesis was designed to answer the following three research questions:

- How have new tactics been devised by the military to incorporate journalism into the war effort while minimising disruptive forms of reporting?
- In what ways has war journalism changed since the occupation of Iraq in 2003?
- How have developments in a hybrid media ecology made the role of professional war reporters vulnerable in a fast-changing situation?

In this chapter, I aim to restate the fundamental arguments, research inquiries, methodology, findings, limitations, and practical challenges. This chapter is structured into three sections: the context, findings and implications, and limitations. I shall begin by outlining the context of this thesis.

The Context

My motivations for understanding this project have derived from personal interest. I wanted to understand the factors that have affected the UK's Defence and Armed Force's engagements with war correspondents – specifically in British media outlets within the context of new war. The UK stands has a historical context of political and war journalism that ensures safeguarding journalistic freedom and liberal values (Fraser, 2017; Viner, 2017; Jackson et al., 2018), however, there has often been a censorship on conflict reporting. The UK MoD has developed several doctrines to identify the strength and opportunities of its military media policies, which aim to secure the UK's national strategy and protect the security of military operations. The Directorate of Defence Communications (DDC) is the department within the UK MoD tasked with communicating with the outside world (British Government, 2014). However, data from the MoD and other institutions indicate a gap concerning the stability of strategic communications command. The involvement of British forces in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrate poor

communication with the public and the media in times of war, particularly when a division in public opinion is observed that may develop into a crisis and increased uncertainty, by limiting information to the hands of a few people (House of Lords, 2018).

The embedded system that was introduced by the American and British forces in the Iraq War of 2003 has achieved part of the military's media management objectives, and marked a new milestone in the military-media relationship. But embedding has several implications for practising journalism. My analysis has drawn on other evaluations that show how the dynamic of the embed system is driven by two conflicting goals (Paul & Kim, 2004): (1) embedding gives journalists remarkable access to the frontline that could potentially violate the security of operations, but is necessary for maintaining trusting relations between the media and the local population, and (2) embedding provides favourable media coverage of troops and positively affects soldiers' morale. Therefore, it is imperative for both the military and the media to be alert to the changeable ecology of today's conflicts, while enabling war to be reported to avoid confusion and the mishandling of information that affects the military's approach. In other words, to educate people about its business, taking into account the fragmentation in the international system and the implications of communications technologies for the security of operations.

Information is a prime asset for war combatants, whether the professional military, fighting in regular or irregular warfare, or non-state actors reinforced by international and regional powers to fight in high or low-intensity wars by employing asymmetric warfare, insurgent tactics, and terror methods. The UK Forces have a long history of counterinsurgency operations. *Shaping a Stable World: the Military Contribution* states that 'balancing the nation's security risks and its values presents a constant challenge for our Government as it decides how, when and where to tackle instability at source' (JDP 05, 2016, p.4). Based on this, UK military responses are part of international community efforts to reinforce stability, this strategy being required to apply a diverse range of actions to secure stability. Indeed, media policy is central to the UK military's strategy. Failure to respond effectively to growing transnational threats in a globalised competitive

world is critical to military policy. Therefore, UK military doctrines recognise the potential of the media – particularly social media – to be used as a weapon, just like physical weapons, in order to influence the perception of its targeted audiences and destroy its enemy's will.

Within these volatile and ambiguous situations, traditional Western media that have dominated the scene of foreign news for a long time have been confronted with some new challenges. The rise of online wartime journalism gives a new form of power to individuals, activists, NGOs, and non-Western media firms to insert their political agenda into the narrative of war, either on social media platforms or on satellite TV channels which have flourished in the aftermath of a series of terror attacks in the US, the UK, Spain, France, etc. This transition in war reportage records an interesting gap in the military-media relationship in the WAP.

This gap can be ascertained from journalists' concerns about losing their access to authentic data in today's conflicts and, therefore, the ability to report freely from the frontline, because of the restrictions set by the military and other powerful forces on the ground. Additionally, there is a risk of being without logistical support from state forces, and there are also the implications non-sourced materials may have on the quality of news feeds, such as trolling web pages, blogs, and mobile applications by firms, activists, and NGOs. Ordinary people who bear witness to day-to-day fighting make their jobs vulnerable to unpredictable and uncontrollable influences because of the lack of training. This gap was observed from analysing selected military documents and what my military interviewees indicated about the necessity to fill a void in strategic communications with the people, to have a sufficient CCS to minimise the disturbance of uncontrolled media, and to educate their people about the potential of new media in either supporting or negatively impacting the national strategy.

The following section elaborates on the main findings of my research, and how they align with or diverge from other findings in the existing body of literature.

Additionally, it illustrates the implications of integrating the media into war efforts for policy and practice.

Findings and Implications

The methodology of this research was based on a qualitative approach. Grounded theory was used to analyse semi-structured interviews and government documents. A number of key strategies were employed to create a framework of categories to develop a theory which includes comparation, coding, and thematic analysis. The literature review was an essential method for outlining the research paradigm, determining a conceptual and theoretical approach, and developing a useful framework for collecting and analysing data (Fram, 2013).

Indeed, the core argument of this research was broken down into three questions that helped to identify samples, organise data, and classify codes to develop categories within the framework of the grounded theory.

The first question of this thesis – restate it here – has investigated the current UK military's documents which articulate how journalists should be incorporated into the war effort.

A wide body of research shows that the relationship between politicians, military generals, and war reporters has broken down since the Cold War because of global changes in the international system, globalisation and a revolution in military affairs (Rid, 2007; Boylan, 2011; Maltby, 2012a; Jensen, 2014; Livingstone & Lunt, 2014; Corner, 2018). It is important to stress that 'military doctrines' were used in this thesis as a guide to understanding the military's view on the process of incorporating the media in war efforts rather than to provide new sources of evidence on the current war thesis's debate on the logic of 'new wars'. It is argued that a new type of war has been practised in the 21st century's conflicts in comparison to the classic concept of conventional warfare in which the new forms of war are being commercialised, documented, broadcast, and mobilised under the gaze of the traditional and new media (Kaldor, 2007; Smith, 2007; Cottle, 2009; Maltby, 2012a; Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2015). What is clear from my research

is that the form of new war provides the media industry with significant challenges in the digital age; traditional models of embedding with troops are being replaced with other forms of collaboration between media outlets and war actors with input from user-generated content (UGC). Although the use of the internet and social media as a source for news has increased (Price, 2015), military doctrines have addressed the risks of the proliferation of free and unverified news that can damage the security of operation.

My focus was to closely observe the British model of dealing with the media in military operations and those that took the form of non-conventional methods. In particular, understanding the lessons of media operations learned from major conflicts that the British military has been involved since the Falklands War of 1982 such as the Gulf War 1991, Kosovo 1998, Afghanistan 2001, and Iraq War 2003, has helped to substantiate my findings. Here, the aim was to explore developments when adapting to new circumstances of the military's media management in the new war.

The outcomes of this analysis have stressed the military's limitations to engage the media into their new war considering implications on both policies and practices. Firstly, the ultimate purpose of any combat operations is to achieve strategic combat objectives by ensuring the development of the command and control system (CCS) that provides safeguards for the military operation and troops. The critical shift in military thinking from full censorship during the Falklands War when a denial-of-access policy was imposed over the media to an operational engagment during the Gulf War and Iraq War has helped defence planners and policymakers to take the advantage of the new opportunities presented by the revolution in information and communications technology. For example, in the 77th Brigade, a comprehensive information system which can engage and monitor the risk of smart, global, and evolved information environment, is dedicated to fighting wars with information in the digital networks and social media (Millar, 2018; UK MoD, 2019). Therefore, the concept of integration has evolved to include the traditional and online media as the warfare over information itself has changed in the digital era. Given the implications of changes in military thinking, I used an analytical framework to

compare how the military and the media have adapted to the developments in the information environment. I have discussed cultural and organisational aspects that remained unresolved in military doctrines.

What has emerged in my analysis is that each of the military, the traditional media, and the new media has its own unique cultural frame of reference which includes values, perspectives, practices, and mind-sets. This frame of refrence is constantly evolving, interacting, conflicting, and reforming in the form of new war. My findings have agreed with Maltby (2007, 2012a), and Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2014) that the military's culture demanded collectivity, is hierarchical in structure, its values have been formed around identity, discipline and security, and is influenced by the revolution in military affairs (RMA). However, the military has shown the ability to interact, to some extent, with people of different cultures – for instance, the local and international embedded war reporters. This includes providing information, protection, training, and logistical services that would be difficult for independent journalists to attain during war by themselves such as recording air bombardments, deploying with the fleet, and attending the daily briefing. In contrast, war journalists often work in a competitive and contested environment, fighting each another for scoops, operating in a decentralised relationship with editors, and oriented on journalistic autonomy but striving for recognition. Indeed, the rise of communications technologies has offered both the military and the mainstream media with the opportunities to seek out alternative methods for communicating the war such as war blogging, but has brought additional challenges regarding structural and functional aspects.

Military doctrines are less concerned about the methods utilised to reach targeted audiences in the digital era as tactics to reach different audiences vary, are centred on the 'effect-based approach' and the political situation to influence multiple targets, especially in state-to-non-state conflicts. When I spoke to the military personnel, they seemed more confident that the command and control system has to be fully integrated with the information campaign in order to secure the process of handling the media during the war-fighting. Despite the fact that Joint Doctrine Publication 3-45.1 Media Operations hasn't been updated since 2007, it grouped targeted audiences using five distinct criteria according to the

nature of the military operations: (1) UK citizens; (2) international; (3) joint operations and regional; (4) joint operations in a local area; and (5) their troops. Considering MOD activities at home and abroad, the use of a certain medium to convey a specific message has to be justified regarding its content and timing. Content in traditional media is based on a one-to-many approach, but in networked media it is more about a many-to-many approach. However, military policy has addressed the disadvantages of relying on both types of communications, because both are more or less vulnerable to insurgents' intrusions for spreading commands, intelligence information, disinformation, fake news, trolling, violence, and recruitment.

Therefore, eliminating the risk of uncontrollable and unmanageable media reportage can only occur if journalism becomes part of the military command and control structure. Currently, the media are used as a means of influencing targeted audiences, protecting national security and supporting foreign policy. Restrictions have been applied (the pooling system in the Gulf War of 1991, an embedded programme in the Iraq War of 2003) to limit casualties and to manage the flow of information, which had to be consistent with the official narrative of the government and its allies. The gap between people's understanding of military commitments and operational reality can confuse audiences when strategic communication by the military is lost, and the military media performance lacks accountability and rationality (Boylan, 2011). Educating war journalists about the military's operational objectives, facilitating their mission with fewer restrictions on gathering information and ensuring their safety can repair the damage posed by the absence of a comprehensive CCS during an armed conflict. According to a report by the office of the UK Prime Minister in 2015, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (2001 and 2003 respectively) have shown a lack of public support in Britain because the political leadership failed to convince people about the geo-strategic benefits of both wars. Additionally, a lack of transparency in telling the press about the UK Armed Forces' objectives in conducting a military intervention in Libya led to a critical debate about whether it is acceptable for British forces to fight ISIS in Syria and Northern Iraq with the coalition forces (House of Commons, 2017).

Secondly, the British military have employed distinctive tactics to engage with the media since Iraq War; these range from offering an adequate package of logistical support in the 'embedded system' to partial assistance in the war against ISIS in Northern Iraq, Syria, and Libya. Thus, the present analysis has illustrated that the organisational structure in the military-media relationship took three forms on the frontline: (1) a top-down model where war correspondents are embedded with the troops, where they are subject to combat instructions (*The Green Book*); (2) a bottom-up model where the ideal structure of relations between combat reporters and other war actors within the liberal context is to report war without direct supervision. However, this ideal world is far from reality, where journalists have experienced interference, intimidation, and attacks, which may affect their work; and (3) a non-hierarchical network communications model that gives war journalists, freelancers, fixers, bloggers, and citizen journalists the freedom to operate with limited interference by a structured hierarchy. Yet, there is evidence of the influence of gatekeepers on a large portion of items that are circulating on social media (Welbers and Opgenhaffen, 2018).

The implications of these three models of organising media access to the frontline by military doctrines can be seen in the emerging challenges of incorporating journalism into combat operations in a new war context. Overall, the above findings suggest that the 'military doctrines' should place more effort on engaging the media into recognising the new imperatives of new war to consider different aspects of collaboration. Firstly, the military-media relationship must be built on mutual trust and accountability in both times of conflicts and peace while adopting a long-term policy of enforcing partnership and integration. Therefore, the media are a professional organisation, which are more useful to be considered as a key component in the process of planning and executing a combat operation rather than as an extra means to achieve operational purposes. This engagement would help war reporters to maintain their autonomy as independent journalists while also retaining their close relationships with official sources and avoiding vulnerability to military manipulation. Secondly, due to the complexity of engaging in what is termed 'the war amongst the people' (WAP), the strategic goals of military operations must be clearly addressed, since these goals provide reliable and comprehensive information about the geo-strategic benefits for the

country including the estimated level of the risk. Thirdly, because of the limitations that surround counterinsurgency operations (COIN), it can be difficult for armed forces to secure the safety of war reporters when they cover these operations. However, witnessing a military action is considered an essential element for war reporters to report the 'reality'. Navigating through the lines of fire to meet the demands of immediate, reliable, and impartial materials has become crucial for war reporting to claim credibility. The poor collaboration can make adventurous war reporters find alternative ways of accessing the area of conflict either through the aid of their fixers or by attaching themselves to irregular forces. Each method can pose a threat to the military operations and cause a negative influence at home front particularly in a situation when a British journalist is captured, kidnapped, tortured or killed in front of a camera.

My second question - restate it here - provides evidence of the implications for the embedded programme to effectively bridge the void in the military-media relationship in both conventional and non-convention warfare.

Turning now to how wartime journalism has changed since the occupation of Iraq in 2003 it is evident that developments in the war paradigm, communication technologies, and military strategies since the Iraq War of 2003 have presented emerging challenges and opportunities for journalists' work at the frontline. Understanding the impact of these transitions for the military-media relationship was approached by comparing tactics used by the British military forces to facilitate media access to traditional conflicts such as the 'embedded system' with other forms of military practice in the period of the post-Iraq War. Both methods of organising media work in times of war have contrasting ethical dimensions, and journalistic roles.

War reporters have struggled in the long term to accept the term 'embedded journalist' in a fruitful way, realising its negative consequences on their profession. However, the reality is far from ideal because without gaining access to the frontline they would face more restrictions on their work.

This research has shown that there is a lack of certainty in the concept of an 'embedded system' in terms of ethical perspectives, functional roles, and relationships. Criticism of this concept falls into two perspectives within war journalistic work: first, those who hold a pragmatic perspective towards solving field problems on the frontline, and claim that an unconditional relationship with the military would be hard to achieve in an uncertain situation where journalists themselves are a physical military target in the new concept of war. Embedded reporters had to sign an agreement with the military that was outlined in *The Green Book*; this document covers practical and policy issues including the MOD's security requirements, safety issues, and media facilities. The purpose of this agreement is to 'enable the media to gain a deeper understanding of the operation in which they are involved, particularly through access to personnel and commanders' (JSP 580, 2013, p. 9). The ramifications of the *Green Book*'s agreement for war reporting are considerable. The journalists I interviewed argue that they achieved some success in integrating themselves with troops for the purposes of personal protection, securing access to local people for humanitarian stories, building up a trustful relationship with tactical commanders and low-ranking officers to get exclusive news, especially classified notes. This provides an alternative way of eyewitnessing. However, they were conscious of the consequences of this agreement for the values of war journalism, as they were exposed to a small section of the battlefield by a tactical leadership who are powerful enough to impose censorship over materials to maintain their desired level of security.

Secondly, another group of war reporters argues that autonomy is vital for the practice of 'good journalism' within the guidelines of news values and the editorial standards of a liberal culture to achieve reliability, credibility, and objectivity in war reportage. The quality of journalism is a matter of concern when trying to identify the best version of the truth, and avoiding subjectivity regarding judgements of military actions. If journalists support a particular war narrative, they potentially lack credibility when they discuss controversial issues such as false allegations, collateral damage, the deaths of soldiers, and the use of drones, and this can also feed accusations of biased reportage. Apparently, independent war journalists rejected the claim that making a deal with the

military to trade their safety for freedom of speech is inevitable for the sake of journalism as a business.

Collaboration between the military and the media has continued during the period of the post-Iraq War phase. Soon after the coalition forces captured Baghdad in 2003, local forces began to fight back by employing multiple insurgency tactics to attack and spread violence throughout Iraq. It was too risky for journalists to operate in insurgent- and extremist-controlled territory, even if they chose not to be embedded with American or British forces, or to move outside central Baghdad without military protection. Given the challenges of covering travel expenses and insurance, some war reporters have chosen to deploy with other war actors such as the Iraqi security forces and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters. Thus, it has become too expensive to run continuous journalistic war reportage because of risks to the lives of staff and the high costs of having translators, fixers, and bodyguards to protect them. Few media outlets can afford to have a foreign press office in Baghdad or Kabul. According to Cockburn (2010), the BBC was the only British media outlet that had a permanent office in Baghdad at that time. Certainly, the absence of the international media in some of today's wars has implications for war reportage. As an alternative to running a press office, media organisations deploy 'parachuted-in' journalists who either risk following soldiers or report from the hotel where they stay (AlSafi, 2017). This encourages local people who are active in journalism to document crucial events in short videotapes to disseminate them on the internet or through mainstream media.

To sum up, the second research question has demonstrated two major issues which characterise war reporting since the Iraq War: (1) in theory, the traditional embedded system aimed to secure journalists' safety and operational security. However, interviewees were concerned about the implications of embedding for their journalistic values and democracy: of losing their autonomy, a lack of credible information, and editorial restraints. The US and the UK placed different obstacles in the way, particularly the British forces which had very strict rules that affected journalists' ability to freely report the real story to their audiences, and (2) the embedded system had little chance of implementation in the period of the post-Iraq War due to the rise of global extremism and organised violence

that were adopted by non-state actors such as insurgents, criminals, and radical groups.

The post-embedded era has been marked by increasing hybridity such as in Ukraine, Syria, and Yemen. The massive usage of an asymmetrical style that generates emerging challenges for national security has implications for war reporting because of the limited resources available for war reporters to gather information and report full stories of the conflict without being targeted. War reporters have been struggling for official embedding with UK Armed Forces which have been engaged in covert operations in several locations during the last two decades such as Iraq and Syria. However, Journalists have managed to secure access with the aid of distinctive militia and local forces on the frontline. In some circumstances, war reporters have had help from local people who have facilitated their mission.

The deluge of unreliable news has made journalism vulnerable to claims of a lack of credibility in the information era, which brings us to the development of a hybrid media ecology.

Here, I have interposed my interviewees' views into the wider debate on the impact of digital revolution on the ethical role of war journalism. This analysis has revealed that the classical form of war reportage is vulnerable to new types of threats in the 21st century. Although wartime journalism faces a surge in asymmetric threats at home and on the frontline, particularly in unstable countries, it is clear that the old rules of embedding don't apply to today's conflicts.

The extensive criticism of journalists' professionalism in the digital era, especially when covering conflicts, has fuelled a heated debate over credibility in reporting war. The ethical role of war reporters carrying out frontline coverage is underpinned by limitations on frontline access, economic pressures, the proliferation of broadcasting technology, and a lack of logistical support by regular forces. In the digital age, more emphasis is placed on the competitive atmosphere of the news industry, taking into account the unprecedented challenges that

journalists face in comparison to the rise of the role of local producer- or user-generated content (UGC) in war reportage.

New communications technology and the information revolution offer more spaces for web journalism to reach global and diverse audiences. The unique form of web journalism places more importance on the quantity rather than the quality of news content. New technology has two distinct aspects: (1) it helps war journalists to obtain exclusive information, footage, and video clips from several sources; and, (2) user-generated content (UGC) establishes strong communication networks such as blogs, regardless of whether materials are being displayed in the public domain or a hidden platform, to cooperate or to collect intelligence, or to disrupt and forge propaganda.

Criticism of the lack of professionalism in reporting conflicts is distorting journalistic values in the mainstream and social media. Evidence is crucial in a climate of uncertainty for questioning the credibility of content and sources, whether in times of political stability or times of confrontation. While information is being used as a weapon for military purposes, the increase in fact checking, either in established media organisations or on the internet is an indication of a growing interest amongst media outlets to check facts, debunk disinformation, and counter deception and lies. War correspondents demonstrate their courage by defending their profession in a contested arena of world politics; however, the role of the wartime journalist is to question any materials, documents, images, statements, etc., that might be used in war stories, whatever or whomever the sources are. As there is a thin line between information and propaganda in war reporting, audiences vary in their acknowledgements of the information being relayed by war reporters about humanitarian issues, the use of lethal and chemical weapons, and the implications of the political process on the course of military action. However, an audience's emotions play an essential role in selecting their desired news. Veteran journalists toil in the market as professionals who have to fight for reporting the truth without being biased in their stories.

In a fast-changing situation, disastrous mistakes where civilians are attacked are, unfortunately, common in the new form of asymmetric war, and are sometimes

considered as collateral damage. Spreading fake news or distorting information to influence enemies is part of the military's deception plan, however, this strategy differs from disinformation and telling lies because in hybrid warfare, such as the Ukraine crisis, and in civil war, such as the Syria conflict, it is normal that each side claims its right to defend its legitimacy, and then fabricates and exaggerates war stories about their adversaries. However, trolling traditional and social media with false information, lies, and hoaxes, via sponsoring accounts, web pages or applications, and in many cases creating fake accounts and computational propaganda, is what some powerful state and intelligence organisations do to manipulate public opinion. Fake news spreads instability in countries' foreign policies and affects national interest and democracy.

Soldiers' blogs provide diverse perspectives on the current socio-political environment, ranging from global security in the post-9/11 era to regional alliances in violent conflicts between civil and non-state actors. Bennett (2013) claims that blogs assist journalists in finding alternative sources of information by accessing ordinary people and facilitating visits to remote places that are difficult to reach. Blogs are also used as evidence when airing live coverage of breaking news stories by interviewing people and focusing on issues like humanitarian crises. Because of the climate of war, such as in Iraq, and Afghanistan, blogs act as interactive platforms and help to shape people's experiences of conflict (Semaan et al., 2010; Harris & Williams, 2019). However, texts and visual postings from soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan on some popular video sites such as YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat have opened another window with regard to understanding the brutal, violent and dark face of modern warfare, and what motivates soldiers to post sensitive photographs (e.g. the discovery of graphic photos depicting guards abusing detainees in Abu Gharib prison – a US Army detention centre which held captured Iraqis from 2003 to 2006) and videos from the frontline (Papadopoulos, 2009).

To conclude, this research aimed to describe the evolving military-media relationship in a British context by considering developments in military strategies, international system, and communications technologies. I have discussed issues around changes in the concept of the war paradigm, the military's

media management on the frontline and the ethical codes of war journalism. I have questioned how British combat reporters and military doctrines have adapted to complex situations in the post-Iraq War concerning the ethical aspects of the embedded system, emerging frontline challenges, and the effect of the digital revolution on classic and online war reportage. This research suggests that the British military has to push the process of the integration system forward so that to confront strategic and tactical challenges.

The idea of integration is not new in the military culture. It is part of the defence management system that the British armed forces are frequently reviewing to keep with the pace of changes in the art of war. These processes require moving to jointness in organising war effort either within services or between other governmental organs, including the media and the people. The embedded system was a desirable method for the British military to engage with the media during traditional conflicts considering its significant role as an instrument of war (Payne, 2005). Controlling the flow of information was among other military objectives during conflicts from the Falklands War to the First Gulf War to Afghanistan and Iraq Wars. While there has been disagreement among the war reporters I have interviewed on the ethical implications of being under the military control for providing impartial and balanced perspectives, I have argued that the embedded programme is regarded as less necessary for the agenda of the military leadership in the form of counterinsurgency operations.

Today's wars are more likely to take the form of a non-conventional style where insurgents aim to weaken the legitimacy of the current government so as to seize political power such as the case of ISIS (Smith, 2007). If the UK military were to succeed in its ambitions to control the flow of information, it would need to engage with the media in either strategic or tactical levels. Although the embedded system offered journalists some access to the local people, intel information on combat plans and tactics, sufficient access to military communications, secure transportation via troops (whether on land, air or at sea), accommodation and security, the system had implications for their journalistic values and commitments to the public. For instance, interviewees expressed their feelings when talking about their experiences, whether with troops or working

independently. Reflecting on embedding, they were concerned with particular challenges that affected their jobs such as losing impartiality and lack of trust, and they experienced conflicts of interest whilst getting close to the soldiers, which had the potential to result in incomplete and biased stories. However, being independent, the freelance journalist had more freedom and autonomy, and an understanding of the suffering inflicted on local people by the forces.

The questions then become as to whether the critical role of the media and armed conflicts has implications to the structure of the military-media integration in either strategic and tactical levels, whether this relation can be sustainable for the long term considering the emerging challenges in today's conflicts including the revolution in military affairs (RMA), cyberwarfare and developments in communications technologies.

On the strategic level, the maintenance of trust is the most challenging factor in war reporting. On the one hand, the military needs to have confidence that journalists are not going to violate the roles of embedding regarding the security of operations and the safety of troops. On the other hand, journalists need to have confidence that the military will not undermine their independence or censor what they report or broadcast. For many journalists I interviewed, journalistic work has been affected when working under tightly controlled media operations. Perhaps most striking was the loss of journalistic autonomy and lack of diversity in gathering information. In a time when the world becomes more connected due to globalisation, news of events can reach audiences across the globe at a glance. In fact, what happens in the west, for example economic crises, affects countries in the east in one way or another. The proliferation of cyber-warfare poses much more significant threats to privacy, business, democracy and national security. The cyber-attack comes in various forms from state-sponsored attacks, disinformation campaigns, and espionage to military operations on critical infrastructure. Thus, it is crucial that the strategic objectives of the military operations must be explicitly addressed to avoid confusion and counter anti-information warfare.

On the tactical level, embedding is a kind of protection for journalists where they can develop a better understanding of the progress achieved on a physical battlefield. Proximity to soldiers can make the report more authentic and credible in the eyes of audiences. Citizen journalism becomes a permanent part of the new ecology of war reporting. The argument of the post-truth has raised concerns on the statues of testimonies in reporting the truth and whether any other testimonies can be believed. Being responsible for the damage that unverified materials can make into the notion of the legitimacy of the armed forces to engage in a high-intensive confrontation against illegitimate groups in times of uncertainty, having a comprehensive a command and control system (CCS) as well as enforcing the cooperation process with the media that can avoid the risk of the leakage of classified information, and the publishing of sensitive data including 'fake' news and its opposite. While the quality of war journalism has been questioned in the digital age due to the decline of professionals and the the reduction in the numbers of editorial positions (Simon, 2017), excluding non-western journalists from the embedded system was a mistake especially when the only way to speak to the domestic audience is through other local reporters, activists on social media or transnational TV stations. Indeed, the tension in the military-media relationship in the new condition of war is not an easily resolved dilemma because this attention has been inherited in the military-media relationship in which the complexity of 'new war' paradigm has to make it more challenging to control the flow of information.

The following section discusses the limitations of this research.

Limitations of this Research

Since all projects have limitations, I should make it clear that I intentionally limited the scope of the research to explore the intersection of the UK military Media Ops policy along with the challenges that war correspondents who work for UK media outlets have encountered in the post-embedded system and within the context of the typology of the new war. Taking into account the political context in the period after the WOT was essential to understand the geo-strategic situation of the British government towards critical issues in the new world order

that has reshaped the environment of international relations amongst superpowers in the 21st century.

The first limitation concerned the research paradigm. The most critical and interesting part of the research has been to determine a position in an ongoing debate, which in this instance was about the new characteristics of war in the 21st century and to ask whether war has changed or not. Focusing on the new type of warfare directed my research methodology and analytical framework to question the existing relationship between traditional media and the military in today's wars, and to make a connection with the rise of social media users, local producers, and bloggers in the way that war has been reported and broadcast.

My methodological approach imposed a limitation on this research. Due to the complexity of the research questions, the methods used attempted to avoid oversimplifications that could lead to unhelpful results. Thus, grounded theory was chosen to provide a comprehensive research approach and to generate an analytical framework with a significant contextual foundation. Research questions were grouped into three themes outlining the key methodological arguments: (1) document the revolution in military affairs; (2) changes in the practice of war reporting; and (3) the impact of the digital revolution on reporting in a new war context. Thus, the analytical framework was designed to construct a set of themes that utilised comparative methods and coding to compare and contrast these themes with other categories so as to identify similarities and differences.

Finally, this researcher's individual personal reflections counted. To obtain reliable data from both sides of the military-media relationship, my sample of 19 interviews represents positions current in both the military and the media to ensure a realistic representative distribution of the population. The journalists in my study were engaged with the UK's military Armed Forces as war reporters in covering crises, particularly in the Middle East. It was vital to speak to some senior officers in the British Armed Forces who had served in different conflicts and had direct contact with local and international media at the frontline. An analysis of military documents was intended to bridge the gap in military officers' testimonies who are reluctant to talk about sensitive issues that they consider to

be off the record. Military documents are usually hard to access, particularly those considered to be classified. Interestingly, the British Ministry of Defence has made many of its military doctrines and media policies available on the internet. However, other documents that are classified or under investigation were not available in the public domain or on request. As such, this restricted access had an impact on the scope of my research. Other interpretations in the academic literature were also taken into account. Semi-structured interviews with military officers helped to clarify other aspects of military media practices and their challenges in times of war. But presumably these were not without challenges because military officers were reluctant to discuss certain topics.

Appendix (1): The list of military and governmental documents used in this research.

	Organisation	Military Doctrines
1		Media Operations. Joint Doctrine Publication 3-45.1.
2		Joint Warfare Publication 3-80: Information Operations
3		Joint Doctrine Publication 0-01 UK Defence Doctrine
4		Strategic Communication: The Defence Contribution Joint Doctrine Note 1/12.
5		National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 - First Annual Report 2016
6	United Kingdom	The Future Character of Conflict
7		Parliamentary approval for military action
8		The National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015
8		Annual Attitude MoD Survey
9		Blackett Review of High Impact Low Probability Risks
10		Joint Doctrine Publication 3-70 Battlespace Management
11		The Green book

12		Morale, Psychological Wellbeing of UK Armed Forces and Entertainment
13		Modern Media Operation A Guide
14		Contact with the Media and Communicating in Public
15		Shaping a stable world: The Military contribution (JDP 05) March 2016
16		JSP 579 Policy and Processes for Non-News Media Projects – broadcast, manuscripts, digital and features
17	United State	Information Operations
18		An analysis of The National Security Strategy of the United States of America Analysis
19		National Strategy for Combating Terrorism
20	NATO	NATO Military Public Affairs Policy
21		Allied Joint Doctrine For Information Operations

Appendix (2): Journalists interviewed for this project

	Name	Organisation	Date	Place
1	Jonathan Steele	The Guardian	3 November 2016	London
2	Caroline Wyatt	BBC	3 November 2016	London
3	Lyse Doucet	BBC Chief International Correspondent	14 November 2016	London
4	Maggie O'Kane	The Guardian	6 February 2017	London
5	David Pratt	The Herald	6 December 2016	Glasgow
6	Jeremy Bowen	BBC	8 February 2017	London
7	Paul Adam	BBC	3 November 2016	London
8	Jonathan Beale	Defence correspondent, BBC	3 November 2016	London
9	Lindsey Hilsum	Channel 4	13 March 2017	Telephone Interview
10	Kevin Bishop	BBC	21 August 2017	Email Interview
11	Sean Smith	The Guardian	6 February 2017	London
12	Muna Mahmood	The Guardian	6 February 2017	London
13	Gabriel Gatehouse	BBC	22 November 2016	Telephone Interview

Appendix (3): Military personnal interviewed for this project

	Name	Occupation	Date	Place
1	Tim Purbrick	Army Reserve staff officer in the Concepts Branch at Army HQ	7 February 2018	Telephone Interview
2	Patrick AG Jackson	Lieutenant Colonel SO1 CGS Media Adviser Army Media & Communication	7 July 2017	Telephone Interview
3	Steven Jolly	Executive Director, World Services M&C Saatchi. The Ex-Director of Defence Communications	7 July 2017	London
4	Angus Taverner	Staff Officer 1 (SO1) Director News (Policy and Plans) in the UK MoD	13 February 2018	Telephone Interview
5	David Richards	The former Chief of the Defence Staff	7 February 2018	London
6	Tony Cramp	VP Aircraft, Shell Aircraft The Netherlands	11 February 2018	London

Appendix (4): Photographs with research participants

Picture 1: Caroline Wyatt and Paul Adam

Picture 2: Jonathan Beale

Picture 3: David Pratt

Picture 4: Lyse Doucet

Picture 5: Jonathan Steele

Picture 6: Lord David Richards

Picture 7: Maggie O'Kane

Picture 9: Tim Purbrick

Picture 8: Jeremy Bowen

Picture 10: Sean Smith

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