Democratic Discrepancy

In

The Age of Information

WikiLeaks and the US on Information Freedom

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Abstract

The ICT revolution has transformed the space for democratic debate on information freedom. Although democratic actors like the US and WikiLeaks both advocate freedom of information, there are obvious discrepancies amongst ideas of how this basic democratic freedom is implemented in the age of information. These democratic discrepancies are analyzed through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis, focusing on the case of WikiLeaks' release 'Cablegate' in 2010, to the great concern of the US. The discrepancy of the US' freedom from WikiLeaks' publishing activity, and WikiLeaks freedom to publish, is seen through the lens of Isaiah Berlin's concepts of positive and negative freedom. It is concluded that the logic of the network society poses the challenge of democratic states' adaption to the network society's dialectic between the Web and the Self, as opposed to that of structure and agent. Concurrently, the missing link between globalization and democracy, points to the transformation from interest-based to value-based motivation for political engagement. As the information age's level of connectivity gives rise to increased clashes of discourse, the purpose of this research is to describe these and thereby clarify challenges of governing the Internet in the 21st Century.

Key words: Democracy, Globalization, Freedom, Information, Transformation.
Word Count: 19.640

Foreword

After having read a Master of Science in Global Studies, it is striking to experience how much literature on this topic revolves around the concept of globalization but does not manage to constitute the meaning of globalization (Kinnvall, Nesbitt-Larking 2011:5). The question of how humans as global actors constitute meaning under globalized circumstances is not adequately covered and has inspired research topic of this master thesis. The original idea for this thesis commenced with the ambition to identify the phenomenology of globalization. As this is a rather grand task to compile into the framework of a master thesis, the thesis will be a modified and considerably limited aspect of this.

The author of this thesis has received interdisciplinary education throughout the program, with a heavy focus upon compiling research on the subject from multiple academic disciplines, namely political science, philosophy, sociology, media and communication. Despite the difficulties of researching across disciplines, this thesis attempts to bridge the gaps between them and turn the different approaches into an advantage, adding to the diversity and interconnection that characterizes both global society and its needed research approach.

In the study of the global development of increased interconnection, academic disciplines must arguably follow suit to match the pace and intensity, thus ensuring that the existing theories and methods correspond to globalized time. I believe there is a need for scientific acknowledgement of unfolding the levels of abstractions, which embraces contextualization to a great extent. Distinguishing factors within global processes may appear de-contextualizing and occasionally contradict conventional research methods, but it is outright impossible to continuously make distinctions as all processes are interlinked. This approach to globalization research will reoccur throughout this paper, not in an attempt to change conventional scientific methods but simply to acknowledge the need for methodological advancement in globalized times.

Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations

CDA – Critical Discourse Analysis

ICT - Information and Communication Technology

IR – International Relations

US – United States (of America)

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1   Introduction

*"Democracy is the worst form of government, except of
course all the other forms of governments."*
- Winston Churchill (Bosetti 1997:85)

Upon entering the 21st Century, connected voices of the global society have grown in number and diversity, reinvigorating the debate of what form of democracy suits the digital age. Waves of democracy have taken the journey from direct democracy, to representative, and recently to the notion of deliberate democracy (Gutmann, Thompson 2004). Characteristic of all forms of democracy is the fundamental principle of *democratic freedom*[1] but, as Churchill points out, democracy is far from frictionless and poses impenetrable paradoxes to the advocates of free minds. These paradoxes have arguably increased in number and complexity in the wake of the ICT revolution, where the interactive Web 2.0[2] facilitates democratic interaction in virtual space.

This technological development has generated an intensification of virtual meetings, and where there is connectedness and freedom to speak one's mind, there is room for clashes of opposing ideas. Yet, as Isaiah Berlin (1909-1997) emphasizes, it is the state of conflict that gives value to freedom and points to the distinct notions of freedom, which are the *freedom to* interfere, as well as *freedom from* interference (Berlin 1969:35). In the age of information, the question of freedom's incommensurability increases proportionate to the level of connectivity, and has consequently led to the recent escalation in the debate on information freedom.[3]

With WikiLeaks' release of 'Cablegate' in 2010, the democratic face of the US was scarred internationally, along with its diplomacy (Berghel 2012:70). Despite both parties being of democratic nature and advocates of information freedom, the events in the aftermath of Cablegate has revealed a *democratic discrepancy* upon the quality of information freedom in the information age.[4] Debate over the quality of democracy on the global scene arguably reflects the new world order, being one of *transparency* and *accountability* (Krotoski

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[1] 'Democratic freedom' refers to political freedom, and not financial, social or cultural freedom, though their interlinkage is acknowledged.
[2] Despite the lack of an official definition of Web 2.0 it is characterized by facilitating communication between people. Furthermore it blurs the distinction between consumer and content publisher, as users consume as well as contribute with information, in the form of blogs, posts, tweets etc. The coming of Web 3.0 is not adopted here, as its additional characteristics, i.e. personalization, are of semantic nature, which is irrelevant to this research, where *interaction* is key.
[3] 'Information freedom' covers the freedom to know, access and publish information, and freedom of expression.
[4] 'The information age', the digital age' and 'the global age' are used interchangeably.

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2011:526). The interactive Web 2.0 has empowered the public and increased the level of autonomy to let information flow through *whistleblowing*, posing new challenges to Internet governance.

WikiLeaks is a capable actor of circumventing the predetermined censorship inherent to the Net's infrastructure (DeNardis 2012), giving spectators across the globe a taste of what an ungoverned democratic practice is like. In this context, Douglas Rushkoff poignantly asks whether people are ready for a real Internet, which he argues is really a question of whether people are ready for *real democracy,* i.e., if people are ready to govern themselves (Flanders 2010). The question directs attention to how the transformation of virtual space affects the link between *democracy* and *globalization*.

1.1   Purpose of Paper

This paper first of all seeks to describe the democratic discrepancy arising in the digital age, where actors within the democratic category subscribe to apparently similar, yet very distinct notions of information freedom. '*Democratic discrepancy*' is defined, as the *incongruence of political ideals within the democratic entity of democratic practitioners*, be it state actors or individuals. Discrepancy may also become visible internally within a single actor, as detection of discrepancy relies on level of abstraction. This description is intended to add clarity to the challenge of governing the 21st Century's Internet. Although diverging views upon freedom of information is nothing new, there seems to be an underlying separation of thought, regarding democratic freedom, which is in need of scrutiny, as the field of divergence becomes the more visible in the age of information.

Thus this paper seeks to problematize the democratic premise of freedom in globalized times, where the current level of autonomy was only imaginary to forefathers of democratic theory on liberty.[5] It is thus crucial for political philosophy to stay tuned in and detect the coherence, or lack thereof, between civil depiction of democratic freedoms[6] and the argumentation of democratic states. Scholars from various disciplines are occupied with this transformation and a recent subfield within political science focuses on the link between democracy and globalization (Shirazi, Ngwenyama & Morawczynski 2010, Youngs 2007, Downes, Janda 1998, Schlosberg, Dryzek 2002, Hedberg 1997, Chadwick 2009, Tartoussieh 2011, Poster 1997). This paper seeks to explore this field further from the perspective of democratic freedom, as it is essential to all waves of democracy (Benkler 2011b:370).

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[5] 'Liberty' and 'freedom' are used interchangeably.
[6] 'Democratic freedoms' refer to those of the 1st Amendment in the US constitution, covering amongst others freedom of speech, press and assembly. Yet in this thesis democratic freedom frequently refers to freedom of information, as that is the specific freedom in focus.

1.2   Disposition

The rest of chapter 1 introduces the research problem and its background, along with its relevance to the third wave of globalization. Before commencing with the theoretical outline, a short section to the information age introduces the context of this research. Chapter 2 serves as the theoretical anchor in this thesis and ends with summing up the theoretical framework for analysis, through which the research is conducted. Chapter 3 introduces an overview of the unconventional research design of this paper, which is based on an expected discrepancy between democratic discourses. Chapter 4 presents material along with an outline of how the expected democratic discrepancy is detected on the basis of existing literature on the topic. Chapter 5 consists of the actual analysis, first analyzing WikiLeaks' discourse, followed by the US. The chapter ends with a cross-unit analysis that describes the democratic discrepancy, based on earlier detection through the theoretical lens adopted in this paper and in the context of the information age. The very last section in this chapter revisits the primary theory of Isaiah Berlin to assess how it applies to the age of information. Chapter 6 presents concluding remarks along with suggestions for further research.

1.3   Problem Background

> *"...unless we understand the dominant issues of our own world. The greatest of these is the open war that is being fought between two systems of ideas which return different and conflicting answers to what has long been the central question of politics — the question of obedience and coercion."*
> (Berlin 1969:3)

The ICT revolution unquestionably has an impact on the debate of democratic freedom. It is characterized by the connectivity of the Web, resulting in an intensification of democratic actors' meeting points in virtual space, making diverging ideas of democratic freedoms, such as freedom of information, the more visible. The interactive Web 2.0's flow of information has transformed democratic practices, wherein a polarization of political actors occurs, along with an equalization of opposing parties' voices on the virtual playground, thus being dividing and unifying at the same time (Rossi 2007:52). The ICT revolution's empowerment of the individual in virtual space continuously confronts the nation-state's authority with requests of accountability. A virtual space that only exists by virtue of technological development represents in conjunction with policies and investments, the bittersweet irony of governments facilitating the public's empowerment, and subsequently faces the self-same *power of information*.

This ambiguous dimension adds to the spectrum between *autonomy* and *authority*, which along with the ICT revolution's interactive means of

communication, contributes to an intensification of the democratic debate in a noticeable fashion. The power of information is nothing new and has long played crucial roles, as it did in the Cold War (Roberts 2012:116), but the character of its power has changed as it has been distributed to the hands of regular citizens, like *whistleblowers*. Managing and navigating through a jungle of information, where information's verification is hard, is no longer a task for national Intelligence Services but up to any individual connected to the Internet. The development revitalizes the question of democratic censorship to democratic governments as a way to cope with the exposure state secrets encounter in the age of information (Sussman 2000).

WikiLeaks' exposure of confidential information from US military intelligence created an outcry from one of the already existing democratic nations in the world whose secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, declared '*The War on Information*' (Anon. 2011). Opposite stands WikiLeaks' founder, Julien Assange, fighting '*The War on Secrecy*' in an ideological fight for freedom of information (Leigh, Harding 2011). Yet Assange has been labeled a "high-tech terrorist" on a level equal with Osama Bin Laden, whereas others perceive him to be fighting for essential democratic freedoms, such as the freedom to know, access, publish and express (Berghel 2012:71). The opposing parties share the commonality of fighting for these democratic freedoms, with at points identical arguments, yet the content and meaning of the messages seem to differ significantly. How *truth* and *treason* can become so interchangeable in a democratic setting serves as the underlying puzzle of this thesis research.

1.4   Problem and Research Questions

Political communication in virtual space raises anew the question of freedom's content and its significance, probing the conceptualization of democratic freedom in contemporary democratic societies. There appears to be a mismatch of meanings of democratic freedom, in its conventional sense, when utilized in national concerns, and its manifold meaning in politicized cyber-space. I will focus on the democratic discrepancy arising between distinct discourses on information freedom as the first step in researching upon democratic transformation in global times. The research question is:

> - *How is the democratic discrepancy between WikiLeaks and the US revealed in the actors' expressions regarding information freedom?*

1.5   Delimiting the Research Scope

There are three main approaches to research information freedom in a political context: classical theory of democracy, a legal approach and one of Human Rights, of which the two latter are omitted from this thesis. With the focus on political freedom, connections to diplomacy will occur in the course of the research, but does not embrace the field of diplomacy as such. Nor will trans-nationalism be addressed, as this takes an entirely different approach relating to international relations (IR).

   Focusing on the link between democracy and globalization suggests a research upon advanced nation-states having adopted a democratic elective system and rule of law. Nations, which are on the brink of democracy and are less developed according to OECD, are omitted from this research. Given that a certain amount of prosperity is required to be connected to the Web, a large part of the society dealt with in this paper consists of citizens from financially wealthy countries, such as North America, Australia and Europe.

1.6   Relevance to The Third Wave of Globalization

Globalization processes that change the mode of powers inspire scholars from various disciplines to study the spectrum between globalization and democracy (Shirazi, Ngwenyama & Morawczynski 2010, Youngs 2007, Downes, Janda 1998, Schlosberg, Dryzek 2002, Hedberg 1997, Tartoussieh 2011, Poster 1997, Chadwick, May 2003), thereby witnessing a forthcoming transformation that characterizes the third wave of globalization. The ICT revolution has unquestionably affected democratic practices, generating new issues in the continuum between authority and autonomy, as the individual's subordination to the democratic state is no longer taken for granted (Shirazi, Ngwenyama & Morawczynski 2010).

   Democracy being inherently linked to a territorial nation-state is heavily challenged with the public sphere's expansion and diversification in virtual space, and thus prone to a transformation in the near future (Youngs 2007:25). The development has given rise to notions of *'E-democracy', 'Digital Democracy'* and *'Virtual Democracy'*, all implying the use of ICT means in democratic practices all the way from the local to the global level of societal organization (Shirazi, Ngwenyama & Morawczynski 2010:23). The ideas present virtual perspectives to the democratic debate, of relevance to the clash of discourses examined in this paper, as WikiLeaks represents a discourse pointing to democratic practices in virtual space.

   David Schlosberg and John S. Dryzek speak of the 'deliberate turn' in democratic theory the past decade, which points to the expansion of political participation beyond representativeness, in the wake of the ICT revolution

(Schlosberg, Dryzek 2002:332). Viewing this observation in the context of researching a whistleblowing organization's discourse, Jay Rosen argues that whistleblowing is a new way of voting, as "…sources are voting with their leaks." (Flanders 2010). Except that '*the distancing effect of globalization*' (Rossi 2007:51), carries potential for distorting participation (Schlosberg, Dryzek 2002:334). The same way one massive leak may not represent more than a single individual, though its impact is of great significance to societies across the globe.

With the ability to share information in the wake of the ICT revolution, leaks are likely to increase as the number of WikiLeaks-inspired websites increases and "The failures of WikiLeaks provide the blue-print for the systems which will follow it", as Mark Pesce puts it (Sifry 2011b:21-22). Although WikiLeaks is accused of being a threat to national security, Mark Page and J. E. Spence argue that the organization is more so a threat to diplomacy (Page, Spence 2011:235). This aspect points to the difficulty of coupling democracy with globalized processes, where interaction with undemocratic entities is inevitable.

The development of global political society has reached a point where political struggles are inseparable from financial, social and cultural dimensions, thereby emphasizing the importance of bringing quality to the political debates upon the state of society (Rossi 2007:29, Piertese 2012:1). The debate of whether global society is considered orderly or on the brink of escalating into anarchic chaos is somewhat a repetition of the break with the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Estate of the hierarchical society vibrant in Europe's 18th Century. Contemporary talk of the 4th and 5th Estate[7] poses similar issues with regard to information freedom, such as a publishing organization's right to publish. Obviously, the third wave of globalization's icon being one of microchips enables a scale of publishing that was impossible prior to the digital age (McGrew 2008:22).

Whether globalization is a recent or ancient phenomenon is widely contested amongst scholars (Steger 2003:17). Defining the concept 'globalization' makes it thus more difficult, as its impetus is driven by ancient forces, only recently showing an escalation of events tied into a global web of visibility. That globalization is characterized as a process with no subject characterized constituted in *flows* seems to be a broadly agreed upon (Hay, Marsh 2000:2). Two basic positions can be taken upon whether globalization enhances or delimits democratic freedom. On one hand, it can be argued that enhanced access to information and possibility of free expression enforces democratic liberty, which reveals an opportunist, or hyper-globalist approach to globalization (Dicken 2007:7). On the other hand globalization skeptics can argue that freedom of for example mobility or free speech, enabled by technological globalization, request restrictions from democratic governments in order to maintain an international order that keeps global society from spiraling into anarchy (Dicken 2007:5-7, Chandler 2007:707, McGrew 2008:21).

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[7] The 4th Estate refers to the complete body of professional journalism, whereas the 5th Estate has no fixed meaning but is used to describe actors in civil society (Tumber 2001).

Globalization is in this thesis defined as *the process of exchanging knowledge*, deriving from the viewpoint of globalization being a historical and dialectic process (Rossi 2007:42). This definition points to the impetus from which all globalization waves originate, of which the information age is intrinsic to the third wave, where time-space-compressions are central. Exchange of knowledge is therefore considered to be the essential catalyst from which all other streams of globalization arise, including challenges of maintaining information freedom in the information age.

It is here suggested that the globalization process is not an external process but also an esoteric process of intensifying connectedness internally within human beings.[8] The individual aspect of globalization relates to the dematerial aspects of information's power (Rossi 2007:52), which indicates a shift from interest-based to value-based motivations for political engagement (Chandler 2007). The shifts from interest-based to value-based motivations in democracies across global society argue for political scientists to look for parameters outside of those that are measurable (Chandler 2009, Chandler 2007). This is an approach the globalization thinker Manuell Castells (1942-) adopts in his trilogy: "The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture", here drawing upon Vol. 1: "The Rise of The Network Society" (Castells 2010).

In his abstract theory for society in the 21st Century, Castells suggests that globalization forces are manifested through dialectics between the *'Web'* and the *'self'*. Despite criticism of this meta-theory being too generalizing (Béland 2005:36), it serves as one of the most important theories for understanding our time, as it points to the rather rapid decline of nation-states (Smith 2003:31, Heiskala 2003). As anyone is someone, in the age of globalization, it is considered an advantage to the field of political science to look to dynamics other than the conventional dialectic between structure and agent, which is why Castells' theory of the information age serves as the contextual backdrop for this research.

1.7 The Age of Information

Postmodern culture is seemingly occupied with awaiting the end of history and to some degree the end of sense and reason, but Castells puts forth the hypothesis that all significant societal change can make sense in their interrelationship (Castells 2010:4). Castells' poignant argument points to the ICT revolution's effect on the mindsets of people in the information age, unlike the popular focus upon exchange through relations, which makes Castells' theory a good supplement for globalization theories.

Interconnection is enabled and maintained through technological expansion, pointing to the significance of the ICT as the realm of the political, social,

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[8] This form of connectedness refers to constant connectivity, in the form of cell phones, iPhones, computers etc. demand new politics for each individual's personal life.

economic and cultural changes we are experiencing (Castells 2010:5). Castells argues that the key feature of constant wireless connection is not the mobility it enables, but the permanent state of connectedness (Castells 2010:xxx). This differentiation between mobility and connectedness differs from the conventional globalization mindset's conceptualization of flexibility and mobility as key to our time. The interactive nature of Web 2.0 has added yet another layer to '*the network of networks*', which is how Castells defines 'the Net', in its relation to 'the self' (Castells 2010:383).

The new media system[9] takes off where the mass-media left off. However the new form of media is according to Castells embedded in politicians and financial interests (Castells 2010:364), which is a relevant viewpoint to this research, considering WikiLeaks' similar position. '*The networking logic*' emancipates boundaries, be it national or cultural, and engages in networking and sharing as an aspect of social capital (Castells 2010:70). What distinguishes this technological revolution from previous ones are that people now have "…technologies to act on information", adding actors involved in global debates.

'*The network society*' is according to Castells characterized by '*the space of flows*' and '*the place of spaces*'. From a social theory point of view: "…space is the material support of time-sharing social practices." (Castells 2010:441). Thus space is not a reflection of society but space is society. In theory, future physical neighboring spaces can be of two distinct types of spaces, depending on where in hyperspace they are connected. Therefore, even though the physical locality is neighboring, its social meaning might be worlds apart (Castells 2010:459).

Castells hypothesizes that the space of flows consists of personal micro-networks, which project common interests onto macro-networks (Castells 2010:446). "The global city is thus not a place, but a process." (Castells 2010:417). Dominant space of flows generating social processes influence the global space in a way that crystallizes historical time, as past social influences are manifested in the shape of contemporary societal structures (Castells 2010:441). The level of human development in modern societies has reached a level where social construction can dictate our perception of the world: thus, when looking at the network society in this perspective, one can only agree with Castells when expressing that history is just beginning (Castells 2010:509).

Following this introduction to the theoretical backdrop, which presents an entirely novel way of thinking about global interaction, chapter 2 introduces the primary theory of this research, relevant to the notion of information freedom in the age of information.

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[9] 'The new media' refers to the digital convergence that allowed everything from individuals to large-scale organizational bodies to congregate and share information online.

2   Theory of Democratic Freedom

"...freedom is more important than equality; that the attempt to realize equality endangers freedom; and that, if freedom is lost, there will not even be equality among the unfree."
- Karl Popper (Bosetti 1997:5)

According to Karl Popper (1902-1994), social sciences need to acknowledge arising new theories as well as testing existing ones (Gerring 2004:349). Berlin, Popper and Castells all theorize upon societal dialectics, but they nonetheless differ in what this reflexivity centers on. Whereas Popper and Berlin center upon structure-agent dialectics (Frisch 1998:2, Popper 1966:20), Castells' dialectic is between the Web and the self (Adams 2003). As the differing dialectics do not exclude each other but rather supplement each other from different perspectives, detecting discourses upon information freedom from distinct democratic actors is possible.

The level of information freedom WikiLeaks put forward can be detected and put in perspective through Berlin's theory of positive and negative freedom. Mainly drawing upon: Isaiah Berlin's theory of democratic freedom in his essay from 1958: "Two Concepts of Liberty" (Berlin 1969). To sustain the theoretical position of the role of the US in the information society, enables a democratic state's discourse to be captured. Karl Popper's theory of the democratic, drawing upon: "The Open Society and its Enemies vol. 1 and 2" (Popper 1966), and Giancarlo Bosetti's interview of Popper in "The Lesson of this Century; With two talks on freedom and the democratic state" (Bosetti 1997) will constitute theory of the democratic state, including its role on censorship.

2.1   Positive versus Negative Freedoms

"I am normally said to be free to the degree to which no man or body of men interferes with my activity. Political liberty in this sense is simply the area within which a man can act unobstructed by others."
- Isaiah Berlin (Berlin 1969:3)

Berlin questions what total freedom is and claims that political liberty is far from the same as financial, cultural or social liberty. Berlin claims that having liberty is by far equivalent to having all: "That we cannot have everything is a necessary, not a contingent, truth." (Berlin 1969:35) Berlin's course of reason upon freedom

originates in a distinction between the individual as a single subject and the individual as a part of a collective, suggesting the essence of liberty to be a reflexive balance between one's internal and external world. Thus '***positive freedom***' points to an internal motivation of exercising freedom, whereas actions of '***negative freedom***' imply a motivation in avoiding an influence from one's external environment (Berlin 1969:10).

The idea of positive freedom relies on the notion of being one's own master, thinking and acting according to personal convictions that correspond to personal ideas and beliefs. Positive liberty implies the *'freedom to'* act independently from one's external world, generically suggesting nothing to prevent a person's actions of internal motivation. This sense of liberty clashes when obstructions occur and one desires *'freedom from'* the external environment, giving rise to a negative sense of liberty (Berlin 1969:9). Berlin expresses concern of the impending risk when the freedoms are considered one and the same, if one is not aware of these two distinct aspects of freedom. Berlin argues for the importance of deciphering the various modes of motivation for an individual's behavior in larger groups, ultimately playing out in societies' political organization (Berlin 1969:9).

What Berlin's conceptualization of liberty enables, in contrast with classical liberal thought, is coherent grounds for individual liberty as a mean of human growth, having three main arguments. Berlin criticizes J.S. Mill's argument for personal liberty for not holding water when confronted with the argument of human growth within severely disciplined communities (Berlin 1969:7). Secondly, Berlin holds "…individual liberty as a conscious political ideal", in contrast with classical thought's emphasis on individual rights (Berlin 1969:7). Thirdly and most importantly, Berlin argues that this form of individual liberty does not stand in opposition to forms of autocracy or the absence of self-governance, and argues that the form of liberty provided in a non-democratic society might in fact be very similar to the form of liberty in a democratic one:

> "Just as a democracy may, in fact, deprive the individual citizen of a great many liberties which he might have in some other form of society, so it is perfectly conceivable that a liberal#minded despot would allow his subjects a large measure of personal freedom." (Berlin 1969:8)

To sum up, Berlin's two aspects of freedom can be simplistically subsumed by placing basically any relevant verb after 'freedom to' (positive freedom) and 'freedom from' (negative freedom), such as 'freedom to interfere' versus 'freedom from interference'. This presentation points to the inherent conflict between positive and negative freedom, whereas Berlin argues that the state of conflict gives value to freedom (Berlin 1969:35). This argument supports the relevance of distinguishing between positive and negative freedom, as the value of freedom is what ultimately give rise to local, as well as global, power struggles.

Berlin's advocacy for negative liberty originates from anti-authoritarian social philosophy, shared by Popper, and reflects Berlin's perception of liberty's strong connection to the '***sense of self***'. Berlin argues that what constitutes the self is directly derived from the conception of freedom (Berlin 1969:11). The logic

stipulates a definition of political liberty, which in political philosophy mainly relates to the individual level, where actions in a democratic society should be internally motivated and not initiated by imposition from external power structures (Berlin 1969:9). According to Berlin, an individual's political liberty is endangered in this potential quarrel of personal freedoms, on both conscious and subconscious levels, as it carries a risk for political coercion, leaving the individual vulnerable to external powers (Berlin 1969:10).

> "Freedom is self#mastery, the elimination of obstacles to my will, whatever these obstacles may be — the resistance of nature, of my ungoverned passions, of irrational institutions, of the opposing wills or behaviour of others." (Berlin 1969:19)

What is liberty to one might not be liberty to another and this superiority of the selves brings the onsets of the power struggle, according to Berlin (Berlin 1969:30). Berlin believes in a minimum level of liberty for all, which if not pursued would deprive us of our inherent nature of autonomy (Berlin 1969:4). Continuing this course of logic, if people are in themselves autonomous beings, there is nothing worse than treating them as if they were not autonomous (Berlin 1969:12-13). Contrary to what one might think, in the wake of this strong belief in the autonomous self, Berlin argues that autonomy is not incompatible authority, though the two are incommensurable (Berlin 1969:21). This is in part due to Berlin being an advocate sustaining of societal order through negative freedom in a way where authority is curbed and not encouraged. The opposing positions of this is constituted by advocates of positive freedom, where authority is placed in the individual's own hands (McBride 1990:298).

2.1.1 The Incommensurable Aspect of Freedom

The non-existence of total freedom relies on the incommensurability of values in play, when more than one person is involved (Ellis 2008:32). To say that freedom or equality is more important than the other is not equivalent to say that one is more valuable above the other. Berlin reasons through '*value incommensurability*', which suggests there are no equal standards for measuring the importance of values but suggests that these change according to context (Rabinowicz 2009). Concepts like freedom and equality can in principle therefore not be juxtaposed and generalized, but political organization of societies request this anyhow. When Popper argues that freedom is more important than equality, it is, according to Berlin's argument, an attempt to make the impossible judgment on behalf of others (Berlin 1969:34).

This is the logic from which Berlin derived the concept of '*value pluralism*', for which he is renowned within his field (Hierman 2007, Ellis 2008). Value pluralism is an argument for liberty: the freedom to choose, the freedom to prioritize one value above the other, depending on context. Choice of value prioritization does not only depend on context but also on ways of life, differing

between cultural origins (Berlin 1969:37), corresponding to the popular vision of multiculturalism and diversity within democratic societies. On the contrary, it can be argued that Berlin's positive and negative freedoms stand in opposition to the concept of universalism, as the idea of value pluralism is incommensurable with multiplicity in global coexistence.

This observation necessarily makes Berlin's idea difficult to apply to the international community, having no overall authority to follow, nor a clear-cut code of conduct with regard to information freedom in virtual space. Concurrently, the interdependence of the international community makes distinguishing negative freedom's non-interference and dependency on others an impossible task, which points to the *incommensurability* of freedoms, which does not become less in a global context. To cover this multiplicity with Berlin's idea of value pluralism is an overarching challenge to political ontology in a globalized era, as the distinction between individuals as single subjects and individuals in a collective is growing in complexity.

Berlin considers the fundamental process of organizing a democratic liberal society to consist of two steps, one, being that of creating a system, which exists to prevent politicians from having excess of power, and the second consisting of the protection of the individual from the state (Ignatieff 1998). As the '**legal system**' is generally intended to enhance freedoms of people and restrain injustice, Berlin argues that authority goes hand in hand with autonomy, as described above.

Berlin believed utilitarian ethics was impossible to reason through, in contrast to Popper, since a quantitative approach to value conflicts neglects the incommensurability of value pluralism in itself because the variables' validity is impossible to asses (Cherniss, Hardy 2010). According to Berlin no value can be placed above another, though they might be conflicting, even irreconcilable. In other words, general criteria of quality do not apply to values and are incomparable, according to Berlin (Cherniss, Hardy 2010). Yet it is a necessary evil that current democratic societies, as illustrated with this research's case, are faced with dilemmas at the micro-, meso- and macro-levels, demanding prioritization of values along with interests, at points of incommensurable nature.

2.2   Freedom of Information in The Democratic State

"The freedom of the movement of your fists is limited by the position of your neighbour's nose."

\- Karl Popper (Popper 1966:116)

The above quote encapsulates the task of both democratic governments and citizens' responsibility in a free and open society, according to Popper. Although most democratic citizens can agree with democratic states' association with freedom, the link is not always frictionless. Likewise, a minimum level of liberty is a precondition to awareness of and accessibility to knowledge of rights, which

enables the pursuit of equality among free human beings (Bosetti 1997:66). Yet it is a balancing point, as too much state-interference can lead to indoctrination and excessive influence on the mindsets of citizens (Popper 1966:16).

The fine line between protection of rights and violation hereof is a fine art and probably the most exquisite task for the democratic state. From this viewpoint, maintaining a democratic society, today perceived to be a society of the people[10], is a mutually constitutive process: "We need freedom to prevent the state from abusing its power, and we need the state to prevent the abuse of freedom." (Bosetti 1997:73). The quest of democratic governance, in this course of logic, does not oppose protectionism, but is suggested as a supplement to liberty, corresponding to the need of managing citizens' interrelated freedoms.

Popper's idea can be summarized to consist of the idea of avoiding excessiveness and pursuing moderation. Excessive state powers, as well as citizens' excessive freedom, are two sides of the same evil. If a society is to remain free and open, without spiraling into anarchy, the pursuit is, according to Popper, a balanced responsibility to protect the citizens' freedoms, utilizing as little power as necessary. This is a pursuit to which there is no unambiguous answer and poses a problem that can neither be solved by law but by conscious morality (Bosetti 1997:73). Popper thus rejects any kind of totality, including total freedom or total democracy, and proposes only that democracy is desirable as the lessons of history have proven democratic states to be significantly better at accommodating freedom than other forms of rule (Popper 1966:115-116):

> "As already indicated, the important and difficult question of the limitations of freedom cannot be solved by a cut and dried formula. And the fact that there will always be borderline cases must be welcomed, for without the stimulus of political problems and political struggles of this kind, the citizens' readiness to fight for their freedom would soon disappear, and with it, their freedom." (Popper 1966:116-117)

2.2.1 Democratic Censorship

The term 'democratic censorship' mirrors the inherent incongruence of freedom of information in a governmental practice, and the term is only one of the many issues that Popper considers related to democratic administration (Bosetti 1997:68). Popper is not supportive of state censorship but acknowledges freedom's reliance on responsibility, as the two are mutually dependent, and suggests democratic citizens to partake in '***societal responsibility***' (Bosetti 1997:34). Popper suggests that if the state is the people, such form of rule demands self-censorship. '***Self-censorship***' meant in the sense of being a self-regulating mechanism in correspondence to libertarianism's principle of self-

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[10] Popper points to the meaning of *democracy* in Ancient Greece, which was not 'the rule by the people' but 'the avoidance of tyranny' (Bosetti 1997:69).

ownership. '**Self-ownership'** is in turn facilitated by the state, through the state's '**responsibility to protect'** citizens' '**democratic rights'** (Bosetti 1997:35).

The shared responsibilities include protecting freedoms such as: "freedom of speech, free access to information and freedom to impart it, freedom to *publish*, and many more." (Bosetti 1997:72) Popper points to the risk of abusing freedom: "One can abuse the freedom of speech and of the press, for example, by giving out false information or by instigating a revolt." (Bosetti 1997:73). The same way states can abuse power by, for example, limiting access to information. Popper's thoughts upon *democratic censorship* fall short in the age of information in terms of the Internet's infrastructure, as previously mentioned. This is in part made up for in Popper's advocacy for intellectual responsibility and education of populations, generating awareness of the terms of conditions (Bosetti 1997:35 and 81).

According to Popper, as well as Castells, the media plays a significant role in directing the attention of the public (Castells 2010:364). Popper emphasizes that the media must seek the truth and develop a self-critical attitude, which is important in an era where the magnitude of information goes beyond measurable scope (Bosetti 1997:80). Along with the '*media's responsibility'*, Popper believes that intellectuals, as generators of knowledge production, likewise have a great responsibility (Bosetti 1997:81).

Even though Popper advocates the rule of law as the ultimate sovereignty of the democratic state, he points to the risk of its errors. Legal principles are man-made and thus fallible, as are the human beings facilitating institutions carrying out the rule of law (Bosetti 1997:75). This points to the difference between 'democracy as popular rule' and 'democracy as popular judgment', where the former is desirable in Popper's opinion and speaks for the moral assessment by citizens prior to judgment by public institutions (Bosetti 1997:84). "What we need and what we want is to moralize politics, and not to politicize morals." (Popper 1966:118). Though a legal system is established to support just procedures, Popper ultimately considers the question of censorship to be of moral character, as with most other issues in democratic practices (Bosetti 1997:68).

2.3   Operationalizing Theoretical Concepts

This section serves the purpose of operationalizing the theoretical concepts introduced above. Concepts **stressed** in the theory sections are illustrated in the following figure (see figure 1), where they are compiled into a theoretical framework for analysis, clarifying how utilized concepts are related. The framework is a theoretical anchor used to describe the expected democratic discrepancy, as the discourse analysis of each actor in play will be contrasted on the backdrop of this theoretical framework.

This constructed framework reflects detection of three research outcomes. First of all the framework enables the description of *which aspects* of the democratic reality each party attaches meaning to and *how* this is done. Secondly,

it enables the detection of the points at which the examined discourses *divert* or *struggle* in the interpretation of democratic freedom. Thirdly, it enables the detection of what is *taken for granted* as obvious signifiers and therefore naturalized in the discourse as common sense (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:145).

Figure 1: Theoretical framework for analysis
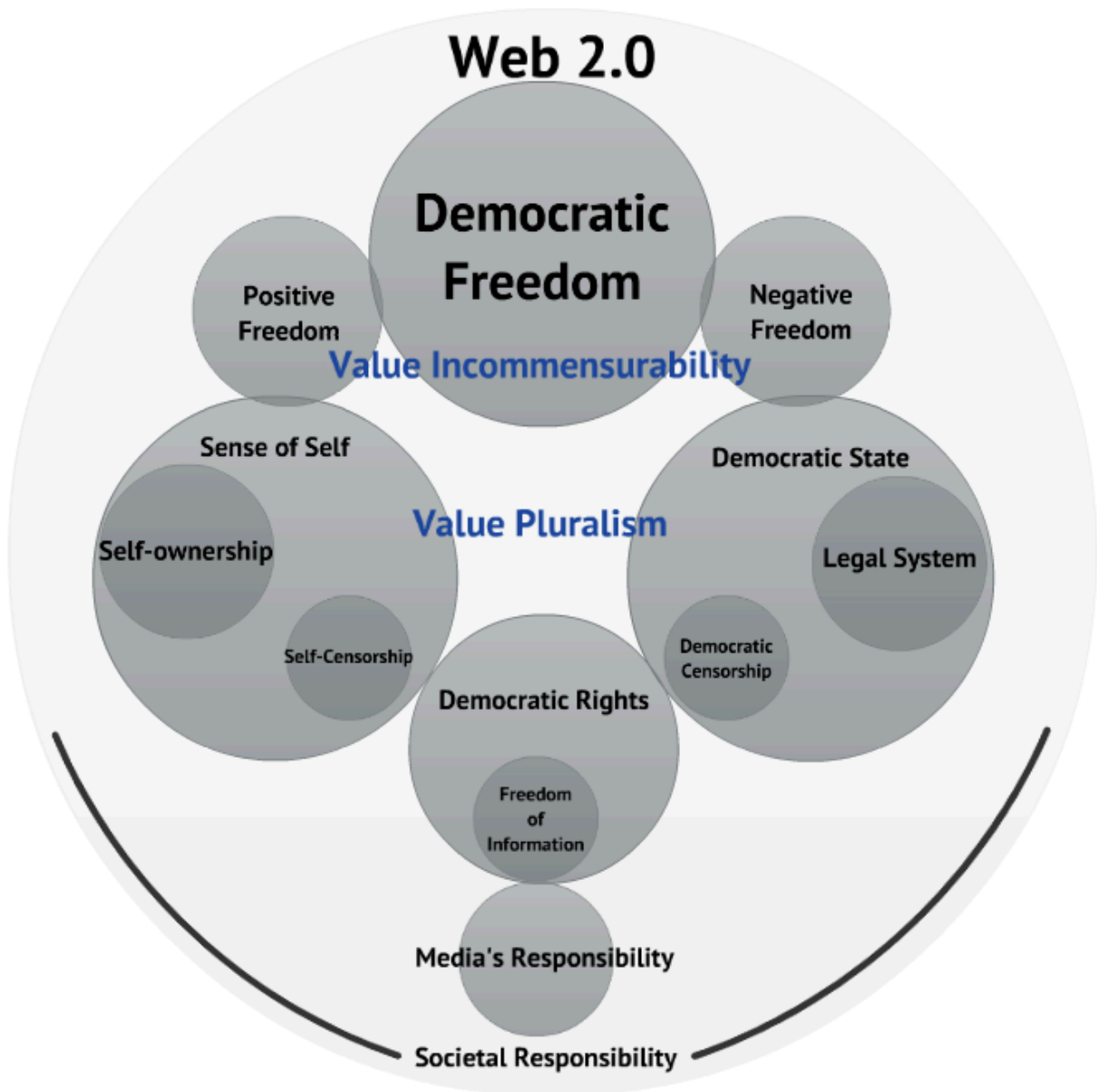
Description of figure 1: The backdrop of the figure, **Web 2.0**, illustrates the underlying autonomy as well as the regulating infrastructure of today's Web, in which democratic interaction to function. The Web 2.0 symbolizes having the age of information and the implications of the network society in mind, when carrying out the analysis. **Democratic freedom** serves as the core idea around which

democratic society is organized, according to Berlin and Popper. The position of circles is only a guide, in order to illustrate the course of logic in combining Berlin and Popper's idea of democratic freedom. The guiding nature of the illustration is reflected in the latent ***value incommensurability*** of Berlin's two concepts of freedom, illustrated with blue writing.

Positive freedom (freedom to) with its internal motivation, characterizes the ***sense of self***, and centers on the left side of the illustration. This leads to ***self-ownership***, ultimately generating a form of ***self-censorship***, generated through a form of a self-regulating mechanism, as Popper suggests. This is not to say that internal motivation always leads to self-censorship but the guiding divide enhances operationalization of positive and negative freedoms. *Negative freedom* (freedom from) on the other hand, with its external motivation, centers on the right side of the figure, where the democratic state sets up a ***legal system*** to prevent basic non-interference. Fulfilling the responsibility to protect citizens' rights and freedoms may require ***democratic censorship***. Combining the sense of self and a ***democratic state*** are the first two steps of organizing society, both derived from a sense or state of freedom, which becomes democratic as soon as political organization is instigated. The underlying ***value pluralism*** arising out of this union is likewise illustrated in blue writing, as in the case of incommensurability's latent presence within mutually constitutive democratic processes.

Value pluralism on the backdrop of Web 2.0 complicates the maintenance of democratic societies, as democratic citizens in the information age are not engaging in a conventional form of consensus with democratic states. Citizens are more likely to act according to global democratic norms, which might differ depending on context, as Berlin points out. The virtual sphere's space of places and flows of space leave room for self-expression and political engagement to another extent in the age of information, as opposed to times of conventional democratic practices. The ***democratic rights*** arising out of the individual subordination to the democratic state provides protection in return of democratic freedoms, such as ***freedom of information***. Maintaining the latter is, according to Berlin, Popper and Castells, a joint ***societal responsibility*** where the ***media's responsibility*** of directing public attention, as well as knowledge production systems, are responsible for knowledge generation to the public sphere.

3   Methodology

This chapter serves as the methodological catalyst of the thesis, which commences with a description of the author's position on ontology and epistemology, including methodological implications. Secondly, different approaches to discourse analysis are presented, along with arguments for choice of discourse analytical approach. Last but not least, the research design is outlined and arguments for qualitative method of case study are put forward.

3.1   Methodological Considerations

The author's adoption of foundational ontology is followed by an epistemological position of *critical realism*. In other words, an observable reality is believed to exist along with reality's appearance. Even though I believe the world exists without our knowledge of it, the world's appearance is influenced by perception and is in need of interpretation. In this line of argument I adopt the idea that a realist's ontology does not exclude the social construction of phenomena, in line with a critical realist's position (Marsh, Furlong 2002:31). Critical realism suggests humbleness to the production of knowledge, subsequently encouraging explorative studies, reaching beyond existing structures of knowledge production.

Objectivity is plausible in theoretical constructions of reality but is problematic in its practical application, as interpretation and perception of its operationalization in the given context may clash with the unobservable reality's perceptual constitution (Bevir, Rhodes 2002:137). Along with other scholars, I thereby denounce the modern project claiming that today's knowledge system is based on objectivity, neither do I confide to post-modernists' appeal to subjectivity, derived solely from humans' interpreted experiences (Bevir, Rhodes 2002:139). Rather I confide to the nature of knowledge derived from *a dynamic between opposites*, as from the contents of objectivity and subjectivity.

The ontology of information varies greatly between scientific disciplines (Sokolov 2010). Here 'information' is viewed as a product of knowledge systems, having its roots in human activity within given structures. *The power of information* is considered to be mutually constitutive, meaning that the awareness that information can bring about, becomes valuable when it influences the shaping of individuals' opinion, which ultimately is potential of having impact on systemic structures. Critical realism here goes hand in hand with the 'transformationalist thesis' of globalization's third wave, where critical realism offers alternative discourses to the dominant one, if the latter gradually distorts its perception of reality in a hegemonic dazzle (Marsh, Furlong 2002:35).

Reality is thus not believed to be a narrative but narratives can be of great influence to the social world constructed by, and within, discourses. Qualitative research methods become more and more requested in a world where diversity is increasingly acknowledged, as qualitative methods are suitable for digging in to competing discourses, as in the case of WikiLeaks and the US (Devine 2002:199). A peculiar aspect of studying social phenomena like *whistleblowing*, is that it questions exactly what qualitative methodology is criticized for, representativeness and legitimacy (Devine 2002:202-203).

The analytical lens is here selected to be discursive, as it questions what is otherwise taken for granted, in a critical examination of invisible ideas behind semiotic expressive texts (Esaiasson et al. 2009:240). This discourse analysis is idea-centered as it is the exchange of ideas in the debate arising out of the ideological struggle between the two actors in play, which is of interest (Beckman 2007:17).

3.2   Approaches to Discourse Analysis

As approaches to discourse analysis are many, I have chosen to concisely outline the field, mainly drawing on Marianne Jørgensen and Louise Philips' description of three primary categories of discourse analysis. One being that of the 'discourse theory' by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, secondly 'critical discourse analysis' (CDA) and thirdly 'discursive psychology' (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:6-8). Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, as well as discursive psychology, are both derived from post-structuralist theories, centering on conceptions of identity (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:146).[11] These approaches are far from irrelevant but apply to a different research focus, such as public perception and public opinion formation.

Though CDA is not easily categorized (Paltridge 2006:179), it is suitable to study the debate of democratic freedom, as it draws on a questioning attitude (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:64, Gee 2010:9), which enables detection of underlying thought patterns, symbolized by similar choices of phrasing from opposing parties. In line with the purpose of this research: "The aim of critical discourse analysis is to shed light on the linguistic-discursive dimensions of social and cultural phenomena and processes of change" (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:61).

The approach is *socio-lingual*, as the production and consumption of texts constitute a social practice in combination with the linguistic-discursive practice (Gee 2010:46). This characteristic is one of five points that unite the different

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[11] It could be of interest to analyze globalization's societal transformations, as both approaches focus on understanding the self, which could be particularly interesting in the information age's dialectic of the Net and the self (Castells 2010). Possible detection of social consequences of, for example ICT, arising out of the interplay between different representations of the world could be detected (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:96-106).

approaches to discourse analysis, under the term CDA, of which only the central ones will be mentioned here (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:61). Another earmark is one of viewing discourses as both *constitutive* and *constituted*, in line with the epistemological position in this paper. The last characteristic is one of *critical research*, where the researcher confides to critical scrutiny of social change (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:64, Gee 2010:9).

Jørgensen and Phillips' categorization of CDA is not to be confused with Fairclough's self-proclaimed critical discourse analysis, centering on detecting unequal power relations[12] (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:60). Yet again elements of Fairclough's work have contributed to the rather broad category of CDA (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:60), of which *'the communicative event'* and *'the order of discourses'*[13] is adopted (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:67). The first, saturates the 'internal' analysis of textual analysis: the second, being the external analysis, which analytically connects the internal analysis to the external political field, through contextualizing it in a broader set of political debates (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:143).

Fairclough claims this *text-system* relation to be dialectical, as the communicative event expressed in particular texts draw upon existing systems, having two ends: one of production, the other consumption (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:145). When discourses are produced within existing paradigms, though questioning its boundaries, it carries potential of contributing to change *'the order of discourse'*. The last contribution from Fairclough, is that of *'intertextuality'*, where dominant discourses are likely to rely on historical *'inter-discursivity'*, by relating to historical texts underlining current arguments (Fairclough 1995:73, Gee 2010:58).

As respective discourses are anticipated to have similar arguments of democratic freedom, but the contents' meaning are expected to differ, Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is considered unsuitable for this research (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:26). Yet a single concept from Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory will add to the preliminary literature review. That is the concept of *'floating signifiers'*[14] which is adopted as a way to identify the different content of similar concepts utilized by authors of existing literature on the topic (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:148).

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[12] Though this research's main goal is not to uncover unequal power relations, these are inevitable in social change, involving more than one political discourse, as is the case in this research.
[13] The 'order of discourse' is: "…the common platform of different discourses, and the discourses are the patterns of meaning within the order of discourse." (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:144).
[14] Definition: "Floating signifiers are the signs that different discourses struggle to invest with meaning in their own particular way." (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:28).

3.3   Research Design: A Case Study

A case study enables in depth research of democratic freedom and description of chosen theories' conceptual validity in the age of information (Gerring 2004:348, George, Bennett 2004:19). Despite criticism of case studies (Yin 2009:3, Campbell 1975, George, Bennett 2004:28), it allows intricate examination of how democratic discrepancies between two democratic actors arise. This case is selected upon the logic of theoretical replication, where units of analysis are expected to give contrasting results for predictable reasons (Yin 2009:47). To detect expected diverting viewpoints of each idea-carrier, prior to the actual analysis, the material presented in chapter 4 contains floating signifiers, and are *emphasized* in the course of the text and illustrated in figure 3 and figure 4 in section 4.3 "Democratic Discrepancy Detected" (Esaiasson et al. 2009:254-255). Figure 2 illustrates the research design of which an explanation follows below.

Figure 2: Research Design
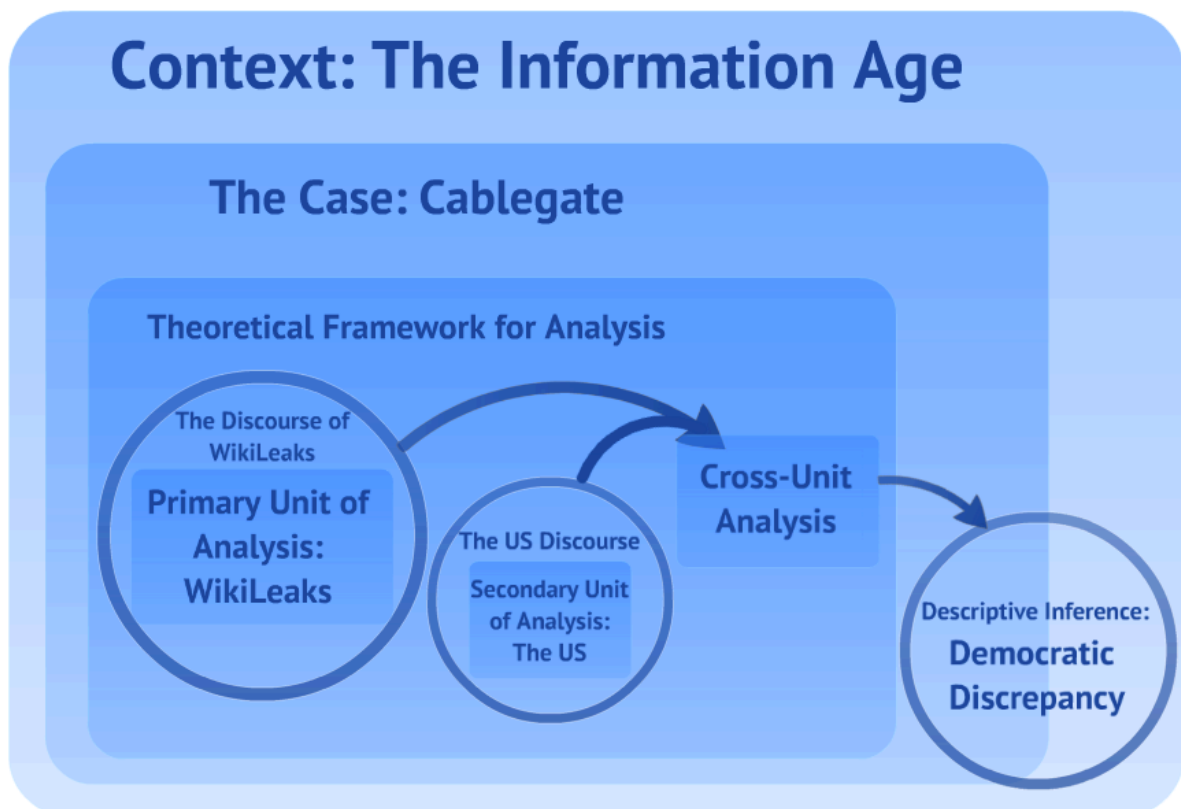
Description of figure 2: To conduct research in this field requests a specific position when interpreting social phenomena, which is met by the operationalization of theoretical concepts illustrated in figure 1 "***Theoretical Framework for Analysis***", which is applied to the ***case*** of this research, in the ***context*** of the information age (Bevir, Rhodes 2002:134). Based on existing literature's description of the units discourses, analysis of the ***primary*** and

secondary units of analysis. Ideas' similarities and differences will be identified through a ***cross-unit analysis***, in section 5.3, which describes ***democratic discrepancy*** (Esaiasson et al. 2009:254, Yin 2009:50).

Studying the phenomenon of *whistleblowing* makes '*Cablegate*' an obvious case[15] selection. Cablegate represents an escalation of unconventional whistleblowing activity, between 2010-2012, and is a turning point in the debate of information freedom. The case selection is an entry point to the discourses in question and the content of leaks are in themselves of less importance, as they do not reveal discourses on information freedom. The case selection can be criticized for being a disadvantage to select a case tied to an exact point in time. Though the study is not longitudinal it is vital to look at the subjects of study as being part of a process, in line with globalization's characteristic *flows* (Hay, Marsh 2000:6), where the only constant is change.

WikiLeaks, as the proactive part in bringing about this debate on information freedom, by releasing confidential information, makes the organization a generic unit of analysis. The US, as the worldwide pioneer of democracy[16], is subject to multiple significant releases and serves a contrasting logic on information freedom. Whereas WikiLeaks set the stage for what may be democratic transformation in the age of information, the US is a potent example of democratic institutional structures, being the first of its kind in modern times.

The better choice of cases, the more generalizable inferences can be found and applied to a wider scope of units (George, Bennett 2004:83), though it must here be noted that the impact WikiLeaks has on nation-states is significant but also of contemporary nature. Cases of corresponding magnitude are limited as of now, though actors of similar logics are likely to increase in the future.[17] It is in this context important to note that WikiLeaks' impact on democratic debate could be contrasted with any democratic state and not only the US. It is an advantage that freedom of speech is constitutionally protected in the US' 1st Amendment, which is not the case in terms of the United Kingdom's constitution for example (Leigh, Harding 2011:170). Constitutional protection brings matter to a head when analyzing democratic disagreements in the age of information.

Despite the implicit comparative nature, this study is not designed to be comparative, as parties involved are far from comparative due to inherently distinct natures of democratic actors on the global scene. Though researchers within comparative political science may argue that single and multiple case studies, demand different methodological structures (Landman 2004, Yin 2009:46), Robert K. Yin argues that a good non-comparative embedded case study, with multiple units of analysis, is conducive (Yin 2009:46).

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[15] A case is here defined as: "…an instance of a class of events" diverging from a case's early definition as a single measure of variables in play (George, Bennett 2004).
[16] 'Pioneer of democracy' refers to the US-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which are both of questionable character. Not the least is the war in Iraq the most recent victim of this democracy-centric attitude, going through with the invasion despite the UN's disapproval.
[17] Other sites similar to Wikileaks are already increasing in number, such as OpenLeaks.org, BrusselsLeaks.com, BalkanLeaks.eu, IndoLeaks.org (Sifry 2011b:22).

Due to WikiLeaks' unique character and the sparse research upon the organization, more attention is dedicated to this organization's discourse. Thus the US is a unit of analysis paid less attention to, though it represents a dominating national democratic discourse (Yin 2009:54). This unconventional case study design accommodates the unconventional phenomenon of study, though it may be a point of criticism, as it is not in line with traditional forms of case studies, dedicating equal scale of attention to all units of analysis (Yin 2009:53). Yet the research design allows descriptive inferences, favoring the unique case of WikiLeaks, above the much-studied conventional case of the US (Gerring 2004:346-349), as the research design enables discursive contrasts to emerge between diverging democratic courses of reasoning.

3.4   Data Collection

Lunds University Search System 'Summon', 'EBSCOhost' and 'Web of Knowledge' (ISI) have served as the primary databases for literature searches. International Studies Association (ISA) Annual Convention 2012 presents multiple papers and panel discussions upon WikiLeaks, and is an updated entrance to the debate, though only few authors of conference papers have granted permission to quote.[18] The articles and books drawn upon in the literature review are the ones most frequently referred to in the debate upon WikiLeaks, the US and democratic freedom.

From these a series of references to direct sources of WikiLeaks and the US government have been extracted and utilized as primary texts as subject to analysis. Documents of analysis have been collected via www.wikileaks.org, 'US Department of State, Diplomacy in Action' and 'Google' has supplemented, where other search engines fell short. In regard to documents put forward for analyzing the US discourse, searches of 'information freedom' and 'Internet freedom' within the US State Department's archives between 2010 and 2012 have been employed.

As Cablegate in itself exemplifies the escalation of the debate on information freedom, a **selection criterion A** is: Data that represents expressions concerning information freedom. Secondly, to extract data as directly from the original source as possible, which constitutes **selection criterion B**: Texts (or transcriptions) originating directly from WikiLeaks and the US government between 2010 and 2012. Thirdly, the least explored dimension in existing literature, being the ideological, has lead to **selection criterion C**: Texts revealing underlying ideas of discourses in the debate on freedom of information.

This research's backdrop being a media-hyped carpet of distorted attention reflects the potential bias in dealing with information and communication, which

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[18] These are: Brent Hierman, James Davis, Judith Reppy and Jan N. Piertese.

is why media like newspaper articles are not utilized, due to its potential of increasing the already existing bias. Media's strategy for processing, presenting and directing the public's attention can be dubious and complex, which is why texts, reflecting underlying ideas, have been prioritized above texts of public debate. Subsequently utilizing public media sources would take a whole different approach to discourse analysis (Fairclough 1995).

3.4.1 Data

Data of analysis for detection of WikiLeaks' discourse consist of interviews[19] carried out by various Interviewers, taking place in between 2010 and 2012[20], and appertaining transcripts.[21] Two contiguous interviews by Swiss Hans-Ulrich Obrist, has been utilized, who with an artistic background is in the process of carrying out "The Interview Project" (Obrist 2011a, Obrist 2011b). Subsequently, CBS'[22] journalist Martin Smith's interview of Assange, after releasing a documentary criticizes WikiLeaks (Smith 2011). Thirdly, investigative journalist and documentary filmmaker, and Assange's fellow countryman, John Pilger interviews Julien Assange (Pilger n.d.).

Amy Goodman's conversation with Assange and Slavoj Zizek, broadcasted on "Democracy Now" serves as the fourth interview (Goodman 2011). The gathering is an attempt to bring attention to the content of WikiLeaks' releases on the backdrop of democracy. Lastly, Steve Kroft's "60 minutes", broadcasted by CBS, make it up for the fifth interview, who is renowned for unbiased reporting, yet questioning in a manner that reflects the American public (Kroft 2011).

Data of analysis for the US discourse consists of two speeches by secretary of state, Hillary R. Clinton, which are repeatedly referred to in the academic debate concerning WikiLeaks. Firstly Hillary Clinton's speech on "Remarks on Internet Freedom" from 2010, is employed, taking place at the 'Newseum' in Washington DC, a monument representing democratic freedoms. The speech concerns how founding freedoms of the US coincide with the 21st Century (Clinton 2010).

Secondly, Clinton's speech at George Washington University "Internet Rights and Wrongs: Choices and Challenges in a Networked World" in 2011, represents a discursive text of how the Internet can be employed in both a positive and negatives sense (Clinton 2011). These speeches are supplemented by press releases concerning the matter in question, released by the State Department to increase the data's reliability.

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[19] Unless else is stated, all quotes in the analysis are by Assange.
[20] Actual dates are visible in Timeline (see Appendix).
[21] When interviews have been available both in transcript and as live TV, both have been analyzed as live TV may reveal other points disguised in written language, such as jokes or ironic comments.
[22] 'CBS' is an American commercial broadcasting television network.

3.4.2 Source Criticism

Collected data consist of two distinct types of data, which may be subject to criticism. WikiLeaks data consists of interviews, where answers are instant and Interviewers set the dialogue's focus of attention. Data of the US data represents monologues or speeches, written and prepared with intent beforehand. As the study is not comparative the different character of data is viewed as an advantage, representing two distinct democratic actors, though this will be kept in mind during the course of analysis.

Critique of chosen data regarding WikiLeaks, could be the structure of interviews being intentionally directed by respective Interviewers. This criticism is met by turning the diverse spectrum of Interviewers into an advantage representing diversity (Yin 2009:97), covering everything from Hans-Ulrich Obrist, to supportive journalist John Pilger, to Martin Smith critiquing WikiLeaks.

It can appear problematic that the data analyzed in this research is of productive character (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:143). Yet the text productions of each respective discourse-carrier are responsive to one another and thereby involved in dialectic dynamic consisting of both discursive and social practice. Social practice is arguably lacking in this research, though James P. Gee argues that language-in-use, as the data in this research, is part of the social practice in CDA (Gee 2010:68).

To accommodate criticism of lacking social practice, a timeline of events surrounding WikiLeaks and the US serves as contextual overview of each party's socio-discursive practice (see Appendix). The timeline is constructed on the basis of secondary literature and news articles, proving the distribution of socio-discursive practice in public space.

A peculiar critique goes for attempts to collect data like the 'Pentagon Report' from 2008, on WikiLeaks as a cyber threat to the US (Strom 2010), which failed as 'Error code 404' occurs with the additional message of 'TOR server'[23] appears. This message frequently arises when pages have been purposely removed and the operator has no interest of it being visible to the public (Leigh, Harding 2011).

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[23] 'TOR' means "The Onion Router": a software developed by the US military intelligence during the Cold War, to protect its spies.

4   Cablegate: Aftermath and Actors

"This disclosure is about the truth."
- Julien Assange (Leigh, Harding 2011:134)

The case of 'Cablegate' is the largest published leak in history[24] and marks a critical point for events contributing to the debate on information freedom in the digital age. Cablegate consists of 251.287 embassy cables between the US government and 274 embassies around the world. The cables date back from December 1966 to February 2010, of which 16,652 are classified as secret (WikiLeaks 2011). The cables reveal US procedures of diplomacy and military communication, giving an insight to the level and form of democratic practices in US activities abroad and its utility of secrecy as a diplomatic strategy (Sifry 2011a:138).

Amongst WikiLeaks' disclosures, the United States' democratic face towards the international scene has been scarred far more than other nations'. Though Assange has made an explicit point of WikiLeaks not deliberately targeting the US, exposure strikes where the potential of secrets and whistleblowers are present (Leigh, Harding 2011:170). Subsequently, a nation consistently active in affairs across the globe generically leaves it potent for being target of unraveled secrets. As Max Frankel, former executive editor of New York Times, expresses: "The threat of massive leaks will persist so long as there are massive secrets." (Sifry 2011b:19)

4.1   www.WikiLeaks.org

"And the truth shall set you free"
- Julien Assange (WikiLeaks 2012b)

WikiLeaks is in many ways an outcome of virtual phenomena characterizing the information age, having no geographical location but exists in the virtual world, relying on the public's support and presence in cyberspace. WikiLeaks is a non-profit publishing organization, which enables whistleblowers to leak whatever information they contain and feel the urge to publish. As the above quote indicates, the overarching goal is to enable people to share information, leak or

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[24] For other leaks by WikiLeaks, see Appendix.

obtain less accessible information, which is usually about governments and powerful institutions across the globe, carrying strong connotation with *conspiracy* (WikiLeaks 2012a).

The philosophical motivation for running the website www.wikileaks.org is based on the idea that *uninformed people are unable to make informed decisions* (WikiLeaks 2012a). Based on this motivation, along with an observation of public media become less independent, the organization has since 2007 intended to contribute to a stronger sense of information freedom (WikiLeaks 2012a): "We have to come to the conclusion that fomenting a worldwide movement of mass leaking is the most cost effective political intervention." (Leigh, Harding 2011:47).

WikiLeaks' ability to publish anonymously is serviced by a protection system, which ironically was developed by US intelligence: "The Onion Router" was originally developed to protect the anonymity of spies in its military intelligence during the Cold War (Leigh, Harding 2011:53). The technological intelligence of the organization continuously works to ensure future anonymity, which ultimately enhances the already high level of *autonomy* (WikiLeaks 2012a).

The name 'Wiki' implies that basically anyone contributes to the publishing of information and anonymity, though this is not the case of WikiLeaks (Hood 2011:637, Beutler 2010). Research upon WikiLeaks is hard to distinguish from its founder, Julian Assange, who unquestionably is the driving force of the organization. Especially within the past year, several democratic states' interest in speech-impairing Assange's whistleblowing organization has taken a personal turn, with allegations of sexual impudence from Swedish authorities (Domscheit-Berg 2011:263). Making a clear distinction between WikiLeaks and Julian Assange is thus rather difficult, as he is the spokesperson of the organization[25], yet the distinction is important to Assange (Smith 2011).

4.1.1 A Literature Review of WikiLeaks

"If you're beginning to feel that getting hold of WikiLeaks content on the Internet is like trying to shovel smoke into a bucket, you're getting the big picture."
- Hal Berghel (Berghel 2012:72)

Literature upon WikiLeaks is characterized by capturing a phenomenon not yet written down in history, and though the opinions are many, the academic sources are sparse, which is why I will draw upon journalistic sources as well. There are agreement upon central concepts in the debate, such as transparency, secrecy, diplomacy, security, democracy and freedom, though there are varying opinions

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[25] Assange is both the author of two essays drawn upon in this outline of the organization, along with the personification of WikiLeaks in applied interviews.

upon what the ultimate goal of WikiLeaks is (Fenster 2012:769-770, Roberts 2012:122). To some analysts, '**radical transparency**' is the central motivation for WikiLeaks' activity, as a more knowledgeable population leads to better democratic societies (Leigh, Harding 2011:510, Hood 2011:635, Murray 2011:510, Sifry 2011b:19, Reppy 2012:8). Whereas others oppose this motivation (Roberts 2012:116) and argue that WikiLeaks is looking for **justice** by confronting governments with embarrassing information (Morozov 2011:7).

What WikiLeaks' motivation actually is will be further scrutinized in this research, what is of greater importance here is the debate WikiLeaks generates amongst scholars, politicians and journalists. Several of these draw comparisons to this generation's Pentagon Papers (Fenster 2012:766, Benkler 2011a:32, Bellia 2012:1448). While others, like Alasdair Roberts argues that such a comparison is out of touch with reality, as the scale of information published was far greater in Daniel Ellsberg's case, compared to the low-technological means of publishing (Roberts 2012:118, Levesque-Alam 2010). The question is whether this is at all a valid argument, as the scale of today's high-technological age seems beyond the measurable, as no one can overcome the amount of information available today (Leigh, Harding 2011:140). Whereas the leaks' content, focus and analysis, as Daniel Patrick Moynihan argues is of much greater importance, than amount of information leaked (Sifry 2011a:135, Roberts 2012:130).

Lawrence Lessig argues that radical transparency merely contributes to full-scale mistrust in the existing system (Lessig 2009:37), yet again opinions upon WikiLeaks' reflect bottom line perceptions of its motivation being of conspiracy-like or transparent character. Andrew Murray exquisitely questions whether the level of transparency WikiLeaks in most analysts' opinions are trying to promote, is at all lucrative for democratic societies (Murray 2011:510). The question draws attention to the perplexed nature of the 4th estate, as the excessive availability of raw information, through organizations like WikiLeaks, depend more and more on analysis hereof, which points to that the mass-media decides the focus. A dependency on the mass-media, which the 4th estate is known to have overcome (Benkler 2011b).

There seems to be broad consensus upon WikiLeaks having effect on journalism, only the character hereof remains contested (Leigh, Harding 2011:174, Reppy 2012:4). WikiLeaks is both challenging existing media by providing an alternative source of information, as well as contributes to extensive amounts of raw information, yet to be processed and conveyed to the public. Benkler describes this perplexity as the identity crisis, journalism is currently experiencing and advocates appreciation for the debate of what journalism is about in the age of information, no matter opinion of WikiLeaks' activity (Benkler 2011a:32-33).

Yet Assange does not hesitate to join the debate of journalism in the 21st Century's, where Assange's concept of 'scientific journalism' proves to be the guiding factor in choosing cooperating newspapers prior to the release of US cables (Fenster 2012:758, Leigh, Harding 2011:184). Coordinating the publication of the cables in an American daily with a French afternoon paper and a Spanish

morning paper, across time zones, proves the complex nature of publishing in the virtual sphere (Leigh, Harding 2011:170 and 198).

WikiLeaks has been criticized for fighting *secrecy* with secrecy due to its opaque organizational structure (Murray 2011:511, Roberts 2012, Foreman 2011:29, Fenster 2012, Sifry 2011a), especially former spokesman of WikiLeaks, Daniel Domscheit-Berg, has an insight in this and left the organization for the very same reason[26] (Domscheit-Berg 2011, Sifry 2011b:23, Leigh, Harding 2011:243). This may appear somewhat peculiar as it represents the global transparency movement (Sifry 2011a:85, Lessig 2009:37).

Whether WikiLeaks meets its own standards of decentralization and transparency is debated and overall there seems to be deviating logics surrounding WikiLeaks, whether it regards basic motivation for fighting secrecy or its organizational structure (Murray 2011:511). Murray continues that WikiLeaks is somewhat placing itself above the law, preventing a single state to control the activities of WikiLeaks, as the organization does not have one specific location, but can "…simply move its base of operation at any time in an attempt to avoid the direct control of any court or legal order." (Murray 2011:511).

The effectiveness of attempts to silence WikiLeaks are ambiguous, such as Joe Lieberman's act, resembling a reverse form of lobbyism, coercing private financial companies to cease corporation with WikiLeaks (Benkler 2011b:339, Leigh, Harding 2011:242, Berghel 2012:72). Few argue that political coercion is not companies' like Amazon's motivation for cutting ties with WikiLeaks, but is merely due to good business circumventing political activity (Berghel 2012:72, Roberts 2012:120).

In continuation of these privately owned means of operation on the Net, urgent concern is directed towards the nature of the Net's infrastructure (DeNardis 2012:725, Krotoski 2011:526, Benkler 2011b:312, Sifry 2011a:176, Reppy 2012:"). What the infrastructure of the Web allows can be seen as a predetermined form of architectonic censorship, where privately owned companies play as big a role, as legacy does in governing the flows of information (DeNardis 2012:733). This is a structural concern, which reaches beyond the measures of debates upon copyright, as a form of censorship (DeNardis 2012:727, Murray 2011:512).

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[26] Daniel Domscheit-Berg left WikiLeaks to open a similar website "OpenLeaks" on September 17th 2010, which to this date has had no leaks.

4.2 The United States of America

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or
prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of
speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably
to assemble, and to petition the government
for a redress of grievances."
- 1ˢᵗ Amendment (Anon. 1791)

The US, as a democratic actor, represents the institutional structures of conventional *democratic* governance, dating back to the US' 1ˢᵗ Amendment, protecting fundamental political rights such as freedom of expression and freedom of press. The US has a long line of experience in maneuvering in non-democratic surroundings. Yet the core principle of IR is that of national sovereignty (Breuilly 2008:410), which in present times is coupled with widespread *diplomacy* through dialogue, as a mean to achieve international agreements in a peaceful manner.

'The democratic peace'[27] none the least added honorable value to the US' code of conduct, in Bill Clinton's time as president (Baylis 2008:233). The transition to George Bush Junior's fear-loaded politics and back to a Democratic administration with Barack Obama, carry visible changes with them. Noticeably is Obama's initiative to enhance *transparent* governance and *accountability* (Emanuel, Bauer 2010). As a good example of democratic institutional structures, the main approaches to politics in the US, as in many other democracies, are split between realist and liberal convictions. Yet Obama is certain to face "state secrets"[28] and go through with his promise of more open government (Obama 2009a, Obama 2009c).

Despite internal disagreement in terms of information sharing[29], Obama is determined to let information sharing reach "beyond terrorism-related issues" (Brennan 2009). Caretaking national *security* in a fairly open democratic society, along with international interests, has for decades asked for secrecy and confidentiality as means for diplomacy, not the least in the wake of 9/11 (Baylis 2008:239). In a world nested in neoliberal structures, it is of no surprise that the US leans towards utilitarian logics, where one person's disadvantage is compromised for the sake of the majority of the people (Amstutz 2008:28). As a nation with a political culture of the fine line between liberty and security, the position on information freedom seems unmistakable (Obama 2009c):

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[27] 'The democratic Peace' refers to the idea of democratic states never having engaged in war with other democracies (Baylis 2008:233).
[28] "…a doctrine that allows the government to challenge legal cases involving secret programs." (Obama 2009c)
[29] The disagreement referred to is the controversy of information released by Obama in 2009, concerning the interrogation method water boarding (Obama 2009c).

> "I [Obama] think that the more freely information flows, the stronger the society becomes, because then citizens of countries around the world can hold their own governments accountable." (Obama 2009b)

4.2.1 The War on Information

The immediate responses from US officials were many and diverse, only they had one thing in common – no one could any longer deny the impact on the US' face internationally, as well as domestically (Morozov 2011:9). Secretary of state Hillary Clinton quickly declared a 'War on Information' and claimed the illegitimate nature of publishing Cablegate: "The United States strongly condemns the illegal disclosure of classified information," (Sifry 2011b:17), whereas Vice President Joe Biden took it a step further calling Assange a: "high-tech terrorist" (Berghel 2012:71). The disapproval of the leak was unmistakable from the US' part but without going into analytical depth of the responses, a brief introduction consists of three main aspects: a legal, financial and an ideological.

Commencing with the legal aspect, the whistleblower, Bradley Manning[30], may serve as Assange's predecessor in the US' legal system. According to scholars of law, the chances of having Assange convicted by the Espionage Act are spares, as the 1st Amendment protects the freedom of speech and freedom of press and it will take proof of Assange having illegally obtained confidential information (Fenster 2012:788, Bellia 2012:1483). Yet that is only the strictly legal aspect, which may not suffice in a political struggle over democratic freedom.

Another attempt to silence WikiLeaks has been to utilize the infrastructure of the Web by coercing financial companies, serving WikiLeaks to end their corporation and financially deplete the organization. Regardless of opinion, senator Joe Lieberman encouraged, what WikiLeaks has named 'the banking blockade' against the organization, which amongst scholars are perceived to be a questionable use of the Web's infrastructure (Krotoski 2011:526). Some call it political coercion, Assange calls it 'economic censorship' (Roberts 2012:121, Leigh, Harding 2011:242), whereas others call it 'bad business' to corporate with WikiLeaks (Roberts 2012:121, Berghel 2012:72). Regardless the truth, the list of quick responses from private companies in virtual space followed suit the unidentified attack on WikiLeaks' website experienced on November 30th 2010 (CNN).

December 1st 2010 *Amazon* ceased corporation with WikiLeaks, arguing the organization had violated its terms of service by distributing information illegally. December 2nd 2010 *EveryDNS*, managing WikiLeaks online domain name, adjourned services, followed by *PayPal* on December 3rd 2010. *MasterCard* followed PayPal's example on December 6th 2010 and *Visa Europe* on December 7th 2010 (Roberts 2012:120).

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[30] Bradley Manning is only allegedly linked to WikiLeaks, but no proof hereof has been put forward.

John Perry Barlow poignantly stated: "The first serious infowar is now engaged. The field of battle is WikiLeaks. You are the troops." (Fenster 2012:769). A viewpoint acted upon by the autonomous group 'Anonymous' on December 8th 2010. A group, which is unrelated to WikiLeaks but fights for transparency in a struggle against censorship, and put MasterCard and Visa Europe out of function for a few hours in 'Operation Avenge Assange' (Leigh, Harding 2011:207). The ideological response for what Yochai Benkler calls: "the integrated cross-system attack on WikiLeaks" is less explored (Benkler 2011b:330), which is why this research tends to fill in this gap. In all, a series of events, interlinking private businesses with politics, where trying to remain neutral is close to impossible in an interconnected world, where passivity is also a political stand.

4.3   Democratic Discrepancy Detected

Based on the floating signifiers in the above outline of each actor's position in the debate surrounding Cablegate, a democratic discrepancy has been detected and illustrated below (see figure 3 and 4). The floating signifiers in existing literature are utilized as analytical tools in constructing a research framework so analyzed subjects can be projected on to the theoretical framework for analysis (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:143). As concepts in focus are not directly derived from respective actors, the frameworks do not necessarily reflect reality. Approaching the theoretical framework from existing literature, on the other hand allows this research to be added to existing research on the subject (Jørgensen, Phillips 2002:141).

Constructing analytical frameworks prior to carrying out the research naturally increases potential of analytical bias, but an open mind is maintained to continuously look for additional floating signifiers.

Figure 3: Floating Signifiers of WikiLeaks' Discourse

Figure 4: Floating Signifiers of the US Discourse

5   Two Views on Information Freedom

After having detected the democratic discrepancy, this chapter will carry out the actual analysis, commencing with the discourse of WikiLeaks, followed by the US' discourse. Each section is split into relevant subsections, based on the logic of respective discourses. Thirdly a cross-unit analysis describes the democratic discrepancy between the actors' discourses concerning information freedom. Finally a section revisiting positive and negative freedoms reveals, to what extent Isaiah Berlin's theory of democratic freedom applies to the information age.

5.1   WikiLeaks: A Publishing Organization's Discourse

> *"It is the right to know that draws forth the right to speak."*
> -Julien Assange (Obrist 2011b)

Contrary to allegations of being political activists in cyber-space[31] (Kroft 2011), WikiLeaks' spokesperson, Julien Assange, emphasizes the point that WikiLeaks is a publishing organization, along with all other publishers on the global stage (Smith 2011). WikiLeaks is unique in the sense that it has no option to track its sources[32], unlike other publishers, leading the way to a high level of self-ownership for whistleblowers, with a level of autonomy beyond democratic measures (Reppy 2012:5).

Yet Assange stresses that WikiLeaks' technological infrastructure is legal and that it provides such a high level of anonymity that not even sources asking questions at the organization's virtual helpdesk, are untraceable (Pilger n.d., Smith 2011). Because: "…the best way to keep a secret is to never have it." (Smith 2011). The statement points to the dilemma between anonymity and autonomy (Pilger n.d.), as a high level of anonymity enables a similarly high level of positive freedom and confidence when leaking confidential information.

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[31] An allegation put forward by Steve Kroft.
[32] The reliability of WikiLeaks' sources is continuously questioned and is rather tricky to uncover for a research within political science, as the answer is of very technical sort. It can be worthwhile to look at responses from victims of its whistleblowing activity, where in terms of for example 'Cablegate', the US does not outright deny the cables existence. But it is important to keep in mind that the way WikiLeaks advocates itself, as carrier of truth, does not automatically verify a self-established authority to establish what is true and what is not.

Critical questioning, along with observation and reflection, appear to be an inherent course of reason in the organization. In fact to such an extent that Assange does not confide to a specific political position (Obrist 2011a), as he declares all political theories to be bankrupt: "…all existing political theories are bankrupt, because you cannot build a meaningful theory without knowledge of the world that you're building the theory about." (Obrist 2011a). Despite the bankruptcy of political theories, Assange does not neglect having ties with libertarianism, coupled with importance of understanding (Obrist 2011b). The only inter-textual reference, to that of Ellsberg's Pentagon Papers (Obrist 2011b), reveals that Assange distinguishes himself from conventional methods of ideological arguments, as he claims to confide to real life experiences, rather than reproduced forms of argumentation (Goodman 2011).

5.1.1 Logics of Motivation and the Road to a Just Community

"We are missing one of the pillars of history."
-Julien Assange (Obrist 2011a)

Historicism plays a significant role in WikiLeaks' inherent motivation for publishing. Assange derives his logic from three aspects of history, of which the latter is of importance to the kind of information freedom, WikiLeaks advocates.[33] That is the kind of information that hegemonic actors actively attempt to prevent from entering the "historical record" or "intellectual record", as Assange calls it (Obrist 2011a). This position on historicism challenges the current order of discourses, as WikiLeaks' fight for the positive freedom to know, by releasing raw material, rather than customizing history to fit a national narrative (Obrist 2011a).

WikiLeaks' aspiration for pure knowledge, in its attempt to encapsulate all knowledge (Obrist 2011a), resonates an information utopia. "There's a universe of information, and we can imagine a sort of Platonic ideal in which we have an infinite horizon of information." (Obrist 2011a). WikiLeaks' information ontology is of realist character, believing in an observable complete set of information, whereas a contrasting relativist position on information ontology acknowledges the impossibility of a total collection of information, as information is shaped in both ends of the communicative event.

WikiLeaks' idea of a complete set of information comes to mind as a notion of totality, be it knowledge, information or freedom, which according to Berlin is pure illusion, as one will always be slave of one's internal ideas (Berlin 1969:10). This sense of totality can be interpreted as an expression of Assange's realist approach, but when it is coupled with his advocacy for a high level of positive freedom, freedom reaches an unrealistic magnitude. Hypothetically if one were able to comprehend a total universe of information, it does not make the task assessing what serves the public good any easier, as the public good becomes an

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[33] The first being knowledge and the second the kind of knowledge that is passed on by generations (Obrist 2011a).

increasingly difficult entity to assess, with its daily expansion in both scale and detail.[34]

For Assange, the right to know comes before the right to speak (Goodman 2011): "What does it mean to have the right to speak if you're on the moon and there's no one around?" (Goodman 2011). Of course the choice of rhetoric brings matter to a head, but if what is being communicated looses meaning in society, through what Castells call 'normalization of messages'[35] or what Ino Rossi calls 'the distancing effect of global communication'[36], the allegory is not irrelevant (Rossi 2007:52). In line with the hyper-globalist position, Assange turns the *space of places* into a *space of public assembly*, where messages need to spread through civil engagement, rather than disappear in the masses of information. Yet this poses another paradox, as the amount of raw material put forward by organizations like WikiLeaks only increase the amount of information to navigate through. One may question the value of an overload of information if it is impossible to process but this does not seem to concern Assange.

Despite Assange's sophisticated approach on TV, quite a bit of arguments lead to the message of reform. This attitude resonates in the material published by WikiLeaks, which does not contribute to confidence in the democratic state. It is no secret that libertarianisms' anti-authoritarian traits live on in Assange's argumentation. The "democratic shift" Assange envisions is characterized by a form of intellectual evolution, resonating elitism's comeback after history's countless attempts of egalitarianism (Goodman 2011). Continuous wording such as: "intellectuals", "intellectual debate", "intellectual scaffold" or "intellectual record", witnesses of a society consisting of "intellectual robustness" (Obrist 2011a, Obrist 2011b, Goodman 2011), almost resonating technocratic or meritocratic, rather than democratic, conditions.[37]

A high level of confidence prevails just beneath the surface of Assange's line of thought, as a confident sense of self is what leads to a public sphere strong enough to hold governments accountable (Obrist 2011a). In between the lines, Assange suggests the hypothesis that the more freedom one has, the stronger sense of self and the less likely are people to buy into existing ideas, upheld by national narratives. By engaging in intelligent behavior people can, according to Assange, confidently rely on humans' sense of morals and: "…when people of high moral character are pressured in a way that is illegitimate, they become stronger and not weaker." (Goodman 2011).

What Assange suggests here is that the moral character of people reaches a higher level in line with a stronger sense of self, ultimately inquiring that strong morals derive from a high level of positive freedom. An argument that appeals to Locke's peaceful state of human nature and the positive sense of freedom that proactively prevents harming other people, which stands in contrast to Berlin's

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[34] For example did the American public's attitude towards WikiLeaks decrease, the more the organization released, from 42% in August 2010 till 29% in December same year (Roberts 2012:127-128).

[35] Castells defines this characteristic 'the normalization of messages', as no differentiation between messages' importance occur, the way sensations do in real life, where our nervous systems clearly sense the importance of when to be alert and when not to (Castells 2010:365).

[36] Meaning that the virtual world does not place cultural customs, geographical position or social meanings to the act of communicating, any closer (Rossi 2007:51).

[37] Assange makes a point of being intellectually distinguished from leftist liberation movements of the 1970'ies (Obrist 2011a).

advocacy of negative freedom for a desirable democratic society (Frisch 1998:2). Whereas positive freedom puts authority in people's own hands, the question is whether WikiLeaks' appeal to positive freedom suits the decentralized network society better than negative freedom, which attempts to curb authority rather than enforcing it (McBride 1990:298).

WikiLeaks' motivation for strengthening the link between freedom and the sense of self, reflects on citizens' participation in society: "…it's necessary to have an understanding that one is either a participant in history or a victim of it…" (Obrist 2011b). Assange is quite clear on how to achieve what in his opinion is a higher quality of society: "the goal is justice, the method is transparency. It's important not to confuse the goal and the method." (Pilger n.d.). Assange points to the simplicity of the word 'transparency', which he is not particularly fond of (Obrist 2011b), but is a digestible word for complex layers of reaching justice, which might explain why it has mistakenly been adopted as the motivation in existing literature (Leigh, Harding 2011:510, Hood 2011:635, Murray 2011:510, Sifry 2011b:19).

5.1.2 Logics of Self-Censorship and Publication Criteria

"Publish or Perish."[38]

-Julien Assange (Obrist 2011b)

WikiLeaks self-censors in the form of publication criteria, of which the first is (Goodman 2011, Obrist 2011b, Pilger n.d.): "We say that we will accept and publish any material that is of diplomatic, political, ethical, or historical significance" (Obrist 2011b). The second publication criteria is that of: "harm-minimization process", which intends to: "…either delay publication or remove small parts of a publication for a strictly limited period of time, or until a harmful situation is resolved." (Obrist 2011b)[39].

Although WikiLeaks can proudly claim that the public supports it, the organization is not representing democratic citizens across the globe. *Public support* is obviously not equivalent to *public representativeness*, as support in the digital age may become victim of the distancing effect of globalization, where all leaks may come from one source. On the contrary the support of WikiLeaks reflects a strong sense of accountability, as the organization would cease to exist as soon as the public decides not to support it (Smith 2011). But the size and character of the public behind WikiLeaks' is impossible to assess due to WikiLeaks' organizational opacity.

Regardless of representativeness, the leaks put forward by WikiLeaks poses a paradox between positive and negative freedom, between some people's freedom from exposure and other's freedom to know. As much as positive freedom, according to Berlin, is a universal human value it is through political management

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[38] Assange's answer when asked to write a mathematical formula for WikiLeaks.
[39] The question is if WikiLeaks is more just or only contributing to injustice, as WikiLeaks first of all is not democratically elected and secondly because it is exactly the procedure of secrecy, that makes WikiLeaks critical towards the US, as an illegitimate authority (Fenster 2012:769-770).

of negative freedom that society persists (McBride 1990:298, Frisch 1998:2). Following this line of thought through in the age of information, seems at points impossible as the proximity in time and space, of positive and negative freedom, bring along an almost instant response that is hard to be adequately met by political ambitions of governing the Internet. The intensity between one person's positive freedom, enhances another person's negative freedom, and the tendency is increasing the more people are connected to the Web.

Despite what one would expect from someone who was awarded "the Index on Censorship Award for fighting against censorship" (Obrist 2011a), Assange expresses: "…we should always see censorship, actually, as a very positive sign…" (Goodman 2011). Censorship, as a contribution to a healthy society, is loaded with coupling positive and negative freedoms, by recognizing that negative freedom is necessary to prevent society from spiraling into anarchy.

It is unclear what form a healthy censorship takes, in Assange opinion, except that the value prioritization is clearly a political censorship above fiscal censorship (Goodman 2011, Obrist 2011a). The question is if WikiLeaks' publication criteria, as a way to reach a more just society, is any better than a democratic form of censorship, as censorship in the end relies on human's relative assessment of what is in the public's interest (Bellia 2012:1095-1096).

Both the idea, the amount and quality of raw material that is accessible in the information age, unquestionably points to a transformation of journalism[40] (Benkler 2011a:33, Pilger n.d.). In line with achieving a society of higher liberal quality, WikiLeaks' vision for the media is one of 'scientific journalism' (Pilger n.d.).[41] New standards are necessary (Pilger n.d.), according to Assange, as media are caught in patterns of 'fiscal' or 'privatized censorship' where an overload of self-censorship occurs due to interests, that keeps the media on good terms with powerful corporations or institutions (Obrist 2011b, Pilger n.d., Smith 2011).

The view of existing media's bias, has motivated WikiLeaks to spark a wave of 'citizen journalism'[42] (Pilger n.d.), where the accessibility to original sources encourage citizens' positive freedom to commit themselves, to take an intelligent and self-evoked stand, free from media's interpretation. This strategy is a prime example of how the hyper-global attitude of WikiLeaks turns what Jan N. Piertese calls hyper-connectivity (Piertese 2012), between positive and negative freedom's intense dynamic, into an advantage for public participation. Assange's appeal to a more intellectual form of public awareness and debate, points to Popper's opinion

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[40] Leigh and Harding argue that the amount of information leaked by WikiLeaks would not have been possible before the information age: "No human diplomats would have attempted to write so much down before the coming of the digital age: if written down, no human spy would have been able to purloin copies of that much paper without using a lorry, and no human mind would have been able subsequently to analyze it without spending half a lifetime at the task." (Leigh, Harding 2011:140).

[41] Assange does not make any clear distinction between 'knowledge' and 'information', which is problematic when concerned wit knowledge production and reporting. I argue that the distinction is drawn between production of 'scientific knowledge' (as revealed in for example 'Climategate', where scientists conspired to keep research from the public eye), and 'informative knowledge' produced by reporting incidences of observations in the world (Iraqi or Afghan War Logs). Assange's vision with WikiLeaks and 'scientific journalism' seems to be a nested version of both scientific and informative knowledge.

[42] 'Citizen journalism' refers to the public form of journalism in virtue of blogs, tweets and posts, characteristic for the 4th Estate.

of freedom being more important than equality[43] (Bosetti 1997:5), but also points to something resembling elitist conditions.

Contrary to what critics of WikiLeaks argue, the publication criteria is neither to publish unpopular material (Berghel 2012:71), nor are publications directed towards the US or democratic societies in particular. But it is a fact that leaks more often regard democratic societies and not authoritarian regimes like China and Iran, who have more advanced systems to prevent whistleblowing (Pilger n.d.). Democratic states are, according to Assange, less advanced in this regard and therefore more likely to become victims of leaks. Which is not surprising when coupled with a political culture where freedom of speech is fundamental and used to free speech, thus more prone to whistleblowing.

> "As for where one draws the line in terms of our publishing, well, […] Whenever a person does something, one can recast it into moral form and ask: Is it right? Instead, perhaps, we can cast it the other way: What right does the state have to use coercive force to prevent people from communicating knowledge? […] As for where we draw the line, the postal system does not draw the line—the rights of people to send knowledge through the postal system is absolute." (Obrist 2011b)

Here Assange distinguishes between the role of the state and the role of a publishing organization. Assange's reasoning becomes incoherent when his advocacy for positive freedom above negative freedom, pair with projecting individual's moral responsibility onto the state, as the above quotes. The anti-authoritarian traits are unmistakable and pose a clear example of how Assange reasons through the dialectic between the Web and the Self, where the state basically is obstructing connectedness and free flow of information. This view on the nation-state may cross as aggressive but seen through the lens of Castells' networking logics, it may merely emphasize the role of the state as facilitator of citizens' freedom. Which stands in contrast to WikiLeaks' view of current democratic states, which will be elaborated in the following section.

5.1.3 Logics of Conspiracy and WikiLeaks' Role in Fiscal States

> *"One man's collaboration is another man's conspiracy."*
> -Julien Assange (Smith 2011)

The concept of conspiracy refers to "political groupings" (Smith 2011), according to its original meaning[44] and not the kind of conspiracy usually associated with

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[43] Referring to that if people are not free to converse about the structures that set the stage for their livelihood, then what is the value of equality, if all are equally suppressed (Bosetti 1997).

[44] Assange expresses: "One has to be careful with this word that I use, "conspiracy," and to differentiate it from the sort of conspiracy talk that you hear about 9/11. The notion of conspiracy is quite ancient and goes back to Lord Halifax, who speaks about political groupings in general as a type of conspiracy." (Smith 2011).

leftists' critique of society (Assange 2006:1). WikiLeaks derives its logic of conspiracy from the idea that the world consists of two major systems, one being neoliberal financial markets, the other an elitist set of connections conserving each other's power through what Assange calls: "patronage networks" (Obrist 2011b). To begin with this view of the political world does not reflect faith in democratic states protecting citizens' rights in return for submission, as suggested by Berlin and Popper (Berlin 1969, Popper 1966). Rather the utilitarian logics on which the international financial market is build, has resulted in power relations guided by financial interests.

> "The basic power relationships of the United States and other Western countries are described by formal fiscal relationships, for example one organization has a contract with another organization, or it has a bank account, or is engaged in a hedge." (Obrist 2011a)

These 'hedges' are what characterize democratic states, which Assange argues is far from a democratic state's role, which is that of serving the people and not controlling it, in line with Berlin's thoughts (McBride 1990:302). These networks have coercive powers, which according to Assange, has gathered forces in a Banking Blockade against WikiLeaks, what Benkler calls a 'multi attack' on WikiLeaks, by coercing corporations working with or serving WikiLeaks to cease interaction with the publishing organization (Benkler 2011b:330-331). Regardless of name it has proved efficient through utilizing the infrastructure of the Web to stop donations for WikiLeaks.

A point that illuminates the illusion of the free Internet, and an aspect of the Web, WikiLeaks has not been able to circumvent with its technological skill. Benkler on the contrary, argues that the blockade has proven inefficient, as if the purpose was to block access to cables, to minimize the attention directed towards them or to prevent further releases, it has failed to do any of that. (Benkler 2011a:351). The fact that financial deprivation has not been enough to silence the organization, witness of the immeasurable forces behind value-based motivations.

Altogether the result is a high level of powerful actors limiting the public's positive freedom, in a way that is invisible to the naked eye. Powers of this fiscal nature are, according to Assange, for example limiting people's right to make informed decisions, by actively preventing information from entering the intellectual record (Obrist 2011a).

The argument brings Popper's course of reasoning to mind when questioning what the difference between democratic and authoritarian censorship is, along with greater importance of "how society is ruled", rather than "who rules" (Bosetti 1997:71). Assange's 'theory of change' derives from this logic and can be outlined as follows: "…it actually doesn't really matter whether the leader is removed or not. What matters is that the power structure of the government change." (Obrist 2011a). Due to this process of slow but steady corruption of minds, through increasingly invisible limitation of freedom, Assange continues that it is even more important with public regulating mechanisms, like critical media who serves as the public's ambassadors to hold governments accountable:

> "We don't say that the State Department should have no secrets. That's not what we're saying. Rather, we say that […] there's not a proper mechanism for internal accountability and external accountability, they must have a conduit to get that out to the public. And we are the conduit." (Kroft 2011)

Transparency for accountability is according to WikiLeaks' logic, the method to reach a just society, as mentioned earlier. According to Assange, there are two ways for governments to be transparent; one is to minimize unjust action. The other is to continue unjust action without utilizing technology that reveals it (Smith 2011). As the technological development suggests, the latter would put democratic governments off in terms of efficient organization and makes them unable to follow the pace of the international market.

As a hyper-globalist, it is of no surprise that Assange suggests the former. Although transparency does not seem to be deliberately radical, as claimed in existing literature (Leigh, Harding 2011:510, Hood 2011:635, Murray 2011:510, Sifry 2011b:19). "What we want is transparent government, not transparent people." (Kroft 2011). Perhaps the reason that 'radical transparency' is a floating signifier within existing literature, is not only due to WikiLeaks' advocacy of transparency but more so its utility of technological means in its technical application of transparency (Leigh, Harding 2011:140). Means that magnify transparency to an unconventional scale of openness, as Christopher Hood points out to be the reason why WikiLeaks' transparency clashes with the transparency of the US Freedom of Information Act (Hood 2011:635).

Deriving from this conspiracy logic, Assange arguably appeals to unravel secret communication, not to reveal hypocrisy in itself, as he would prefer to be without it, but more importantly to strengthen officials' sense of self, as the release of Cablegate unquestionably increased the US' self-awareness. This points to a discourse with a point of departure in Castells' dialectic between the Web and the self. Such an analysis is to be viewed on the background of Assange's idea of a moral motivation rather than financial interests, witnessing of value-based motivation rather than interest-based, in line with Chandler's observation of motivational shifts in the 21st Century.

Even though conspiracy is at the very origin of intellectual derivation in WikiLeaks' logic, the organization does not neglect the constructive function of a legal system.[45] However acknowledging the importance of a legal system does exclude to question the quality of it and how it is exercised by democratic states, which is exactly what WikiLeaks does in rhetoric and practice.[46] Yet Assange is preoccupied with what he calls: "creative legal methods" (Kroft 2011), arguing that: "…it's not that the U.S. justice system brings justice, it's not that the U.S.

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[45] Assange follows the legal procedures in regard to his prosecution in Sweden, which proves his acknowledgement of the legal system. The only exception is his recent application for political asylum at the Ecuadorian Embassy June 19th 2012 (Stringer 2012). On the other hand, the legal exceptions made in the case from the Swedish authorities, refusing to question Assange in the UK, also deviates from normal extradition procedures in the EU (Ratner 2012).
[46] 'Practice' refers to the social practice of WikiLeaks maneuvering within legal system's borders in the allegations against Assange.

justice system is always unjust, but you have to bring justice to the U.S. justice system" (Pilger n.d.). Conspiracy in WikiLeaks' terms may not regard authorities like the US' government, but the logic of conspiracy reveals that the discontent is directed towards people engaged in fiscal relationships, which according to WikiLeaks, happens to center around governments like the one of the US.

5.2 The US: A Democratic Government's Discourse

"We feel strongly that principles like information freedom aren't just good policy, not just somehow connected to our national values, but they are universal and they're also good for business."
- Hillary Clinton (Clinton 2010)

Freedom of information is a fundamental principle regardless of who holds the oval office in the White House. The long democratic tradition is obvious throughout both of Clinton's speeches, where the national narrative plays a significant role, as both speeches commence with an outline of the nation's course in history (Clinton 2011, Clinton 2010). The diligent use of inter-discursive references consist of the US' founding values, Roosevelt's speech on "Four Freedoms"[47] and incidences relating to the Iron Curtain (Clinton 2010). This is not of surprise to a nation with strong ties to a history and national narrative that has put the US at the lead of democratic nations for decades. But the importance of the historical narrative may change, upon entering a post-national era, where contents of historical events may be the same, but the value attached to it may change with the logic of the network society.

Clinton addresses the digital age seemingly optimistic: "Instead of division, it stands for connection" (Clinton 2010), marking a transition from the 20th to the 21st century. Yet again the historical paradigm is arguably preventing the paradigm shift needed, to deal with the challenges of the information age. Despite attempts to adapt to the relatively free flow of information, the US administration sticks to a historical mindset, when referring to: "a new information curtain" (Clinton 2010), dating back to the Cold War's Iron Curtain. The difference is that the nature of the 'Iron Curtain' derived from ideological confrontations, whereas today's clashes derive from increased connectivity.[48]

Despite ideological rhetoric, it is clear that the underlying premise of the US' course of reason upon the good life, has strong ties with a wealthy financial situation (Clinton 2010, Clinton 2011). Besides being an ongoing topic throughout

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[47] January 6th 1941 Franklin D. Roosevelt held a speech about the "Four Freedoms", including freedom of speech and expression.
[48] Slavoj Zizek believes the function of ideology is distinct in the 21st Century as people act according to other rationalities and is not deliberately ideological (Goodman 2011).

both speeches, it is apparent in the neoliberal choice of words, using "gain" instead of "achieve" which would be suiting for obtaining political goals rather than financial (Clinton 2011). Likewise "interest" is used instead of "value" (Clinton 2010), as well as: "…for our shared progress and prosperity", which clearly resembles progress with financial affluence (Clinton 2011). Obviously there is no need to address basic political rights such as freedom, if these are already in place. The question is if this is in need of continuous reevaluation to maintain democracy as a desirable form of rule.

5.2.1 Freedom to Connect

> *"The spread of information networks is forming*
> *a new nervous system for our planet."*
> - Hillary Clinton (Clinton 2010)

The freedom to connect is essential to Clinton, and resonates the 1st Amendment: "…the freedom of assembly, only in cyberspace." (Clinton 2011). Yet with the nature of cyberspace being: "…the world's town square, classroom, marketplace, coffeehouse, and nightclub", Clinton's view upon freedom in a digitalized world advocates negative freedom and justifies the state's interference in organizing virtual space's dispersed form of interaction. (Clinton 2011). Without adequate means to govern virtual space, it is hard to create policies that embrace the Internet's magnitude, which by far exceeds national boundaries.

The argument is that information transforms and therefore must be controlled (Fenster 2012:756), which is an interesting logic, which supports the argument of the US' incapability to transform its mindset to match the logic of the network society. As transformation constantly happens in the interactive space online, there is clearly a gap between the US logic of preventing such change within the reflexivity between individuals and the virtual world. This is a clear example of when the structure-agent dialectic clashes with the Web-self dialectic belonging to the information age.

Maintaining this analytical lens the US course of reason contrasts with the relatively autonomous premise of the Internet[49], when the US considers itself responsible for spreading the freedom to connect, merely because it is the birthplace of the Internet: "The United States is committed to devoting the diplomatic, economic, and technological resources necessary to advance these freedoms." (Clinton 2010). As transformation in the Web happens through flows, and not deliberate centralized action, the US' discourse resonates a structure-agent dialectic, as opposed to the self's reflexivity in the Web (Castells 2010:45).

Furthermore the legitimacy of this historical form of responsibility to protect can be questioned, first of all because it carries hegemonic traits, when considering the fact that democratic representativeness ceases where borders of

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[49] 'Relatively autonomous' refers to that the Internet is free till the extent its infrastructure determines.

democratic states do, which points to the fine line between a state's responsibility to protect and coercion. Secondly, because it neglects the importance of cyber space's counter-culture and its influence on the development of the Internet, as well as its influence on the network society's logic (Castells 2010:49).

With the level of connectivity, the encounters between where one person's freedom begins, and another person's freedom ends, have increased. Along with hyper-connectivity, or connectivity in hyperspace as Castells puts it (Castells 2010:459): "…new targets for censorship" arise, where Clinton addresses citizens' self-censorship: "…what we say has consequences." (Clinton 2011). The challenge of governing information freedom in a digital age, brings the question of the demarcation between privacy and anonymity to mind, as anonymity both enables: "…theft of intellectual property," but also enables people to exercise untraceable freedom of expression (Clinton 2010).

Clinton clearly appeals to citizens' self-regulating mechanism of how to utilize the Internet, coupled with democratic states' responsibility to protect. Again the fine line between coercion and governance is a fine art, as securitizing a constructive utility of the Internet at points compromise privacy, as in the case of Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement.[50]

Clinton's analysis of asymmetrical access to information in global society as cause of conflict is reasonable (Clinton 2010). Only Clinton's argument that a united world should have: "…access to the same set of facts and opinions" points to the question of what this information consists of (Clinton 2010). Coupled with the strong sentiment of historical narratives in the US' discourse, the question of the information referred to becomes a point of criticism. In a multicultural world information's value is context dependent, whereas interpretation of information from innumerous actors' point of view, adds to the diverse landscape of information. Transformation of messages is an inevitable consequence of increased interconnectedness between diverse people's realities. As Clinton argued earlier, information is likely to change and can therefore not be seen as static and factual as the above quote indicates.

5.2.2 Web 2.0: A Double-Edged Sword

> *"The freedom of expression may be the most obvious freedom to face*
> *challenges with the spread of new technologies…"*
> -Hillary Clinton (Clinton 2010)

Hillary Clinton sees the Internet as a double-edged sword carrying just as much potential for destruction as for construction: "…amid this unprecedented surge in connectivity, we must also recognize that these technologies are not an unmitigated blessing." (Clinton 2010). Clinton continuously mentions the

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[50] 'ACTA' is an international trade agreement, which aims to enforce copyright and counterfeited goods, to an extent that questions the quality of information freedom online.

Internet's dual potential, which on one hand demands protection of citizens' democratic freedoms, on the other hand, it takes security measures into account, also if it implies democratic censorship, as: "… free expression has its limits." (Clinton 2010).

The need for managing information freedom goes for both citizens and governments in an appeal to both positive freedom, as a self-regulating mechanism, although the advocacy is strongest in terms of negative freedom, which allows state interference. Clinton's message echoes the risk of excessive statism, as Popper points out to be a threat for undermining people's democratic freedoms (Bosetti 1997:72-73). And even though the challenges of the 21st Century is not yet captured by what US officials has named "statecraft" (Clinton 2010), or met by policies to protect in the virtual sphere, Clinton points to the importance of not letting the frustration result in governments' abuse of power (Clinton 2010).

The challenge of governing the Internet and regulating information freedom partially arise from the Internet's inherent paradox (DeNardis 2012, Benkler 2011b, Reppy 2012). On one hand, its infrastructure is shaped along the lines of a neoliberal mindset, where the liberal aspect becomes greater than what can be contained in neoliberal government policies, as in the case of the US (Benkler 2011b:396-397). On the other hand, the Internet is already predetermining forms of censorship due to its infrastructure, which in principle contradicts a liberal mindset (DeNardis 2012:725). The irony is enhanced when viewed on the backdrop of the US being the government who initiated the Web's construction in the first place.

As mentioned in the introduction to the US, secrecy is seen as a diplomatic method, serving the public interests of the country (Page, Spence 2011:234). According to the US, its governments work would be impossible without utilizing confidentiality (Clinton 2011). Only this entails questioning whether the US government is doing the greater good for its domestic population or for the world's population, pointing to another gap in the transition to the Web-self dialectic. The question of how to couple secrecy with openness, as "…the internet's greatest attribute" (Clinton 2011), is clearly one of the greatest challenges for the democratic state to function in the networked age (Price 2008). It is of no surprise that Clinton draws upon liberty coupled with security, as the answer to nest transparency and confidentiality (Clinton 2011), only she points to the coexistence of the two, despite the fact that they are often perceived as opponents:

> "Without security, liberty is fragile. Without liberty, security is oppressive. The challenge is finding the proper measure: enough security to enable our freedoms, but not so much or so little as to endanger them." (Clinton 2011)

Initiatives for cyber-security are taken both internationally in terms of "Europe's Convention on Cybercrime", but also domestically, where Clinton has set up an office for foreign policy in cyberspace to deal with cyber-threats

(Clinton 2011, Clinton 2010). In all the US discourse seems to resonate an acknowledgement of the interdependent current world order, being one of transparency and accountability (Krotoski 2011:526), which requires global visions of what Internet governance should look like, whereas Clinton expresses her vision: "…free, secure and reliable." (Clinton 2010). The content of these three words resonate above all the advocacy for the public's negative freedom, in line with what you would expect from representatives of a nation-state.

In all Clinton appears to have a coupled approach to technological globalization, consisting of both the hyper-globalist idea of its great advantages paired with its downside. Which is a characteristic so inherent to globalization's reflexivity between opposites. Underneath the politically correct words of enhancing global development, Clinton emphasizes the pessimistic approach to globalization, which arguably brings forward an insecurity that is answered by the state's deployment of negative freedom to transform the Internet's dangers into a lucrative virtuality for both states and citizens. Appealing to virtual dangers is a plausible line of thought that ultimately underlines citizens' need for security from the state, supporting the argument of a mindset derived from the structure-agent dialectic.

Lastly, Clinton points to the fact that information has never been freer than it is today, and how information networks enable people to acquire new knowledge, get new facts, and thereby hold governments accountable (Clinton 2010). The question is if the degree of freedom is proportionate to the amount of existing information. Meaning that just because we can access more information than previously, it is not equivalent to being freer, as there has never been produced more information as of today. So because the world is flooded with an information-overload, the accessibility is not generically proportionate. This scenario describes a part of the discrepancy detected between the US and WikiLeaks, which will be elaborated on in the following section.

5.3 Democratic Discrepancy Described

> *"…our founding values are those of the U.S. revolution."*
> -Julien Assange (Kroft 2011)

When cross-analyzing the material from respectively the US and WikiLeaks, the first thing that comes to mind is the similar use of words, only the content and value loading differ. Despite both actors being of democratic nature, their distinct roles in society reflect in the contrasting discourses (Davis, Meckel 2012:5). To WikiLeaks the goal is justice, whereas the method is transparency and the premise is freedom through the right to know. In terms of the US, the goal is the state's responsibility to protect, through diplomacy, of which secrecy is a part, whereas the method is freedom coupled with security and a financial premise. These are obviously two separate lines of thought, representing two different ideas, though both advocate the value of information freedom.

It is of no surprise that the discourse of WikiLeaks mainly centers to the left when projected on the theoretical framework, where the sense of self is directly derived from freedom. The organization's publication criteria witness of a self-ascribed responsibility to inform the public, where its sources' leaks determine the content of published information put forward. Whereas the US' discourse centers to the right, and on the role of the nation-state's responsibility to protect through a legal system. Obviously WikiLeaks is not in the position of nation-states, having to maintain diplomatic ties across the world, which is a position leaving room for a purist idea of information freedom.

These distinct roles of WikiLeaks and the US are important to stress, as it is a primary variable distinguishing the two democratic actors' discourse, though their roles are similar in the sense of serving the democratic public. What is even more important is that the distinct functions of the two ideally should not exclude each other in a coherent democratic society, which points to the missing link between democracy and globalization. Both actors contribute to the democratic debate, which in the end contributes to maintain the quality of democracy through a mutually constitutive process between citizens and states. Exactly because of the transformation from structure-agent dialectics to one of the Web and the self, the US arguably acts to reinstate its authority jeopardized by a Web-organization as WikiLeaks.

WikiLeaks is outright critical of the US, but adopting the lens of the information age, this Web-self dialectic resonates in WikiLeaks' discourse, as its societal responsibility centers on the individual's positive freedom. Adopting Castells' premise of the network society, as opposed to the state centered view, WikiLeaks' mindset arguably values the individual's right to know above the achievement of putting the US politically checkmate. Releasing Cablegate may not be to target the US as such, but simply to serve the link between the self (the whistleblower) and the Web (the network society, of which WikiLeaks is a part of).

These differing premises of perception, surrounding the case of Cablegate, reflect on visions of future societies' information freedom. The US depicts peaceful coexistence to be actively pursued, reflecting a Hobbesian perception of human's naturally violent state. Whereas WikiLeaks, in line with Locke's idea of a naturally peaceful state appeals to intelligent behavior that arguably avoids violence. Put in the perspective of the network society, virtual violence is an increasing problem that points to the distancing effect of globalization (Manning 2000). It is an aspect of the information age that arguably demands even higher forms of morals than the pre-virtual world, where physical violence was closely linked between perpetrator and victim.

WikiLeaks' utility of the ICT clearly reflects a hyper-globalist position on the possibilities that technological globalization brings along, whereas the US balances on a double-edged sword between skepticism and optimism upon the Web 2.0, in an attempt to couple liberty and security. The two actors have a similar value attached to the power of information, but differ on information's role in society, as WikiLeaks takes a realist position on information ontology, where: "…all information that is true has value…" to the historical record (Pilger

n.d.). On the contrary the US confides to a relativist position, where perception can be managed and information can be shaped according to what serves the public interest. Determining the content of the public's interest, is guided by the US' utilitarian logics, where the financial aspect serves as the premise. The question is if the struggle of the order of discourses reflects an underlying transition from interest-based to value-based ideologies, put forward by Chandler (Chandler 2007). What concerns WikiLeaks, which has no financial gain on the matter of publishing information, the prime force is arguably based on the value of accessing an uncensored historical record, where individuals can make informed decisions, in order to build a robust intellectual civilization.

The US emphasizes equality along with democracy, which is something Assange avoids unless directly confronted with it. WikiLeaks' position on democracy is unclear and hardly touched upon in the interviews. Yet Assange's answer to political position somewhat answers the questionable position on democracy, being that of the bankruptcy of all political theories. The fact that no Interviewer thought to ask WikiLeaks' position on democracy is perhaps a good example of how easily citizens of democratic states take certain ideas for granted. Nonetheless does the content of the ideas encapsulated in democracy, transform in the course of time if not questioned and revised to match contemporary times.

The fact that WikiLeaks' position on democracy is unclear questions its very categorization as a democratic actor. Which coupled with Assange's opinion of political philosophies' bankruptcy, echoes democracy's transformation in the global age, arguably adopting democracy because it is the least horrible form of rule, not necessarily because it is good. Assange's line of thought unquestionably points to the direction of post-democratic thought (Piertese 2012:10), resembling that of intelligent self-governance, as opposed to the US' state-centered governance. Only WikiLeaks' vision of future society does not reveal where one person's freedom ends and another one's begin, which makes the overall vision a questionable path for society. Yet it resembles Castells' argument of the space of flows' terms of condition, being that of projecting micro-networks onto macro-networks (Castells 2010:446). Through the lens of Castells' Web-self dialectic, what constitutes negative freedom in the Web is something beyond the political, pointing to the negative freedom inherent in social norms and cultural practices.

This logic coincides with the shift from interest-based to value-based motivation for civil engagement. Civil engagement is here deliberately not described as political, as the integration of cultural and social spheres intersect with the political to an extent where they become inseparable. The post-democratic nature of interaction in the information age resembles something after the political, a transformation of the conventional understanding of 'political', and stands in opposition to the nature of democratic states, where national actors' sovereignty is given. The question is if this transition points to, what Michael Cox calls an interregnum between two world orders (Cox 2008:72), creating a vacuum that symbolizes a change in the order of discourse upon information freedom. For sure who controls the information transmitters is of great importance to further development of the state of democracy in a global age (Rossi 2007:52, Foreman 2011:28).

5.3.1 Positive vs. Negative Freedoms Revisited

To the naked eye, both parties accommodate value pluralism, but the US' advocacy of universally applicable values, rests on the idea that humankind is commensurable to a greater extent than what Berlin suggested. It is essential to Berlin's idea of value pluralism to differentiate between, which level of humanity's freedoms are commensurable, and which are not. Incommensurability arises on a societal level with negative freedom's manifestations through external interference, whereas positive freedom is commensurable in the sense of being universal, as its limits are only set by one's internal ideas (Berlin 1969:9).

In other words when an advocate for state interference, as the US, suggests that information freedom is universally applicable, a democratic discrepancy internally within the US' line of thought is revealed. The inconsistency arises between communicated messages of freedom as a universal value and the US' discursive possibilities, as a state actor, establishing structures of negative freedom through the legal system. This reasoning follows through to the very tangible element of measuring the value of a good life in terms of financial wealth, as finances may not be the top priority of all humanity, thus neglecting value pluralism.

Value pluralism on this level may resemble a state of anarchy, where the US obviously reasons through the logics of the greatest good for the greatest amount of people, a logic that arguably does not resemble the Web-self dialectic. Anarchy, is arguably not implementable in the network society, as interconnection is what mainly characterizes the order of interaction. Still it is an order though it is disorganized compared to the 20th Century world order. Thus interdependence along with a level of autonomy defined by the Web's infrastructure is what determines the fine line between positive and negative freedoms. WikiLeaks' purist idea of positive freedom puts forward a hypothesis of whether a prioritized level of positive freedom, coupled with a limited amount of negative freedom, matches the network society. If positive freedom is prioritized above negative freedom, democratic citizens have arguably matured to govern themselves and are ready for real democracy, in Rushkoff's terms.

The question is if freedom's incommensurable aspect allows such maturation of democratic practices, as negative freedom arguably is present in other forms of freedoms than the political, such as social and cultural freedom, guiding human interaction where policies fall short. Berlin's advocacy for negative freedom, as a way of curbing authority rather than enforcing authority, as the national era advocates, stands in opposition to WikiLeaks' advocacy for positive freedom's primacy. Presumably due to the fact that total freedom is illusory according to Berlin, as one will always be a slave of internal ideas, which makes positive freedom impossible to achieve without negative freedom.

The virtual culture of the network society, on one hand facilitates positive freedom's self-realization. On the other hand, it advocates a greater sense of negative freedom, requiring higher demands of citizens' self-regulating mechanism. In other words one person's freedom to move his/her fist before hitting the neighbor's nose is thus at once both expanded and delimited. Expanded

in the sense that virtual space opens up new planes of interaction, previously out of reach. Delimited in the sense that the encounters with others are significantly multiplied, and results in an intensification of practicing both positive and negative freedoms in the wake of the ICT revolution.

The very nature of human coexistence makes negative freedom inevitable to circumvent as it is not only constituted by the statist structures but also written into social norms and communal behavior. This very compromise is what also constitutes freedom as a dynamic dialectic between internal and external motivation, between individual as a single subject and the individual as a collective, ultimately between positive and negative freedom.

As incommensurable as positive and negative freedoms are, they are also interrelated in mutual constitution through the dynamics of dialectics in the age of information. From the time of Berlin's writing till today significant transformation has happened, which cannot be captured in a few lines, but the change of world order since 1989 and the changes posed by the ICT revolution are undeniable. Despite negative freedom's central aspect of structure-agent dialectic, Berlin's ideas are applicable to the information age. But Berlin may not have imagined his theory would capture the issues posed in the information to the extent it does.

6   Concluding Remarks

The magnitude, of which information travels around the democratic part of the world, after the ICT revolution, differs from previous technological revolutions, in the sense of being able to act on information. The Web 2.0 is characterized by globalization's reflexivity of opposite forces being mutually constitutive, where action is instantly subject to reaction. Such a transformation of interaction in virtual space unquestionably affects the intensity of conflicting viewpoints in the democratic debate, making democratic discrepancy all the more visible, as illustrated in the case of Cablegate. Considering this research's point of departure, as illustrated in figure 3 and 4, this research has substantial contributions to the existing literature on the topic.

The democratic discrepancy between WikiLeaks and the US is revealed through the underlying discourses of respective actors, concealed by similar expressions on information freedom. The distinct discourses on information freedom in the digital age are revealed through each actor's view on globalization's reflexivity. Where the US reasons through the national mindset, being that of dialectics between structure and agent, WikiLeaks reasons through the self's relation to the Web. Due to these very distanced points of departure, the content of what role freedom of information plays in the global age differ significantly. The bridging of this gap between a state-centered view and the network society's self-centered view of world affairs is arguably in need of a maturation process integrating social, cultural, financial, political spheres, along with the virtual sphere.

Whereas WikiLeaks encourages freedom of information's positive aspect, both in terms of the right to know, publish, and access information, the underlying discourse reveals advocacy for relying on the citizen's self-regulating mechanism by appealing to more intellectual behavior. On the contrary, the view of the US on information freedom is characterized by coupling liberty with security, where the democratic state provides legal structures that facilitate negative freedom by for example governing the Internet.

These distinct positions on what kind of information should be accessible to the public arguably reflect a shift from the interest-based to the value-based motivation of actively participating in the debate of democratic freedoms. As *public good* arguably equals the *value* of information, in the case of WikiLeaks, public good in terms of the US equals the *interest* of maintaining diplomacies on good terms for the sake of financial growth. Berlin points out, it is the state of conflict that gives value to freedom, and opposing parties arguably serve as a precondition for nurturing movement of political currents in the process of democratic transformation in global times.

6.1　Future Research

As suggested in the foreword, other aspects of the phenomenology of globalization are relevant to study in continuation of this research. What comes to mind in the wake of this research is how the ICT on one hand opens up to new fields of interaction, which were previously out of reach. Secondly, the Internet's infrastructure as an unbiased debate forum. This relates to globalization's effect of at once compressing time and space, concurrently resulting in the distancing effect of globalization. How this affects the practices of democratic freedom could be of interest to research further, adding to the diversity and in depth understanding of globalization's phenomena.

In this perspective further scrutiny of Internet governance is likewise of interest and the question of whether there should be a globally agreed upon code of conduct, as a supplement to research currently undertaken upon E-democracy. Where governments fall short of policies' that endorse negative freedom, it reveals that political freedom is not the only freedom to bring forward as essential for global society's future development. This process of integrating political globalization with the virtual sphere points to other kinds of freedoms crucial for society as a whole, which need to follow suit with the technological interconnection.

7 Executive Summary

Upon entering the 21st Century, connected voices of global society have grown in number and diversity, reinvigorating the debate of what form of democracy suits the digital age. The ICT revolution has transformed the space for democratic debate upon information freedom, as the interactive Web 2.0 connects democratic actors across the globe, and thereby expands the field of communication. The power of information is nothing new but has changed as it has been distributed to the hands of regular citizens, like *whistleblowers*. Managing and navigating through a jungle of information, where information's verification is hard, is no longer a task for national Intelligence Services but up to any individual connected to the Internet. The development revitalizes the question of democratic censorship to democratic governments as a way to cope with the exposure state secrets encounter in the age of information.

WikiLeaks, as a whistleblowing organization, has fueled the debate of democratic freedom with a series of conspicuous leaks, revealing confidential information of democratic, as well as non-democratic governments' practices. The release of Cablegate in 2010 was of especial concern to the US as it scarred its international face renowned for democratic practices, along with its diplomatic ties across the world. Attempts to speech-impair WikiLeaks witnesses of the magnitude whistleblowing organizations in the age of information can have on established democratic governments. Only the question of representativeness in the virtual space is prone to be victim of the distorting effect of globalization, where sources' number and impact may not be proportionate.

Though democratic actors like the US and WikiLeaks both advocate freedom of information, there is an obvious discrepancy between ideas of how this basic democratic freedom is implemented in the network society. Democratic discrepancy is defined, as the *incongruence of political ideals within the democratic entity of democratic practitioners*, be it state actors of individuals. Researching in the 21st Century requests alternative approaches to match current times, which is why Manuell Castells' theory of the information age is adopted, and serves as the theoretical background for analyzing actors engaged in the digital age. The 'networking logic' emancipates that of national boundaries and is, according to Castells, in the process of transforming from a reflexivity between the Web and the Self, as an alternative to the conventional dialectic between structure and agent.

The increase of virtual meetings make discursive clashes the more visible, and where there is connectedness and freedom to speak ones mind, there is room for clash of opposing ideas. Isaiah Berlin emphasizes it is the state of conflict, that gives value to freedom, and points to the distinct notions of freedom, being that of *freedom to* interfere, as well as *freedom from* interference. The question of

information freedom and democratic discrepancy arguably arises from the nature of the information age, and points to a fundamental core of value incommensurability in democratic liberty. The virtual culture of the network society, on one hand facilitates positive freedom's self-realization. On the other hand, it advocates a greater sense of negative freedom, requiring higher demands of citizens' self-regulating mechanism. Virtual space can be seen as a double-edged sword carrying just as much potential for construction as for destruction but is above all a space where democratic freedoms, as freedom of information is practiced on a daily basis. Arguably whistleblowing can be interpreted as anonymous people voting with their leaks. As a contribution to link globalization and democracy, this research attempts to describe the diverging discourses of the role of information in the network society, for the purpose of clarifying challenges to Internet governance.

The fact that WikiLeaks' position on democracy is unclear questions its very categorization as a democratic actor. Which coupled with Assange's opinion of political philosophies' bankruptcy, echoes democracy's transformation in the global age, arguably adopting democracy because it is the least horrible form of rule, not necessarily because it is good. Assange's line of thought points to the direction of post-democratic thought, resembling that of intelligent self-governance, as opposed to the US' state-centered governance. Only WikiLeaks' vision of future society does not reveal where one person's freedom ends and another one's begin, which makes the overall vision a questionable path for society. Yet it resembles Castells' argument of the space of flows' terms of condition, being that of projecting micro-networks onto macro-networks.

These distinct positions on what kind of information should be accessible to the public arguably reflect a shift from the interest-based to the value-based motivation of actively participating in the debate of democratic freedoms. As *public good* arguably equals the *value* of information, in the case of WikiLeaks, public good in terms of the US equals the *interest* of maintaining diplomacies on good terms for the sake of financial growth. Berlin points out, it is the state of conflict that gives value to freedom, and opposing parties arguably serve as a precondition for nurturing movement of political currents in the process of democratic transformation in global times.

The democratic discrepancy between WikiLeaks and the US is revealed through the underlying discourses of respective actors, concealed by similar expressions on information freedom. The distinct perspectives on information freedom in the digital age, reflects on each actor's view on globalization's reflexivity. Where the US reasons through the national mindset, being that of dialectics between structure and agent, WikiLeaks reasons through the self's relation to the Web. Due to these very distanced points of departure, the content of what role freedom of information plays in the global age inevitably differs. The bridging this gap between a state-centered and the network society's self-centered view of world affairs, a maturation process integrating social, cultural, financial, political spheres, along with the virtual sphere is arguably needed.

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9   Appendix

Timeline of Events 2010-2012

2010

January 21st 2010
- H. Clinton's speech at the Newseum, Washington DC: "Remarks on Internet Freedom"

April 5th 2010
- WikiLeaks releases 'Collateral murder video'

May 26th 2010
- Bradley Manning is arrested and detained in Kuwait

July 6th 2010
- Manning is charged with 8 violations of US criminal code

July 25th 2010
- WikiLeaks releases 'Afghan War Logs'

August 11th 2010
- Assange arrives in Stockholm for a speaking trip, it is arranged for him to stay at 'Miss A's' apartment

August 14th 2010
- Assange and Miss A reportedly have sex

August 17th 2010
- Assange and 'Miss W' reportedly have sex

August 17th-20th 2010
- Miss A and Miss W share concerns over sexual encounters with Assange

August 20th 2010
- Arrest warrant for Assange is issued on two separate sex allegations. One of rape, one of molestation

August 21st 2010
- Arrest warrant is withdrawn but molestation charge remains

August 31st 2010
- Assange denies charges of sex allegations and argues they are politically motivated

September 1st 2010
- Investigation of rape allegations against Assange reopens

October 22nd 2010
- WikiLeaks releases 'Iraq War Logs'

November 20th 2010
- Swedish authorities press an international arrest warrant for Julien Assange through Interpol

November 26th-28th 2010
- Letters exchanged between WikiLeaks and the White House prior to release of 'Cablegate'

November 28th 2010
- Hacktivist calling himself "The Jester" disables WikiLeaks shortly before expected release
- WikiLeaks releases 'Cablegate'

November 30th 2010
- State Department removes files from the government's classified network Siprnet
- Unidentified Hacker disables WikiLeaks shortly
- Assange is put on Interpol's most wanted list

December 1st 2010
- Amazon stops corporation with WikiLeaks

December 2nd 2010
- Swedish supreme court summons Assange

December 3rd 2010
- EveryDNS, American-owned domain provider withdraws it service for WikiLeaks
- WikiLeaks gets a Swiss domain name

December 4th 2010
- PayPal ceases corporation with WikiLeaks

December 5th 2010
- Twitter is suspected of censorship tweets regarding Assange

December 6th 2010
- MasterCard blocks payments to WikiLeaks
- US Attorney General E. Holder Jr. states significant investigations of WikiLeaks and Assange has been authorized
- Facebook does not cease corporation with WikiLeaks

December 7th 2010

- Assange is arrested and British judge denies release on bail
- 'Autonomous': "Operation Payback"
- Visa suspends payments to WikiLeaks
- Swiss authorities close Assange's bank accounts

December 8th 2010
- Assange shows up for extradition hearing and is being held in custody by British authorities
- Operation "Avenge Assange" is launched by 'Autonomous'

December 14th 2010

- Assange is granted 380.000 US dollars bail by British court
- Swedish prosecutors appeal the judgement
- US poll shows most Americans want Assange arrested and that WikiLeaks hurt public interests

December 16th 2010

- Assange is released on conditional bail and enters house arrest

December 17th 2010

- Assange claims the investigation of him is illegal, as no evidence of his supposed wrongdoings have been put forward

Towards the of 2010
- John Pilger interviews Assange. Unfortunately an exact date has been unattainable

2011

January 7th 2011
- US Department of Justice issues court order to Twitter. Demands all records of Birgitta Jonsdottir, Icelandic Parliament member and friend of WikiLeaks.
- Twitter refuses

January 12th 2011

- WikiLeaks releases 'Spy Files'

January 21st 2011
- Bradley Manning's lawyer alleges mistreatment in prison

January 27th 2011

- Daniel Domscheit-berg launches rival site 'OpenLeaks'

January 30th 2011
- Steve Kroft interviews Assange in "60 Minutes"

February 3rd 2011
- WikiLeaks releases Egypt Cables

February 1st 2011
- WikiLeaks nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by Norwegian Snorre Valen

February 7th 2011
- Assange fights extradition to Sweden in British court

February 15th 2011
- H. Clinton's speech on "Internet Rights and Wrongs: Choices and Challenges in a Networked World"

February 24th 2011
- British court rules Assange must be extradited to Sweden to face allegations of impudent behavior

March 4th 2011
- H. Clinton declares international information war. The US is losing the information war and asks for funds to new media in the US

April 4th 2011
- Martin Smith's interview of Assange

April 25th 2011
- WikiLeaks releases 'Guantanamo Files'

May 23rd 2011
- Hans-Ulrich Obrist's interview with Assange, part 1

June 15th 2011
- Hans-Ulrich Obrist's interviews Assange, part 2
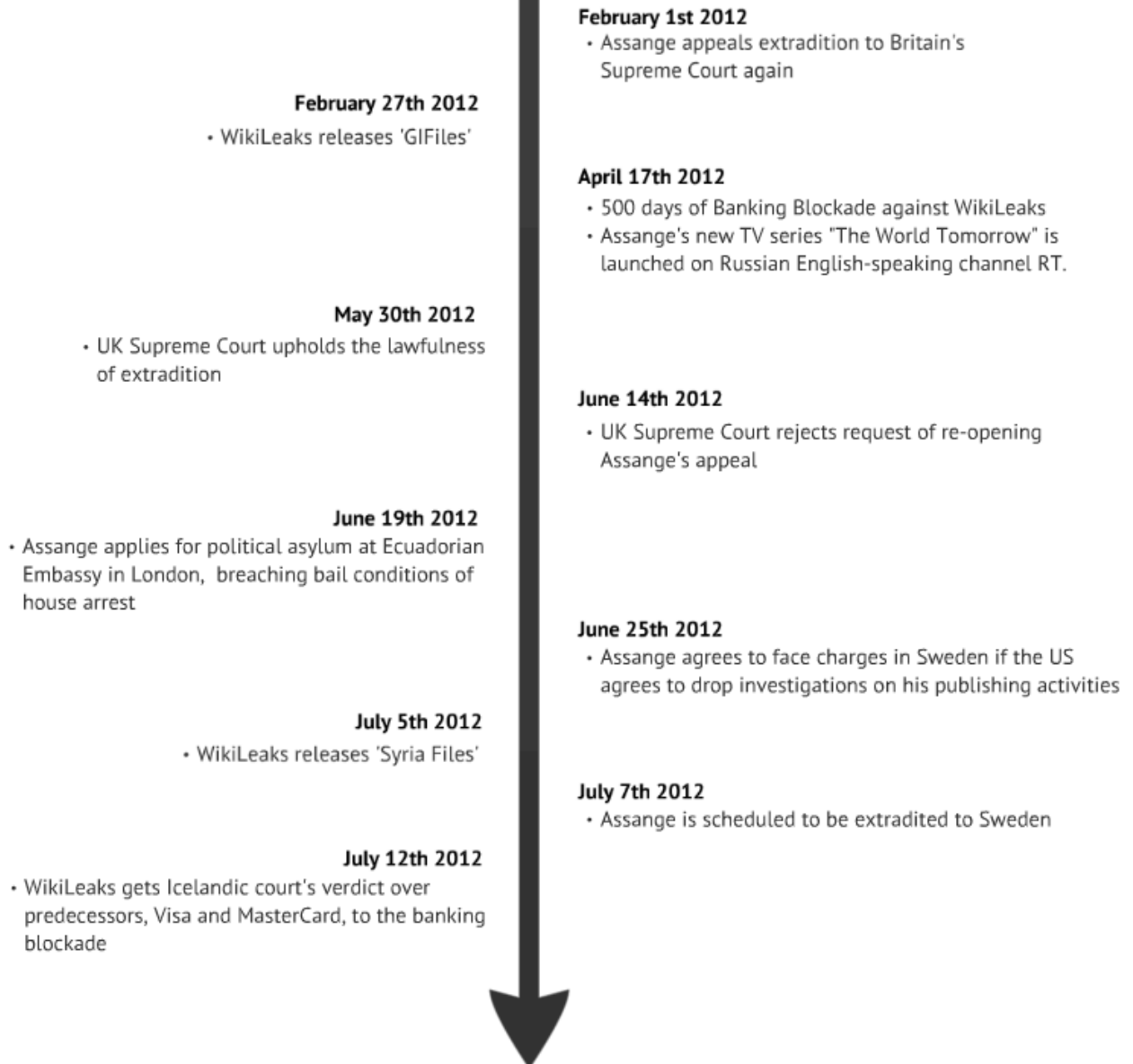
July 5th 2011
- "Democracy Now" Interview: J. Assange and S. Zizek in Conversation with Amy Goodman

July 12th 2011
- Assange launches appeal at High Court

October 24th 2011
- WikiLeaks announces it will have to cease publishing cables and devote itself to fund-raising

November 2nd 2011
- British High Court rules Assange to be extradited to Sweden

2012

February 1st 2012
- Assange appeals extradition to Britain's Supreme Court again

February 27th 2012
- WikiLeaks releases 'GIFiles'

April 17th 2012
- 500 days of Banking Blockade against WikiLeaks
- Assange's new TV series "The World Tomorrow" is launched on Russian English-speaking channel RT.

May 30th 2012
- UK Supreme Court upholds the lawfulness of extradition

June 14th 2012
- UK Supreme Court rejects request of re-opening Assange's appeal

June 19th 2012
- Assange applies for political asylum at Ecuadorian Embassy in London, breaching bail conditions of house arrest

June 25th 2012
- Assange agrees to face charges in Sweden if the US agrees to drop investigations on his publishing activities

July 5th 2012
- WikiLeaks releases 'Syria Files'

July 7th 2012
- Assange is scheduled to be extradited to Sweden

July 12th 2012
- WikiLeaks gets Icelandic court's verdict over predecessors, Visa and MasterCard, to the banking blockade

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