

The ethics of hospitality in changing journalism: A response to the rise of the anti-immigrant movement in Finnish media publicity

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Abstract

This article examines the role of the media in the rise of nationalist populism in Finland. The interplay between social media and mainstream media has facilitated the emergence of anti-immigrant agendas into the public debate, which has strengthened the nationalist populist politics. This is despite the mainstream journalism has followed professional ethics of balanced reporting. The article concludes that the traditional journalistic framework of agenda setting is not morally adequate for the new fragmented media environment. We propose the ethics of hospitality (Derrida, Silverstone), with emphasis on transnationalism, as a moral goal for a multi-ethnic public sphere where everyone has the right to voice concerns and to be heard. Therefore, journalism ethics should address how public debate can be organised in such a way that the principle of hospitality is achieved. Framework of agenda can allow inhospitable discourses to flourish, as the Finnish example shows. Theorisation of hospitality is connected with the need for transnational and cosmopolitan agendas.

Key words: hospitality, multi-ethnic public sphere, online media, anti-immigrant movement, nationalist populism, the Finns, multiculturalism, immigration, agenda-setting

European political populism has received significant scholarly attention since the 1990s when the right-wing populist parties began to gain electoral support with xenophobic agendas in many countries (see e.g. Mudde, 2007: 1-8). Some of this research has touched on issues related to the media's role in populism. For instance, many researchers have pointed out that charismatic leaders increase media attention (Norris, 2005; Stewart, Mazzoleni, & Horsfield, 2003: 228). However, there are surprisingly few academic studies that have systematically analysed the role of the media in the rise of populism (for

exemplary work in this field, see Ellinas, 2010; Stewart, Mazzoleni, & Horsfield, 2003). Furthermore, attention towards the role of social media in populism is scarce, and the nexuses between social media and mainstream media have not yet been adequately scrutinised. This article aims to fill these gaps in the existing literature. It provides a methodological and theoretical approach to analyse how movements that speak about immigration use social media to advance their message and how the mainstream media identifies and treats the messages disseminated in social media.

The traditional theoretical approaches to such questions are agenda setting theory and the ethical principle of free speech. Agenda-setting refers to a process where public opinion and policies are shaped by media (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). With a hierarchy of importance media can introduce some issues over others in ways that influence or change the salience of that particular issue in public debate (Dearing and Rogers, 1996). In the increasingly fragmented media environment the agenda setting function of mainstream media on the one hand is not as evident as it was before the Internet age. On the other hand however, the agenda setting function has gained new substance. Mainstream media may not create the space for social debate but they can bring different debates to the consciousness of the general public.

We examine how different views on immigration are set in the mainstream media agenda in Finland. Which online forums and debates rise to the pages and screens of the mainstream media? In addition, we are interested in examining how the mainstream media and social media shape the national political movements. Finally, we discuss the moral shortcomings of the traditional journalism that have been founded on the ideas of agenda setting and freedom of speech and propose the ethics of hospitality as a more inclusive ethical principle for the new media environment. Our notion of hospitality is developed from Silverstone's (2007) concept of an 'ethics of hospitality', as a necessary principle of media justice in a cosmopolitan world. It is crucial that the mainstream media hears and treats various voices equally. The important question for journalism therefore is: How can public debate be organised in such a way that the principle of hospitality is achieved?

The Ethics of Conditional Hospitality

Derrida: 'Hospitality is culture itself and not simply one ethics amongst others.' (2001:16)

'On Cosmopolitanism' Jacques Derrida interrogates the cosmopolitan rights of asylum seekers in Western societies with the focus on reformulation of 'refuge city', as a hospitable sanctuary. Drawing on Derrida's (2001/1997) discussion Roger Silverstone (2007: 139) proposes the concept of hospitality in the context of media and mediapolis. For Silverstone hospitality is a primary ethic in a cosmopolitan world. Hospitality 'goes to the heart of our relationships with others' and 'is a primary moment of morality'. In the context of media and journalism, hospitality is crucial for the creation of a just public sphere, or mediapolis. The ethical goal in a multi-ethnic public sphere (Husband, 2000) should be a space where everyone has the right to voice their concerns and for what they have to say to be heard (Silverstone, 2007: 147). Hospitality therefore addresses the core organising principle of the public sphere. It is not only concerned with representation and

access, but also, as the notion of ‘understanding’ suggests, interpretation and the responsibility of the audience. As a normative theory, it addresses the concern over fading democratic values in new, increasingly fragmented media environment. Theory of hospitality does not simply criticize media over its lack of just reporting but aims at finding ways to enhance democracy. It calls for fair and responsible reporting in a cosmopolitan society where audiences increasingly have different cultural backgrounds and are in the risk of being marginalized as members of the society. Marginalization may have severe consequences in terms of sense of citizenship and belonging and therefore it is important to pay attention to the ways in which media addresses its multiple audiences and facilitates public discussion. We argue that this is particularly important now as the media environment is going through substantial changes due to simultaneous effect of economic crisis and technological innovations. With the concept of hospitality, we are not talking about a space where marginalized people are allowed to voice opinions in a tokenistic manner. Tolerance does not equal hospitality, because tolerance refers to putting up with something that one does not necessarily have to even try to understand. Hospitality goes beyond tolerance and demands opening up the public sphere to voices that are different and uninvited, and hearing opinions which are difficult to accept. However, we are aware of the difficult terrain of ethical understanding. Hospitality is not cultural relativism that would accept everything. In his discussion of hospitality Silverstone, following Derrida, makes a distinction between conditional and unconditional hospitality. In democratic societies, conditional hospitality is already in use when newspapers invite strangers to voice their views. However, the access is based on invitation and limited with editorial control. Therefore, as the ethics of hospitality seeks to transcend boundaries that exist in our societies today, Silverstone proposes a concept of unconditional hospitality that is not based on invitation only but extends beyond that. Derrida on the other hand puts emphasis on the tension between unconditional and conditional. For him just political action requires negotiation between these two poles: the universal unconditionality and the pragmatic political action (Derrida, 2001). Our task in studying and defining media ethics is to critically explore the conditions of mediated ethical communication. As researchers, we need to examine the regulations, professionalism, routines and practices of production, participation and consumption that set the boundaries of actual access, hearing and understanding of the various voices. From the perspective of media ethics, we need to ask how different voices are restricted, manufactured, directed and treated?

One might think that these questions are irrelevant in the digital age, where Internet publicity is open to all; even the most extreme voices of anti-democratic groups are allowed to exist. Silverstone (2007: 142-3) takes up this perspective in his theorisation of the ethics of hospitality. He argues that hospitality requires a meaningful host who organizes the co-presence of multiple voices in a shared space of responsibility. This may seem contradictory to the call for unconditional hospitality. Yet hospitality can be understood as a combination of unconditional ethics with pragmatic notion of the meaningful host. It points to the relevance of traditional media structures in the growing online media environment. This does not mean that hospitality requires nationally bound media. On the contrary, mainstream media need to recognise the transnational dimension of citizenship which is emerging on the social networking sites and blogs to be able to

host multiple voices. This is the point we want to emphasize in the concept of hospitality. Although Silverstone connects hospitality with cosmopolitan mediapolis and presence of ethnic minority audiences, he does not fully address the issue of transnational sensibility as a way to realize hospitality in media practice. He points out however the importance of shareability of mainstream media for minority audiences. For this to succeed, we argue, media professionals need to identify and interact with the transnational dimensions of the society that operate on various levels from online forums to local associations, and may not always be easy to recognize. This is relevant since, as previous research has shown (Morley, 2000; Madianou, 2005; Nikunen, 2008), the narrow national address in mainstream media may turn away minority audiences. This kind of development does not only weaken the accountability of mainstream media but also deteriorates its potential for creating platform for social debate.

Fragmentation of Communicative Space

To achieve or foster hospitality is particularly challenging in the constantly evolving media technological environment. One of the crucial questions is, how to deal with the multiplicity of voices that emerge in the new spaces of communication. Internet and related technologies have created new communicative spaces that challenge the role of traditional media in public and political debates. Virtual communities, discussion groups, networking and blogging in social media have introduced new models of public participation and dissemination of information (Jenkins, 2006).

Introducing new forms of participation, the Internet has been seen to promote citizen activity and democracy, but also created spaces for hate speech, racist groups, and undemocratic movements (Cammaerts, 2009; Daniels, 2009; Horsti 2012). On the other hand, the emergence of the new media has also been interpreted as a move towards individualisation of the public sphere (Youngs, 2009). This term refers to an increased blurring of the public and the private, in both the supply and uses of media. The proliferation of voices, forums and subgroups has also been termed as fragmentation of the public sphere (Downey & Fenton, 2003), referring to the coexistence of multiple parallel publics and counter publics with the random nature of the information presented and gathered online (Papacharissi, 2002). According to Zizi Papacharissi, online discussions fragment political discourse as the virtual space becomes subdivided into smaller groups, illustrating Nancy Fraser's argument of the plural public spheres and the formation of alternative counter publics (Fraser, 1992). As argued by Papacharissi, the Internet may offer various advantages to political communication; however, this does not mean that the voices heard on the Internet equal the opinions and voices offline. In this new media space, voicing one's views is easy; however, being heard becomes a challenge. From the perspective of hospitality the new communicative spaces of the internet create particular kind of distance to human affairs that makes it easier on the one hand to reject others and on the other hand to maintain groups with the like-minded ones.

What becomes crucial here is the way in which online debates gain visibility and public attention: Whose views are heard? What kind of forum is followed? Whose voices disappear in the vast farrago of virtuality? These questions connect the concept of

hospitality to the agenda-setting function of media. Mainstream media may not create the space for social debate but they can bring different debates to the consciousness of the general public. In our case then it is relevant to examine how views on immigration are set in media. In other words, how the agenda-setting process shapes, hinders or furthers the ethics of hospitality.

The Finnish Context

In addition to the fragmentation in the mediascape, political participation has also become more fragmented and alternative political movements have grown in preference to the traditional party politics in Europe (Ruzza, 2009). Some of these movements enhance democratic participation but others are clearly ‘uncivil’ (Ruzza, 2009). Populist movements such as the French National Front and the Italian Lega Nord share xenophobic, nationalist, territorially protectionist, and Eurosceptic agendas. In the past few years, debates on multiculturalism have intensified in Finland, resonating political developments in rest of the Europe (see Keskinen et al., 2009; Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010). The populist-nationalist movement has rapidly grown, and this combines dissatisfied citizens from various movements under one party, the Finns (Perussuomalaiset). The anti-immigration group within the Finns is visible, and has gained a foothold in the party organisation and political agenda. The Finns gained substantial victory in the general elections of 2011, becoming the third-largest party in Finland, with 39 representatives in the parliament of 200 members. Altogether, nine elected representatives campaigned with an openly anti-immigration agenda.² After exceptionally long and difficult governmental negotiations, the Finns took the leading position in the opposition in 2011. The Finnish situation, then, reflects the Nordic political landscape at large, where nationalist-populist parties have had growing support during the last decade. The triumphal march of the Finns had already begun in 2008, when the party was successful in the local elections with several candidates’ anti-immigration agenda. The previously rather unimpassioned immigration debate became heated in Finland. Other parties published their agendas on immigration, the topic was discussed on a daily basis in mainstream media and a series of highly mediated ‘immigration and integration crisis’ debates followed one after another. The anti-immigration movement criticizes media and politicians for deemphasising the problems and ‘true’ costs of immigration. One of the key arguments of the movement is that Finnish multicultural and equal opportunity politics are an artificial creation of the elite and cannot be debated ‘critically’. The anti-immigrant movement is particularly against asylum seeking and refugees. With these arguments, the Finnish anti-immigrant movement seems to echo the views of other similar populist groups in Europe (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010).

While there is growing tension surrounding the issue of multiculturalism, it is important to notice that the scale of immigration to Finland is modest compared to its neighbour, Sweden. In 2008, just under 30,000 people immigrated to Finland, whereas the figure in Sweden was 101,200 (in Britain 537,964 and in Germany 682,146). According to statistics, 2.5 per cent of the population had foreign citizenship in 2008, of which the

Russians formed the largest group (26,211) followed by Estonians (20,006), Swedes (8,349) and Somalis (4,582) (Statistics Finland; Eurostat).

In Finland, social media have played a particularly important role in the rise of the anti-immigrant movement. A few significant Internet communities and blogs played a crucial role in pulling together the anti-immigration movement and in defining their agenda and discourse (Keskinen, 2009; Nikunen, 2010; Horsti 2012). The mainstream visibility of the anti-immigration movement began with the Scripta blog in 2003, when linguistics PhD Jussi Halla-aho began writing his individual blog, titled *Scripta – Writings from the Drowning West* (<http://www.halla-aho.com/scripta/>). He rose from nowhere to become one of the most popular writers in the Finnish blogosphere. In 2006, he entered politics, and won a significant number of votes in the local elections in 2008 as an independent candidate of The Finns Party. The guestbook of the Scripta blog became immensely popular between 2005 and 2008; ultimately, in 2008, the community around the Scripta blog created a Hommaforum (<http://cms.hommaforum.org/>) online site for discussion on immigration.

The popularity of the anti-immigrant movement is connected with the change in the mediascape, including the growing participatory action and individual voices as well as the crisis of journalism (Curran, 2010; Franklin, 2008). The mass media market has also become increasingly competitive in Finland throughout the last decade. However, a major decline in revenues of the traditional newspapers took place relatively late, between 2008 and 2009, when their market reduced by ten per cent (Statistics Finland, 2010). The Internet is rapidly changing both news making and news consumption. Exclusive scoops are no longer the main resources in distinguishing media from each other. In addition, in the new technological environment, the media need to build their customer relations in a different way. Social media, blogs and Internet discussion forums have become increasingly popular among citizens, and the mainstream media is struggling to maintain its position as the main forum of political debates and as a main source of news. Despite this change, the traditional media in Finland seem to be hesitant when it comes to how to make use of social media. Social media have evolved on their own without much attention from the mainstream media until the political success of Halla-aho. The traditional mainstream media has only recently begun to follow social media more systematically with appointed journalists. Experiments of citizen journalism are scarce in the Finnish media, and participatory elements have not profoundly changed structures or practices in the newsrooms. However, all of the Finnish dailies offer space for online discussions to promote audience engagement. The traditional media have been active online in developing interactive mechanisms to invite and integrate their readers to the media brand and community. Online discussions are not necessarily held as rational and productive by journalists, but they are regarded important in terms of fostering audience relations, interaction and democratic values (Nikunen, 2011).

We consider that these developments form a background to the increase of opinionated material in news media. Traditional media can compete through commentators who frame the speedily disseminating news for audiences. Therefore, the mainstream success of Halla-aho and the Hommaforum debate site has not only grown out of the participation

of like-minded people who hold anti-immigration views, but is also facilitated by the need for distinctive opinions and extremist commentators in the mainstream media. Clearly, the mainstream media still have the power to highlight individual online forums and make them known to the general public. The mainstream media, by referring to particular debates online, help to navigate these sites, but at the same time, create visibility and value for particular sites. In this way the agenda-setting process creates saliency to particular political movements (Dearing and Rogers, 1996: 8).

Method and Research Material

This article builds on the observations given above to provide a more systematic and detailed study of the role of the mainstream media in raising awareness of particular Internet sites among the mainstream audience. How were these sites covered in the mainstream media in 2008–2010, when the anti-immigration movement in Finland was gaining strength? We have analysed the mainstream media exposure of the key figures of the anti-immigrant movement, Halla-aho and the Hommaforum online site in the national broadsheet *Helsingin Sanomat* and in the public service broadcasting company YLE news and its current affairs programming in 2008–2010. We have also gathered data on the exposure of multiculturalist voices in *Helsingin Sanomat* (including all genres) and YLE news and current affairs, namely the coverage of blogger Husein Muhammed and a multicultural website, Monimos (<http://www.monimos.fi/?lang=fi>). In total, 208 items were collected from the online archive of *Helsingin Sanomat* and 53 items from the YLE archive.³ In the analysis of mainstream coverage, we operationalise the concept of hospitality. The voices in the analysed anti-immigration sites can be seen as non-elite voices that generally do not have access to mainstream journalism through the routine elite sources. However, as the immigration debate heated up, other pro-immigration and multiculturalist citizen voices also began to be expressed in various debate sites. The immigration issue became polarised, and multiculturalist sites joined the debate. In this article, we analyse sites and blogs that focus on immigration; these are either clearly against (most types of) immigration or support (most types of) immigration and argue against racism and xenophobia. The main focus in the empirical analysis is on the visibility of these sites and their prominent authors in the mainstream media. The empirical analysis seeks to answer how the mainstream media take the principle of hospitality in the immigration debate. How well do they identify different discourses on immigration created and circulated in the blogosphere? Are they able to hear different voices and bring them into a meaningful and responsible dialogue? How successfully do the online communities get their definitions and agendas through into the mainstream media? Who becomes a public expert on immigration in the Finnish debate between 2008 and 2010?

The concept of intermediality provides a tool for exploring the impact of online debates at large. With intermediality, we refer to relations between various media, also defined as intertextuality between different media (Lehtonen, 2000). Intermediality investigates intersections within differentiated networks of communication, stressing interrelations rather than separate and monolithic reductions of media (Fornäs, 2002). It may be used to

address the articulation and re-articulation of the media through changes in the social and cultural contexts. In this case, we examine intermediality between online forums and the mainstream media, in terms of the ways in which online discussions appear in the mainstream media and the ways in which this appearance adds to the visibility and impact of the discussions.

Anti-Immigration Communities: The Scripta Blog and the Hommaforum Debate Site

Jussi Halla-aho's Scripta blog (2005–2009) and the Hommaforum are closely connected. There are regular references to one another in these sites, and Halla-aho's writings are often praised and commented on in the Hommaforum. Today, the Hommaforum is a much more visited site than the original Scripta blog, and visitors enter the site more through Facebook and search engines than via the Scripta blog¹. The number of Hommaforum visitors typically peaks when the site is mentioned in the mainstream media and around elections, particularly the elections of 2011 (Alexa.com).

The forum has grown broader than just a site for commenting on Halla-aho's writings. Today, in addition to news and Halla-aho's blog entries the main page offers other links that create a sense of a community, such as a dating service. A corpus-linguistic study shows that Hommaforum participants use standard language and legitimate their arguments through links to reports and news articles (Vänni, 2009); they therefore seem to have an above average educational level. The discourse used in the site is distinctive: The participants have created some new vocabulary and use general vocabulary in an ironic sense, which reflects a high sense of community and shared identity (Vänni, 2009; Nikunen, 2010).

A search of the archives of the national mainstream media reveals that the Scripta blog and Halla-aho were not visible in the mainstream agenda before the election results of the municipal elections in 2008. Although the nationwide newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* is the local paper of Helsinki, the city where Halla-aho was running, the paper did not cover Halla-aho's success in the blogosphere before the elections. His name and views against immigration and Muslims were briefly mentioned in *Helsingin Sanomat* four times before the elections of 2008, and only once in YLE in 2007. However, after Halla-aho's high number of votes became public on October 27, 2008, his name began to appear regularly in both media. This follows the typical logic of media attention to populist parties. After legitimate electoral success, the smaller parties also begin to receive coverage between elections (Norris, 2005, p. 9).

We identify three phases in the mainstream treatment of Halla-aho's blog and the Hommaforum site between 2008 and 2010: first, a phase of *ignorance* before the 2008

¹ (All visitor analytics of websites are retrieved from the Web information company site Alexa.com on June 20, 2011.)

municipal elections; second, a phase of *disputed phenomena* after the electoral success; and third, a phase of *expertise* in 2010. In March 2009, Halla-aho was accused of breach of freedom of worship (of which he was convicted in September 2009) and incitement to racial hatred, which attracted even more mediatised attention to him and his blog. In 2009, Halla-aho was the second most Googled celebrity in Finland. Although the coverage on his blog was initially negative, his anti-Muslim views received public attention which then increased discussion in the Hommaforum site. Simultaneous to Halla-aho's public success and rising public awareness of his writing and thinking, the Hommaforum that grew out of his blog's guestbook became recognised in the mainstream media. Hommaforum praises every mainstream mention, link and public appearance of its members on the site. However, between 2008 and 2010, the forum is mentioned in the *Helsingin Sanomat* in only 21 stories, whereas Halla-aho is mentioned in 170 stories.

Hommaforum first appears in the mainstream agenda not in the news genre but in the commentary journalistic genre. In *Helsingin Sanomat*, it is first introduced in a journalist column in February 2009, and it is discussed several times in the letters-to-the-editor section. The YLE current affairs program *Ajankohtainen Kakkonen* and a debate show called 'Immigration Night' (February 17, 2009) were significant in terms of reaching publicity; both programmes were afterwards widely circulated on YouTube. The first appearance in the highly appreciated public service broadcaster YLE was considered particularly prestigious among the forum activists—this is noted as a key event in the Hommaforum 'timeline'. When the invited speaker Juha Mäki-Ketelä mentioned Hommaforum in the on-air television show, the number of visitors rose to the highest peak of simultaneous visitors and the website crashed temporarily.

The discussion site is mentioned in the daily nationwide newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* later that month, on February 21, 2009, in a journalist column that discusses the immigration debate and makes reference to 'the debates on television during the last weeks' (HS February 21, 2009). The forum becomes the main reference point for antiimmigration discourse in the Finnish mainstream media. Hommaforum debators' main argument at the beginning is that the immigration debate has been politically correct in Finland, and any 'critical' remark is considered racist. Both the YLE and *Helsingin Sanomat* seem to accept this rationale, as for instance the notion of 'immigration sceptic' lobbied by the anti-immigration movement is adopted into journalistic language. Both the Hommaforum site and the Scripta blog are characterised as 'immigration sceptic'. Neither in *Helsingin Sanomat* nor in the YLE is the concept ever given in quotation marks or unpacked. This terminology distracts attention from the racist discourse. Furthermore, the Hommaforum activists and Halla-aho mark the territory of 'immigration criticism' for themselves, thus positioning their group as the opposite of current government policy. This discursive manoeuvre distracts attention from the other civil society activists, as they are not needed as alternative sources to create journalistic balance. The mainstream media constructed the issue as a dispute between two binary opposites—the immigration policy sceptics and the government—which positioned the multicultural activists and the immigrants on the margins of the debate.

Although Hommaforum is presented as a new political phenomenon, its discussions are rarely explained or quoted in the media. Nevertheless, there are two exceptions to the absence of deeper reporting: First, when 13 True Finns candidates published their immigration program, 'Nuiva vaalimanifesti', the ideas were reported in *Helsingin Sanomat* (July 26, 2010) and YLE (July 24, 2010). This attention reflects the routine tendency of news journalism to follow organised sources and their public relations announcements. Secondly, the more commentary-based and investigative genres of journalism take the time and dig into the debates on a few occasions. The YLE weekly current affairs program *Ajankohtainen Kakkonen* presented Hommaforum activists and their ideas without any alternative perspective on April 28, 2009. The above-mentioned 'Immigration Night' is another such example. *Helsingin Sanomat*'s monthly supplement *Kuukausiliite* published a cover story in the February 2010 issue on Minister of Immigration Astrid Thors which offered the agenda-setting power to the Hommaforum. The questions for the interview of Ms Thors were not created by the journalist; instead, she asked the members of Hommaforum to post questions for the minister. The journalist ended up receiving 111 responses and suggestions for the interview from Hommaforum and used 12 of them in the final five-page story. The story frames Hommaforum as one of the main immigration-critical online forums in the country. The story is set up as an encounter between Astrid Thors and her critics (titled 'Flowerhat Auntie Meets her Critics'). Although the story distances itself to Hommaforum by characterising it as the home base of The Finns and racists, it follows the logic of the Homma debate by placing Astrid Thors as a person in charge of immigration policy in Finland. Most importantly, the story restructures the debate between anonymous, angry and organised citizens (Hommaforum) versus the 'multicultural' political elite, just as the anti-immigration movement demands.

The perspective is not widened to include any other agents. This setting places multicultural activists and immigrants as outsiders of the debate, although there are several public figures of migrant origin who have voiced critical views concerning multicultural politics in Finland. The story published in the monthly is referred to as a 'milestone of immigration debate' on the Hommaforum site, illuminating the importance of the mainstream media coverage for a political online community. To sum up, the trajectory of the Finnish anti-immigration movement's public appearance begins from total ignorance on the part of the mainstream media. However, the blogosphere raises Halla-aho to electoral success. His political success does not depend on the mainstream media's awareness, which typically would have been necessary for political newcomers. The online public space demonstrates its discursive strength here. However, after he is recognised as an elected member of the city council, the mainstream media begins to address his position more seriously. Still, even his presence in court and accusations against his blogs do not seem to harm his political career. On the contrary, supportive energy is created in the Hommaforum and Halla-aho is considered a warrior of 'freedom of speech'. Because of the court cases, he becomes a celebrity, and gains more space for his anti-immigrant views. Halla-aho is raised to a position of an immigration expert, first by his online audiences and voters, and soon after by the mainstream media. Similar to the rise of Halla-aho from ignorance to a well known political figure, Hommaforum emerges from the unknown to the dominance of the 'critical' view on the Finnish

immigration policy. In the mainstream media Hommaforum is treated as a site for views of the 'ordinary Finn', the non-elite and this 'ordinary voice' is positioned as a strong popular opposition to the government immigration policy.

How should we perceive the treatment of anti-immigrant movement in media from the perspective of hospitality? We are not to say that anti-immigrant voices should not enter mainstream media at all or that they should not be discussed. In fact, in terms of hospitality shouldn't we treat anti-immigrant voices as ones that we need not only tolerate but listen to? From the perspective of hospitality, the coverage of anti-immigrant movement as such is not problematic. The focus here is on the fairness and substance of such agenda setting. We also acknowledge that censorship on anti-immigrant speech can backfire and aid proliferation of these discourses (Cammaerts, 2009: 570). Clearly, as our case points out these voices have been accounted for and listened to in Finland not only on the arrays of the online media but in the national mainstream media as well. The anti-immigrant movement grew within the social networks of the Internet; however, the attention from the mainstream media expanded its national popularity. The mainstream media gave substantial coverage to the anti-immigrant movement perhaps finding it as an important emerging political issue that needs to be debated in public. However, such agenda setting can create narrow and exclusionary view to political issues if the media do not recognize their role as a responsible host with understanding of the transnational dimensions of the society. Therefore to achieve ethics of hospitality instead of mere agenda setting a responsible host of social debate media should strive for a fair coverage and include multiculturalist and immigrant voices to the discussion. Has this been the case? We now turn to examine the coverage of multiculturalist views in media to evaluate how the ethics of hospitality is achieved.

Multiculturalist Online Activism

As a response to the rising anti-immigration movement, many people in Finnish society felt that the debate was going in the wrong direction. In addition to some politicians who voiced their concerns over increasing hate speech and the anti-immigration agenda, citizens became active online. However, supporters of the multicultural politics have not formed a coherent movement. Instead, activism is scattered and fragmented without actual leadership or a home base. Therefore, this movement is also difficult to identify; which however does not mean that it is nonexistent. There are various individual public figures who speak out for multiculturalism and defend humanitarian rights, such as Husein Muhammed a lawyer of refugee background. He began blogging on an online-only newspaper service, *Uusi Suomi*, just before the municipal elections in 2008, when he was running as a Green Party candidate. He was also a candidate in the general elections in 2011.

Therefore, as a public figure, he forms an interesting comparison to Halla-aho, also an activist and a candidate but from the opposite political side. Like Halla-aho, Muhammed is an active commentator and takes frequently part in the multicultural debate on his blogs and in various letters to the editor published in *Helsingin Sanomat*. As the lawyer for the Finnish Refugee Council, he has expertise in refugee law. In 2011, Husein

Muhammed also published a book on Islam in Finland.⁴ On the issue of multicultural politics, Muhammed argues in his writings for practical political solutions that hinder the segregation and marginalisation of immigrants in Finland, such as new housing policies and employment initiatives. When we analyse the way in which Husein Muhammed is represented in the mainstream media, we can see an increase in the volume of his writings, but little change in his status as a discussant. He is caught on the fringes of news journalism, and is rarely invited to mainstream media. Instead, Muhammed appears in the letters to the editor: between 2008-2010 he published 15 opinion pieces in *Helsingin Sanomat*, mostly on multicultural politics and Islam in Finland. However, he appeared only in three news stories in 2010 in connection to the position of the ombudsman for minorities—a position for which he had applied, but was not selected. Muhammed’s appearance in *Helsingin Sanomat* illustrates how conditional, not unconditional, hospitality operates. As argued by Silverstone (2007: 141), conditional hospitality already exists in contemporary media. Although Muhammed is able to voice his opinions, his views are confined to the margins of the news production (17 letters to the editor, 3 new stories as oppose to Halla-aho’s 23 letters and 105 news stories). Nevertheless, it seems that Muhammed’s image as an expert strengthened to some extent in 2010 in the public service YLE where he was invited to talk shows and news four times. Besides Husein Muhammed’s blog, there are various online sites that support multiculturalism, including Monimos, an NGO-led web site that aims at being a ‘virtual meeting place for internationally minded people and associations in Finland’. Similarly, a Facebook group titled ‘My Finland is International’ (<https://www.facebook.com/MyFinland>) gathers people who support multiculturalism. Both of these sites were created in 2010, which can be interpreted as a response to the increasing hostility against immigrants. Monimos is a semi-official site for supporting multiculturalism with 300 members and 22 multicultural associations. Online discussion revolves around integration, practical guidelines and immigrant debate. In addition, associations use the site to inform the public about their activities and events. Much of the discussion goes on in English. Monimos is an NGO-led web site, and as such it has not been able to attract lively, grassroots-level discussion and enthusiasm. Monimos was not mentioned once in *HS* or on YLE in 2008–2010.

Table 1.

Halla-aho	181	Muhammed	24
Hommaforum	56	Monimos	0

Table 1. Media coverage in *Helsingin Sanomat* and YLE 2008-2010

Conclusions: The Anti-Immigration Movement as Agenda Setter

Journalism tends to create a frame of conflict to discuss social issues and highlight oppositional views on a subject. As argued by Wolfsfeld (2004), instead of conciliation, tension and conflict are the default modes of the press. From this point of view, Husein Muhammed would make a perfect counterpart for anti-immigrant figures such as Jussi Halla-aho. However, in the case of Finnish immigration debate, these conflicts are created between the elite (the minister of immigration) and the anti-immigrant activists

(Hommaforum, Halla-aho's Scripta) instead of multiculturalist and anti-immigrant activists (Monimos, Muhammed's blog). Technically news reporting was balanced. However, the voices of immigrants themselves are practically absent from the public debate. This positions immigrants as outsiders in relation to Finnish society, as they are not actively brought to the debate. In this way, the mainstream media repeats the agenda set by the anti-immigrant activists, who claim that multiculturalism in Finland is merely an artificial construction of the political elite. By leaving out the immigrants and multicultural activists from the debate, the news media ends up strengthening the antiimmigrant argument and creating a view of a nation without actual grassroots multicultural life. The way media set agenda for the debate on multiculturalism clearly emphasized the role of anti-immigrant movement over multiculturalist activists. This demonstrates the inadequacy of agenda setting without more profound ethics and understanding of the transnational dimensions of the society. In terms of hospitality mainstream media failed to listen to the variety of voices and make them heard. Thus, they failed to contribute to the construction of a responsible sphere of public discussion and follow the ethics of hospitality. The mainstream coverage of nationalist populist politicians followed a routine news gathering practice which at first did not catch the emerging anti-immigrant movement online but later over-exposed its ideas. Although, many think that mainstream attention to xenophobic views would diminish its power through shaming (Cammaerts, 2009: 570-571) in this case the publicity facilitated Halla-aho's political success. However, the mainstream media failed to identify the less organized multicultural civil society.

We can identify several reasons for this. Journalism in Finland and elsewhere is going through a crisis: Competition over readers has intensified and the conditions of journalistic work have become more difficult due to cuts in workforce and increased multi-skilling (Fenton, 2010). Increased concern over the vanishing audience has resulted in emphasis on more sensational and flagrant news. This communicative space, fragmented, participatory and competitive, is challenging from the perspective of media ethics and the concept of hospitality. Clearly, new technologies facilitate greater, but not necessarily more diverse, participation in political discussion.

At the same time, increasing number of citizens participate in online communities that express transnational sensibility that is not limited to geographical national boundaries (Cunningham, 2001; Georgiou, 2001; Mainsah, 2011). As argued by Cunningham (2001), these online spaces form transnational sphericules that address citizenship as voluntary, elastic, multiple and self-made. Perhaps due to the national standpoint of Finnish news journalism, these transnational dimensions of citizenship and multicultural debate are particularly difficult for the mainstream media to understand and identify. Instead, the debate is organised between Finnish-born politicians that operate in the realm of traditional party politics. However, transnational sensibility that goes beyond the national frame of action is a growing element in the everyday life of people and connected with the idea of mediapolis and hospitality. As our case has shown, however, it is challenging in the contemporary media environment for the national media to identify relevant social discussions, but most importantly, media has difficulties to include multicultural and transnational experiences in these discussions. This is why we argue

that the idea of hospitality, the co-presence of multiple voices hosted with responsibility, should not be understood as a national media space that ‘tolerates’ others. Instead, it should be conceived as transnational from the premise where the right to be heard, the right to be addressed as a citizen, is not connected with a nationalistic and ethnic understanding of citizenship.

For media research the theory of hospitality provides an important reminder of the responsibility of media and the ideal of just reporting that seem particularly essential in the issues of multiculturalism and migration. Failure to achieve hospitality may have severe political implications as our case goes on to suggest. Moreover hospitality points out the relevancy and the power of the host: power to define and power to set the agenda that has not withered away with the advent of online participation. In order to achieve hospitality it is not enough to identify this power but to exercise it in responsible matter with the understanding of the audience as multiple and cosmopolitan.

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Notes:

1. We use the term *anti-immigrant movement* to refer to the members of Hommaforum and the supporters of Halla-aho. The movement refers to itself as *immigration skeptics* (direct translation, ‘immigration critics’) to emphasise the members’ argumentation as rational and distance itself from claims of racism. However, the writings of Halla-aho and discussion in Hommaforum depict a stance against immigration rather than efforts to solve daily problems connected to immigration and integration policies, such as housing, language education, etc. (see et al., 2009).

2. Six elected members of parliament signed the anti-immigration election programme before the 2011 elections (www.vaalimanifesti.fi); moreover, three members of the parliament voiced their antiimmigration views in their campaign (Tom Packalén, Reijo Tossavainen and Teuvo Hakkarainen). They are all representatives of the Finns Party. The Party changed its English name True Finns to the Finns in 2011. We use both translations in this article.

3. The same news story is often aired several times in the day’s news shows. The story is counted only once per day. However, news in Finnish, Swedish and English are counted separately, although sometimes the same event is reported in three languages during the same day.

4. Muhammed, H. (2010) *Islam ja suomalainen kulttuuri*. Helsinki: Teos.

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