



— JO Paris 2024, J8- Glory and its threat - hate speech online

Glory is the bright grief of happiness (Madame de Staël, 1810). The ceremony of opening of the Olympics in Paris was a main success, the most innovative and creative postcard France could send to the World. Its French artistic director (Thomas Jolly) and her female DJ (Barbara Butch) are harassed online with death threats. They both sued their hidden attackers. In both cases, alleged or real religious belonging and their sexual orientation are the “reason”. The origins of such hate speech come from conservative personalities pretending defending “moral” values (Musk or Trump in America, alt-right in France and Europe...).

The Algerian female boxer Imane Khelif is also targeted by a main hate propaganda in social networks after her victory against Italian female boxer Angela Carini, who refused to recognize her defeat. Her counterpart “would be a man”. Algerians of all sexes and ages, unanimously denounce the controversy that targets their boxer and see in the contestation of her femininity a «hogra», an Arabic term for an injustice combined with contempt. The attacks are spread online by the same “hate speakers”- conservative organizations and terrorist hackers.

What is the morality in giving a “licence to kill” to hate speakers with possible dramatic consequence in real life ? Information is a weapon. When it falls into the wrong hands, it can cause main damages. The Nobel Peace prize was attributed to two journalists in 2021- Dmitry Muratov, the editor of *Novaya Gazeta* in Russia, and Maria Ressa, co-founder and editor of *Rappler* in the Philippines (Association of European Journalists’ media freedom). Both journalists were openly opponents to authoritarian regimes - Russia of Putin and Philippines of Duterte. A “cyberwar” is declared with “hidden warriors” emerging from diverse places and countries sharing the same spirit – confusing citizens on a microlevel and democracies on a macrolevel.

The first meaningful examples were identified in Europe in 2015 with the migratory crisis, then then in 2016 with the Brexit and the American elections. During the Coronavirus pandemics, hate speech exploded. Since the war in Ukraine, Pro-Russia propaganda was identified in a series of cyber attacks in Europe. The war in the Middle East was a step further in hate speech. Europe is equipped with a strong judicial basis - the European Union and its Member States are reinforcing their actions to counter efforts by actors who spread disinformation to destabilize our societies and democracies, try to exploit a crisis, and put citizens’ lives at risk.

The Olympics are a main target for propaganda and hate speech. All the elements are gathered – a world show (1 billion viewers/followers), with outstanding emotions at stake. They come from the show and the champions themselves - we can easily identify to these human super-heroes who belong to “our” countries, a national pride. The values attached to sport in general and the Olympics in particular can easily be twisted – a success becomes a main threat. For whom the bell rings (Hemingway, 1940)?

- (1) Karim Amrouche « JO 2024 : face à la polémique sur sa féminité, l’Algérie soutient sa boxeuse Imane Khelif », Le Monde, 2 août 2024-
https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2024/08/02/jo-2024-face-a-la-polemique-sur-sa-feminite-l-algerie-soutient-sa-boxeuse-imane-khelif_6264956_3212.html
- (2) COJO-<https://olympics.com/fr/paris-2024/les-jeux/ceremonies/ceremonie-d-ouverture>
- (3) European Commission, Code of good practices in disinformation (2022)-
https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/protecting-democracy/strengthened-eu-code-practice-disinformation_fr
- (4) Bénédicte Halba « Ideal world - Information, Diversity and Leadership – a centre of excellence for training “smart” leaders to diversity to defend Democracy & European values», working paper , déposé avec l’ Université de Parme (Erasmus + , 2022) et à la Francophonie (OIF, 2022).
- (5) Ernest Hemingway (1940), “Pour qui sonne le glas », Paris : Gallimard
- (6) William Horsley, The Nobel Peace Prize to two journalists makes a difference, 11 October 2021, - <https://voxeurop.eu/en/the-nobel-peace-prize-to-two-journalists-makes-a-difference/>
- (7) Jules et Gédéon Naudet « Au cœur des jeux », France , 2024- **Cérémonie d'ouverture : premiers secrets - Partie 1** - <https://www.france.tv/sport/les-jeux-olympiques/6324884-ceremonie-d-ouverture-premiers-secrets-partie-1.html>
- (8) Opening ceremony of the Olympics in Paris - 26 July 2024-
<https://www.france.tv/sport/les-jeux-olympiques/6326006-ceremonie-d-ouverture-paris-2024.html>