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Editorial

Journalism studies in the GDR is the subject of the historical paper in this edition. Based on Bourdieu's field theory and on records, contemporary witnesses, and publications from the training facility at the University of Leipzig, Michael Meyen examines how the constraints of society and the requirements placed by editorial offices on teaching and research influenced the subject. He concludes that the logic of the academic field and the expertise developed in it relativized the intervention of the ruling Party. The paper goes on to look at why, despite this, GDR journalism studies was so difficult to integrate into West German communication studies following reunification in 1989.

Theresa Möckel investigates which journalistic situations lend themselves to being presented as stories on digital platforms. The author examined news stories and evaluated a sample story in an online survey. Based on its results, she developed a recommendation for the use of stories in journalism.

Hack or entertainer? How do tabloid journalists see themselves and what is their role? Jonas Schützeneder conducted a qualitative survey to find out.

In the essay, Wiebke Möhring takes a look at the local journalism available, the state it is in, and the challenges it faces.

Is there a place for fictionality in journalism? This question has been the subject of extensive discussion in the media industry and among its recipients in recent months, triggered by the falsification scandal at *Der Spiegel*. Gunter Reus and co-author Tanjev Schultz – both former journalists – examine this question from an academic point of view. Yes, there is a place for fictionality in journalism, as long as it is transparent, says Gunter Reus. Tanjev Schultz, on the other hand, argues that there is no place for fictionality in journalism, which should consist purely of factual storytelling.

What do you think about the question of fictionality in journalism? Do you have experience of stories in journalism? Do you see the future of local journalism differently from Wiebke Möhring? Did you experience or play a part in the development of journalism studies in the GDR?

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Papers

Michael Meyen

A contribution to the history of the subject in the Post-War period

Abstract: **This paper investigates the way politics, media practice, and academia interact using the example of journalism studies in the early GDR. How do the social constraints and the requirements of editorial offices influence teaching and research? Based on Bourdieu's field theory and on records, contemporary witness reports, and publications from the training facility in Leipzig, the paper shows that the logic of the academic field and the expertise developed there overruled interventions by the ruling Party. With journalistic practice reliant on staff from Leipzig, its signals were more important than what the SED leadership wanted. However, journalism studies in the GDR was only developed by the students of the first generation of professors. The way the subject was structured, with a focus on style, journalistic methods, genres, and the working process in editorial offices, was a world apart from the social sciences focus of communication studies in West Germany. This also made it impossible to integrate the two after 1989.**

1. Subject of interest, theoretical basis, and sources

Using the example of journalism in the early GDR, this paper investigates the way politics, media practice, and academia interact. How do the social constraints and the requirements of editorial offices influence the structure of teaching and research in degree programs whose names imply an education in the field of public communication (newspaper and communication studies, media studies, journalism studies) and thus also suggest that they can help »to guarantee use of the mass media in the public interest« or at least to provide knowledge that makes »the working of the ›tool‹ more transparent« (Lazarsfeld 1973: 8, 15)? In exaggerated, theoretical terms: How autonomous are academics in a subject that was initially created in the German Empire and the Weimar Republic primarily at the request of practicing organizations (cf. Bruch 1980, Kutsch 2016), only to become a pawn of political and economic interests in the period of National Socialism and beyond (cf. Duchkowitsch/Hausjell/Semrad 2004; Pöttker 2005; Meyen/Wendelin 2008), and that continues to benefit from the increasing importance of the media and the rush of students into such professions to this day (cf. Meyen/Löblich 2006: 33-71)?

The theoretical basis behind this search for answers is Pierre Bourdieu's field theory. The term »field« here is intended to aid understanding of »cultural production« and to prevent a »short circuit« between »text« and »context.« In this theory, fields are »relatively autonomous« spaces that are subject to different laws from the »macro-cosmos,« even if they cannot be entirely separate from the constraints it creates. However, according to the theory, external requirements (such as a party's desire for legitimation, a specific need to solve a problem in society, or suggestions from journalism) »only take effect through communication of the field.« The »logic of the field« breaks through such constraints and puts them in a specific form (Bourdieu 1998: 17-22). Since Bourdieu conceived the scientific field as a social world in which there are power relations like anywhere else, autonomy became »one of the big questions« for him: Which »resistances« and which »mechanisms« can the micro-cosmos of the academic field or sub-field (e.g. journalism studies) use to remove itself from external constraints »that are exercised through the origin and scope of the available money, regulations, research assignments, contractual provisions, etc.?« The ultimate goal here (and for Bourdieu one of the »crucial differences« between the disciplines) is »to only follow one's own, internal stipulations« (ibid.: 18f.).

At first glance, it might seem unusual to want to examine this problem using the GDR as an example. However, the main objection can be reformulated into a research question based on Bourdieu. Because the »objective relationships between the actors« determine the room to maneuver of people or institutions in every social field (cf. Bourdieu 1998: 17-25), the level of autonomy and the relationships to policymakers become the subject of investigation alongside the actors, the hierarchies, and the logic of the field: Which actors were involved? Who was in charge of whom? And what capital was needed in order to rise up the hierarchy? Another reason why this is interesting is the fact that the social position (the capital one possesses compared to others) also determines the habitus. For Bourdieu, the habitus is not determined at birth, but comes from a person's experiences. These (individual and collective) experiences lead to »systems of permanent dispositions« that work as »structuring structures« (Bourdieu 1976: 165). The habitus concept is Bourdieu's attempt to overcome the antagonism between structure and action. As such, it not only allows the work of scientists to be examined in different historical contexts (because they can be located within one of the large, systematic social theories, cf. Park 2013), but also offers a link between socialization and specialist understanding on the one hand, and the structures of the relevant scientific field and the social space as a whole on the other. Largely unnoticed by the actors, the habitus generates behavior that corresponds to the logic of the field, thus appears »sensible« to them (the actors), and is therefore documented in biographical statements with no significant inhibitions.

Despite this, even at second glance, it is worth considering whether Bourdieu's assumptions (developed in France in the 1960s and 1970s) are truly suitable for examining the beginnings of journalism studies in the GDR. There is no doubt that journalism was part of the political field there and that politicians pulled the strings. This means that, if there were any doubt, the material published was based not on journalistic principles (e.g. information to help with orientation in a complex society), but on what appeared to best support the latest goals of the respective publisher (cf. Meyen/Fiedler 2011; Fiedler 2014). In education, this influence was broken by academic logic on the one hand. For example, Emil Dusiska, Dean of the Journalism Studies Faculty in Leipzig from 1967 and then Director of Journalism Studies until 1978, failed in his attempt to establish an Institute of Journalism outside the university, with its own right to award doctorates (cf. Knipping 2017). On the other hand, current literature assumes that there was strong »SED intervention in communication studies« and that the Party's ideas on the content and organization of such studies was based »on the example of journalistic practice in the Soviet Union.« »The objective was to educate comprehensively trained, politically indoctrinated cadres« (Jedraszczyk 2017a).

This paper begins by showing how the logic of the academic field succeeded in overruling such external influences. These influences could not have been as strong as suggested in the literature, not least because politicians in the GDR had greater priorities than journalist training and simply did not have the expertise to conduct detailed monitoring. The same applies to an even greater extent to the Soviet Union, where the academic discipline of the same name was also in its infancy and would have had to build on a very different tradition both at universities and in journalism. The second hypothesis of this paper argues that the signals from journalistic practice in the GDR were far more important than the specifications of the SED's leaders or even orientation on a role model (of whatever kind) in Moscow or Leningrad. In the GDR, one relied on staff from Leipzig and therefore did everything possible to ensure that its graduates had all the skills they would need in their work at the editorial office.

The first generation of professors, however, was not yet in a position to invent a kind of Journalism Studies »made in the GDR« – as the third hypothesis argues. Unlike Walter Hagemann in the Federal Republic, for example (cf. Wiedemann 2012), Hermann Budzislawski, Wieland Herzfelde, Wilhelm Eildermann, and Heinrich Bruhn (to name but four) lacked the necessary academic ambition and the belief in the Party's journalistic ideal (Budzislawski) or the educational background that was needed, even in the GDR, to succeed at university. The journalistic exercise system – the core of the practical curriculum until 1990 – was only developed by three students of these founding fathers. This is similar to the situation in West Germany, where it was also the first generation of graduates in the Post-War period that determined what ›good‹ media, journalism, and communication studies look like (to this day) (cf. Meyen 2007; Löblich 2010).

The fourth hypothesis is directly linked to this: The idea that there were two entirely different subjects (one with a focus on style, journalistic methods, genres, and working processes in editorial offices; the other an empirical social science) can be explained by the differences in the logic of the social spaces in general and the political field in particular. This also means that Journalism Studies in the GDR was by no means ›better‹ or ›worse‹ than the subject that developed from the same tradition on the other side of the German border (key points: foundation of the Institute of Newspaper Studies [Institut für Zeitungskunde] in Leipzig in 1916; cautious academization at the end of the Weimar Republic; instrumentalization by National Socialism, cf. Averbeck 1999; Koenen 2016). Journalism studies in the GDR was different from communication studies in West Germany, which is why it was impossible to integrate after 1989 (cf. Meyen/Wiedemann 2017). Judgments on academic quality always depend in part on the relevant paradigms and thus on the interests pursued by those making them (cf. Kuhn 1973).

Apart from the literature, this argument is based on three types of source: – records from the media steering apparatus [Medienlenkungsapparat]) in the Federal Archive and the training facilities in Leipzig (faculty, section) in the university archive; publications by the training facilities in Leipzig; and discussions with contemporary witnesses and personal records. Six lecturers (in alphabetical order: Fritz Beckert, Werner Michaelis, Hans Poerschke, Klaus Preisigke, Karl-Heinz-Röhr, Wulf Skaun) were interviewed for this paper, the majority of whom studied Journalism Studies in Leipzig (exceptions: Beckert, Michaelis, cf. Meyen 2015), and Ingeborg Schmidt, a student at the Faculty from 1954 to 1958 and a protagonist in Brigitte Klump's novel *Das rote Kloster* (1991), later married to Siegfried Schmidt, lecturer in the Journalism Studies Section. Interviews were also conducted with Franz Knipping (Dean of the Faculty of Journalism Studies from 1965 to 1967) and Heinz Halbach (professor from 1977 to 1992) – both also former students (cf. Meyen 2017). A catalog of professors, painstakingly compiled by Hans-Dieter Daniel (2015), was also consulted.

This paper brings together multiple source editions and publications by the author on the topic (cf. Meyen 2015, 2017; Meyen/Wiedemann 2017) and is intended to provide inspiration to examine the history of Journalism Studies in the GDR in more detail. It is no substitute for such a history, not least because looking at the topic from the point of view of Bourdieu inevitably shifts the focus onto the field structures (relations between positions), the habitus of the actors, and the field autonomy and thus enables only a fleeting look at the content of teaching and research.

2. Hermann Budzislawski: An »American« as the founding father

Brigitte Klump was born in to a farming family in Glöwen, gained her high school diploma in Havelberg in 1953, worked as a trainee at weekly paper *Der Freie Bauer* in Berlin for a year, and was then assigned a place to study at the Faculty in Leipzig, despite actually wanting to study drama and become a critic. Her interview for the Press Association was the first time she saw Hermann Budzislawski, the Dean of the Journalism Studies Faculty. »A man with a face of stone. A bow tie around his neck.« According to Klump, Budzislawski asked her what she saw as the role of the newspaper, expecting, »as he told me later, that I would argue in Leninist terms that the newspaper should be a collective agitator, propagandist, an agitator, the mouthpiece of the party.« Since she was not »familiar« with »press theory,« she thought briefly and then reported how the farmers used newspapers: to wrap their sandwiches or on the toilet. »Everyone laughed,« and Brigitte Klump was accepted (Klump 1991: 27, 35f.).

As is often the case with such memories, the others in the story are long gone. At that interview in summer 1954, Hermann Budzislawski might not even have known that he would later become the first Dean of the new Faculty. Franz Knipping, a student at the Institute of Media and Newspaper Studies in Leipzig from 1951, research assistant from 1954, and then Dean himself from 1965, recounted shortly before his death that another professor (Wilhelm Eildermann) had »already prepared his inaugural address as Dean. [...] It was all ready on his desk. Suddenly, the decision was made to choose ›the American,‹ as Budzislawski was known back then. It was a complete surprise to everyone« (Knipping 2017).

Eildermann or Budzislawski: Looking back, there is no question. Born in 1901, the »American« brought with him not only a doctorate (awarded in Tübingen in 1923) but the aura of a well-travelled journalist. He had written for Ossietzky's *Weltbühne*, headed the *Neue Weltbühne* during his exile, and then made a career in the USA (cf. Schmidt 2017). His return to East Germany was a question of prestige for the SED. Budzislawski had »a big name as an anti-fascist journalist,« wrote Willi Lehmann, Head of Personnel at the German Administration for People's Education in the Soviet occupation zone, in his recommendation on April 22, 1948. Having remained true to his convictions during his exile, he was one of the »very few progressive specialists in the international press that [came] into question for a professorship at the Faculty of Social Sciences«.[1] In his application to the Ministry of People's Education in Saxony on February 12, 1948, Friedrich

1 Federal Archive Berlin (BA), DR 3-B 14978 (Hermann Budzislawski), Bl. 22.

Behrens, Dean of the Faculty in Leipzig, also referred to the competition. He claimed that Budzislawski had two other offers – one from Berlin and one »from another German university«.[2]

The candidate knew how valuable he was. Budzislawski was in the same league as Ernst Bloch and Julius Lips. The trio were awarded »special remuneration for returners«.[3] When Budzislawski became the first of the three new stars from America to arrive in Leipzig in fall 1948, he also used this argument to reduce the rent on a »beautiful« house in Eutritzsch from 300 to 200 Marks per month.[4] But the journalist was not to become an academic. Although he gave lectures (initially on the »history of public opinion in Europe« and the »techniques of journalism«), offered seminars and practical sessions, and expanded the (still tiny) Institute of Media Studies, which had one assistant (Hans Meergans) and one secretary in fall 1949, he also continued to do what he did best. His radio comment show, broadcast every Thursday, was the »most listened to« on the Leipzig station, according to a letter he wrote in November 1949 to Helmut Holtzhauer, Minister for People's Education in Dresden, to back up his request for a staff car. Further arguments included his many »lectures and speeches« and the Provisional Volkskammer [People's Assembly], in which Budzislawski had sat as a representative since October 7, 1949 and, if one believes his own accounts, »more or less« led the Cultural Association group.[5] Its nominal chair was Klaus Gysi.

»We all had respect for Budzislawski,« said Ingeborg Schmidt, a classmate of Brigitte Klump, in Leipzig in early 2017. »We were proud to have him with us. He held a two-hour lecture every week for two years.« What about the other professors? »Heinrich Bruhn and Wilhelm Eildermann were deserving comrades for whom a position needed to be found. I didn't learn a single word from them, but I am not cross about it today.« The post-war generation needed the old fighters (the »mistrustful patriarchs«) as »political father figures« (cf. Schüle/Ahbe/Gries 2006). The communists, many of whom had been fighting fascism since the Weimar Republic and especially during the Third Reich, suffering personal sacrifices such as imprisonment or exile, were beyond all reproach – not least because many of the younger ones had »participated« in some way themselves and only became part of the winning side by joining the Free German Youth [the official youth movement of the GDR] (cf. Niethammer 1994).

We will hear more of Bruhn and Eildermann later. When it comes to Budzislawski, reports from contemporary witnesses largely match up. Heinz Halbach, born in 1930 and enlisted from the Hitler Youth in Prague to the last German line

2 Friedrich Behrens to the Ministry of People's Education, February 12, 1948. ibid., Bl. 12.
3 ibid., Bl. 46.
4 Rocholl, State Government of Saxony, to Erich Zeigner, Mayor of Leipzig, October 1, 1948 (draft); Zeigner to Rocholl, October 14, 1948. ibid., Bl. 64, 68.
5 Budzislawski to Holtzhauer, November 11, 1949. ibid., Bl. 89.

of defense just before the end of the War, had heard him on the radio while he was still taking care of young farm workers. »I heard the polished way he spoke. But I was especially impressed by his arguments. You didn't read stuff like that anywhere else. It was unique to him. When I heard that he was teaching Media Studies, I was pleased to be allowed to learn from him« (Halbach 2017). Budzislawski certainly enjoyed respect and pride (Ingeborg Schmidt). Some even venerated him – such as Karl-Heinz Röhr, who studied Journalism Studies from 1956 to 1960 before joining the Faculty as »a kind of adjutant« to Budzislawski. »Budzislawski bridges the gap between classic academics and Media Studies teachers. Well-read, analytical, creative, stimulating, multilingual« (Röhr 2015). However, barely conducting any academic work, Budzislawski was hardly a suitable academic role model. *Sozialistische Journalistik*, published under his name in 1966, was more the work of his staff. Karl-Heinz Röhr, who is honored to this effect in the foreword (Budzislawski 1966: 10): »Very little of it was down to him personally. We had to do all the preliminary work. He then tore it all up, dictated something and wrote as well. The name at the end was Budzislawski. He had a way with words, far removed from the German of officialdom« (Röhr 2015).

The claim that Budzislawski wanted Brigitte Klump to quote Lenin's theory of the press in summer 1954 does not seem to fit in with anything else reported on him. Hans Poerschke, himself a Professor of Journalism Studies in Leipzig from 1983 to 1990, carved out the two fronts that squared up to one another in the Faculty's predecessor institution as early as 1952: On one side were deserved KPD fighters like Wilhelm Eildermann, who saw the press exclusively as an instrument of the party in line with Leninist-Stalinist theory; on the other Budzislawski, Dietrich Schmidt, and (later) Willy Walther, for whom newspapers were more than political institutions, related to the literature and the children of the modern society (Poerschke 2010: 159f.). Hans Poerschke has thus condensed this conflict into a simple equation: instrument of the party vs. reflection of reality. Its referee after August 13, 1961 was the leadership of the university wing of the Party in meetings on the scandal surrounding the student cabaret show *Rat der Spötter*, [Council of satirists], which demanded »unconditional submission to the media policy of the Party leadership (Poerschke 2010: 176). Suppressing information, twisting information to serve one's own interests, inventing a world intended to get its own citizens enthusiastic about socialism and that offers no point of attack for the West (cf. Fiedler 2014): all a world away from Budzislawski' theory of reflection.

And this success story of an »American« in Leipzig had another blot on its copybook – just like the stories of many of the emigrants who returned to East Germany from the West (the USA, France, the UK) after the War. In August 1949, less than a year after Budzislawski's arrival in Leipzig, Willi Lehmann at the German Administration for People's Education received a less than gushing report from the University. Although Budzislawski had joined the Party, »particular participation in the work of the local group has not been seen,« wrote Ernst Eichler, who had been »Curator« – a kind of political minder for the higher positions at the University – since October 1948. »No clear judgment on him can be delivered, neither from a political nor an academic point of view.«.[6] The first assessment from Albert Norden, Head of the Press Department at the Office for Information, in January 1950 was also sobering: just ten graduates in summer 1949, with »not entirely satisfactory« examination results. Although another 30 students were expected to graduate in fall 1950, »Budzislawski [had] not yet succeeded in linking the work of the Institute with the democratic press.«[7]

It can therefore have come as no great surprise to the »American« when he was informed on November 22, 1950 of the SED Central Committee's decision to restructure the Institute of Media Studies without him. Budzislawski had been fighting a losing battle. »I saw my appointment in Leipzig as a mission to play a significant role in training practical journalists, given that I am a practitioner myself,« he wrote on April 13, 1950 in a letter to the Department of Universities at the Ministry of People's Education in Berlin. But, he continued, there was a lack of sufficient staff and, especially, orientation. There was no reply from Albert Norden, whom Budzislawski had known in the USA, nor from Hermann Axen, another emigrant to the West who had been in the upper echelons of the Party as Head of the Department of Mass Agitation since 1949. Budzislawski spoke to Gerhart Eisler, Georg Stibi, Hans Mahle, Kurt Heiß[8] – a who's who of the new media world in East Berlin. He developed study and examination regulations[9] and, having received no response from the Party leadership for some weeks, sent the paper to Paul Wandel, Minister for People's Education, on June 16, 1950.[10] It was all in vain – even though Budzislawski referred to experience of the Soviet Union in journalist training and even offered to »return more to the area of theory«.[11] He was allowed to keep his title, continue speaking on the radio, and keep hoping to stand up in front of students once again, but his Institute was closed at the end of 1950.

3. Budzislawski's colleagues: Careers on the back of the Party

When Hermann Budzislawski interviewed applicant Brigitte Klump in summer 1954, it was the end of three-and-a-half turbulent years for the »American« and journalist training in Leipzig. A commission from Berlin had examined all stu-

6 Budzislawski to Sindermann, November 24, 1962. In: BA, SAPMO, DY 30/ IV 2/9.02/ 67, Bl. 20.
7 Halle to Norden, January 6, 1950. In: BA, DR 3, 5962, no page number.
8 Budzislawski to Kippenhagen (sic!), April 13, 1950. ibid.
9 Draft study and examination regulations for Communication Studies students under Gewifa Leipzig, May 1950. In: BA, DR 3-B 14978 (Hermann Budzislawski), Bl. 96-100.
10 Budzislawski to Wandel, June 16, 1950. In: BA, DR 3, 5962, no page number.
11 Budzislawski to Kippenhagen (see Note 8).

dents from November 27 to 29, 1950. Already active in the background was Eduard Schulz, who enjoyed the kind of stellar career that is only possible in times of radical changes in power, perhaps even only during the formative years of the GDR. The first record of Schulz is from November 20, 1950 in a letter to the Ministry. The header on the writing paper reads *Friedenspost*, the weekly newspaper of the Society for German-Soviet Friendship, where Schulz had been an editor since 1949. There could be no doubt that he was the new big man in Leipzig. What about Budzislawski? He would continue operations until the Ministry closed his Institute, before holding talks on the »history of the press in capitalist countries.« »As far as we can see, there is no question of further lectures for him.« Schulz himself announced lectures about the »history of the Soviet and people's democratic press,« demanded a »Lectureship for Practical Journalism Studies and Newspaper Studies,« and mentioned in passing that Hermann Axen had proposed Georg Krausz – deskman at *Neues Deutschland* since October and formerly in the Party apparatus – for the role.[12]

The records of how many students passed their examinations at the end of 1950 are unclear. When Eduard Schulz wrote his letter in November, there were apparently 101 registered students, of whom 55 were in their first semester.[13] An instruction from the Minister for People's Education dated January 8, 1951 mentions 80 students.[14] This is similar to the figures submitted by the new Institute for Media Studies and Newspaper Studies in early 1952 (78 transferred, eleven left the University), in a report that is scathing about the first Budzislawski students and their professor. They are described as »bourgeois and petit bourgeois elements« with unclear professional goals and sporadic attendance at lectures. »What was presented to students in these lectures was un-Marxist at the very least. It was based on the methods of the Schools of Journalism. Attempts were made to apply these ›theories‹ to our role and circumstances.« The report also names names, for example Carl N. Warren, who had published a book on news factors in 1934 (cf. Warren 1934).[15]

Eduard Schulz was already history by this time, having been fired without notice at the end of June 1951 following »accusations of rape« (Schemmert/Siemens 2013: 210). Hermann Budzislawski had informed Gerhard Harig, Minister for Universities, as far back as May 14 that he had heard »things« about Schulz that would »rule out collaboration.« This letter was triggered by the situation of the »American« – although he was still receiving his salary, »my professorship

12 Schulz to Kippenhahn, November 20, 1950. In: BA, DR 3, 5962, no page number.
13 ibid.
14 Minister for People's Education, Instruction No. 81 of January 8, 1951, relates to foundation of a Department of Communication and Newspaper Studies at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Leipzig. In: University Archive Leipzig (UAL), Phil Fak B 01_14_50, Vol. 2, Bl. 7.
15 Heinrich Bruhn; Horst Illmayer: Overview of the conditions for the development of press cadres at the University of Leipzig, January 11, 1952. In: BA Berlin, NY 5251/63 (Eildermann legacy), Bl. 206-224.

is floating in an airless space.« He claimed not to know whether he would be teaching at all in the summer semester, which had long since begun, and what he should prepare or announce.[16] Two months later, the situation had not changed and Budzislawski wrote again to Harig. Fred Oelßner, Propaganda Secretary in the Zentralkomittee, however, had by then informed him that the Party continued to view him as an academic teacher and that a »restructuring of Institute-related matters [was] imminent.«[17] At the end of that hot summer, this »restructuring« was entrusted to Wilhelm Eildermann, one of the two professors from whom Ingeborg Schmidt »didn't learn a single word.« The other, Heinrich Bruhn, had been appointed professor in February 1951 and would remain in post until January 1, 1977. Neither had had anything to do with the University before.

Bruhn, born in Holstein in 1913 as the son of a carpenter and a laborer and thus one of the youngest ›distrustful patriarchs‹ in the generational structure of the GDR (cf. Schüle/Ahbe/Gries 2006), had contact with the labor movement early on. His road into the KPD began in the youth wings of both the Party and the Spartacus League. In 1936 he was sentenced to two and a half years' imprisonment for »preparation for high treason,« some of which time he spent in the Fuhlsbüttel concentration camp together with his wife and mother. Enlisted in 1939, he was captured by the Americans in early 1945. After his release in May of that year, Heinrich Bruhn first became a policeman in the Mansfeld operations, then a party official (Secretary of the SED District Association Hettstedt), and finally an deskman at the daily newspaper *Freiheit* in 1948. Just as for Eduard Schulz, things move quickly: delegated to the State Party School in 1949; retained there as a teacher; from June 1950 head of the school for young deskmen at the SED's Zentralkomitee in Kleinmachnow; after a single course there, called to the University »with full responsibility for teaching the subject ›History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (B).‹« The leap in his income was also impressive: from 720 Marks in Kleinmachnow to 2800 in Leipzig. A glance at Bruhn's personnel records shows that this decision was made in a hurry. When the University requested the appointment as of February 1 retrospectively on March 1, 1951, the personnel file was not even available in Leipzig.[18]

It must have been difficult for Heinrich Bruhn to enjoy this lightning-fast career, with the Schulz case breathing down his neck and later with students like Brigitte Klump, who were well aware that he did not have a PhD. »I did not obtain a professorship under false pretenses,« said Bruhn to Brigitte Klump (1991: 59) in a private conversation with the student, probably during her first year in 1954/55. »I was given it for my services to the labor movement.« The files show that Bruhn

16 Budzislawski to Harig, May 14, 1951. In: BA, DR 3-B 14978 (Hermann Budzislawski), Bl. 102.
17 Budzislawski to Harig, July 11, 1951. ibid., B. 103.
18 Personnel record for Heinrich Bruhn, dated March 20, 1951; résumé, no date; University of Leipzig to the State Secretariat for Universities, March 1, 1951. In: UAL, PA 356 (Heinrich Bruhn), Bl. 1f., 9, 30.

requested a transfer to the Kasernierte Volkspolizei [Barracked People's Police] in spring 1955. Cadre instructor Schöne writes that the Professor had »great difficulty in meeting the requirements of the University.« His »extensive, politically important activities« made it difficult for him to »learn scientific working methods and skills.«[19] Bruhn had been a member of the Volkskammer, in the FDGB group, since October 1954, just as Budzislawski would be in the next parliament. The Party needed Bruhn in education, however, and in 1956 posted him to the Party University in Moscow, where he received a degree in social sciences in 1959. It was not a PhD, but at least he was no longer the »professor without a high school diploma« who taught Brigitte Klump (1991: 59).

Wilhelm Eildermann, born in Bremen 1897 to a tobacco worker and a housewife, also came to Leipzig without a high school diploma, albeit with decades of practical experience. Having started at the *Bremer Bürgerzeitung* as a trainee at just 15, he worked for various KPD papers in the 1920s and became Editor in Chief of the *Tribüne* in Magdeburg in 1929, before shortly afterwards being sentenced to 21 months' imprisonment. A »wandering orator« (as the older Eildermann said of the younger in 1977), steeled by illegality, imprisonment, and escape, he joined the editorial office of the newspaper *Freies Deutschland* in Moscow in 1944 and finally the anti-fascist schools. The fact that this man led the SED leadership's press service after his return to East Berlin fits perfectly into his life story. His professorship in Leipzig did not. The Party sent Wilhelm Eildermann to the University in late summer 1951, because shooting star Eduard Schulz had burned out much too quickly.

The poor decision to appoint Eduard Schulz had consequences that went far beyond the appointment of rescuer Wilhelm Eildermann. Plans to expand the Institute of Media and Newspaper Studies into a faculty or even a separate university had to be suddenly put on hold. On May 2, 1951, Heinrich Bruhn and Eduard Schulz met representatives of the University, the Ministry, and the Departments of Agitation and Propaganda in the SED Zentralkomittee in Leipzig to map out the future of journalist training in the GDR. They found that there was not sufficient personnel, funding, or time for a totally new facility subordinate only to the Office for Information. They decided to scale down: a separate faculty with a boarding school in Leipzig, free from the academic shackles that a Philosophical Faculty would place on future journalists, even in the socialist GDR. Appointments, doctorates, post-doctorates: Why should the other disciplines have a say when it came to the heralds of the new fatherland? Assignment to the Philosophical Faculty was »considered impractical for political reasons,« said the small group on May 2, 1951. Two weeks later, Secretary of State Harig back-pedaled and made a hand-written addition to the minutes of the meeting: »Given the

19 Schöne, cadre instructor: Assessment of comrade Professor Heinrich Bruhn, April 29, 1955. ibid., Bl. 38f.

unresolved situation in Leipzig (Prof. E. Schulz), conversion into a faculty is now impossible.«[20]

Almost exactly three years later (on May 14, 1954), the time came. Wilhelm Eildermann sent another letter to the Secretary of State, applying to set up a Faculty of Journalism Studies. In 1951, he wrote, this step had not been considered (a complete lie, as Gerhard Harig must have known) »because there were no academic teams, because there was not complete clarity about the scope and sequence of the training, and because it was not yet possible to tell whether the Institute would fulfil the task placed upon it.« Now, three years later, he continued, it was clear that this constellation »was not able to accommodate the particular features of Journalism Studies.« Eildermann indicated the otherwise »not usual entrance examination,« the »particular type of promotion« that this examination necessitated, the »practical training« that »in individual cases« had demanded »the appointment of experienced experts from press practice, who did not always hold a university degree,« and the »particularly intensive political and moral education that is made easier in a boarding school, in part due to the pooling of students in one place.«[21]

The applicant was aware of the debt he owed the zeitgeist. The »individual cases« Eildermann mentions were the norm in Leipzig. Wieland Herzfelde was the only one of the professors to have attended a university. We will return to him shortly. Karl Jakobi, who taught »contemporary press« for eighteen months from September 1951, came from the old KPD, like Bruhn and Eildermann. He was Editor in Chief of the *Landes-Zeitung* in Schwerin when he received the call from the University. In May 1953, the SED Zentralkomittee sent him to Magdeburg as Editor in Chief of the *Volksstimme*[22]. Hedwig Voegt, lecturer in the history of literature from fall 1953, was a trained telegraph operator, entered the Communist Party in 1925, and was imprisoned by the National Socialists in various jails including Lübeck-Lauerhof and Fuhlsbüttel. In February 1954, Vladimir Andrejevich Ruban arrived from Kiev, bringing, if one can believe Wilhelm Eildermann, »the experience of Soviet academia to Leipzig.«[23] Ruban stayed until the end of July 1956. His topic was the history of the press at home. »They were not actually teachers with academic training,« said Heinz Halbach fifty years later of the habitus of his teachers. »None of them had any idea about systematic research. They had experience of life and had been politically active. That was all. That was why they picked out people from among the students who they thought could become

20 Felix-Heinrich Gentzen: Report on the meeting on May 2, 1951 at the Institute of Communication Studies Leipzig, May 9, 1951. In: BA, DR 3/5962, no page number.

21 Eildermann to Harig, May 14, 1954: Application for faculty foundation. In: UAL, Phil. Fak B 01 14 50, Vol. 2, Bl. 61-66, here 62-64.

22 BA, DR 3-B 15062 (Karl Jakobi).

23 Eildermann to Vice Chancellor Georg Mayer, September 4, 1954. In: UAL, Journ. Fak 28, Bl. 2-7, hier 4.

academics. All the seminars at the time were led by assistants like me. There just were not many assistants« (Halbach 2017).

Those selected were not really asked. Heinz Halbach: »In July 1954, Wilhelm Eildermann invited seven or eight people from our year over and said: You will be working here as assistants from September 1. I put up my hand straight away and said: No, I do not agree. I do not feel suitable. Eildermann said: That may be, but the Zentralkomittee Department of Agitation has already confirmed your appointments.« That was the end of Halbach's dream to do »something sensible,« such as study properly or write for the newspaper. »Later there were commissions who spoke to every graduate,« says Heinz Halbach. »But in 1954, nobody asked. You were appointed and that was it.« From then on, Halbach had »a new role almost every year«: history of the press, foreign press, distance learning (cf. Halbach 2017). It was the same story for his colleagues of the same age. An academic career was not (yet) an option – because they had gone to university to prepare for journalism; because that in itself was more than the families of these working class children could have imagined; because there were no academic role models to provide orientation. Journalism Studies ›made in Leipzig‹ was yet to be invented (cf. Meyen/Wiedemann 2017). Field autonomy was a long way off.

The reputation of the young discipline (or, with Bourdieu, its scientific capital) began to suffer under this mix of young bucks who taught students more or less of their own accord and old KPD warriors who had never been inside a university until they were appointed professors. Just like in West Germany, where renowned practitioners like Walter Hagemann (Münster), Fritz Eberhard (FU Berlin), Hanns Braun, and Otto B. Roegele (Munich) dragged media and newspaper studies out of the mire of National Socialist involvement but were not able to celebrate the first post-doctorate (Kurt Koszyk at the FU) until 1968, the new addition in the GDR was also cut from long-established disciplines. Although the party leadership at the University was in favor of founding a faculty with the right to award doctorates in July 1954, it took the concerns («no professors with post-doctorates«) seriously and asked that the comrades work more closely with the university management and the State Secretariat, instead of isolating themselves »as in the past« and dealing »only with the specialist department in the Zentralkomittee.«[24]

Despite this, the Faculty of Journalism Studies was not granted the right to award doctorates until 1960.[25] Before that, the State Secretariat decided »on a case by case basis«. Their justification was that there were too few PhDs and professors in the Faculty's Academic Council.[26] The Party could not help either – not even

24 SED Party organization at the University of Leipzig to the State Secretariat for Universities, July 22, 1954. In: BA, DR 3, 5958 (no page number).

25 Cf. Faculty of Journalism Studies: Regulations for doctorate process at the Faculty of Journalism Studies at the University of Leipzig, January 7, 1960. In: UAL, Journ. Fak 44, Bl. 3-10.

26 Schad, State Secretariat for Universities, to Dr. Karras, Head of Department, December 4, 1956. In: BA, DR 3, 4089 (no page number).

Franz Dahlem, Deputy to the Secretary of State and (more importantly), following his rehabilitation, member of the SED Zentralkomittee from February 1957. Even in a dictatorship of the proletariat, a »university tradition« cannot be created overnight.[27] The plan for a University of Journalism Studies in Berlin, developed by Emil Dusiska in the second half of the 1960s and (without saying it) building on the first attempt in the early 1959s, explicitly included the right to award doctorates.[28]

Appointments would also have been easier to push through at this Dusiska-run university than they were in Leipzig. While even in the GDR other disciplines were sending three-candidate shortlists to the Ministry from the mid-1950s, as is the procedure in other German states,[29] Journalism Studies tended to have only one candidate – who did not really meet the usual standards. One example to illustrate this shortage of staff: When Hermann Budzislawski suggested to the Vice Chancellor on August 11, 1959 that Arnold Hoffmann be appointed as a lecturer in image journalism studies, he really had to beg – the candidate had only just been awarded his first degree, through long-distance learning while working as the Editor in Chief of the illustrated paper *DDR*. A »new field,« wrote Budzislawski, so there were barely any »experts,« let alone any »with an appropriate academic career« behind them. That meant, he continued, that one »very often [had to] use tried-and-tested practitioners, in order to lay the foundation.« Luckily, Budzislawski went on, the Zentralkomittee had now recommended just such a person (a suggestion with power) and the Vice Chancellor should decide as quickly as possible, as Hoffmann would »otherwise be used elsewhere.« Even in the tenth year of the GDR, good people with the right attitude and a clean record were hard to come by. Budzislawski offered Arnold Hoffmann the chance of a doctorate within two years.[30] The fact that it actually took three and a half years should not be viewed negatively – given that the average time between graduation and completion of a doctorate was eight years (according to figures from 1965), it was almost a sprint.[31] Be it professorships or lectureships, the problem of formal qualifications among the journalism teachers in Leipzig remained a problem. 15 years later, the triumvirate of University, Ministry, and Party would be discussing not the doctorates, but the lack of post-doctorates.[32]

27 State Secretary for Universities to Franz Dahlem, February 1, 1957. ibid. cf. Karras to Georg Mayer, April 30, 1957. ibid.

28 cf. Submission to the Secretariat of the SED Zentralkomittee regarding transfer of the Journalism Studies Section of the University of Leipzig from Leipzig to Berlin and its restructuring as a »University of Journalism Studies« of the GDR, July 15, 1970. Developed by Georg Förster, signed by Werner Lamberz. Not attended to in Secretariat. In: BA, SAPMO, DY 30/5462, Bl. 203-207, here 203.

29 cf. Budzislawski to Georg Mayer, November 24, 1956. In: BA, DR 3-B, 13898 (Teubner), Bl. 27f.

30 Hermann Budzislawski to Georg Mayer, August 11, 1959. In: BA Berlin, DR 3-B, 11549 (Arnold Hoffmann), Bl. 37f.

31 Faculty of Journalism Studies, Party leadership: Additions to the cadre analysis of March 17, 1965, 5. Mai 1965. In: UAL, Journ. Fak. 43, Bl. 14-19, hier 14.

32 cf. for example note in minutes from Hans Piazza (Prorector for Social Sciences) about meeting with Minister Schirmer on September 14, 1976 on the Secretariat resolution of December 3, 1975. In: UAL, SJ 2, Bl. 3-7.

The biggest misunderstanding in the founding team in Leipzig was Wieland Herzfelde, who knew Hermann Budzislawski from the USA and came to the University of Leipzig in 1949 on the same ticket as the future Dean. A founding member of the KPD, he was best known as a publishing legend. The Malik and Aurora publishing houses were worshipped by the German left – but that did not make Wieland Herzfelde a professor. Gerhard Menz, who was entirely impartial (cf. Jedraszczyk 2017b), voiced doubts in an appraisal as early as August 1948 that a three-page review (the only academic publication by the candidate that could be found) was enough to appoint someone a Professor of Literature, »quite apart from the fact that this also entails academic teaching ability, for which there is currently no evidence«.[33] The Ministry in Dresden took a similar view in late 1949, but knew that the promise made to the famous comrade could not be retracted »without insult«.[34]

Herzfelde and his professorship moved to the Institute for Media and Newspaper Studies on September 1, 1952. Just six months later, Director Eildermann asked the Vice Chancellor to retract this decision. He had only heard about it shortly before Christmas, he said, and until then had assumed that, although Herzfelde would be giving lectures at the Institute (about world literature and about literature and art critique), he would otherwise remain in German Studies.[35] However, because that Department was pleased to have got rid of their ›cuckoo in the nest,‹ the Faculty of Journalism Studies was stuck with him. Although the Institute Director and the Dean constantly complained about their colleague's laziness and incompetence to the responsible State Secretariat in Berlin, it was not until fall 1958 that Herzfelde agreed to take a leave of absence until his retirement.

Daniel Siemens (2013: 32-37) painted a picture of an »outsider« whom the GDR needed as a big name but then stripped of any form of influence at the University, perhaps even with anti-Semitic motives. The records tell a different story. Here, Wieland Herzfelde was a man who saw the professorship as well-deserved reward for his services. Unlike Bruhn and Eildermann, he did not even make efforts to meet the University's standards, thus annoying his colleagues. As early as summer 1953, Wilhelm Eildermann had to promise the State Secretariat that he would improve Herzfelde's lectures through open critique, rather than continuing to allow students and teaching staff to »grumble behind his back.« All those involved knew that the Professor would literally be »lying on the street« if this professorship was abolished.[36] Budzislawski made many interventions in Berlin. Two examples: »Collaboration with Prof. Herzfelde becomes impossible as soon

33 Appraisal of Gerhard Menz, August 18, 1948. In: UAL, PA 573 (Herzfelde), Bl. 15.
34 Rocholl, State Government of Saxony, to the Ministry of People's Education in the GDR, Universities and Science Departments, November 15, 1949. In: BA, DR 3-B, 15048 (Herzfelde), Bl. 27.
35 Eildermann to the Vice Chancellor, February 28, 1953. ibid., Bl. 77.
36 Zeuske, note in records regarding a conversation with Wilhelm Eildermann, July 31, 1953. ibid., Bl. 79.

as he is asked to fulfill the obligations of his office« (Budzislawski on December 8, 1955)[37] and »Herzfelde has never conducted research and has no idea what it is« (Budzislawski on August 1, 1958).[38] Students and staff could not fail to notice the conflict. »I really did not understand what was going on,« says Heinz Halbach, looking back. »These famous professors, famous anti-fascists, both Jewish. And at war with each other. I tried to mediate, but I did not succeed« (Halbach 2017).

4. Content of training: Journalism Studies moves towards a practical course

The literature continues to maintain the idea that the Faculty of Journalism Studies at the University of Leipzig was founded in 1954 based on the »Moscow model« (Jedraszczyk 2017a). Moscow State University had had a Faculty of Journalism Studies since 1952; it had been set up as a spin-off from the Faculty of Philology, where the Department of Journalism Studies had been established in 1947. Until then, it had been common practice in the Soviet Union to train young journalists at Party schools, with no academic background at all (cf. Zassursky 2016). Journalists were simply Communist Party officials.

Having worked in the Soviet Union for a long time, Eduard Schulz and Wilhelm Eildermann would have been familiar with this system. Like Hermann Budzislawski, both repeatedly referred to the motherland of socialism in concept papers and letters – rhetorical accompaniment intended to gain the good grace of decision-makers. Schulz, at least, may have had plans in this regard. A report in the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* on his inaugural visit on January 7, 1951 explicitly stated that the new professor would apply »experience of the Soviet press«. »The work of the Institute will be modelled on the Communication Studies Departments at the universities in Moscow and Leningrad«.[39] The idea of setting up a new faculty and a boarding school to go with it first appears in the records on November 30, 1950 – shortly after Eduard Schulz had appeared on the scene and the students had been tested. Material from the Soviet Union was suddenly on the menu: Lessons, literature, newspapers, and magazines were to be procured from Moscow and Leningrad.[40] Following Schulz' departure, the State Secretariat spent the summer of 1951 desperately searching for a guest professor who could take over the lecture series on Soviet communication studies and hoping that their sister

37 Budzislawski to Nultsch, Head of Department in State Secretariat, December 8, 1955. ibid., Bl. 175f., here 176.
38 Budzislawski to Bönninger, Deputy State Secretary, August 1, 1958. ibid., Bl. 114f., here 115.
39 CL: Ein neues Institut für Publizistik. In: Leipziger Volkszeitung, January 7, 1951.
40 Cf. Schulz to the Mayor of Leipzig, November 30, 1950; note in records »New Institute of Communication Studies in Leipzig«, no date (late 1950). In: BA, DR 3, 5962 (no page number).

Party could help.[41] However, it was not until February 1954 that a real Soviet citizen (Vladimir Andrejevich Ruban from Kiev) arrived in Leipzig.

Although the professors in Leipzig were familiar with the curricula from the Soviet Union[42] before this, it was not of any great use. They knew that things were done very differently there from in the GDR. Journalism was different, the tradition was different, and practice pursued different aims. At the request of Wilhelm Eildermann, in February 1954 the Moscow lecturer Juschin described the two departments in his faculty: Newspapers and Publishing. »If I judge your letter correctly, the role of the Institute is slightly different to that of our Faculty. Is that right?«[43] To put it clearly: Even if Eildermann had wanted to, he would not have been able to copy the Soviet model. This model did not even really exist. In July 1954, Moscow State University rejected the request to send lecturers to Eildermann. The two topics in question (industry and agriculture in the Soviet Union) would have only been launched in 1953/54 and would have first had to be revised.[44]

In September 1954, just after the Faculty in Leipzig was founded, Heinz Mießlitz, Head of Sector in the Science and Propaganda Department of the SED's Zentralkomittee, travelled to Moscow. He wanted a detailed, first-hand report – albeit somewhat late. The result was sobering. The Moscow Faculty trained »literary deskmen« and »academics in the field of publishing.« The first two years consisted solely of lectures, while third-year seminars covered translations, literary style, and »editing mass literature.« There were few textbooks, just aids. According to him, the science of journalism studies still had to be developed »all over the world.« Despite this, the Dean of Moscow State University advised »developing the training of editorial cadres in a similar way at our University.« After all, he said, the GDR also needed »good specialist literature and other books.«[45]

That might have been the case. But even more than that, the GDR needed journalists who could fight for the cause and write well. The second half of the 1950s saw a flurry of letters and visits between Leipzig and the large faculties in the Soviet Union. They sent each other curricula, literature, and practice newspapers. Hermann Budzislawski travelled to Leningrad, Moscow, and Kiev, where he saw his colleagues struggling with the same problems as he did: long-established disciplines that wanted to banish Journalism Studies; practitioners that saw themselves as artists and did not want to believe that journalism can be learned. The

41 Gerhard Harig to the Department of Propaganda in the SED Zentralkomitee, August 8, 1951. ibid.

42 At least the curricula of the Moscow Department of Journalism Studies (before the Faculty was founded at Moscow State University) are in the University Archive in Leipzig: Journ. Fak. 59, Bl. 48-51, 52f.

43 Juschin to Eildermann, February 10, 1954. ibid., Bl. 59-63, here 63.

44 Chudjakov to Eildermann, July 21, 1954. ibid., Bl. 66.

45 Notes by comrade Mießlitz, visit to the Faculty of Journalism at Moscow State University on September 16, 1954. ibid., Bl. 1-4.

first Dean in Moscow was Yevgeny Chudjakov, formerly Deputy Editor in Chief of the daily newspaper Tageszeitung *Iswestija*. The comrades spoke to each other on an equal footing. Both were searching for answers, curious about what the others were trying out. If Budzislawski had not known it before, these trips also showed him the key difference: Investment there was in philology, here it was in editorial skills. Journalist Chudjakov was quickly unofficially replaced in Moscow by Yassen Zassursky, a renowned literary scholar from a good family (his father had represented the Soviet Union abroad), who specialized in American novelists (cf. Zassursky 2016). The arrangement was made official in 1965. The conclusion that the delegates from Leipzig came to was that, in the Soviet Union, universities, practitioners, and »leading comrades« »completely« rejected the »practical method of training, as is common in the USA.«[46]

The »American« in Leipzig also did not immediately introduce laboratory classes in which students could produce and edit articles in a realistic journalism setting. Setting up this kind of »exercise system« took at least 15 years and the strong arm of Emil Dovifat. As soon as he was appointed in the 1966/67 academic year, he relieved the staff at the »Institute for the Theory and Practice of Press Work« from many of their tasks in order to develop the curriculum that would teach journalism to the next generation right up to the end of the GDR[47] (cf. Röhr 2015). Alongside the obligatory Marxist subjects, general studies, and foreign languages (a lot of content), Budzislawski's first degree program from mid-1950 contained nothing but internships and exercises in German. That is not to say that talent was not important: »The language test must decide whether the student is suitable for a degree in Media Studies. Poor performance means a change of subject!«[48] Students like Heinz Halbach, who began their studies in fall 1951, had four hours of German »language and style« and four hours of practical exercises every week for the first two years.[49]

This was not enough, claimed the editorial office of *Neues Deutschland* in June 1952: The interns from Leipzig were »[unable] to work well and responsibly at the fast pace of press work.«[50] Still not enough, said the German Press Association (VDP) and then the Party leadership in 1955, although suitability for the profession was at least as important as attitude right from the entrance interviews at the very start, and although many students wrote not only during seminars, but

46 Report on the study trip to the Soviet Union, May 21 to June 4, 1957. In: BA, DY 30 / IV 2/ 9.04 /230, Bl. 1-21, here 1f.

47 Regulations for the system of journalistic exercises in the study program for training graduate journalists. Signed by Franz Knipping, July 14, 1967. In: UAL, Journ. Fak 78, Bl. 1-15.

48 Draft study and examination regulations for Communication Studies students under Gewifa Leipzig, Mai 1950. In: BA, DR 3-B, 14978 (Budzislawski), Bl. 96-100, here 97.

49 Curriculum for Communication and Newspaper Studies, no date (late 1951). In UAL, Phil_Fak_B_01_14_50_Bd_02, Bl. 24-26.

50 Bodesheim: Report on monitoring of the professional internship for second-year Communication Studies students at the editorial office of ND, June 28, 1952. In: BA, DR 3, 5962 (no page number).

also during the holidays and sometimes even in proper editorial offices. Ingeborg Schmidt now speaks of »dry runs« at university one day a week. »The genres were handed out and we worked through them. News, report, portrait, feature, reportage. We learned one after the other. There were also lectures on them. Then we had a chance to try them out, for around five hours. And then we read them aloud to each other and analyzed them. None of it was intended for publication, but it was hard work nonetheless.« Typical dry runs. »I thought it was a shame. The pieces I wrote as a people's correspondent were always published.« But she does not have a bad word to say about the German lessons to this day. »I was grateful for them. Style was an integral part of the program for me. We didn't have much that was not directly related to the profession. German language and style: Those were the tools of our trade.«

If one is looking for Soviet influences in Leipzig, this is where one is most likely to find them. Joachim Pötschke (1997: 142f.), who graduated from the Faculty of Journalism Studies' predecessor institution in 1951and was Professor for Style of Language in Journalism from 1977 to 1989, referred to a lecture by Vladimir Ruban (the guest professor from Kiev), which was quickly printed (cf. Ruban 1954), and a text book by the Moscow linguist Elise Riesel (1959). Werner Michaelis (2015) also remembers both publications – albeit merely as »a good addition to that which we already knew.« This interpretation is backed up by the timescale and the people involved. There had been German lecturers in Leipzig before: as well as Pötschke, for example, there were Willy Michaelis, who had been a high school teacher in the Weimar Republic and a teacher trainer in the early years of the GDR (from 1951), his son Werner, who had been deputy head of a school in the Leipzig area (from 1953), and Siegfried Krahl, who came from the workers and farmers faculty in Halle. These lateral entrants to the Faculty »thought about what we want to teach the students. What does a journalist need? The same three answers were true right to the end: language skills, the ability to assess language, and language formation skills. A journalist must know his language. He must be able to justify the edits he makes. And he must write convincingly« (Michaelis 2015). The publications by Ruban (1954) and Riesel (1959) helped with teaching and provided legitimation – but there was still no »Moscow model.« Elise Riesel had nothing to do with journalism studies (she taught at a school of foreign languages), while Vladimir Ruban was a press historian (cf. Pötschke 1997: 142). His ability to say a little about style came from the focuses of journalism studies in the Soviet Union. But the need for teaching in this field was determined not by Moscow, but by the wishes of practitioners in the GDR and the ruling Party.

»Mastery of the German language« thus became one of the three pillars of the 1955 reform, which was decided by the Secretariat of the SED's Zentralkomittee on September 7 and prepared by the central delegates' conference of the VDP on

February 12, through interventions from practitioners and the Department of Agitation. The other two pillars were »journalistic skills« and »solid specialist knowledge.«[51] All the papers on the subject called for talent. To ensure that no duds made it to Leipzig and that only »journalists with stylistic talent« were trained, as a commission of the State Radio Committee requested in June 1955[52], applicants from then on had to have worked in an editorial office for at least a year – not necessarily in a traineeship, but at least an internship. In setting this standard, the teachers were reacting to their experiences during the first few months of the cohort that included Ingeborg Schmidt and Brigitte Klump. In June 1955, they complained in an internal Faculty paper that, in fall 1954, »almost exclusively 18-year-old high school students« had joined the University, with »neither sufficient maturity nor sufficient experience in work in society.« If there were a »kind of pre-internship,« it would quickly show whether people were really suitable – plus the Faculty would no longer have to teach its students how to read a newspaper or discuss the »most primitive journalistic terms.«[53]

Studying Journalism Studies in Leipzig in the 1950s also meant being flexible. Everything changes except change itself. Teaching was discussed in almost every session of the Faculty Council. How long should student presentations be? What is on the compulsory reading list? What is tested? Why do not all students attend lectures? How can we help them to prepare better for seminars? What do we do with the students »who cannot write«? Should we include »the language and style aspect« in our assessment of other seminar papers? The Council also examined critique from students, both in general terms and, in October 1955, specifically on the lectures on »agricultural economics« and »modern history«.[54] This criticism reached not only the FDJ group, the Party group, and the Dean, but went as high as the State Secretariat for Universities in Berlin – in December 1954, for example, via the Council for the Frankfurt/Oder district and a »VdN comrade,« [someone who had been persecuted by the Nazis for anti-fascist views] whose daughter felt overwhelmed in Leipzig: »I have one free afternoon, when I have to study for eight subjects. (...) Apart from that, we grapple with editorials, comment pieces etc., all without instruction, because the curriculum has to be met. Protests have so far been unsuccessful.«[55]

51 Horst Sindermann: System of qualification of journalistic cadre by the German Press Association. Submission to the Secretariat, September 2, 1955. In: BA, DY 30/J IV 2/3A, Bl. 180-183, here 180. – cf. VDP: Guidelines for the appointment, training, and examination of staff of the dem. press. Passed at the extraordinary Central Delegates' Conference of the VDP on February 12, 1955. ibid., Bl. 184-197; Department of Agitation: Resolution on the reorganization of the Faculty of Journalism Studies. Submission to the Secretariat, August 26, 1955. ibid., Bl. 198-201.

52 Commission for Training, June 29, 1955. In: BA, DR 6, 288 (no page number).

53 For enrolment in the Journalism Studies program, June 6, 1955. In: UAL, Journ. Fak 78, Bl. 1-3.

54 Faculty of Journalism Studies: minutes of the Faculty Council meeting of September 22, 1955, p. 2. ibid.

55 Council for the Frankfurt/Oder district to the State Secretariat for Universities, December 1, 1954. In: BA Berlin, DR 3, 5958 (no page number).

The constant fiddling with the curriculum, which is reflected in the many draft new study regulations that remain on record, was only partly the result of pressure from above, in the form of the installation of Eduard Schulz in 1950 and the reforms decided by the Zentralkomittee Secretariat in 1955. More important for the day-to-day life of the Faculty were the experience that teachers and students gained on the ground and the feedback from the editorial offices who had to work with the graduates. The four pillars of the degree program – Marxist-Leninism, history of the press, German language and literature, and practice – were never shaken, although the focus did shift more towards editorial skills. Even the major reform of 1955 did not bear fruit straight away. How could it have done, when practitioners remained skeptical and when the teacher's lectern was occupied by self-taught teachers who themselves were not entirely sure what they should offer students who brought with them plenty of ambition and good will, but hardly any academic background and sometimes nothing more than the new teachers in the post-war schools had taught them. Ingrid Kirschey-Feix, born in 1950, heard as late as 1969 as a trainee at the *Junge Welt* that Leipzig would not give her »complete fulfillment,« offering only »knowledge that is not needed in practice« (Meyen/Fiedler 2011: 211).

In December 1957, almost two and a half years after the reform of 1955, the Department of Agitation/Propaganda of the SED's Zentralkomittee still made a positive interim assessment. Although it had not yet been possible to motivate sufficient »experienced journalists from practice« to take part and the »political training and education of the students« remained »poor« (especially among those who came »directly from high school to university« and held no official role in Leipzig), they said, »the vast majority of graduates« (374 directly in the subject since 1951) had proven successful. »After around a year in practice, most become fully-fledged deskmen.«[56]

5. The invention of journalism studies by the post-war generation

The fact that journalism studies was established by practitioners in Leipzig after 1945 and only made into an academic discipline by its students is not unique to the GDR (cf. Meyen/Wiedemann 2017). Before the subject began to orient itself on the standards of the leading research universities and especially on psychological theories and elaborated processes of data analysis in the 1960s (cf. Meyen 2012), the academic schools of journalism were headed by journalists like Carl Ackerman (Columbia University), Walter Williams (University of Missouri), and Raymond B. Nixon (University of Minnesota) and were largely focused on the skills of the

56 or.: Der Volksmund spricht vom »Roten Kloster«. Ein Besuch in der Fakultät für Journalistik der Leipziger Karl-Marx-Universität. In: *FAZ* on October 1, 1955.

trade, rather than academic capital (cf. Rogers 1994). In West Germany, Newspaper and Media Studies resolved its existential crisis after the Second World War by appointing practitioners whose name alone (rather than their academic reputation) would help to polish the subject's reputation at universities and in society as a whole. Otto B. Roegele, for example, acquired two doctorates in medicine and philosophy in 1945, before the end of the War. His reputation at the Chair of Newspaper Studies in Munich was largely thanks to his position in the Catholic media (cf. Löblich 2010).

Some of the founders in Leipzig did not even have a doctorate, or acquired one at a similarly advanced age (shortly before becoming professors). Hermann Budzislawski (the only Journalism Studies professor in the GDR, who had gained his doctorate in the Weimar Republic and had the bourgeois press to thank for this professional status) did not set a suitable academic example. Asked about his dissertation on the press in the television age, Karl-Heinz Röhr (2015) responded »I chose it myself.« Werner Michaelis (2015) had a similar story. Although Budzislawski was officially his mentor, looking back, he cannot call him an academic teacher. »That would be saying too much, although I admired him as a seasoned journalist. As a dissertation supervisor, he did not give me much at all. Perhaps the occasional literature tip.« Hans Poerschke (2015) was also unable to name anyone who had taught him how to conduct academic work. »We were given responsibility very quickly.« What about doctorates? »That is a strange story. Some topic or other was chosen for me. I just worked on my own and moved away from it.«

Given this background, it is easy to see why the self-taught like Karl-Heinz Röhr, Hans Poerschke, and Klaus Preisigke could, or had to, invent journalism studies as an academic discipline in Leipzig themselves, without any help from experienced mentors. Mostly born after 1930 and therefore uninvolved in the crimes of the Nazi era, these professors were part of the generation that built the GDR – the generation that carried the GDR until the fall of the Berlin Wall. A look at the Party's personnel reserves is all it takes to understand why the SED was forced to rely on people coming back from the War or who had been members of the Hitler Youth to provide academic journalist training. There were a lot of positions to fill, and many of the best communists had been killed by the fascists. This enabled the post-war generation to enjoy the kind of stellar careers that they and their parents could otherwise only have dreamed of – careers that tied them to the GDR. Lutz Niethammer (1994) spoke of a »collective educational novel« – an experience that could never be repeated by the generation that followed, because the new elites had positioned themselves over society like a »lead plate.«

The interviews with contemporary witnesses confirm this picture. Werner Michaelis and Fritz Beckert became school headteachers in their early 20s, themselves looking for qualified people, while Karl-Heinz Röhr was given the night shift for foreign policy at *Neues Deutschland* at the age of just 17, when Politburo member Fred Oelßner appeared in the editorial office following the events of June 17, 1953. However, it is clear that the desire for a ›pure« background (child of workers, no relations in the West) was as much of a limitation on the choice of personnel and thus the opportunity for outstanding academic performance as the need to fill a large number of top positions in a very short space of time. They were ambitious young people who were instructed by Party members, who had proved themselves in work for the Party, in agitation, and in the fight against fascism, but who brought with them few of the skills needed at a university. This constellation explains both the dissatisfaction among many students (cf. Klump 1991) and the continuing discussions about the concept of the training. »The program was overloaded with history of the press, although this was at least useful in terms of general knowledge,« said Klaus Preisigke (2015), who started the Journalism Studies course in 1961. »But when it comes to the subject itself, the journalistic methods: It was sparse back then.« It was not until the students of Hermann Budzislawski and his colleagues came along in 1969 (15 years after the Faculty was founded) that the journalistic exercise system could be installed that would remain in place until the Journalism Studies Department was wound up.

However, instead of being autonomous, the academic field was always subject to the primacy of politics in the GDR. Although this applies to some extent to Communication Studies in West Germany, too, where appointments right up to the fall of the Berlin Wall were often made based on party membership and political loyalty (cf. Meyen/Löblich 2007), the SED intervened much further in recruitment in the GDR. The positions of Dean and (from 1969) Department Director remained political positions filled not with outstanding academics but with Party workers who had proved themselves in media practice (the exception was Franz Knipping, cf. Meyen/Wiedemann 2017: 1850). In addition, graduates were given positions that appeared useful to the relevant officials at the time. As a result, academic careers were much more difficult to plan than in West Germany or the USA. In the case of Hans Poerschke (born in 1937), for example, the decision that he would remain in the Faculty after graduation, rather than being sent to a newspaper of the National People's Army, »was made literally on the last day.« Why did he not go into practice? »No idea. One was given a position. For me, it went without saying that that was what happened.« Poerschke then had a similar experience when he spent three years in the FDJ apparatus, before returning to academia, where he completed a doctorate and advanced to become the leading theoretician in Leipzig (cf. Poerschke 2015). After completing his doctorate, Günter Raue (1938-2015) was delegated to *Neues Deutschland*. He was to return to Leipzig as a lecturer twelve years later, but not before he had worked as a foreign correspondent (in Moscow) and deskman in the business section. It was a similar story for Jürgen Grubitzsch (born in 1937), who had 26 years in leading positions at editorial offices under his belt before he was appointed Professor of Journalistic

Methods in 1988. Frank Knipping's (1931-2015) career, on the other hand, ran in reverse: He had been a professor and briefly even the Dean of the Faculty in Leipzig (1965-1967) when the Party sent him to *Neues Deutschland* as Head of Department in 1968. Although he remained a guest lecturer in Leipzig, he never returned as a professor.

The fact that political work came first and a position at the university was a (rather random) consequence of talent and personnel requirements undoubtedly had consequences for the way the latest generation of professors in Leipzig saw themselves (a key part of the habitus). Although the average age at which they gained their doctorates and post-doctorates remained high (between early thirties and mid-forties), these home-grown academics were the first journalism studies professors in the GDR to be formally qualified for the position. Just like their predecessors, who had stepped up to train journalists for a new society, these home-grown academics also saw research as of secondary importance. »I enjoyed being an educator,« says Karl-Heinz Röhr (2015) today. »I liked teaching. Asking questions, moderating, explaining things, even if I sometimes lacked practical experience.« Klaus Preisigke (2015) also concentrated on training: »I enjoyed being a university teacher, passionate and dedicated. I won multiple awards for promoting young people. My people knew that I would get them to where they wanted to be.« To this day, Preisigke remains proud of the text book of journalistic methods for which he led the collective of authors (1985). »In terms of facts and content, it is at a high level. It can match Haller (cf. Haller 1983, 1987). But the whole thing is overloaded with ideology.«

6. Conclusion: The Journalism Studies Faculty in the 1950s

There is no need to repeat the hypotheses from the introduction here. Of course the Journalism Studies Faculty was a school of the Party, educating the next generation of journalists who would promote the SED and its socialist state in the press, on the radio and on television. The Party leadership in Berlin provided the framework for this school: how many staff there were and who was among them, how many graduates were needed, and the skills those graduates ultimately needed to have. This framework also included the Party leadership's disinterest in data on media content and use, and their desire for the Leipzig graduates to function in a guided media system (cf. Meyen/Wiedemann 2017: 1851). However, the political logic was broken by the logic of the academic field. Even in the GDR, this was oriented not solely on the specifications of the ruling party, but also on academic standards, many of which had their roots in the German university tradition. That meant that the officials who became professors in the new Faculty had to either gain academic qualifications or leave the university again. The repeated failure to establish an independent university (due initially to the personnel constellation and later to the resistance that always comes from established structures) ultimately led to the birth of journalism studies in the GDR. Its founding fathers were the students of the 1950s and early 1960s, who had been placed on a professorship career path by the Party and were the first to be able to complete a full academic career in the new discipline, including doctoral and post-doctoral studies (cf. Meyen/Wiedemann 2017).

Some may wonder why the Ministry of State Security has not been mentioned in this analysis. The reason is simple: It was not present. Christian Schemmert and Daniel Siemens (2013: 228) have shown that just three members of staff were responsible for the entire University of Leipzig when Brigitte Klump was a student there. There was just a single »secret informer« at the Faculty of Journalism Studies in early 1955, although the Ministry at the time generally complained of its people's lack of qualifications, incompetence, and »dispersal.« Although the Stasi of 1955 was in no way comparable with the Stasi of 1989 (cf. Kowalczuk 2014), Schemmert and Siemens (2013: 231) have claimed that the mere presence of these few, clearly overwhelmed staff had far-reaching consequences. From the point of view of state security, they say, gaining informers or useful information was not so important at that time. Instead, the idea was for the students to »find out about the role and power of the GDR secret service« and to learn »not to make this role of the state secret service the subject of public discussion.«

This is hard to refute. People experience any »institutionalized world« as »objective reality« and internalize the regime in a process of socialization. They then adapt their behavior to the regime and pass the »knowledge« on to the next generation – especially when the regime is legitimized; then there are symbolic realms that provide justification (Berger/Luckmann 2016: 64f.). Ingeborg Schmidt, Heinz Halbach, Franz Knipping, Karl-Heinz Röhr, and even Brigitte Klump were all students for whom the »institutionalized world« of the young GDR was much larger than the Stasi. They had a university place, complete support, and a bursary. There were anti-fascists dabbling as professors, but whose careers made them untouchable. There was the promise of career progression and early trust and responsibility, for seminars and newspapers. One is particularly likely to consider this kind of »institutionalized world« legitimate when one has experienced its formation. Those that come after need more – they need arguments and sense. Every »institutional regime« has »to be communicated to a new generation«; must gain the »dignity of the normative« with them, too (Berger/Luckmann 2016: 100). In the language of social constructivism, the fact that the lives of the GDR and the post-war generation ran in parallel says that the legitimation of the symbolic world of socialism later failed – and with it the graduates of the Faculty of Journalism Studies.

What was taught in Leipzig had to be fought out between those involved on the ground. The Party leadership in Berlin had neither the personnel nor the expertise to get involved in the detail. Minds were always on the skills needed by practitioners. Although the journalistic field in the GDR was dominated by the political logic much more than the academic field was (cf. Meyen/Fiedler 2011), the editorial offices on the ground ultimately needed people who had mastered their craft: finding topics, writing, taking photographs, editing, building pages and programs. That is why talent was just as important as conviction in student selection from the very beginning. The Soviet Union was not a suitable blueprint, not least because the newspapers there worked differently and the linguists in charge in Moscow, for example, rejected the idea of practical courses at university. Led by Hermann Budzislawski, the founders of the Faculty in Leipzig based their work more on the tradition of Karl Bücher's Institute of Newspaper Studies (cf. Schlimper 2007) and the schools of journalism in the USA, of which the first Dean had gained experience in exile. Communicating openly about these relationships (such as strategy papers) would have been fatal in the GDR. Instead, the actors preferred to refer to (alleged) ›role models' in Moscow, Leningrad, or Kiev and to resolutions of the SED leadership – rhetoric that misleads historians to this day.

Translation: Sophie Costella

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Theresa Möckel

News in portrait format

How can the story format on social media channels be used in a journalistic context?

Abstract: **For which journalistic situations are stories on social media platforms suitable? What do most young users expect from a story? This paper reveals what stories offer in narrative and journalistic formats. The author analyzed news stories, before creating a sample story, presenting it to a selected target audience, and evaluating it in an online survey. She then used this survey as the basis for a recommendation on how to use stories in journalism.**

Introduction: Story formats in journalism

Smartphones have unlocked new ways of telling, producing, and involving viewers in stories (cf. Atkinson 2016). Many social media platforms today feature a central, linking element: the story – a visual concept consisting of short, consecutive video clips with digital extensions. So far, journalism studies has paid little attention to this. How can the story be used for journalistic purposes? How can content be presented in short video clips? »Which story online has journalistic value? Who is using Instagram or other social networks for new journalistic formats?« These are just some of the questions considered by the judges for the Grimme Online Awards (Anonym 2018).

Snapchat's stories were launched in early October 2013 and, according to Philipp Steuer, were key to the app's success (Steuer 2016: 39). Journalistic services also played a role in this: »High-quality American media such as CNN are demonstrating that news topics can be presented on Snapchat – in a calm, clear, and compact form. And with no emojis« (Müller-Lancé 2017). Unique to Snapchat when they were launched, stories have now long been incorporated into Facebook and its subsidiary platforms, and are especially popular on Instagram (cf. Firsching 2018).

In the German-speaking world, correspondents from *ARD's Tagesschau* program are seen live at the heart of the action, for example with stories from the mid-term elections in the USA or from carnival celebrations in Mainz. News magazine *stern* creates totally different stories: Similar to photo collages, they comprise multiple images with one-sentence explanations and links to the relevant *stern* articles. *ntv* and *Welt* also work with links, but in their case with brief video clips.

A story brings with it a host of limitations and special technical features. Most can only be accessed for 24 hours. Clips are published individually, so they have to be carefully planned in advance, and are limited to a certain length (videos up to ten seconds, for example). This also provides new opportunities. The new way of communicating content forces media producers to limit themselves to what really matters. Interviews have to be prepared in a different way, as the interviewee only has ten seconds for their answer.

At *Media Convention Berlin 2017*, Eva Schulz, Snapchat reporter for *funk*[1], reported on her colleagues' initial negative reaction to communicating news via Snapchat:

»Colleagues always react like that: Always the panic emoji, because their first reaction is always »What? But it's portrait!« They don't know what to do with it. »How can we tell a story like that?!« It is super short. I only have ten seconds per snap, it is awkward, it is completely inflexible, because I have to tell a story chronologically. I can't organize my material afterwards. [...] And then, something that journalists are totally unaccustomed to on the internet: there is no feedback from the masses – no likes, no favorites, no shares, no public click counts. Not even a number of followers. [...] There are no notifications. That is something where Snapchat really is totally reshaping the user behavior of the under-twenties. [...] It doesn't have such a strong focus on viral spread. Snapchat is one of the few platforms – the only one at the moment – that is not controlled by algorithms. As a »creator,« that is a huge gift« (Schulz 2017).

According to Richard Gutjahr, the disadvantage of short availability can also be an advantage. When he asked himself why he should produce news content that is no longer available after 24 hours, a Snapchat user responded with a question of his own: »How often do you read news from two days ago?« (quoted in Steuer 2016: 79). By their very nature, Snapchat stories are extremely up-to-date. Other advantages, shared by other mobile journalism formats, include flexibility, mobility, and proximity to the viewer.

»Snapchat might have some weaknesses as a tool for reporters. But the app is wonderful at one thing: It communicates a form of proximity and immediacy that hardly any other medium or social network can. Because Snapchat offers so few options for reworking videos, the down-to-earth informality of the snaps often makes them seem more authentic than television or even YouTube.« (Steuer 2016: 80)

1 *funk* ist das Content-Netzwerk des öffentlichen-rechtlichen Rundfunks und vereinigt über 60 Formate, die für eine Zielgruppe der Altersspanne 14 bis 29 ausschließlich online distribuiert werden. Durch die Verbindung zu ARD und ZDF wird funk durch den Rundfunkbeitrag finanziert, garantiert keine Werbeinhalte und verfolgt den Bildungsauftrag.

Studies on how people use smartphones also indicate that the story is a useful format for journalistic content. A recent study by the Reuters Institute, surveying more than 74,000 people from 27 countries, showed that use of smartphones for consuming news services rose from 56% to 62% in the period 2013-18. Transmission in the form of online videos specifically has also been rising steadily for several years. Given that mobile news consumption is increasing in Germany, too, demand for mobile news content, including moving images, is not expected to fall in the near future (cf. Nic Newman with Richard Fletcher et al. 2018).

Although they are available on different networks, there is a uniform basic structure for creating stories. »All content that you publish in the story throughout the day is strung together as a long film strip, creating one long story. That's where the name comes from« (Steuer 2016: 34).

Question and method

The objective of this investigation was to develop recommendations for how to structure journalistic content in the story format. Using a ›mixed methods‹ approach, the study comprises an analysis followed by an online survey (cf. Döring/Bortz 2016: 72). The analysis of the *hochkant*[2] format on *Snapchat* examines six selected stories based on various criteria. This was then used to draw conclusions for the creation of a sample story and to produce the first draft of a set of guidelines for creating news items produced in the story format.

The sample story created by the author is based on the results of the analysis (cf. Döring/Bortz 2016: 184) and undergoes quantitative analysis with the help of an online survey. This type of preliminary study can help to generate hypotheses and define them more precisely; in this study, it helps to make the guideline criteria for the content, visual structure, and design of stories more precise.

Based on the work of Werner Faulstich (2008),[3] the following categories were used for the analysis: Active persons, Camera, Sound, Content, Text, and Graphics.

- In the *Camera* category, a distinction must be made between front and cell phone cameras. If the image examined is a clip/photo made with the help of a front camera, it is known as a *selfie*.
- *Sound* describes not the sound of the clips in general, but the form in which the spoken word appears in the clip. A distinction is made between *on-screen* (the

2 *hochkant* ist ein Format, dass vom Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg produziert wurde und im Rahmen des Content-Netzwerkes *funk* auf den sozialen Netzwerken Snapchat und Instagram, News und Nachrichtenbeiträge zur Verfügung gestellt hat. Thematisch bewegten sich dabei die Beiträge von Reportage, über Kommentare bis hin zur Kurznachricht. Seit der angekündigten Winterpause 2017 und der Jahreszusammenfassung gab es bisher allerdings keine neuen Storys.

3 Die Auswirkungen der technischen Anforderungen und Beschränkungen bei der Erstellung von Storys und daraus resultierende Anpassung der inhaltlichen und optischen Gestaltungen wurden berücksichtigt indem Faulstichs Kategorien verändert, ergänzt und an das zu untersuchende Format, die Story, angepasst wurden.

reporter/audio source is visible in the image) and *off-screen* (the reporter/audio source is not visible in the image).

- The visual and audio content is noted in the *Content* category.
- *Text* considers only writing shown on the screen. If the text has a particular function, this is also noted.
- The final point, *Graphics*, looks at all the graphical elements used, such as emojis, stickers, and geofilters. With their comic-like appearance, emojis in particular, as well as all other graphical elements used, should be viewed critically in relation to neutral, informative reporting. No studies have yet been conducted on this, but Israeli scientists from Ben Gurion University have already succeeded in proving that the use of emojis in corporate communication gives the impression of incompetence (cf. Glikson/Cheshin/van Kleef 2018).

Creation of a sample story and online survey

Based on topics from the presentation made by Snapchat reporter Eva Schulz at *Media Convention Berlin 2017* entitled »Dos and don'ts for journalistic storytelling on Snapchat« (Schulz 2017), the following recommendations for action were first derived:

- Early statement of objectives and topics
- Use of on-screen text
- Sparing use of off-screen text
- Generation of viewer loyalty

For evaluation purposes, the recommendations for action were applied in a sample story[4] in the form of variants. These variants (see Figure 1) related to the combination of multiple elements (in particular the use of emojis), the use of on-screen text, and the use of off-screen texts.

4 Gegenstand der Muster-Story war das Wave-Gotik-Treffen 2018 in Leipzig. Die Autorin besuchte im Rahmen dieser Veranstaltung das alljährlich stattfindende Picknick im Clara Park. Die dort entstandenen Aufnahmen wurden mit den in der App Snapchat zur Verfügung stehenden Bearbeitungsmöglichkeit optisch aufbereitet und anschließend im Rahmen der Online-Umfrage gezeigt.

Variants in the investigation into the use of on-screen text in interviews.

Use as a transcript of the interview response.

Visualizing the interview question as text.

The idea is to examine the extent to which the use of emojis is tolerated in reporting. Although they are used multiple times in the stories in the analysis, their appearance does not suggest a serious character from the outset. The on-screen text is to be examined to find out whether it should be used to support the content, or simply as a transcript.

The two variants were fairly evenly matched in the analysis. One advantage of the transcript, for example, is the ability to consume the content without sound. An advantage of the supporting text, on the other hand, is that – in the form of a question, for example – it can encourage the user to switch on the sound, and perhaps keep it on for all subsequent clips. Finally, we want to examine whether using off-screen text is justified or whether, in contrast to the stories in the analysis, the viewer would like to see more off-screen text rather than selfies.

As a sample story had been created, incorporating video elements was a particular requirement for the online survey tool. Creating the survey on the website onlineumfrage.com (Marbot 2014) was a simple option. The questionnaire went through a design and pre-test phase, before finally being placed online for two weeks. In order to reach the target group of 14 to 29-year-olds[5], it was predominantly sent to high school and university students and those new to the job market. The target sample size of around 100 was achieved with n=99. As it is not a random sample, the results of the survey are not representative, but nevertheless give an impression of the users' point of view.

5 Bei dieser Altersspanne handelt es sich um die größte Nutzungsgruppe der App Snapchat.

The first step in creating a summary in the form of guidelines is to examine the results of the online survey. Almost half (42 percent) of respondents stated that they had a Snapchat account, although, when asked how often they use the app, a majority of 56 percent said »not at all.« This is not a problem for the object of the study – the story – however, as stories are also used in the other social networks listed. It is therefore not surprising that 95 percent of the participants were familiar with the term »story« in connection with social networks.

Asked which content is linked to their app use, 90 percent of respondents stated that they associated stories with following current experiences of friends/acquaintances; 59 percent sharing personal experiences with followers/friends, 28 percent advertising, and just 10 percent up-to-the-minute news. The question regarding familiarity with and examples of news content also reflects this result. Only 12 respondents stated that they knew of news agencies and journalists who publish their content in story format. The most common ones named were *Tagesschau*, *Sky Sport News* and *Vice*.

In order to find out how on-screen text is used, the survey participants were asked about the volume at which they consume media content. A slight majority said that they have the sound for media content permanently silent on their smartphone. This finding makes it clear that descriptive use of on-screen text and text as a transcript of interview and survey responses is important in order to enable use without sound. To aid comprehension, this issue was picked up on again in the sample story with the help of two versions: Version 1 in the sample story contains a question as on-screen text and a request to switch on the sound, while Version 2 shows a transcript of the response as on-screen text to enable the story to be used without sound.

Contradicting their responses on the use of media content without sound, 68 percent of the survey participants chose the first version. Combining these two results, one can conclude that the respondents prefer on-screen text that tells them to switch on the sound, so that they can also hear the audio content of the story – even though the majority has the sound switched off for media content.

The second comparative investigation conducted with the help of the sample story examined the audio presentation of content in connection with the use of selfies. Version 1 showed a video snap[6] with off-screen text from the reporter recorded live. The action on screen was also described in sound. In the second version, a selfie snap, the reporter was seen taking the image. The image related to what the reporter was saying, but was only seen in part and in the background. The content of the two snaps was identical. A majority of 77 percent of the survey participants chose the first version. This finding was confirmed by the question of

6 Im Rahmen der Muster-Story werden die einzelnen Clips mit »Snap« benannt. Dies ist die ursprünglich von Snapchat etablierte Bezeichnung für einen Clip innerhalb einer Story. Egal ob foto- oder videografisch.

the number of selfie snaps the viewers considered appropriate. The most common upper limit named was three, confirming the assumptions made in the first version of the guidelines.

Finally, the latter two versions were used to investigate how the use of emojis is viewed. In version 1, a snap was decorated with emojis, while version 2 showed the same snap without emojis. The result was very clear here, too, with 73 percent choosing the second version without emojis.

When it came to the opinions expressed in stories, the respondents agreed with the statement that stories convey particular proximity to the viewer, as they are at the heart of the action (in the form of the reporter's smartphone). Because they are automatically deleted after 24 hours, stories help the news to stay up to date, said the respondents. Keeping things short was popular: 39 percent of those surveyed responded »strongly agree« to the statement »The longer a story is, the less willing the viewer is to watch the whole thing», while 24 percent chose »agree.«

Consuming news content in a story format was generally (still) considered unusual. However, more than half of the respondents (55 percent) said that they could imagine using stories for news consumption in future. They were then asked about the conditions a story should fulfil in order to be considered worth watching.

To finish, the sections below describe and justify the evaluated recommendations of the guidelines.

Adaption of preparation

Because a story cannot be edited later, journalists have to prepare submissions in story format differently from traditional television pieces. As the online survey focused on the viewer point of view, this issue was not examined. However, a brief estimation can be given based on the author's experience. Adapting the preliminary discussion to the features of the format has proved essential. Most interviewees and survey participants were not surprised by the smartphone as a recording device or by the time limit on their responses. They were usually able to provide well-formulated responses within the time limit even at the first attempt.

Early specification of objectives and topics

Since early specification of objectives and topics can be derived from the theory of television news and occurred in all the stories in the analysis without exception, this feature of design and content was applied directly to the sample story. Unlike in classic television formats, which often show the highlights and best images from the pieces at the start of a program, this is not possible in stories: It would lead to a duplication of clips that could irritate viewers. Stating the objectives and topics early helps the viewer to find out what he can expect from the story. In addition, the introduction at the start of the story should not be too long. The results of the survey show that the viewers prefer brief stories.

Combination of multiple elements

The use of emojis and photo and video clips was examined. Using photos in connection with on-screen text proved a good way of communicating longer texts, as there is no distraction from a moving background. Despite this, photos should be used more sparingly than video clips. Asked about the conditions for a good story, one survey participant even said that they should not use photos at all, as they were irritating. Photos should be used in moderation, as their lack of sound and movement annoys viewers.

When it comes to the use of emojis, the survey showed that they are not well tolerated by the audience: Most viewers saw them as appearing frivolous. Emojis should be used with caution, if at all.

On-screen text

The use of on-screen text depends to a certain extent on the sound settings on the viewer's smartphone. In the survey, the balance of devices with the sound switched on and off was relatively even. On-screen text that provides a transcript is therefore to be recommended, as it enables people to consume the clip without sound. However, when asked to compare the two versions of the sample story, the responses of the survey participants expressed precisely the opposite, with a majority of 69% opting for the version with the on-screen question designed as motivation to switch on the sound for media content. The survey results thus do not provide the basis for a clear recommendation. Media producers can choose whether to use one or both versions.

Serial depiction of interview responses

No results were gained here, as the serial depiction of interview content relates to the production side of creating news pieces as stories. However, the estimation gained by the author as she created the sample story confirmed that this kind of presentation is advantageous in production. Given the short clip length, a lack of thematic order for the clips would result in the connection to the interview question being lost, e.g. if responses to the same question were spread throughout the story. Showing interview responses one after the other enables the viewer to recognize the context immediately, so that the question has to be shown only once.

Off-screen text

To examine the use of off-screen texts, one of the versions merely showed a sectional image with a recorded off-screen text by the author. To contrast this, the same scene was then recorded in selfie mode. When the two were compared in the sample story, 76 percent of the survey participants chose the version with off-screen text. This also confirms the viewers' desire for reporters to take a back seat.

Sparing use of selfies

The survey also looked at how tolerant viewers were of selfies. The respondents were asked to state a figure for the maximum number of selfies they would view in succession. Without having been given information from the analysis in advance, 35 of the 99 participants said that they would consider a maximum of three selfies in a row appropriate. Asked about the conditions a story should meet, many of the respondents also stated that selfies should be used sparingly. Justifications for this included the complaint that selfies put the focus too much on the reporter rather than the topic/event and the view that the use of selfies was intended more for the self-presentation of the reporter.

Willingness to be spontaneous

Spontaneity should also be considered a particular requirement for the reporter in a story. Spontaneous encounters with people on the ground and events that occurred while creating the sample story meant that the final version of the sample story was very different from its original concept.

Willingness to be spontaneous therefore helps to make the content of the story more authentic.

Viewer retention

In the sample story, the viewers were asked to send feedback. This could not be used as the last snap, however, as that was reserved for a thank you for taking part in the survey. As the sample story was not posted publicly due to the author's small number of followers, no conclusion can be drawn on whether viewers would have responded to the request or whether the request would have led to greater viewer retention. However, the survey did ask about the willingness to respond to the reporters of the stories. The majority – 54% – said that they could imagine sending a private response to a reporter.

Conclusion

Half of these recommendations can be brought together under the heading ›visual design.‹ The reporter's creativity and willingness to experiment play a key role here, be it in combining multiple elements, using on-screen text, presenting people active in the story, using off-screen texts sparingly, or using selfies. When multiple elements are combined, the recommendation to use photos more sparingly than video clips should be adhered to.

The second half of the recommendations for action focuses more on the content. In order to provide successful quotes that are not cut off by the time limit, interviewees and survey partners need to be clearly briefed. Willingness to be spontaneous proved an important aid and stylistic device in both the analysis and implementation phases of the sample story.

Finally, viewer retention is a point that can be justified from both an economic and a content-related point of view. Reporters have the chance to gain direct feedback on the stories they publish or to pursue topics that are of particular interest to the target group. As a result, a request for interaction should be included at the end of a story.

Since the general appearance of stories – content available for 24 hours, time-limited clips, portrait format, and visual appearance – is very similar on all platforms, the findings gained here for *Snapchat* on the visual and content-related design could also be applied to stories on other platforms.

Last year, *Facebook*'s CPO Chris Cox announced that stories were on the way to overtaking other news feeds (cf. Bogost 2018). Cristina Wilson goes a step further, claiming on NiemanLab.org that »If we as Instagram users spend an average of 24 to 32 minutes looking at stories, then we as producers have to treat them as what they are – the new television« (Wilson 2018).

Translation: Sophie Costella

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The paper refers to the bachelor's thesis *Short mobile Journalism – Kriterien für journalistische Beiträge im Story-Format am Beispiel von »hochkant« auf Snapchat* and summarizes the investigations and results it contains.

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HERBERT VON HALEM VERLAG

Jonas Schützeneder

Between information, dramatization, and entertainment

An analysis of the role and self-image of tabloid journalism

Abstract: **Hack or entertainer? Masterly investigation or fearmongering? Tabloid journalism and its actors live by exaggerating content and emotionalizing issues. Although they are regularly criticized for this, their products are consumed by a majority of the population. Much research has been conducted into the balance between information, drama, and entertainment, but the personal perspective of the journalists is frequently neglected. How do the journalists describe their role? A qualitative survey of 14 German journalists shows that tabloid journalism and sensitivity are not mutually exclusive and that digitalization is bringing with it entirely new opportunities and challenges.**

»What he says, goes, right darling?« Helmut Fischer asks his wife Annette von Söttingen (played by Ruth Maria Kubitschek) as *Monaco Franze* (BR production from 1983, episode 1) in the cult series of the same name. He is talking about the literary critic Hans Böttner-Salm from the fictional newspaper »*Abendzeitung*.« Wily Monaco gets his hands on the review of the performance of Wagner's opera Walküre from the paper in advance, thus gaining an advantage in the cultural scene he hates so much. This brief sketch takes a humorous look at the interaction between tabloid journalism and its audience. One aspect remains unchanged to this day: Tabloid journalism content is based on economic and often political interests, with the specifics lying in the way the content is selected and presented (cf. Engesser/Krämer/Ammann 2010: 136). Journalism Studies and Communication Studies have long viewed this kind of reporting as more of an evil than an academic challenge (cf. Lünenborg 2005: 97). Renger calls tabloid journalism »a process that falls from top to bottom,« finding that tabloid journalism is »the apparent downfall of high-level information journalism that is dedicated to the quality standards of objectivity and communication of truth to a lower-quality sensationalist journalism that panders to the audience's lusts and desire for entertainment« (Renger 1998: 28). This paper picks up on this criticism and plays it back to the tabloid journalists in constructive form. How do they see their own role and professional image? Which problems and solutions can they describe? To find out, guided interviews were conducted with 14 German tabloid journalists.

1 Is tabloidization omnipresent?

Tabloid-style content is no longer the reserve of classic tabloid media. The strong focus on reach and interaction makes many websites an almost indistinguishable mix of celebrities, crime, and scandal (cf. Berg 2018: 58). Tabloid journalism is seen not only in print and online services, but also as a form of entertainment journalism on television and radio (cf. Pürer 2003: 155). According to this, the critical role models vary only minimally between »market crier, (...) entertainer, a cheerful mate of some level of fame« (Löffler 1997: 23). When it comes to content, tabloids are often accused of a »loss of depth,« with reporting lacking in completeness, distance, and/or objectivity (cf. Leidenberger 2015: 132). We thus take the word 'tabloidization' to mean a variety of journalism that expresses itself predominantly through the integration of tabloid-esque content. As a result, tabloid journalism is largely determined by the level of entertainment and is clearly distinguishable from quality journalism (cf. Friedrich/Jandura 2012: 404).

Academia's view of tabloid journalism was long dominated by one perspective: differentiatiating tabloid journalism from quality journalism and complaining about it as a threat to journalistic quality (cf. Weischenberg 1997; Langer 1998). Yet the established media have not been spared tabloid-esque trends, providing academic discourse with a constant source of content. Weischenberg, Malik, and Scholl (2006: 16) ask questions that are as provocative as they are concerned: »How far can one dilute holy water before it loses its effect? How and when will journalism have lost so much substance through the tabloidization process that it becomes useless as an instrument of self-observation in society?« This question is picked up on regularly to this day.

Lünenborg (2016: 325) argues on a different level, finding that the differentiation of tabloid formats can be observed in all forms of media. However, a de-differentiation can also be observed, »in which tabloidization strategies influence and alter traditional forms of information journalism.« That is why developments in and around tabloid journalism are so highly relevant at a journalistic, economic, and social level, he argues. Almost 20 years ago, Sparks (2000: 1) criticized that: »The high standards of yesterday are being undermined by sensationalism, prurience, triviality, malice and plain, simple credulity.«

But content is not the only factor: The economic dimension must also be examined. According to Büscher (cf. 1996: 24), there are two key elements in the design of tabloid content: attracting readers and retaining readers. Attracting readers is a short-term approach achieved by exaggerating content and creating an appealing look. Retaining readers has a more medium to long-term focus and is intended to encourage loyalty to the brand by maintaining an image. Given the falling sales and advertising revenue that many media face today, other providers are also beginning to use this two-pronged strategy. In other words: »Tabloidization is the means, commercial success is the end« (Weischenberg 2003: 72). Various indicators (e.g. diversity, professionality, relevance) make it »clear (...) why tabloidization is often seen as a danger to quality journalism« (Landmeier/Daschmann 2011: 184). This fits in with the findings of a qualitative study by Lieske (cf. 2008: 157ff.), which examined the image of journalists. The recipients surveyed make a clear distinction between tabloid journalists and »serious journalists,« the former being accused of »lack of consideration,« »dishonesty,« and »sensationalism.«

There are numerous studies on this, the vast majority of which are conducted through content analysis, operationalizing different quality criteria based on tabloid content. Donsbach and Büttner (cf. 2005), for example, showed that television reporting in news formats displays a »significant rise in stories that mix news with opinion,« regardless of the broadcaster. A quantitative content analysis by Schäfer-Hock produced similar findings, showing that tabloid content increased significantly between 1992 and 2012 in all daily newspapers examined (the analysis looked at national daily newspapers and tabloid media) (cf. Schäfer-Hock 2018: 300). The content analysis by Landmeier/Daschmann (cf. 2011: 184) demonstrates that even »Germany's conservative journalistic institution« (Siering 2002: 86), the *FAZ*, shows a slight trend towards tabloidization, with the prominence of soft topics increasing over the period of the study. The proportion of »hard news« fell from around 60 percent in 1982 to just under 53 percent in 2006.

Although the tabloidization of traditional media has been verified by further studies with comparable results, some questions remain unanswered, especially with regard to the future: If traditional media puts more focus on tabloid content, what will happen to the original tabloid journalism? A Publicom study (cf. Publicom 2016) suggests that difficult times are ahead. If one believes the 40 experts' repsonses to questions about the future prospects of tabloid journalism, information journalism, investigative journalism, and interpretive journalism, the type with by far the worst prospects is tabloid journalism. Only 38 percent consider it likely that tabloid journalism will still be able to pay for itself in future. Interpretive journalism is considered to have the best prospects (83 percent).

2 Question and method

This bleak outlook is a good starting point for looking at the following research questions:

1) How do tabloid journalists see the current situation and the future of their profession?

2) Which roles and self-images do they describe?

The investigative method used was a qualitative survey with guidelines (cf. Häder 2010: 261). Qualitative surveys are subject-oriented – not guidelines, but the interviewees themselves, determine the course of the interview through their responses. 14 interviews were conducted with tabloid journalists from television (7), print (2 newspaper, 3 magazine), and online media (2). When potential interviewees were researched, care was taken to ensure that all the channels named above were represented and that the interviewees worked for established tabloid media. The interviews had an average length of 55 minutes and were authorized before publication. As some interviewees requested anonymity, no names, ages, editorial offices, or media are named here –a distinction is merely made between television, print, and online.

3 Results

14 tabloid journalists aged between 25 and 57 years were interviewed for the survey. Their average age was 38 years. When it comes to their position in the editorial office, the majority of the interviewees (5) work as deskmen; there are also managers (4), a presenter, a freelance journalist, an editor, a reporter, and a trainee. Most work for between six and nine hours per day, corresponding to a normal 40-hour week on average. It can be assumed that most have regular contracted working hours – an assumption supplemented by this statement from a print journalist:

> »As a tabloid journalist, [...] you are always working. As I say, whether I am having dinner with friends, as I used to, or am at an official press event. There are no regular working hours, plus: A working day might even go on until 2 am, if there is a party after a film event« (print deskman).

Another journalist, who works in television, states that he has now reduced his working time from 70 hours a week to start with to around 50 hours now.

In the next question, the interviewees were asked to give more detail on the content of their products, listing the topic areas that are most important at the moment (unprompted). Almost all state that reporting in tabloid media is dominated by topics from society. All the interviewees emphasize the importance of »putting oneself in the reader's shoes« and choosing topics that interest them. It is vital to mention the emotionality of the reporting at this point. For the tabloid journalists interviewed, this form of news selection is essential and a connection to the reader is an indicator of the quality of the media production.

»Celebrity« is named particularly often (a total of nine times), with some editorial offices focusing almost exclusively on this field. Needless to say, the core topics vary between media and formats. As well as current topics such as the »refugee crisis,« many of the interviewees count »crime,« »scandals,« and »accidents« among the topics that arise frequently in tabloid news. Current events are often presented in »service pieces« intended to aid understanding, such as short question-and-answer formats that aim to make topics less complex.

3.1 The competition and the audience shape the choice of topics

In the next phase, the interviewees are asked to report more on the news factors. Their responses show that relevance and up-to-dateness are seen as the most important criteria when selecting topics. Research is usually conducted by looking at competing news services (online or print) and PR agencies. Journalists often uncover social trends online and on social networks, although public events such as galas are also often used as angles for the reporting. All the journalists interviewed also stated that direct and indirect competition plays a significant role. For most of them, regularly observing both the large print media and competing news services is part of their day-to-day work in the editorial office. The competition is used not only for comparison, but also as a source of ideas. Efforts to be the best and the fastest at all times appear a particularly important factor shaping the tabloid landscape. The editor in chief of a newspaper gave a reason for the focus on lightweight, entertaining topics:

> »We do not set out to change the world. We leave that to the others. Of course, I am happy that they are there.«

3.2 Humble self-image

Next, the tabloid journalists are asked what they like about their job. One thing the interviewees particularly enjoy about their job is the opportunity for individual fulfillment – characterized by terms like ›freedom,‹ ›teamwork,‹ and ›variety.‹ When it comes to teamwork, the journalists emphasize not only the human aspect within the editorial office, but also external relationships, such as with interviewees and celebrities. In terms of variety, phrases such as »no two days are the same« and that it is »never boring« are just as important as the fact that journalists travel a lot, giving them the opportunity »to gain unfamiliar impressions.« Talking about freedom, the interviewees highlight the opportunity for self-determination, working independently to select topics and compile pieces. The profession of tabloid journalism sets great store by individual initiative. The privilege of being able to ask questions is also addressed. Just two interviewees mention negative aspects: »time pressure« and »frequent evening appointments.«

In order to examine the self-image in more detail, the interviewees were asked to describe themselves in their role as a tabloid journalist. Their responses vary widely.

One print journalist, for example, describes himself as the »first point of recourse for this magazine«; another emphasizes the fight for his position and his stories, which he wants to see in the most prominent position possible in the magazine. A television journalist sees himself as a »service provider« who tries »to put a complex world view [...] into a form and flow that can then be understood.« Another interviewee characterizes himself as »captain and chief editor«; a print deskman argues that he is »not just a headline machine.«

In general, tabloid journalists differentiate between their role in relation to interview partners, the external perception of their role, their role within journalism, their role in the editorial office, and their role in relation to the recipients.

The survey also shows that tabloid journalists do not see themselves only as »tabloid journalists, but as journalists in general« – even though the external perception varies and tends to be critical. In their view, the role is »not a question of tabloid,« as the interviewees see themselves primarily as journalists who need to excel at their craft. Another interviewee, who previously worked in public service television, also highlights the fact that »the same rules [apply there] as in a tabloid program now.«

The interviewees consider that they bear a responsibility to the recipient to structure content in a light, easy-to-understand, yet still interesting and exciting way, thus offering entertainment to the viewer or reader. Reports need to be relevant and arouse the interest of the recipient. Only one of the 14 print journalists interviewed sees himself in the role of a lone warrior – the rest describe themselves as team players, coordinators, or organizers.

Referring to the characteristics and interests that bring him and his colleagues together, a print journalist says:

> »What unites us is a love of writing, a love of people – that is very important. And openness is also important. What I said at the beginning: curiosity – without curiosity you cannot do this job. That and an appetite for our topics.«

What should a tabloid journalist bring to the role? The majority of the interviewees agree that assertiveness and the ability to work in a team are crucial criteria for success in the sector.

3.3 Two types of tabloid journalist

Next, the interviewees were asked for more detail on the working environment in tabloid journalism. At this point, it is notable that almost all of them confirm a simplified theory to some extent: the idea that there are »good« and »less good« tabloid journalists. All the interviewees are familiar with these two types from their own experience and attribute certain characteristics to them. Firstly, a »good« tabloid journalist is primarily characterized by his innate humanity. This makes it easy for him to make contact with public figures and protagonists and to establish a good connection to them. Empathy plays a particularly significant role here, as journalists with this trait »really manage to tease a lot out of the celebrities; they trust them immediately. Not everyone can do that.« According to the interviewee, this also means that people are more willing to open up to this journalist.

This »good« journalist is in stark contrast to the »bad« tabloid journalist, who is often associated with »gossip« and would do a lot or even »stop at nothing« for a good story or the best picture, as one television journalist puts it. He is simply »dead keen on celebrity stories, on sensations.« This type of journalist is characterized by a high level of self-confidence, an arrogant manner, and artificial curiosity. His work is primarily typified by a very forceful, outspoken approach often intended to touch celebrities' sore spots. Attempts are made to »capture them in a private situation and [to ask] questions that are a little below the belt.« »The difference simply lies in repsect,« describes one television journalist. All the respondents agree that these types exist and that they shed a poor light on the entire sector. The interviewees argue that economic pressures further strengthen the characteristics of these types and that media are increasingly deliberately looking for just this kind of person.

While discussing the different types of tabloid journalist, half of the respondents again highlight the particular importance of quality criteria and proper research. »However, it is always important to stick to all the journalistic principles: using multiple sources, not simply copying from the competition, conducting one's own research, and enriching the articles with one's own material.«

3.4 Outlook for the future of tabloid journalism

In the final question, the interviewees were asked where tabloid journalism is going in the long term and what challenges it faces. The majority have worked in the sector for a long time and have experienced the changes of the last few years first hand. One of the tabloid journalists is optimistic, especially with regard to the print market: »Millions of copies are still being sold on the market. That means that younger people also still like to read tabloids.« However, the responses indicate that the role of the recipient has changed a lot. In the past, published stories were simply consumed and accepted without comment, with readers and viewers not challenging the content. »People took what they could get.« Several interviewees stressed that the audience has become more critical. Exaggerated or even fake reporting on celebrities is seen through immediately and punished. After all, »viewers do not want to be lied to.«

In order to prevent incorrect information being broadcast accidentally, research has become much more demanding than it was in the past. Although digitalization has made it easier to access new stories and images, the flood of information and the high number of channels and sources are confronting journalists with new challenges. The fast pace of the sector brings with it potential sources of errors that have to be eliminated before the content is published.

One of the journalists interviewed believes that this need for extensive research has resulted in the emergence of an entirely new field of work: »I think that, at some point, the large media houses will have to employ hordes of people just to look at one question: Is this real or not?« One online deskman calls for vague statements to be labelled as such: »Sometimes, you just have to say that you don't know for sure.«

In stark contrast to the complex research is the opportunity for celebrities to publish their stories and thoughts on their social media channels themselves, thus preempting the work of journalists. Some media companies even see this as reducing their workload:

> »For us as a tabloid medium especially, the Instagram channels are of interest, seeing whether they have made any interesting posts recently. Where we might even be able to use the image.«

There is consensus in how the interviewees describe today's tabloid journalism compared to in the past, stating that it has become »more sensitive,« »more respectful,« »less provocative,« and »milder.« They also stress that tabloid journalism should set greater store by the principles of journalistic work, explicitly criticizing the approach on online and social media channels. Although the interviewees see the race for users as a significant cause for concern, when asked about this again, the majority comes to the conclusion that »we have to sell our content somehow.«

On the other hand, smaller changes in reporting are appreciated more positively. In particular, the respondents list increased protection for the children of celebrities as an example of an issue that has long been relevant but has not been sufficiently implemented. Television media has become more careful, they say, with one interviewee emphasizing that »one cannot report without regard for morality.« In contrast, a television journalist argues that »the basics have not changed, namely conducting clean research and telling proper, balanced stories.« The change, he says, lies in the fact that journalists now have to deal much more with technical aspects.

Based on these responses, we can see that there are concerns regarding the implementation of journalistic standards. The interviewees argue that the required quality cannot be delivered if editorial offices continue to insist on fast publication, causing immense time pressure. However, they also differentiate here: When researching television and print productions, the question of the highest possible quality is omnipresent and the subject of discussion within the editorial offices on a daily basis; online, the only currency that counts is that of the greatest possible reach.

4 Conclusion

In summary, it is clear that the changes in tabloid journalism have led to a highly ambivalent image of the sector. A statement from a television journalist demonstrates this: »The term [tabloid journalism] has simply become outdated to some extent; one can no longer define it, it is becoming increasingly blurred.« Rather self-critically, the 14 interviewees describe their view that tabloid journalism has long ceased to stick rigidly to the usual criteria for clean journalism and that all media now use tabloid-style marketing strategies on social media. All the interviewees confirm that digitalization has made their work hugely more dynamic and that constantly revising topics and news can be hard work and lead to errors in the long run. Despite this, the interviewees value their profession as tabloid journalists. They enjoy the diversity and the opportunities it gives them to conduct research and write independently. This is particularly interesting given that the television and print journalists interviewed are particularly likely to highlight the opportunity to spend more time on research.

The survey also showed that, in the view of the interviewees, the profession of tabloid journalist does not differ significantly from that of journalists in other fields in terms of perception and activities. Journalism is subject to constant and ever-faster change. This ambivalence in the sector is clear to see in the responses regarding the challenges facing tabloid journalism in the future. According to the interviewees, sensitivity, complex presentation, and tabloid journalism are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but are the subject of constant scrutiny due to the pressure of profit and digital processes.

Another finding from the survey is that there is still a need for more academic research into tabloid journalism. The interviewees often feel that they are shown in a poor light and openly criticize research and errors in their own sector. Little attention has previously been paid to the views of journalists in the tabloid sector. This paper is an attempt to frame their perspective at least to some extent.

Translation: Sophie Costella

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HERBERT VON HALEM VERLAG

Essay

Wiebke Möhring

The need for local, everyday information

The importance of local journalism in the world of digital media

Abstract: **Information about where they live is very important to readers – people have a fundamental need to be well-informed about their surroundings. Local journalism is also considered extremely relevant and important at society level. So why does Communication Studies so often take such an anxious view of it? This essay looks at the local journalism on offer, the state it is in, and the challenges it faces.**

The ways we can communicate and gain information and the opportunities to access them have changed at lightening pace over recent decades. Today, finding out what damage was caused by the recent tsunami in Indonesia or how the protest movement of the *gilets jaunes* is progressing takes no great communicative or financial resources. There can be few people who have failed to hear, at least via third parties, that the Merkel era is drawing to a close or that there is a lot of discussion about banning diesel vehicles – or that it was not Bayern Munich but Borussia Dortmund that topped the Bundesliga in fall 2018. Access to information about national and international political and social events is now available to everyone, at any time. Anyone who wants to can gain comprehensive information from the wide range of journalistic sources available to the public.

But what if I am interested in local events? What if I want to know why the town hall has been covered in scaffolding for months now, or whether it is true that the local university's laboratories are conducting experiments with unknown bacteria? Whether there is an alternative candidate in the mayoral election and how much it costs to keep the city's orchestra going?

When it comes to local reporting, descriptions of the status quo and assertions of importance often contradict one another. But before I address this and the quality and importance of local journalism, we must first look at what is on offer.

Local communication services – information vs. journalistic classification

Those looking for local information will find a significantly larger and broader range than ever before. Almost every local institution, organization, and company provides information online, directly available to an interested public. Everything from refuse collection dates, church events, kindergarten parties, and discussions on the latest construction plans to the résumé of the new Head of Dispatch is easy to find on the relevant website. I can also find statements, assessments, and evaluations of social and political events. I can follow local companies and societies on Facebook, or meet and talk to fellow residents in local Facebook groups or neighborhood portals. Free local advertisers keep me up to date on local events, while my local radio station lets me know about traffic jams and interviews the coach of the luckless local handball team.

Perhaps my town also has a local or hyperlocal blog. In recent years, the emergence of blogs and local news portals has seen the development of new ways of communicating, albeit varying greatly in their professionalism and the type of content, and with high fluctuation rates. Not all of these services provide proper, journalist-prepared content – some are operated by amateurs, others by those with journalist training, still others by editorial communities with or without editorial connections to traditional media companies (Möhring/Keldenich 2018). Some of the services provide up-to-the minute news, while others concentrate on fewer, but more detailed, articles every week or month. Some specialize in a few local topic areas, such as the fashion scene in the city, local sport, or political developments in the town; others attempt to report on a town or district as a whole (Röper 2016: 67-86). These (hyperlocal) blogs and news portals enhance diversity, provide access to additional information that is not covered in the established media, and offer an opportunity for participation (Möhring/Keldenich 2018).

Last but not least, I can use the local daily newspaper (be it in print, online or via social networks) to gain information. Despite its reach having shrunk significantly, it remains the most-used source of local information to this day. In almost all local communication spaces, the media structures are still dominated by traditional media houses. But, as described above, the local newspaper is facing new competition. It no longer has a monopoly on local news – a development that local editorial offices are watching with concern (Neuberger/Langenohl/Nuernbergk 2014). In addition, local newspapers – not only in Germany – are struggling with challenges such as a massively reduced reach, an aging readership, and financial problems caused by a collapse in advertising income (Kleis Nielsen 2015; Jenkins/Kleis Nielsen 2018). There is undoubtedly no shortage of local information. The local sphere of communication today is more open and diverse than it was twenty years ago. Access to it is easy, if sometimes a little arduous.

However, although the range of local communication available appears enhanced at first glance, a closer look reveals risks for communication in society. The local sphere of communication is becoming fragmented, with the local audience increasingly splitting into sub-sections interested in specific topics. What has primarily increased is the range of local information on offer – this is not the same as the range of local journalism. On the contrary: In many towns, journalistic reporting – based on professional editing standards, independent, offering scrutiny and critical classification – is now just one voice in the crowd, and a quiet one at that. Editorial offices suffer from a lack of staff. As a result, many simply copy pages from other offices or leave reporting to freelancers who do not always have the appropriate professional training. There is often not enough time for research-intensive topics: The pages of the print edition have to be filled at all costs.

Local reporting as a particular challenge – the daily tightrope walk in editorial offices

One of the key ways in which local news differs from other fields of reporting is that it covers a much more diverse range of topics. Editorial decisions are made based not on the topic, but on the geographical location; what is included in reporting depends on the local sphere of communication and the needs of its actors (Möhring 2013). Alongside special occasions and events, this largely means stories of everyday local life and the people behind it. The very nature of this focus results in another key difference: Local editorial offices cannot rely on agency material. Instead, they have to research and place stories from their distribution area themselves, separate the relevant from the irrelevant, and rely on material and information from local companies and institutions. To do this, local journalists have to be well integrated into their local spheres of communication – part of a close-knit structural and communicative network of professional, social, and often personal contacts. This faces them with the specific challenge of permitting close social relationships while also maintaining a professional distance. Local journalists have a very particular self-image that they want to maintain: Not only do they see themselves as responsible for communicating up-to-date information in a neutral way, they also want to explain complex situations, reflect reality, and act as a source of critique and scrutiny. On top of all that, they see themselves as advocates of their region, showing the best sides of a town and a positive image of life there. The consequence of this is that local reporting observes and reflects local events that local editorial offices themselves play an active part in shaping.

A comprehensive recent content analysis shows that local journalism has mixed success in this publicity function. The results of numerous previous studies have seen local journalism described in largely negative terms, including [royal] court reporting, proclamation journalism, chronicler journalism, and courtesy journalism. Too little criticism, too many elites, too little politics. This latest study, however, shows that change is under way. The diversity of the topics covered and the people given a chance to speak has increased, while newspapers and their online editions are providing more balanced, neutral reporting. But many of the core problems remain: too little criticism, too little background, too little discussion, too little participation. In addition, the gulf between different newspapers and between urban and rural editions is enormous (Arnold/Wagner 2018: 188).

If one focuses not only on the criteria of journalistic quality, but also on the contribution that local journalism makes to social cohesion in a town, studies show that social cohesion plays an important role in reporting. The local print media examined – local newspapers, advertising papers, and tabloids – were found to report more positively on dimensions like social networks, cohesion, and helpfulness, and more negatively on deviations from social rules and norms (Leupold/Klinger/Jarren 2018: 977). However, they vary widely in terms of the dimensions they emphasize (ibid.). Another recent study shows that people want local reporting to address their worries and concerns more and to be dominated by solutions, rather than problems (Dinter 2018).

The desire for local orientation as a central motivation for use – reason for hope?

The problems facing local journalism are not down to people's lack of interest in local issues as such. On the contrary: In times of unrest and insecurity in society, people have a strong sense of needing social and local orientation. The desire to be able to act and participate independently within one's own environment creates a need for local information, ideally provided by professional local journalism. People's interest in where they live and their connection to it are key parameters of local media use, regardless of factors such as age, gender, and the size of the town.

The need for local information is both a gift and an obligation. Given the public duty of the press, it falls to local journalism to meet this need. That is the source of legitimation – a fact confirmed by local journalism itself. The problem is that fewer and fewer people are using local journalism in its current form. With so many sources to choose from, younger people in particular no longer see it as the central source of the information they need. There are plenty of reasons for this: Local journalism is considered too expensive, too banal, too traditional, and not relevant to their specific interests.

This falling use of local journalism ultimately has just one logical consequence: Local journalism has to change. In digitalized media worlds, the structures of local public life have changed just as much as the usage habits and repertoires. But it will take more than simply providing the same content online: The changes will have to be far-reaching. How does reporting need to change? What new narrative forms and new topics could be used? What do local people want? How can people become more involved in reporting? Which participative formats could enrich local reporting and how? How can local journalism be reinvented, for example by making use of technological potential (Kramp 2018)? Journalistic virtues such as curiosity and mistrust remain important, the basic steps involved in research and writing remain the same – but the form of presentation needs to change. This new way of thinking, this reorganization of previous processes and working routines will be a hard road (Jenkins/Kleis Nielsen, 2018). The destination and the result remain to be seen. What will be the business model (Lobigs 2018)? How will digital income develop? Do we need to talk about charitable foundations? Instruments of media policy? Cross-financing from other revenue streams? The answers to these questions are yet to be found; established media houses and new providers are still experimenting.

We can only hope that local editorial offices are bold enough to tackle these experiments head-on. The statement »stand up and startup instead of copy and paste« (Brouwers 2018: 561) refers to the need to approach local issues in a totally new way. We must also hope that sufficient time and resources are (made) available. After all, however much local editorial offices are lauded as the heart of every media house, the conditions under which they are forced to work tell a different story.

It can be easy to look down on local journalism. Even within the sector, local journalism is often the subject of jokes, both openly and behind closed doors. Its topics are considered too everyday, its events too fragmented, too little major politics, too much local cronyism. On some days, some local sections confirm this stereotype. And local journalism is often seen as a ›beginners'‹ section, used as practice for one of the ›big‹ sections. But sports reporting and business and politics pages can be just as banal, deadline-driven, and elite-oriented. Foreign reporting is not always balanced. What some see as local gossip is for others the charm of local reporting: reporting on the everyday and scrutinizing everyday structures. If done well, this can result in real journalistic gems.

Local journalism plays a vital role, even – or perhaps especially – in digital media worlds. From the point of view of both society and democratic theory, effective local journalism is more than just desirable: Information enables participation. At the same time, local journalism can serve as a useful yardstick for the credibility of the entire profession. Unlike the subjects of much journalistic reporting, many of the facts and conclusions published in local journalism can be immediately checked by its audience, which is why trust in local media is so high (Guess/Nuyhan/Reifler 2018). This added trust must be rewarded with professional and up-to-date local journalism.

Translation: Sophie Costella

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HERBERT VON HALEM VERLAG

Debate: Is there a place for fictionality in journalism?

Gunter Reus

Yes, there is a place for fictionality in journalism

Transparency is the key

***Abstract*: When fiction in journalism is used to deceive and mislead readers, the culprits need to be named and shamed. But it would be a mistake to think that fiction has no place in journalism at all. In fact, the history of journalism is a story of the elaboration and transformation of reality in an imaginative way. What counts is making sure that the audience knows when and why this is done.**

»This film is based on a true story.«

We have all seen this in the credits at the cinema, taking for granted that facts are shown and used in a fictional genre.

So why can we not finally accept the opposite? That a fact-based genre like reportage can, indeed must, include fiction? Could we not label it in the same way? Perhaps like this:

»This *reportage* deliberately deviates from the pure facts in some areas. The owner of the gas station has a different name and lives in a different town. Not all robberies took place on the same day; the author has condensed them for dramatic effect. Some peripheral incidents used to create atmosphere, such as life in the town's night club, are recreated and based not on first-hand experience, but on conversations with visitors. However, at no point in this reportage has the author invented named characters or altered the content of quotes.«

This kind of notice would undoubtedly be possible and could become the norm, just as referring to points or difficulties in research at the end of longer pieces has been standard practice for a while now. Such labelling would certainly be fair, and definitely more useful than the constant debate about fact and fiction in journalism and the work that goes into keeping them apart – effort that merely serves to show how little journalists and the academics that follow them reflect on professional standards.

Fact or fiction: That is not the question

Whether craving recognition or hoping to increase their audience, journalists have always cheated, deceived, and presented as reality events that either never happened or were actually totally different. Only the tip of a presumably enormous iceberg, a famous example is Janet Cooke's fabrications in the *Washington Post* in 1981, for which she won the Pulitzer Prize (cf. ras 2000). Other famous cases include Michael Born's brazen enactment for *stern tv* in 1996 (cf. Haller 2000), the fictitious home stories made up by Jayson Blair for the *New York Times* at the turn of the millennium (cf. Winkler 2003), and the celebrity interviews and portraits that Tom Kummer invented and published in top newspapers and magazines at around the same time (cf. Reus 2004). Journalists who simply make up stories that sell are almost a topos of the history of journalism, as reflected in Erich Kästner's novel *Fabian* and Gustav Freytag's comedy *The Journalists*.

The latest is Claas Relotius from *Der Spiegel*. There is no doubt that he deserves to be named and shamed for misleading the media audience – but not by repeatedly insisting that simply exploiting creative options in reportage equates to deceiving readers as Markus Kowalski did in an interview with Michael Haller.[1] As Andreas Wolfers, Head of the Henri-Nannen-Schule school of journalism, rightly complains, outspoken critics continually ranting about »penmen« in journalism is not productive and does not help to escape from the trap of deception (*Die Zeit* on January 31, 2019).[2]

»Fact *or* fiction« is not the question. Both are part of journalism. Instead, what counts is making sure that the media audience knows when and where it can expect each one. We need to agree on this in this debate.

The history of journalism is essentially a story of the elaboration and transformation of reality in an imaginative way. In comment pieces, satire, and features in which they exaggerated, distorted, or indeed entirely invented events of the time, »penmen« constantly strived for the journalistic goal of recognizing reality, monitoring those in power, and exposing them where necessary. Features and satire were some of the few media-based opportunities to approach the truth about society in DDR journalism (cf. Knobloch 2002). Germanist Manfred Brauneck referred to Tucholsky's Parables, in which he reacted to events in the Weimar Republic, as

1 http://www.taz.de/!5568567/, accessed on February 18, 2019
2 https://www.zeit.de/2019/06/journalismus-claas-relotius-reporter-faelschungen-transparenz-glaubwuerdigkeit, accessed on February 18, 2019

»fictitious immediate reports« (Brauneck 1984: 593). Even ›false‹ interviews are part of the honorable tradition of media history. Leipzig-based David Fassmann wrote and edited his *Gespräche in dem Reiche derer Todten* [*Conversations in the realm of their dead*] from 1718 to 1739 (cf. Schmidt 1973). In this monthly publication, dead militia, princes, academics, and even their mistresses discussed their time and commented on the last messages from the realm of the living, moderated by a Secretarius. Many tried to copy him. Conversations with the dead remained a successful magazine format well into the 19th Century.

Admittedly, these were all journalistic formats whose audience was always fully aware of what to expect. They did not deceive or mislead when they moved away from the factual, while still remaining closely linked to events of the time. We have no problem with that. In contrast, we find it harder to concede that any writing process, however much it appears merely to report on and reflect only real events, can become disengaged from the factual reality. We know that journalism can never be a perfect representation of reality; that it has to select and then reassemble building blocks of reality. We talk about the ›narrative‹ that is formed, of ›framing‹ and ›media reality,‹ without a second thought. Of course this process is initially based on empirical evidence, on investigation of reality. But at the very moment in which we want to grasp and capture this reality, the depiction becomes interpretation that goes far beyond ›facts, facts, facts.‹

Of course television reportage on a game of soccer does not withhold the actual score, nor the players who are injured or substituted. That forms the match statistics – the ›facts.‹ But what makes the broadcast a living reportage is the deliberate selection made from the countless options available to our eyes and ears: the camera angles, the image detail, zooming into faces in the crowd, the bench, the faces of injured players, the positioning of the exterior microphones, the voice of the commentator. These all come together to form the image of what is happening within the viewer – it is a different, new, shaped image. It is fiction. We know that.

Journalism translates reality into perceptions of reality

Why are we not more confident in admitting that, through its very processes, journalism stands against the empiricism that is so crucial to it? This is the case because it can inevitably only filter out individual forms – images, sounds, and language that it then has to put together into something that can be read, watched, or listened to. It is then no longer like the starting material – it has been imaginatively reshaped.

Metaphors are a good example of this. Without metaphor – condensing what has happened into language images – we would be unable to speak or even think. But metaphors also convert the ›actual‹ into the ›non-actual,‹ translating reality into an image or a representation of reality. We are often unaware of them, and we certainly do not find them spectacular (they are »firmly established«), but they can elevate a situation ideologically or euphemistically, trigger new associations, and remove themselves significantly from real events (»anchor centers«). Metaphors are found in all types of text, even apparently sober political news. Although little research has been conducted into their effect in people's minds, they are key components of a journalism that fictionalizes by necessity.

If journalism does not wish to limit itself purely to the factuality of tables, it must constantly be aware of the dramatization of its processes. Journalists themselves say that they want to »tell stories,« with their work in writing articles similar to that of storytellers and novelists. They have to break through the chronology of events, reconfigure and reweight sections, round out and smooth details, incorporate repetition and leitmotifs, cut and reassemble, compare and contrast. However many facts it contains, the end product – the report – is always far removed from the factuality of the starting material. It invites its readers to imagine a piece of reality. But it can still contain a high degree of truth and credibility that is intersubjectively perceived in a similar way.

Although reportages that do not take such a storytelling approach, instead attempting to rely simply on records, can occasionally succeed, their lack of padding generally makes them less enjoyable to read. The same goes for interviews. Anyone who has ever tried to transcribe an interview knows how chaotic, unclear, superficial, and even contradictory authentic speech can be. Turning a conversation into readable text means intervening in the factuality of what was originally said: Deskmen have to reorganize, abbreviate, or cut passages, insert additions, create links, or change the wording. Although published »word for word,« the result often looks nothing like a simple transcript of what was said.

Journalism without fiction is not possible. Nor is journalism without fiction necessary. Instead, what is necessary and credible is journalism that clearly states when and why it needs fiction – where it has modified, intervened, added, copied, or used »logical imagination« (Kisch 1983: 206). Transparency about sources is advisable here, too, as is adding brief instructions for use as described above. Although it involves a little more work, it makes deception like that committed by Claas Relotius impossible.

Translation: Sophie Costella

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Debate: Is there a place for fictionality in journalism?

Tanjev Schultz

No, there is no place for fictionality in journalism

On the difference between fictional and factual storytelling

***Abstract*: The question »fact or fiction« is by no means obsolete in journalism. In fact, it is central. This paper emphasizes the importance of factual storytelling that adheres strictly to the standards of authenticity and truthfulness. Using examples, it demonstrates what this means for journalistic practice and especially for reportage, which has found itself in such need of justification following the falsification scandal at *Der Spiegel*.**

Fiction generally has no place in journalism. However dramatically refined a reportage might be, however well-told a portrait, journalists are not poets. They put limits on their imagination. They compose, edit, and assemble texts, scenes, and articles, but they remain factual storytellers. Or that is the idea.

When the boundaries between fact and fiction are demolished – as they were in the Relotius case – it is rightly considered a scandal. This shows that our expectations of journalism are different from those of a novel. Penmen in journalism produce journalistic texts that are enjoyable to read, but not beautiful literature. Erasing the differences in theory, too, and pretending that fiction is an unavoidable part of journalism, is not the correct reaction to deceptions like the Relotius case. The informative effect of constructivist, narratological discourse, with which naïve understanding of objectivity and media reality are overcome, can morph into a dangerous relativism. What is true? What is objective? What are facts? After all, it is all just a story...

Luckily, many people still expect journalism to provide them with accurate information. This also applies to reportages, whose subjective perspective by no means gives journalists carte blanche for invention or deception. Reportage is a fact-oriented form of presentation or, in the words of Kurt Reumann, a »fact-focused report on experience with personal color« (Reumann 2009: 150). As well as the external facts, reportages focus on the experience, emotions and mental processes. These, too, have to be represented truthfully and treated as internal facts. Making them up would be reprehensible.

One of the ways that falsifiers like Relotius are revealed is when it becomes clear that a person quoted in the text does not actually exist. But interior worlds can also be falsified – and this is much harder to prove. If an author writes about how a situation chilled him or others, even though neither he nor others actually were chilled, it leads people to believe in an experience that did not actually occur. That cannot be allowed to happen in journalism. One fear is that writers of reportages concoct impressions and emotions that did not exist, or exaggerate them for dramatic effect. The problem begins when a certain behavior is presented in a qualified way. Someone speaks a little louder, and the writer claims he is shouting. Someone thinks for a minute, and the writer claims he is brooding. It sounds more interesting, more dramatic. But is it actually true? If it is not true, a journalist should not write it.

No justification for becoming lax

The fact that any storytelling, even factual storytelling (cf. Renner/Schupp 2017), necessarily makes a selection, puts information in a certain order, and builds on interpretation (when does shouting or brooding start?), i.e. that it does not depict »pure« reality, cannot be used as justification for becoming lax in reproducing events and experiences. The function and credibility of journalism depend on authenticity and orientation on the truth – even in storytelling forms of presentation.

Incidentally, true reproduction does not have to be any less thrilling or colorful than manipulated reproduction. Reporter Carmen Butta once said, »In order to find something unconventional or surprising, I have to replay a situation in my head again and again. Time and again, I am tempted to stop this laborious dissection and whitewash a little. How often has a shepherd or a policeman failed to say something that would have fitted in so beautifully with their character or the story. But [...] I stick rigorously to what I have experienced, without giving in to the temptation to orchestrate (i.e. to falsify) a single detail (a gesture, filler word, or facial expression). At the end, I am always amazed, as I hone the story with all the senses, that the situation I have accurately reproduced is more exciting, fitting, and dramatic than any manipulated sequence« (quoted in Wolff 2011: 171).

I thus vehemently reject the hypothesis presented by Gunter Reus in this edition of *Journalistik* (Reus 2019). »Fact or fiction« certainly is the question.

Reus is of course right when he refers to comment pieces, satire, and features, in which there is a place for »elaboration and transformation of reality in an imaginative way.« But these are specific forms of presentation in which the public, as Reus himself highlights, is able to judge the status of what is written. Of course a columnist like Axel Hacke has every right to bring his fridge – the famous »Bosch« – to life and have it speak, and of course odd ideas can be employed in »Streiflicht« [a column in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*] or by Hans Zippert [author of the »Zippert zappt« column in *Welt*] in a comment piece. Ludic forms of journalism like this (cf. Peters/Schultz/Wimmel 2007: 223f.) are an exceptional and unmistakable case that crosses over into fictional literature. Recently, we have also seen the emergence of more and more hybrid formats, such as news shows (*Heute-Show* etc.) and satirical, political talk formats (cf. Lünenborg 2017).

Needless to say, even ludic and hybrid formats like this are subject to some boundaries. »Streiflicht,« for example, usually contains a core of up-to-date news. Even if a quote, the findings of a study or another fact is represented incorrectly there, beyond the permitted satirical license, this is at least considered incorrect and tainted.

In all other forms of journalistic presentation, including reportages, the audience should be able to expect not to be served fiction. The same applies when literary figures write journalistic reportages (just as there are journalists who write novels; they switch between two roles).

Metaphors are allowed, and I agree with Reus that they translate reality into an image. However, unlike in fictional storytelling, factual storytelling must be connected to a solid basis of fact. Literary figures are allowed to pick out interesting, beautiful, and attractive metaphors and shape the world of their storytelling around them. Journalists, on the other hand, must find the metaphor that fits the basis of fact. It can be just as interesting, beautiful, and attractive – but its link to reality is crucial.

There is no doubt that reportages can also use the same kind of stylistic devices as literature, giving them the look and feel of literature. Some call this »literary journalism« (Eberwein 2013). Movements like »new journalism« and »gonzo journalism« are famous for deliberately breaking down the barriers between literature and journalism. But this becomes a problem if, in doing so, they blur the boundaries between fact and fiction, or replace a link to reality with poetry.

Many will flinch at hearing words like »reality« and »truth.« The question of the access journalism has to the (social) world brings with it complex epistemological issues. But it would be wrong, indeed disastrous, to conclude from this that there is no difference between fact and fiction and that journalistic pieces were just as much creative compositions as literary pieces. They are not. Composition of a journalistic text is subject to certain rules and limits – even, or indeed especially, if we accept that a completely neutral, objective observer role is not possible or (particularly in reportages) even desirable.

People wear clothes, do their hair, get tattoos. One could say that they design their bodies. But would we therefore say that all kinds of genetic manipulation are also acceptable and must be permitted? Of course not. Journalists design their pieces. But would we therefore say that all kinds of content manipulation are acceptable and must be permitted? Of course not. When it comes to design, there are vital distinctions to be made in terms of extent and quality.

Gunter Reus has not written a defense statement for journalistic imposters either. His main concern is transparency for the audience. I share this desire, but from a different starting point. The way I read Reus' argument is this: It is impossible to separate fact and fiction rigidly anyway, so it is important to expose journalistic production and explain aesthetic interventions to the recipients. In contrast, this is how I see it: There is a clear distinction between fact and fiction in principle and the drive to refer to real events (not fiction) is integral to journalism. When consuming journalism, readers, listeners, and viewers need to be able to assume that the presentation is not fictional. Wherever there is a chance that an intelligent audience could be misled, aesthetic interventions and the journalistic method need to be made transparent and explained.

Rules for practitioners

My concern is that general labelling, as suggested by Reus, could cause (or even tempt) journalists to take ever more dubious liberties. Even Reus would surely not approve of this. After all, it can be no coincidence that his example of a general statement includes the sentence »However, at no point in this reportage has the author invented named characters or altered the content of quotes.« (Reus 2019). The fact that such interventions or inventions are absolutely not permitted in journalism is not as trivial as it first appears. It is vital – and it defines a key difference between journalism and fictional representations.

It is best that we take a more specific look at what should be allowed or taboo in journalistic pieces. The list below is in no way exhaustive – it merely serves to illustrate what it means to separate factual from fictional storytelling.

Quotations: Where a text contains a quote, the quote must not be made up. It must be exactly as it was said. Careful smoothing out is allowed, but no changes to content. In reportages in particular, the authenticity of the spoken word is what counts. If someone says »oh my goodness,« the journalist must not turn it into »golly,« even if this changes little or nothing of the content. After all, reportages are all about the style and appearance of people, their preferences and quirks. Anyone who has ever had a journalist put words in their mouth that they would never have said knows how important this rule is. Editing and authorizing word-for-word interviews is another story altogether. Stilted formulations that emerged not on the scene, but later at the desk of a press officer, have no place in reportages – certainly not when they are parachuted into a scene as if the person had said exactly that in the situation. I believe that is dishonest and wrong.

People and places: The people and places in a journalistic piece must be real. In order to protect sources and personalities, anonymity or aliases can be used in some cases to prevent them being identified or to conceal the real scene of the action. In such cases, however, the audience must always be notified that this method has been used and provided with a plausible explanation. I find inventing a person or combining several people to form a single character – a practice that was once considered admissible in some reportages and reportage courses – extremely problematic. That is how authors and scriptwriters work when they want to reduce complex historical subjects to create an attractive film or literature, deliberately mixing fact and fiction in the process. There may be a value and a point to it then. But it is not journalism.

Chronological order: Journalistic pieces inevitably put their material in a certain order – usually not the chronological order in which the events occurred. This does not mean that they can mix up the order any way they like. If a politician is sits on the train exhausted after giving a speech, loosens his tie, and puts his feet up on the seat, it would be a falsification to describe the scene and pretend that it had taken place on the way *to* the appearance, when the politician had actually been sitting much more upright. To pick up on Reus' example, if multiple robberies occurred on different days, a journalist should not pretend that they were all carried out on the same day. Sometimes the chronological order is not relevant, but often it is. Journalists must never prioritize their own preferences over correct and relevant content for dramatic effect.

Internal and external: Literary figures can invent internal monologues for their characters. Journalists must not. They cannot see into people's heads. They can record their impressions and make suggestions on what others may have been thinking or feeling, at least in reportages. They can support their theories with observations, self-disclosure, and opinions from third parties. But journalists should not pretend that they are authorial storytellers who know everything about their characters. On the other hand, just like literary figures, journalists can certainly describe the external world in a symbolic, allegorical way. A classic example is natural spectacles, which create a certain atmosphere and are used to represent certain social or internal developments: a thunderstorm that gathers just as the debate between the coalition partners in the conference room begins to escalate. But here, too, it has to be true – completely true. If the storm gathered hours earlier or hours later, it would not be correct to suggest that the two events were simultaneous.

Scenic reconstruction: In general, there is no reason why journalists should not give a lively description of situations that they did not experience in person, for example historical events. What matters is that an intelligent audience knows that the journalist was not an eye witness – be it through information to that effect or from the context. Of course, there must also be sufficient sources for a scenic reconstruction and the usual care must be taken in handling the material and the statements of other people. A famous example is the description of CSU politician Horst Seehofer's model railway basement in a portrait by *Der Spiegel* journalist René Pfister. The journalist wrote about Seehofer's model railway without ever having been in the basement himself. However, the judges of the Henri Nannen Prize for journalism in 2011 were not aware of this and felt deceived when they discovered that Pfister's description was not based on his own observations. The scandal was not improved by the fact that the portrait had won a prize in the »Reportage« category, causing the judges to assume that its scenic start was based on the writer's own experience. Although the text never claimed that this was the case, it also failed to mention the source. This shows how important it is to create transparency. All it takes is half a sentence at a suitable point in the article.

More or less objective

No-one can simply leave aside their own (social, historic, etc.) point of view – not even journalists. Everyone sees things from a certain perspective. Journalism research offers countless models and evidence for this. But it does not change the fact that journalism is not fiction and that it needs accepted standards for the quality of the claims it makes (cf. Neuberger 2017: 418f.). It is something that journalism and science have in common. Science, too, has long since got rid of any naïve belief in its own orientation on the truth, but that does not change the need and the opportunity to approach certain ideals. Take the science of history, for example. It tells stories, too. Like in journalism, it needs to be factual storytelling, not fictional. Historians unlock the past but, in doing so, cannot simply shake off their present. Of course they cannot simply make things up – they have to stick to the rules of their discipline. They would not accept a blurring of the line between fact and fiction any more than journalists should.

Rudolf Augstein's motto, which *Der Spiegel* printed on its front cover during the Relotius scandal, is »Say how it is.« Some might consider this naive or pretentious, but as a quality standard and a regulative idea it is neither wrong nor obsolete. Historian Thomas Nipperdey provided a clever defense of this kind of standard – in his case coined through historical science and the dictum of Leopold von Ranke – arguing that he merely wanted »to show how it actually was« (Nipperdey 2013: 62). A simple reproduction of the past cannot exist, he says, but science does not simply construct history either: »The empirical fact that historians are not objective does not mean that this standard becomes invalid« (ibid.: 73).

Historians check sources and attempt to tap into a diverse range of perspectives and break out of their own biases. As scientists, they subject themselves to the scrutiny of the scientific community (as journalists subject themselves to the scrutiny of the audience). These methods and mechanisms ensure that scientists (or journalists) approach the facts through reality. Nipperdey calls this »more or less objectivity« (ibid.: 81).

The reliable subjectivity of journalistic reportage relates to journalists' opportunity to report on their own experiences and impressions and to reflect moods. These have to be authentic. The subjectivity of the reportage remains fact-oriented. It aims to achieve objectivity and the combined effect of external and internal facts. Reportage thus plays a key role in public communication. After all, what a gap we would have if there were only sober news reports on the one hand, lively products of imagination on the other, and nothing in between! We would gain barely any authentic experience of the social world and the lives of others outside our direct surroundings.

We already face the problem of exposure to an excess of fictional worlds and imagery that shapes our view of reality and makes very free, imaginative use of the real events it subjects to its dramatizing logic. Journalism works differently – it has to. It puts limits on imagination and stays away from fiction. Otherwise, journalism would be lost.

Translation: Sophie Costella

About the author

Dr. Tanjev Schultz (*1974) has been Professor of Journalism at the Institute of Communication Studies, Journalism Seminar, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz since 2016. Before this, he spent more than ten years as a deskman for the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, where he wrote numerous reportages, among other texts. His journalistic texts won many prizes. In 2018, Schultz was one of *Medium Magazin's* »Journalists of the Year.« The focuses of his research include investigative journalism, journalistic forms of presentation, and democratic theory. He studied Philosophy, Psychology, Communication Studies, and German Studies in Berlin, Hagen and Bloomington (USA) and completed his doctorate in Political Science at the University of Bremen. Contact: tanjev.schultz@uni-mainz.de

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Reviews

Berit von der Lippe, Rune Ottosen (eds.): *Gendering War and Peace Reporting. Some Insights - Some Missing Links*. Gothenburg [Nordicom] 2016, 278 pages, EUR 32

reviewed by Julia Lönnendonker

The collection of essays *Gendering War and Peace Reporting*, edited by von der Lippe and Ottosen, examines the role of gender in war reporting. Reporting on war has traditionally been dominated by men: Not only are the majority of war reporters past and present male, but their sources, including politicians, high-ranking military, and civil servants, are also often men.

The editors consider whether the increasing presence of women – both as war reporters and as actors in the military and politics – has changed reporting from the front and whether the female perspective has led to a greater focus on the victims of war, rather than the technical and strategic aspects that dominated in the past. The answers to these questions remain unclear, and there is no deterministic link between gender and more ›peaceful‹ news. However, the forces that shape our collective perspective are still dominated by male voices to this day. Traditionally masculine stories still shape the rules of the game of war (cf. 9). Following an introduction from the editors, the collection consists of 15 articles. They are divided into four themed sections, each of which contains three or four chapters on gender and war and peace journalism through the lens of the respective theme.

In the introduction, von der Lippe and Ottosen explain the thematic association between gender and war and peace reporting, creating a basis that aids understanding of the various articles. The very brief introduction gives a rather trenchant overview of the topic, shining a light on the huge range of perspectives.

The »A third gender or post-colonial flashback« section, in which the authors provocatively discuss the increasing number of Western female journalists in the Islamic world, is particularly thought-provoking. On the one hand, the increase in the number of female reporters can be seen as progress in terms of emancipation. On the other, Western female journalists working in the Islamic world are often seen as a kind of »third gender,« viewed by the men who live there as both different from the local women and less threatening than male journalists.

While some Western female journalists use this to their advantage in gathering information, it also reinforces the traditional role of the Arab woman, in stark contrast to the modern, educated, Western woman. The authors describe the danger that liberal feminist ideas of gender equality could turn into »a nasty little weapon of imperialism« (12). Together with Judith Butler, the editors define gender and the heterogeneity of influences of gender of war and peace reporting as »an act that requires repetitive performance ›of a set of meanings already socially established; it is the mundane and ritualised form of their legitimation‹ (Butler 1999: 178)« (18).

The four thematic blocks that follow examine very different aspects of gender in war and peace reporting. This takes two forms: the results of scientific studies and the voices of practitioners reporting on their experiences in war and crisis zones. A very positive aspect is the well-organized structure of the volume, with each sub-chapter building on the last and helping to explain the next. Despite this, each chapter also works well as a standalone piece.

In the first thematic block, entitled »Gendering Professional Agencies,« Linda Steiner examines the dangers and forms of sexism to which female war reporters were subjected from a historical perspective. In her chapter »Gendered Narratives: On Peace, Security and News Media Accountability to Women,« Sarah Macharia demands that journalism become more professional in terms of gender consciousness. Based on a content analysis that was initiated by the United Nations Entity of Gender Equality (UN Women) to examine reporting on peace and security issues in 15 countries, she demonstrates that »women are barely present in peace and security print news produced in transitional and conflict countries« (55) and describes transnational »patriarchal capitalist norms in news media systems, shaping newsroom practices, approaches to news production and the content delivered« (59).

In the third chapter of the same thematic block, Lilian Ngusuur Unaegbu describes a pattern of discrimination against women in reporting about the terrorist organization Boko Haram in north-eastern Nigeria. Taking interviews with female journalists as her starting point, she shows that female journalists are banned from reporting on the topic, even though cultural and religious reasons mean that many Nigerian women would be more likely to talk to female journalists. In the final chapter of this section, entitled »Sexual Violence against Journalists in Conflict Zones, and Gendered Practices and Cultures in the Newsroom,« Marte Høiby questions the assumption that violence against male reporters is significantly different from violence against women and that female journalists therefore need particular protection. By putting the spotlight on the vulnerability of male journalists, too, she shows that security measures for journalists are influenced by a paradigm that has men as aggressors and women as victims. As a result, men's vulnerability is underestimated and women are discriminated against.

Eva Boller kicks off the second thematic block, »Women and Lack of Agency,« with her essay »›There are no women‹. The War in Libya in TV News.« In it, she shows that almost 60 percent of all television news stories transmitted in Germany, France, and the UK about the 2011 war in Libya did not feature a single woman. Furthermore, German television did not have a single female correspondent on the ground at the time – French television had just one, while the BBC had seven. According to Boller, the main reason for this lack of women in reporting is the strong focus on »reporting on the battlefield instead of reporting about the situation for the civilian population« (21).

In the next chapter, »War and Women's Voices: The Gender Approach of Afghanistan's Largest News Agency,« Elisabeth Eide looks at the representation of women in reporting by the largest Afghan news agency Pajhwok. She shows that, although women's issues are not generally a high priority, any coverage they do receive is usually by women themselves. Violence is a very prominent topic, and an analysis of the topics and keywords that arise confirms a strong link between violence and the lack of rights. Traditions are usually named as the reason behind the violence, while the ongoing war is rarely mentioned in this context.

The third chapter of this section is Desy Ayu Pirmasari's »Being a Female Journalist at the Frontline,« in which she shares her experiences as an Indonesian Muslim female reporter in a male-dominated news environment during the war in Libya. She explains the problems female reporters face in a culture that does not welcome strong, independent women.

In the final chapter of the section, »Good or Bad Agents? Western Fascination with Women and the Construction of Female Objects during the ISIS/ISIL Crisis,« Marta Kollárová challenges the traditional view of women as vulnerable objects that need protection by putting the spotlight on women in battle. Her focus is on the Western media's ambivalence towards women's role as soldiers: According to her, they often show reports about strong, pretty Kurdish women who heroically lead the fight against ISIS fighters, while representing women who join ISIS as ghostly creatures who are manipulated by ISIS propaganda and do not know what they are doing.

Sadia Jamil begins the third thematic block, »Postcolonial Perspectives Forever,« by shining a light on »Journalism Practice and Freedom of Expression« in Pakistan from the point of view of the two genders. In doing so, she focuses on discussing the challenge facing female Pakistani journalists from the perspective of postcolonial feminist theory. The next chapter by Berit von der Lippe, »Philanthropic War Narratives and Dangerous Protection Scenario(s),« uses Afghanistan to highlight the contradictions and paradoxes of embedded war reporting. Taking the visit by the Norwegian Defense Minister to a women's prison in the Afghan province of Faryab in 2009 as an example, she explains the difficult tightrope that has to be walked between ›feminist philanthropy‹ and war reporting. The minister allowed the female reporters to photograph inmates without their veils and to publish the very intimate details they told her, thus endangering »the lives of those ›we‹ claim to protect and empower« (23).

The next chapter, »Key Factors and Challenges to Understanding Women's Roles in the Peace Process in Afghanistan« by Quhramaana Kakar, attempts to explain how the role of women has developed in Afghanistan's misogynistic society. In the thematic block's final chapter, »Is Peace a Smiling Woman? Femininities and Masculinities in Conflict and Peace Coverage,« Kristin Skare Orgeret uses examples from Norwegian newspapers to examine how the concepts of gender, war, and peace are applied in reporting on international strategies for conflict and peace. She looks for alternatives to the »universal ›white feminism‹« that she argues is constructed in the Norwegian newspapers. By linking her critical perspective with peace journalism, she attempts to enable more diverse representations of femininity and masculinity in conflict and the establishment of peace.

In the final thematic block entitled »Masculinities, Heroes and Victims,« the authors make the case for awareness of the constructions of femininity and masculinity in the media's war reporting. In his article »Masculinity, Iconisation and Fictional War Heroes in the GWT,« Rune Ottosen examines how the media distort the male experience in theatres of war, for example by discussing the traditional American hero as the basis of American war propaganda and its influence on Norwegian media. In his chapter »Why War – Still? Albert Meets Sigmund in the Ultimate Match-Up;« Toby Miller imagines a conversation between Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud on the topics of war and peace. He then goes on to discuss how this depiction of masculine scientific and technological rationality influences contemporary reporting. In the final chapter, entitled »Subversive Victims,« Anette Bringedal Houge questions the assumption that only women are become victims of sexual abuse and rape in large numbers during times of war. As an example, she cites the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in which male prisoners on all sides suffered sexual violence. However unlike violence against women, this was never discussed in the media.

This brief overview of the individual articles shows the diverse range of topics covered in this collected volume. Each chapter contains a high density of information, yet is still easy to read despite the complexity of the issues covered. However, what is missing is a summary at the end that ties together and contextualizes the (often ambivalent) conclusions from the individual chapters. As it is, at the end of the final chapter, the reader feels a little lost among all the loose ends and has to spend time classifying and transferring the new knowledge himself. Ultimately, however, this is the only flaw in a very informative and well-structured compilation of articles dedicated to the topic of gender and war and peace reporting.

Translation: Sophie Costella

This book review first appeared in rezensionen:kommunikation:medien (r:k:m).

About the reviewer

Julia Lönnendonker is a post-doctoral student at the Institute for Communication Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). Her research focuses on international and European journalism, foreign reporting, and European public life and identity, among other fields.

Hans Mathias Kepplinger: Totschweigen und Skandalisieren. Was Journalisten über ihre eigenen Fehler denken [Withholding information and creating scandal]. Series: edition medienpraxis, Vol. 15. Cologne [Herbert von Halem] 2017, 232 pages, EUR 21

reviewed by Guido Keel

Journalists make mistakes, just like any other profession. But long-serving Mainz-based communication studies expert Hans Mathias Kepplinger believes that these errors are more significant than most. In his view, they contribute directly to the loss of trust in the media – a problem for a democratic society that relies on its citizens being able to trust the media.

Journalists themselves thus bear some of the responsibility for this development. After all, according to Kepplinger, journalists have now become so alienated from society (cf. 173) that they see themselves as enlighteners who stand above the rest of society and work for the common good. They think they know better than others (cf. 171). In doing so, they employ two problematic practices: They create scandals out of essentially unproblematic events and they withhold facts that could explain a situation or lead to an alternative conclusion. In addition, they suffer from blind spots when it comes to putting (their own) journalistic mistakes up for discussion (cf. 113, 140ff.).

These are the hypotheses that Kepplinger pursues in his book. His analysis takes on a clear point of view: He does not investigate whether errors occur, but instead assumes that journalists make mistakes and tries to find out why. The case studies he chooses largely confirm his hypotheses – arguably making Kepplinger guilty of exactly the same actions as the journalists he pillories. But more on that later.

The investigation starts from the observation that the media in Germany are suffering a crisis of legitimation (cf. 10f.), receiving criticism on a range of issues from academics, the public, and fellow practitioners. This lack of credibility in the media has already been exhaustively described by other authors, notably Uwe Krüger in his book *Mainstream*. However, like others before him, Kepplinger also has to concede that the level of fundamental trust in the media in Germany remains relatively stable (cf. 22). When it comes to evaluating the specific journalistic quality seen today, the author's assessment is based on data from the period 1964 to 1995.

Kepplinger goes on to argue that the media have gained in power and begun to abuse this power – despite the fact that much of the public discourse is taken up with complaints about the media's general loss of significance. According to Kepplinger, this increase in the media's options for exercising influence lies in the expansion of its legal privileges, the increase in range, especially of television, and the »decades-long reduction in opportunities for politicians to address the public independently and directly« (31) – all arguments that are undoubtedly questionable in an age of Facebook election campaigns and Twitter-happy heads of state.

Another cause, continues Kepplinger, is the change in how journalists themselves view their role (cf. 34ff.). He claims that more journalists now see their role as an active one, in which they emphasize information that fits in with their own world view. This hypothesis contradicts regular surveys of German journalists, which repeatedly find that they see their role as neutral communicators, reporting on things as they are, as by far their most important – much more important than aiming to shape the political agenda or influence public opinion (cf. e.g. Weischenberg/Malik/Scholl 2006: 102-110). Kepplinger thus finds an »abuse of power« (39) among journalists and asks whether journalists bear moral responsibility for the unintended side effects of their reporting.

Kepplinger therefore does exactly what he pillories journalists for doing: He creates scandal, in this case about the abuse of power of a professional group that plays a role in democracy, while also withholding information about investigations and points of view that contradict this finding. However, he also provides empirical evidence, which forms the core of his book.

Using eight case studies, the author investigates how journalists assess dubious practices and the arguments for and against these practices. In one of these practices, journalists create scandal by unduly adding to, combining, instrumentalizing, or abbreviating statements and by setting events inappropriately in or out of context. In the other, they withhold relevant facts in order to retain interpretational sovereignty or to prevent damage to reputations.

All the case studies come, at least indirectly, from German politics and are – coincidentally? – chosen so that all the victims of alleged journalistic mistakes are found at the right-wing, conservative end of the political spectrum: Wolfgang Schäuble, Bishop Tebartz-van Elst, Pegida, supporters of nuclear energy, Sibylle Lewitscharoff, Pegida again, supporters of nuclear energy again, Christian Wulff, Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg, and Susanne Gaschke, who, although an SPD and therefore left-wing politician, is a media victim as the result of a controversial tax remission granted to a businessman.

Kepplinger states that his intention with these eight case studies is not to provide overall assessments, but to discuss obvious examples within them where a line has been crossed. This has the convenient side-effect of releasing him from any obligation to report fully on an issue or to evaluate controversial practices appropriately. Despite this, and although Kepplinger does not say so in as many words, the case studies undeniably give the impression that the scandalous abuse of power he claims to have identified among journalists is directed against right-wingers by left-wing journalists. The book does not mention any mistakes made against left-wing actors and concerns at all. To quote Kepplinger himself once again, one could easily come to the conclusion that the author himself is the victim of a »hostile media effect« (118) that causes the worried to perceive negative reporting on their concerns as more negative than impartial observers do. This is a shame, as it detracts from the author's real objective: to find out how journalists themselves judge dubious practices.

The real knowledge value of the book lies in its investigation of the connection between the perception of whether a certain journalistic practice is legitimate and the approval or rejection of journalists with regard to arguments for or against a certain journalistic practice in general.

The survey of 332 editors from selected departments of daily newspapers on the eight case studies shows that journalists largely adhere to the professional standards and that the majority of journalists consider the actions that Kepplinger describes as »creating scandal and withholding information« as illegitimate (cf. 108). But it is not these professionals that Kepplinger is interested in: »The analysis focuses not on the journalists that follow the rules,« but on the arguments of the minority that condone dubious practices to a greater or lesser extent.

The results show that journalists endorse certain dubious practices in individual cases if they already have a negative opinion of the person or situation that has potentially been unfairly treated. For example, journalists with a negative view of nuclear energy tended to see the excessive scandal created around nuclear energy as more acceptable than their colleagues whose views were more neutral. Although journalists believed that standards of professional ethics applied in general, they saw these standards as irrelevant in some cases, depending on their views on the specific topic. The applicability of a standard was thus assessed based on the specific case in question (cf. 49). This opens up a gulf between ideal and practical application – something that is not atypical in journalism. Although journalists consider certain rules and standards to apply, they tend to qualify them when they contradict the journalist's own world view in a specific matter.

Kepplinger ends by drawing a credible conclusion, arguing that covering up errors in professional practice damages the public image of journalism. This insight, which has long been established in other professional fields, such as medicine and engineering, needs to enter into journalism. There is still a lot to do – work that is not made easier by journalists' view that they are already confronted with significant public criticism. Journalists need to face up to the findings that are presented in this book – without being distracted from the agenda that the author's subjective choice of case studies seems to suggest.

Translation: Sophie Costella

This book review first appeared in rezensionen:kommunikation:medien (r:k:m).

Literature

Weischenberg, Siegfried; Malik, Maja; Scholl, Armin: *Die Souffleure der Mediengesellschaft. Report über die Journalisten in Deutschland*. Constance [UVK] 2006

About the reviewer

Prof. Dr. Guido Keel is Head of the Institute of Applied Media Studies at Zurich University of Applied Sciences. The focuses of his research include quality in journalism, change in journalism, and journalism in non-European contexts.

Anna Jehle: Welle der Konsumgesellschaft. Radio Luxemburg in Frankreich 1945-1975 [The wave of the consumer society]. Series: Medien und Gesellschaftswandel im 20. Jahrhundert, Vol. 9. Göttingen [Wallstein] 2018, EUR 44,90

reviewed by Konrad Dussel

When covering the history of broadcasting, most writers limit themselves to cultivating a niche that understandably attracts little attention outside its narrow boundaries. But with her prize-winning dissertation under the supervision of Frank Bösch, Anna Jehle has now written a book that deserves broader appeal. Her history of CLR/CLT –Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Radiodiffusion/Télédiffusion – and its French-language radio programming after the Second World War is not only an academic study of her chosen private broadcaster and the service it offers, but an attempt to locate a very specific media service in the context of its most important direct competitors and to analyze the interdependency between general economic, cultural, and media development – and it is done in a clearly structured, carefully developed, and fluently written way.

One of the many strengths of Jehle's book is its refusal to limit itself to the history of the ultimately French-dominated company and its radio programming, which was then primarily broadcast on long wave. Instead, the book repeatedly casts a glance at the key competitors: broadcasts by the French state and other broadcasters outside the country, with the Saarland-based private channel »Europe No. 1« the most significant after 1958. As Jehle not only translates all the French quotes, but also explicitly comments on the subtleties of the language in many cases, even those with little or no knowledge will get a lot out of this book.

In the past, there has been passionate debate about how to add the history of programming to the history of broadcasting – which up to then had been dominated by institutional history – without theorists contributing practical examples. Anna Jehle leaves out the theory and delivers a concrete paper that stretches across two chapters, around a third of her text. One chapter focuses on the programming and the way it is structured in general; the other on the news in particular. This is because, as she mentions in the chapter heading, she sees this as the »decisive factor in programming competition.« In both chapters, she ably links a look at the specific competition situations with one at creative individuals, specific programming offered, and the technical innovations that are also driving developments.

As well as presenting the institution and programming, the author does not forget the audience. The data and sources here are not sufficient to allow a comprehensive analysis like that in the other two fields, but Anna Jehle offers an interesting substitute. In one chapter, she investigates the way the Luxembourgish broadcaster addresses target groups, accentuating both the role of women and, in changing times, the role of the new target group »young people.« In a second chapter, she provides a detailed examination of the various marketing campaigns the broadcaster has used, i.e. what it offers outside its purely broadcasting function.

Anna Jehle creates a dramatic finale for her book by waiting until the end to tackle the »crucial point of private commercial broadcasting,« the »business with advertising.« In the sixth and final chapter of the same name, she takes a long run-up, first looking at the contemporary market and listener research as an accompanying moment of price calculation for the various means of advertising. Only then does she turn her attention to the most important types of advertising and advertising customers. It is no surprise that this presents the biggest obstacles to research. Although she is permitted to report in some detail that L'Oréal was one of the most important users of advertising time in Luxembourg, no meaningful figures are available on how much money was involved and how the company's balance sheet looked in detail.

This overview in itself is enough to demonstrate the points of reference Jehle's book provides for so many different fields of interest. Were any more motivation to read it required, however, it is worth mentioning the central thread that runs through the book. The limited time frame of her investigation is not least due to the enclosed period of the »trente glorieuses,« or »Glorious Thirty,« – a period of rapid change that fundamentally transformed France both socially and economically. The new phenomenon of mass consumerism was one of its central features, demanding not only material changes, but a change in consciousness for broad sections of society. It is here that Anna Jehle pinpoints the subject of her investigation: »Under these conditions, ›Radio Luxembourg‹ was able to act as a component, as a catalyst and as an agent of mass consumerism« (20). The book repeatedly returns in detail to what this meant in practice.

Anna Jehle has undoubtedly written a piece of Western European broadcasting history that sets new standards. It only remains to be hoped that the obvious extension work will be tackled. Radio Luxemburg was not only hugely significant due to its French programming directed at France between 1945 and 1975 – its English programming was presenting a considerable challenge to the BBC long before that. In the 1960s, the same went for its new German-language programming and the neighboring German public broadcasters, who had become rather self-contained. This background also puts the novelty value of the 1980s German dual broadcasting system into perspective. The conflict between private commercial and public or state broadcasting organizations goes back much further in Europe, too – and Luxembourg has been home to one of the most important players on one side since 1933.

Translation: Sophie Costella

This review first appeared in rezensionen:kommunikation:medien (r:k:m).

About the reviewer

Dr. Konrad Dussel is apl. Professor for Modern History at the University of Mannheim. His research focuses on media history and the local and regional history of south-western Germany.

Matt Carlson: Journalistic Authority. Legitimating News in the Digital Era. New York [Columbia University Press] 2017, 256 pages, approx. EUR 25

reviewed by Katherine M. Engelke

Why should we listen to journalists? According to Matt Carlson, the answer to this question lies in their journalistic authority. Having found only superficial reference to this topic in the literature up to now, (cf. 3), Carlson addresses both it and another question – Where does journalism get its authority from? – in his book.

Journalistic Authority pursues two specific goals. Firstly, it aims to deliver a conceptual intervention by explaining in detail the individual components of the theory of journalistic authority. Secondly, it produces an analytical model that enables the current state of journalistic authority to be both recorded and criticized.

Carlson takes a holistic view of his research topic and applies a relational approach. He sees journalistic work as »a contingent relationship in which certain actors come to possess a right to create legitimate discursive knowledge about events in the world for others« (13). Arguments for why journalists should be listened to – arguments in favor of journalistic authority – are constantly (re)made, making it a continuous process. Carlson's relational theory is built on three fundamental principles: (1) The relationships that give journalism its authority are diverse and include actors both inside and outside news editorial offices; (2) these relationships depend on context; (3) authority cannot be explained by a single variable, but by interaction between a wide range of factors (cf. 23).

In line with the objectives of his book, Carlson dedicates each chapter to a different component of journalistic authority. Apart from the introduction and conclusion, the book is divided into two large sections. The first details how journalists legitimize their authority. More specifically, this is explained based on journalistic identity and the (disputed) way journalism is understood as a profession (Chapter 1); various forms of journalism and the influence of digitalization in particular (Chapter 2); and, finally, narratives about journalism, which Carlson also refers to as meta-journalistic discourses (Chapter 3).

In the second section, Carlson discusses the relationships between journalists who aim to achieve an authoritative position in society and other actors who recognize this position. In doing so, he focuses his attention on the audience (Chapter 4), the sources (Chapter 5), technology (Chapter 6), and public critics of journalism (Chapter 7). His reflections build comprehensively on relevant current and historical studies from journalism research, which he links to this topic in a useful and beneficial way. Furthermore, he is also inspired by other disciplines, building his theory based on approaches from fields as diverse as sociology, political science, and philosophy.

The work is framed perfectly by its introduction and conclusion. The introduction provides a comprehensive overview of authority in general (cf. 7ff.) and journalistic authority in particular (cf. 13ff.). The model of journalistic authority designed in the conclusion (cf. 183) mirrors the structure of the book and encapsulates the crucial aspects: group identity, textual practices, and the meta-discourse on the one hand, and the relationships between journalists and the audience, sources, technology, and critics on the other. This brief tabular summary is backed up by the complex and dynamic concept that Carlson has developed in the preceding chapters, with the various influences on journalistic authority both depending on and influencing one another. The reader could thus gain a good understanding of the relationship theory of journalistic authority by reading the introduction and conclusion alone.

Were he to do so, however, he would miss out on many interesting insights and explanations, as those two chapters of course cannot contain all the detail of the model's components. After all, many of the components provide interesting contributions to journalism research in their own right. Examples include the concept of meta-journalistic discourse (cf. 77ff.), on which Carlson has also published a journal article (Carlson 2016), and the (historicized) observations on technology as an actor in journalism (cf. 150ff.). Throughout the book, Carlson successfully underpins and illustrates his theoretical considerations with numerous concrete examples. This makes the book not only of interest to its target group of students and academics, but also easily accessible to practitioners and anyone interested in journalism.

One critical point worth mentioning is the overwhelming dominance of examples from the USA. However, Carlson himself is transparent in addressing this flaw, setting himself the challenge of developing his analytical model in such a way that it can be applied outside the American context, too – a goal that he achieves.

The fact that the research topic is worked through so comprehensively makes one stylistic shortcoming all the more irritating: The author uses end notes at the end of the book to refer to the literature used and to make further additions to his considerations. As a result, readers who want to understand the sources used and gain further explanation are forced to flip back and forth in the book, interrupting the reading flow.

There is no question that Carlson's book fills a gap in research and provides a foundation for many further connections. Journalistic authority and the concept developed here can both be used as a background and basis for investigating questions of trust or mistrust in journalism, the blurred line between journalism and advertising, and options for audience participation, to name but three examples.

Translation: Sophie Costella

Literature

Carlson, M.: Metajournalistic Discourse and the Meanings of Journalism. Definition Control, Boundary Work, and Legitimation. In: *Communication Theory*, 4, 2016, pp. 349-368

This review first appeared in rezensionen:kommunikation:medien (r:k:m).

About the reviewer

Katherine M. Engelke completed her doctorate in the DFG Research Training Group »Trust and communication in a digitalized world.« Since 2018 she has been a Lecturer and Researcher at the University of Münster's Department of Communication. The focuses of her research include journalism research, trust research, political communication, and terrorism and the media.

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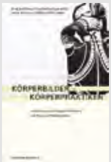

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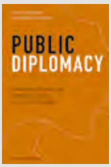

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