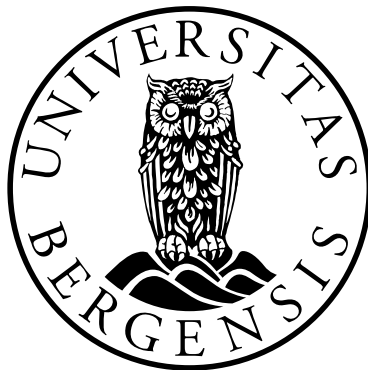


Journalistic Ideology

*Professional Strategy, Institutional Authority and Boundary
Maintenance in the Digital News Market*

Helle Sjøvaag



Dissertation for the degree philosophiae doctor (PhD)
at the University of Bergen

Abstract

Journalistic ideology is an enduring feature of professional life that is frequently mobilised to serve a boundary maintaining function. This dissertation examines how journalistic ideology is mobilised when the profession is met by exogenous forces that challenge journalistic authority, primarily by looking at how the Norwegian commercial public service broadcaster TV 2 engages journalistic ideology as part of its news market strategies. Examined hereunder is the branding effect of the traditional hard news ideology in the launch of TV 2 News Channel; the efficacy of narrative strategies and journalistic methodology in mainstream media's encounters with amateur contributions; and the application of the public service ideal in the renegotiation to sustain TV 2 as a publically licensed broadcaster. Fundamental to journalistic ideology and its mobilisation in these encounters is the concept of a social contract operating as the driving force behind professional strategies. These issues are further contextualised within Anthony Giddens' concept of the duality of structure to illustrate the recursive nature of journalistic ideology for the maintenance of professional boundaries. Journalistic ideology consequently emerges as the news media rule system, where ideology constitutes an expression of agency as much as it entails a structuring force. This thesis presents quantitative and qualitative research conveying how journalistic ideology serves the authority of the institution and the strategies of professionalism. The result is a conceptualisation of journalistic ideology that contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the function of ideology for the journalistic profession.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	III
LIST OF TABLES.....	IX
PREFACE.....	XI
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	XIII

PART I SUMMARY

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 PRIMARY OBJECTIVE.....	3
1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	4
1.3 THESIS OUTLINE.....	7

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	9
2.2 THE SOCIOLOGY OF JOURNALISM	10
2.3 JOURNALISTIC IDEOLOGY RESEARCH.....	13
2.3.1 <i>The Critical-Marxist Tradition</i>	14
2.3.2 <i>Professionalization Studies</i>	19
2.3.3 <i>Objectivity Research</i>	23
2.3.4 <i>Sociological Ideology Research</i>	30
2.4 CONCLUSIONS.....	35

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES.....	37
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	37
3.2 THE THEORY OF STRUCTURATION.....	39
3.2.1 <i>Structuration Theory and Journalism Research</i>	41
3.3 FORCES INFLUENCING JOURNALISTIC IDEOLOGY	44
3.3.1 <i>The Market</i>	45
3.3.2 <i>Professional Practices</i>	46
3.3.3 <i>Regulatory Politics</i>	46
3.3.4 <i>Political Philosophy</i>	47
3.4 KEY TERMINOLOGY.....	48
3.4.1 <i>Strategy</i>	48
3.4.2 <i>Institution</i>	53
3.4.3 <i>Ideology</i>	61
3.4.4 <i>Appropriating Key Terminology</i>	74
3.5 IDEOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY	74
3.6 CONCLUSIONS.....	79

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS	83
4.1 INTRODUCTION	83
4.2 PRELIMINARY FINDINGS	84
4.3 RESERVATIONS AND LIMITATIONS.....	85
4.4 FINAL CONCLUSION.....	86
REFERENCES	89

PART II THE ARTICLES

ARTICLE 1

REVENUE AND BRANDING STRATEGY IN THE NORWEGIAN NEWS MARKET: THE CASE OF TV 2 NEWS CHANNEL	103
INTRODUCTION	103
THE NEWS MARKET: TECHNOLOGY AND IDEOLOGY	105
CASE STUDY: TV 2 NEWS CHANNEL AND THE 24-HOUR GENRE.....	108
CONTENT PROFILE	109
THE 24/7 NEWS GENRE.....	113
JOURNALISM BETWEEN THE MARKET AND THE IDEAL.....	116
CONCLUSIONS.....	119
REFERENCES.....	121

ARTICLE 2

AMATEUR IMAGES AND JOURNALISTIC AUTHORITY	125
INTRODUCTION	125
JOURNALISM AS INSTITUTION	126
PROTECTING THE PROFESSION.....	127
NARRATIVE STRATEGIES.....	129
THE CASE STUDIES.....	132
METHODOLOGY.....	133
THE ASSASSINATION OF BENAZIR BHUTTO	133
THE 7/7 LONDON BOMBINGS.....	136
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AMATEUR IMAGES	142
CONCLUSIONS.....	143
REFERENCES.....	145

ARTICLE 3

REGULATING COMMERCIAL PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING: A CASE STUDY OF THE MARKETIZATION OF NORWEGIAN MEDIA POLICY	147
INTRODUCTION	147
THE CASE STUDY	149
BACKGROUND AND THE PARTIES INVOLVED.....	150
MEDIA SYSTEM CONTEXT	152
THE PROCESS	155
REGULATING BROADCASTING	160
A MARKETIZATION OF BROADCASTING REGULATION.....	161
CONCLUSIONS.....	165
REFERENCES.....	167

ARTICLE 4

THE RECIPROCITY OF JOURNALISM'S SOCIAL CONTRACT: THE POLITICAL- PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF JOURNALISTIC IDEOLOGY.....	173
INTRODUCTION	173
SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY IN JOURNALISM RESEARCH	173
JOURNALISM AND MODELS OF DEMOCRACY	175
MIXED LIBERAL-REPUBLICAN SYSTEMS.....	177
THE ORIGINS OF THE SOCIAL CONTRACT OF THE PRESS	178
RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS WITHIN THE SOCIAL CONTRACT	183
PROFESSIONAL IDEOLOGY AND THE RECIPROCITY OF THE SOCIAL CONTRACT.....	186
CONCLUSIONS.....	191
REFERENCES.....	193

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

METHODOLOGY REPORT.....	199
INTRODUCTION	199
OPERATIONALISING RESEARCH QUESTIONS	199
THE QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS	200
<i>Coding Design</i>	201
<i>Sample Selection</i>	203
<i>The Coding Process</i>	203
<i>Reliability</i>	204
<i>Analysis</i>	206
THE QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW	206
DOCUMENT ANALYSIS.....	207
THE QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS	208
CLOSE READING	208
THE CASE STUDY	209
MIXED METHODS.....	209
LIMITATIONS	210
CONCLUSIONS.....	211
REFERENCES.....	212

APPENDIX 2

CODE BOOK	214
DETAILED CODEBOOK.....	217

List of Tables

Table 1. Content TV 2 News Channel.....	p. 111
Table 2. Sports content TV 2 News Channel.....	p. 111
Table 3. Crime content TV 2 News Channel.....	p. 112
Table 4. Business content TV 2 News Channel.....	p. 113
Table 5. Political content TV 2 News Channel.....	p. 113
Table 6. Kappa table for the content analysis.....	p. 205

Preface

This is an article-based PhD. The Faculty of Social Sciences guidelines for doctoral theses consisting of several shorter works state that this should comprise 3-4 articles in addition to the summary. This thesis consists of four single-authored articles. At the time of submission, all articles are either published or in publication with an international journal or publisher.

According to Faculty guidelines, the summary for the article-based dissertation should summarise the thesis, present the problems and conclusions to the articles, and outline the contribution of the thesis to the research field. The aim of the summary is furthermore to document the consistency of the thesis. This thesis therefore consists of two parts. Part one is called the Summary. It contains the research questions and an introduction to the articles, a literature review, and a theory chapter. Part two contains the articles. The methodology is outlined in a separate methodology report in Appendix 1.

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Most of all thanks to my superhero of a husband, Thomas Owren.

PART I
SUMMARY

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Primary Objective

This thesis investigates the function of journalistic ideology as production and distribution technologies are digitalised. Combined, the four articles comprising the dissertation illustrate how professional ideology performs boundary work to sustain the status of journalistic institutions in an increasingly challenging media landscape. The news operations of the Norwegian commercial public service broadcaster TV 2 serve as appropriate points of departure here, as this particular news organisation not only is in a competitive situation, but also finds itself mediating between the market and the ideal. As a vantage point, journalism is perceived both as an ideal practice and as a business operating in an uncertain marketplace. Digitalisation processes fundamentally challenge the established business model for news and journalism. Free online news is turning the subscription model obsolete, and the fragmentation of television channels is driving down ratings for mainstream news programming. This entails increased financial pressures on journalistic institutions. Competition in the news market now involves a plurality of new players coming from across technological platforms, and old market segmentations no longer matter as much as before. Such market changes have consequences for how journalism functions as a profession, particularly as its weak professional status continues to warrant ideological maintenance work. Journalistic ideology is primarily communicated through professional activities that recycle and confirm vocational values through practice. As these practices are digitalised, the results of these technological processes should also have an effect on such practice. However, as the articles in this dissertation demonstrate, digitalisation does not weaken

journalistic ideology, or its function as a boundary maintaining property. Digitalisation might challenge professional autonomy through increased competition on many fronts but it has yet to alter the function, content or disposition of the ideologically projected value of journalism.

1.2 Research Questions

The focus of this thesis is the institutionalised projected value of news and journalism. In essence, it is a study of journalistic ideology. More specifically, the project investigates how TV 2 as a digitalised media house and as a commercial public service broadcaster uses the ideological value of news journalism as a strategic asset in a competitive media landscape. The primary research question is thus how journalistic ideology is maintained and projected by the news institution in light of challenges posed by the new market situation. The four articles comprising this thesis each contribute to address the overall research question through their various entry points. In the following, the research questions outlined in each of the articles are related to the primary research objective, while findings and contributions are put into context with the overall thesis topic.

RQ1: What is the competitive idea behind, and advantage of, aiming for a journalistic market in which competition is strong and news non-exclusive, ubiquitous and predicted to lose future battles for revenue?

Article 1 asks how TV 2 uses its TV 2 News Channel for branding purposes and to position itself in the digital television and news markets. The article looks at the future prospects for hard news as a revenue-generating type of journalism. Here, ideal perspectives are mixed with media economy perspectives to investigate the ideologically projected value of hard news journalism. The article finds that the internal discourse surrounding TV 2's news channel venture uncovers the ideological rules of the Norwegian news market as well as the overall journalistic field. Not only does this ideology continue to emphasise traditional objectivity-based and live fact-centred journalism, but the success of this brand also reveals

the extent to which mainstream news ideology remains strong within the profession. The article contributes to the primary objective by presenting journalistic ideology as a market-strategic asset. Its contribution lies not only in its quantitative content analysis of TV 2 News Channel, but also in its approach to the surface value of ideal projections of the ideological narratives of TV 2 as a news enterprise. Overall, findings indicating that normative news considerations are ideal as well as economic explain how ideological news practices also have strategic and financial value in the news market.

RQ2: To what extent is journalistic authority threatened by the inclusion of user-generated content among professionally collected images in the coverage of breaking news stories?

Article 2 asks how journalism uses narrative strategies to retain authority over the increasing flood of amateur contributions to the news production, particularly in relation to terror events. This article looks at to what extent journalistic professionalism is threatened by the influx of user-generated content to mainstream news. Here, a comparative content analysis of NRK and TV 2's narrative strategies in two case studies (the 7/7 London bombings and the assassination of Benazir Bhutto) are used to investigate the ideologically projected value of journalistic methodology. The article finds that journalistic authority remains unthreatened by amateur contributions to televised breaking news coverage through the employment of institutionalised practices. Overall, the ideological value mobilised in retaining such authority resides with journalistic methodology as a founding principle of journalism's contract with the audience. The article contributes to the primary objective by presenting journalistic ideology as an asset protecting the profession from outside threats to its authority. Its contribution lies in the identification of narrative schemes used to encounter user-generated content through its output expression rather than merely describing the internal editorial treatment of such material. Overall, findings indicating that the analytical practices of journalism work to retain professional authority explain how methodology and editorial procedure carry ideological value.

RQ3: How do technology, regulation and the market logic affect the regulation of commercial public service broadcasting in a twin-duopolistic and co-regulated political economy?

Article 3 asks how TV 2's public service status is regulated according to an increasing market logic. The article looks at how policy makers attempt to retain editorial plurality in the public sphere through broadcasting regulation in the digital era. Here, a document analysis of the process of renegotiating TV 2's public service contract essentially investigates what is the ideologically projected value of public service broadcasting. The article finds that the public service concept is a strategic asset that holds considerable value both politically and in the market place. The marketisation of the regulation of commercial public service in the Norwegian media landscape thereby signals the extent to which public service is a policy tool mobilised to maintain editorial plurality in the public sphere. The article contributes to the primary objective by assessing the value of the ideal dimensions of public service media beyond its mere journalistic purpose. Its contribution lies in the mapping of the negotiation process towards establishing a new public service contract for TV 2. Overall, findings indicating media regulation is a valuable asset also to a commercial broadcaster contribute to identify the pervasiveness of the ideology of the journalistic institution in the wider media landscape.

RQ4: What is the ideological relationship between the political-philosophical concept of a social contract and the social contract of the press, and how does this link reveal the function of journalistic ideology in liberal-democratic societies?

Article 4 asks how journalism uses the social contract metaphor to assert its professional authority and to retain its power within the political public sphere. The article investigates the political-philosophical origin of journalistic ideology. Such a close reading of contractarian groundworks looks at what is the ideologically projected value of the journalistic social contract. The article finds

that journalism sees itself as a separate partner within the political social contract. This in turn explains the pervasiveness of the social contract metaphor within journalistic ideology, and how this ideology is maintained within the profession. The article contributes to the primary objective by investigating the origins of the social contract metaphor as the primary ideal of journalism. Its contribution lies in the appropriation of philosophical groundworks in a reading of journalistic ideology. Overall, the link established between the basic ideals within the liberal-democratic system and the social contract of the press contributes to explain the strength and necessity of journalistic ideology within democratic systems.

Together the four articles address the question of journalistic ideology from different theoretical and empirical vantage points. Combined they contribute to answer the main research question of how journalistic ideology is manifested through mainstream institutional news production from structural, professional, political and theoretical vantage points. In essence, the thesis in large part deals with questions regarding conflicts between ideals and realities – particularly the various effects of the fact that news is a business with ideal provisions. All articles are grounded in the assumption that journalism is a weak profession that needs to mobilise a number of intangible ideal values in order to retain its authority in the public sphere and in the marketplace. As such, journalistic ideology remains at the centre of the thesis.

1.3 Thesis Outline

This thesis is structured according to the centrality of the ideology concept for contextualising the four articles. The thesis consists of two parts. Part one contains the Summary – the theoretical contextualisation of the four articles that make up the dissertation – and part two contains the articles. The Summary consists of 5 chapters. The first outlines the research questions for each article and puts these in context with the primary research object. The second chapter contains the literature review – here a directed investigation of the sociological journalism research field where this thesis belongs. Included in this review is the

critical-Marxist tradition within media studies, professionalization studies, objectivity research and sociological ideology research. Throughout the literature review and in the thesis overall there is a fairly myopic attention to the Anglo-American research tradition. Chapter 3 contains the theoretical discussions establishing background for the articles. This includes the overarching perspective of Giddens' theory of structuration and its relevance to the various forces influencing journalistic ideology as identified within the four individual articles – the market, professional practices, regulatory politics and political philosophy. From here follows a discussion of the key terminology used throughout this thesis – strategy, institution and ideology. Chapter 3 concludes with a consideration of the relationship between journalistic ideology and research methodology. Because of the nature of the methods used in the articles, the specific methodological operationalisations of research questions are outlined in a separate methodology report in Appendix 1. Chapter 4 contains the overall conclusion to the thesis, followed by a list of references. In part two, the articles are listed in the order outlined in this chapter. As all articles are either published or in publication at the time of submission, they have undergone final review and have not been altered except to establish consistency, ensuring they each come with an introduction, a conclusion and a list of references.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This thesis finds itself within the field of journalism sociology – the study of how journalism comes to be the way it is. It is primarily a study of television news, and moreover, it is a study of news produced within a commercial public service institution in a democratic corporatist media system. Overall, this is an investigation of news as a projected perspective – of news and journalism as ideology. The focus is thus on the principles of journalistic professionalism, on how these principles are constructed and maintained, their significance internally and externally – primarily centred on professional ideology as part of the institution of journalism. Each of the articles demonstrates how the professional projection of journalistic ideology emerges as a vital practice within the boundary work of the field. In the following, the research area to which this work belongs is presented as an upside-down inverted pyramid. By casting the net wide across the field of the sociology of news and journalism, the ensuing literature review begins with a general overview of the field. Once journalistic ideology is placed within the proper disciplinary context, the central works within the strands of ideology research – professionalization studies and objectivity research – are discussed in relation to their contributions to the field. This section then concludes with an outline of some of the more essential influences on this thesis. The aim of the literature review is not to account for every relevant study within the field. An exhaustive overview is as impossible as it is pointless. Instead, the aim is to identify where in the field this thesis belongs and its major influences. Alongside such a contextualising exercise, the overview

also serves to identify some of the enduring weaknesses of the academic attention to journalistic ideology. Contested here is primarily the pervasive critical approach to the functions of journalistic ideology. Whereas these perspectives are undoubtedly vital contributions to the field, it is high time we look beyond how ideology works in the practice, production and output of news, and investigate *why* ideology is useful for journalism.

2.2 The Sociology of Journalism

Sociological studies of news and journalism are usually divided into a number of research areas according to the object of interest and the questions asked. Such subdivisions can be useful in identifying common questions and methods over time and across borders. A survey of the literature reveals that studies of news and journalism for the most part are trisected into areas concerning the political economy of news, journalism's professional practices, and its ideology. Ideology, the heading under which this thesis can be placed, remains largely unmentioned as a main faction of research until the 1990s. For instance, Ettema, Whitney and Wackman (1987) divide research on journalism into an institutional industry level, an organisational news making level, and an individual level concerning news as work practices. By the 1990s, however, ideology makes its appearance in most research classifications. Dahlgren (1992) identifies three research waves in the journalism field – institution research from a (critical-Marxist) political economy perspective, the sociological study of news production, and the critique of ideology. Berkowitz (1997) separates the canon of research into questions about news as social production and questions about news as text. Social production entails news selection, news reporting, news as routine and news as a product, while news as text involves news as stories and news as ideology. Tunstall (1999) operates with four categories, and characterises news and journalism research as concerning the production, the economics, the sources of, and the ideologies of news. Schudson (2003) distinguishes between research on the principles of journalism, studies of institutional and organisation structures, and the focus on systems of news control. On a general level, Schudson says news research is concerned either with the political economy of news, that it assumes

a culturological view, or that it has a mainstream sociological approach in analysing occupational ideology. In a more recent overview, Harrison (2006) divides news research into four strands, including (critical-Marxist) political economy perspectives, culturalist approaches, organisational studies and new media theory, placing ideology research under the banner of the political economy of news.

Overall, such overviews seem to generally divide the field into political economy, cultural studies and sociological production studies¹. Ideology research is either identified as one of the main strands of news and journalism research, or it is included within the political economy of news (Harrison 2006), or as an aspect of news as text (Berkowitz 1997). One could easily question the appropriateness of these subdivisions. To call critical-Marxist perspectives a 'political economy' of news perhaps does more to obscure the field than to define its theoretical positions. Schudson, in one of the latest revisions of his 1989 review article *The Sociology of News Production*, in fact abandons the term 'political economy' as category and instead proposes to segment the field into four sections – the social organisation of newswork, cultural approaches, the economic organisation of news and the political context of news-making, hence splitting 'political economy' into two separate strands. Initially the term 'political economy' meant to interrelate the spheres of politics and economy. However, as it also "smuggled in the Marxist theorem that economics is fundamental and political structures secondary", the fact that political institutions also structure media markets became obscured (Schudson 2005: 172). The political-economic tag does however appropriately indicate the extent to which the section is theory-driven. To term a subdivision of the sociology of news a 'sociological' approach is somewhat confusing too, as the entire field is already defined as sociological. On

¹ Sociological journalism research is largely defined within field reviews as having a clear focus on the organisational realities and practices of journalism as a profession (c.f. Zelizer 2004). Whereas news sociology can also include audience perspectives and reception studies (c.f. Hagen 1992; Jensen 1998; Madianou 2009 for an overview), these directions are seldom expanded on within the literature surveyed here, and thus fall sufficiently outside the scope of this thesis to not warrant treatment within this focused literature review.

the whole, the field in question is concerned with the production of journalistic products, and with the institution where this production takes place.

The ideology of news and journalism is of such interest to scholars in the field that it is often identified as a separate strand within the research tradition. In this regard, Zelizer's (2004) segmentation of the research field seems the most appropriate and informative for placing this thesis within the larger research area. Zelizer divides journalism research into questions about journalists as sociological beings, organisational studies of journalism, and studies of journalistic institutions and ideology. The first category identifies journalistic work processes, the second points towards the production of media products, and the third looks at journalism as a system of meanings within a larger social context. Zelizer also maintains we should move research beyond the cultural artefacts of journalism and towards the study how journalistic authority is constructed and maintained from within the culture of journalism itself (Zelizer 1993). It is within this meta-perspective of journalistic ideology as a self-sustaining and coherent system of ideas that we find this thesis.

The articles in this thesis investigate how the internally constructed occupational ideology functions as an outwardly projected ideology to sustain and advance the legitimacy of the journalistic endeavour. None of the articles engage in a comprehensive analysis of this ideology specifically, however the cases all contribute to contextualise how the ideological narrative of journalism functions. Hence, the question of journalistic ideology is approached through four perspectives: in article 1 by conceptualising hard news as an ideological currency in the news market; in article 2 by identifying journalistic methodology as the brand of journalistic authority; in article 3 by establishing the commercial and political value of the public service ideology; and in article 4 by tracing the political-philosophical foundations of journalistic ideology. The question of how professional ideology is sustained through the journalistic endeavour is hence outlined not only as a question of political economy, but also as one of journalistic practice, media policy and political philosophy.

2.3 Journalistic Ideology Research

Research on journalistic ideology tends to come from two directions. One strand is critical-Marxist and tries to unmask how the news media as social institutions maintain the status quo, or the “subconscious set of values and interpretations” in the dominant ideology (Berkowitz 1997: 397). The other looks at journalism’s professional ideology as a shared culture, at how journalists learn their trade, and how this ideology is maintained. Hence, one direction is developed from the critical tradition and is concerned with uncovering the dominant ideological paradigms projected by journalistic products, institutions and practices. The other is based in sociological enquiry and is concerned with the ideological system of self-referential understanding as projected by journalism as knowledge and journalism as professional practice. It is within this second strand that this thesis is placed.

Within this second strand, studies of the ideology of news and journalism have largely been preoccupied with two things – the contentious concept of objectivity and aspects of professionalization. Anderson (2008) provides a good overview here. According to Anderson, questions in the early phase of ideology research largely revolve around the professionalization project. This essentially entails analyses of how the constructed nature of reality in journalism attempts to translate expertise, or knowledge and skills, into social and political power and economic rewards (Anderson 2008: 252-254). Later, focus turns to the “*constructed nature of journalists themselves* and their relationship to systems of social control” (ibid: 253-254). In the following, major contributions to the field of journalism ideology will be outlined. This thesis does not follow the critical tradition, however an overview of this area of research is necessary to establish the field as a whole. Secondly, knowledge gained from professionalization studies and major contributions to the objectivity debate will be treated. A discussion of the more general sociological studies of the ideology of news and journalism that have directly influenced this thesis concludes this overview of the field of research.

2.3.1 *The Critical-Marxist Tradition*

The sociologist Thomas F. Gieryn (1983) outlines two strands of sociological ideology research, one associated with Parsons called *strain theories*, and the other associated with Marx called *interest theories*. Strain theory says ideology functions as 'evaluative integration' in situations of role strain, as when faced with "conflicting demands, competing expectations and inevitable ambivalences of social life" (Gieryn 1983: 782). Interest theory says ideologies are social levers or weapons "used by groups to further their political or economic interests amidst universal struggles for power and advantage" (ibid). Both strain and interest theories characterise ideologies as symbolic representations, where ideas, beliefs, values, world-views and consciousnesses selectively distort social reality. Marxist interest theories are therefore particularly suitable for the study of professions, says Gieryn, because they help unmask how professionals struggle to achieve authority, power and resources (ibid: 792). During the 1970s, researchers began to investigate journalists as important in the formation and maintenance of views about social structures and classes. This was primarily accomplished by analysing the texts produced by the news institutions. As such, news is here mainly conceived of as involved in the construction of reality.

Many studies in this tradition focus on news production and news selection. Overall, journalistic work processes are seen to support the dominant ideology, and moreover, that this ideology supports newswork and protects journalism from outside criticism. Publications here include Cohen and Young's *The Manufacture of News* (1973) and its finding that, "the newsman actively squeezes events into categories suitable for the smooth running of the media bureaucracy as well as ideologically significant in upholding a particular world view" (Cohen and Young 1973: 20). Molotch and Lester verify this perspective in *News as Purposive Behaviour* (1974) where news is seen as a constructed reality, "as reflecting not a world out there, but the practices of those having the power to determine the experience of others" (Molotch and Lester 1974: 111). Likewise, Philip Schlesinger's study of the BBC finds that news is a routine practice that engenders predictable stories, where the organisation and ideology of news practices are mutually reinforcing (Schlesinger 1978: 47, 83). The journalistic

worldview is equally central in Golding and Elliott's *Making the News* (1979), where the emergence of news is tied to its service-function for elite groups. As news remains geared towards these elites while also attempting to reach a mass audience, news draws on the widest held assumptions and values. Thus, news is ideology, to the extent that "it provides a world view both consistent in itself, and [is] supportive of the interests of powerful social groupings" (Golding and Elliott 1979: 208).

A few seminal works published in the early 1980s culminate the critical perspective on journalistic ideology as a hegemony-enforcing entity, but they also contribute to complicate the picture. Stuart Hall's *Encoding and Decoding in Television Discourse* (1980) makes a significant contribution to this area of research. Here, Hall outlines the process by which media messages can have an effect. According to Hall, signs carry meaning beyond their literal or consensual meanings – thereby acquiring their ideological value. Moreover, signs take on active ideological dimensions in their interactions with different semantic cultures. The codes used in communication processes are therefore seen as "the means by which power and ideology are made to signify in particular discourses" (Hall 1980: 134) – reproducing the dominant-hegemonic position. Such ideological reproduction takes place within news organisations inadvertently and unconsciously, because the professional code "operates *within* the 'hegemony' of the dominant code" (ibid: 136). This is because, as Hall explains, the dominant hegemony defines the mental horizon and carries legitimacy, making it seem natural (ibid: 137).

Todd Gitlin assumes such a perspective in *The Whole World is Watching* (1980), where he looks at media coverage of the political left in America. Gitlin finds that the media supports the dominant ideology, but he also remarks on the apparent disparity between maintaining the status quo and reporting critically about the government. While the media supports the system, remarks Gitlin, journalism's professional ideology also encourages criticism of the system (Gitlin 1980: 259). Mark Fishman's perspective in *Manufacturing the News* (1980) is that routine journalism reflects the ideology of the world they report on, here specifically the

bureaucratic world. According to Fishman, however, ideological hegemony in the news does not necessarily stem from the dominant elites or from management. Instead, he says, “The ideological character of news follows from journalists’ routine reliance on raw materials which are already ideological” (ibid: 140). This is because news is “a practical organizational accomplishment” reliant on “the bureaucratic definition of the phenomena they report” (ibid).

Here, Oscar Gandy’s 1982 study *Beyond Agenda Setting* contributes to the picture by positioning ideology as a structural constraint. Gandy explains the media-supported hegemony with the position that, “Information consistent with the dominant ideology flows more easily, is accepted more readily, and is less likely to be discounted in the reduction of uncertainty” (Gandy 1982: 96). Because culture is premised on the rules of the marketplace, says Gandy, audiences also play a role in its domination, as they accept the ideological content of the mass media (ibid: 210). Based on the findings of studies such as these, David Altheide sets out to investigate the claims of the hegemony hypothesis in his 1984 article *Media Hegemony: a Failure of Perspective*. Altheide concludes that “(1) journalists are not uniformly socialized into the dominant ideology, nor are most elite journalists supportive of conservative values and ideology; (2) journalistic reports do not routinely perpetuate the status quo, but have been agents of change in a number of instances” (Altheide 1984: 477). So whereas journalism in the 1980s is primarily seen as an ideology-producing practice, there is also a growing awareness that things are not quite so simple, and moreover, that journalism is not autonomous in the hegemony process.

Daniel Hallin addresses the hegemony debate in *We Keep American on Top of the World* (1994). Hallin remarks that most of the research within critical theory is content to identify ideological assumptions that are “supportive of the capitalist social order” (Hallin 1994: 29). What he criticises in the Marxist perspective is its portrayal of ideology as a *deus ex machina* (ibid: 79). While they often discuss how these are effective as journalistic routines, most fail to ask how such ideologies become dominant. Here, Hallin contributes an important insight, namely that, “the ability of the media to support that structure [of social power]

is limited by their need to maintain the integrity of the process of communication on which their own legitimacy depends” (ibid: 20). Hallin consequently says there is no simple answer to whether the media serve “the power structure of advanced capitalism” ideologically or not (ibid: 43). In this respect, John B. Thompson criticises the tendency to negate the role of communications in the ideology debate, as it reduces the media to instruments of social control. Instead, he aims to rethink the theory of ideology in light of the development of mass communication and the consequent ‘mediation’ of modern culture. Thompson acknowledges that the media – as the primary disseminator of symbolic form – can transform ideological phenomena into mass phenomena. However, whereas Thompson’s focus remains on how mass communication mediates ideologies, he says this is not the only form of ideological mediation found in modern societies (Thompson 1990: 19-20)².

Alternative perspectives on the hegemony thesis in the research on journalistic ideology come from the cultural studies tradition and from organisational studies of news production. In the cultural studies tradition, communication systems have been seen as fields of contending discourses where there is a constant struggle for legitimacy. This direction does not see the mass media “as a transmission belt for a dominant ideology” (Murdock and Golding 2005: 74). Instead, people working within the production of communication do so “within a range of codes and professional ideologies” (ibid: 73). From the organisational perspective, news output is seen as the result of organisational constraints, and not as a result of hegemonic system maintenance (Epstein 1973: 270-271). News content is more determined by the resources allocated to journalistic production to sustain the operation than by the ideologies of the producers. Moreover, says Epstein, “these requirements imposed on the news divisions are not arbitrary; they flow from the logic and structure of network television” (ibid: 268). Whereas ideology functions to support the institution in which the profession is set, the term ideology can also be used to refer to professional belief systems “through which the practitioners make sense of their work experiences” (Elliott

² Thompson’s perspective on ideology is treated in greater detail in Chapter 3.

1972: 132-136). A more contemporary critical perspective on journalistic ideology can be found in Teun van Dijk's discourse analytic approach. He sees ideology as a form of social cognition and combines the role of discourse in the expression and reproduction of ideology with a theory of its function in society (van Dijk 2009: 193). From here, he criticises newsroom studies for being too focused on ideology as projected through organisational routines of established values. Nevertheless, his own research still finds that news ideologies function to sustain existing power boundaries along class, gender, race, age and sexual orientation (ibid: 197-202). As he himself admits, this is hardly a new conclusion.

Summary

The critical-Marxist tradition has clearly contributed a major theoretical perspective to the field of journalism ideology research. Although somewhat conspiratorial in its orientation, the arguments here serve to remind us of the potential ideological effects of journalism as an organisational practice. However, this tradition also largely overlooks how the constraints of the journalistic work process affect news practices, and how the institutional framework structures and limits news work. The journalistic manufacturing of reality – an often-repeated chorus in this tradition – should be tempered by Schudson's recent insight that while news certainly is socially constructed, it is not constructed out of nothing. Much of the work journalists do is reaction work – reaction to events – because, as Schudson points out, 'things happen'. How journalists report the things that happen depends as much on the available cultural tropes and narrative forms as it relies on routine organisation (Schudson 2007). Despite the fact that there is clearly a difference between news ideology and journalistic ideology, in the critical-Marxist tradition the two are often taken as one and differences overlooked. Journalistic ideology entails the ideal of journalistic practice – its democratic importance, its information value, its social and political impact, its codes of ethics, its objectivity ideal. News ideology contains the ideal that justifies journalism – breaking news, agenda setting, live coverage, hard news, foreign correspondence. Both ideologies insist upon themselves and

support the field as a whole. The next research tradition reveals how journalism expresses this insistence.

2.3.2 Professionalization Studies

The question regarding the professional status of journalists grew out of the sociology of the professions. In line with the general mood of the 1970s, a Marxist critique of professional power here replaced the structural functionalist (or Parsonian) perspective that until then had seen ideology as institutionalised in social systems (Anderson 2008: 252). The primary issue for Parsons had been the sources of ideological selection and distortion, and the consequences of the acceptance of ideological beliefs for the social system (Parsons 1967: 156). Here, the function of ideology was to “protect the stability of the institutionalized values” (ibid: 162). Moreover, ideology was seen to facilitate the acceptance of the professions and the bodies of empirical knowledge they produce in the wider society. As functionalism became increasingly criticised for undervaluing the role of agents and overemphasising the role of structures in determining human action, the Parsonian structural functionalism was abandoned for a more agency-driven enquiry. From this vantage point, research turned to the development of journalism as a ‘professional project’ (Schudson and Anderson 2009: 89). The main issue in this tradition is to investigate the extent to which journalism can actually be said to be a profession.

Many of the researchers working in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s set out to measure journalism against a list of professional criteria. This list includes systematic and technical knowledge, training schools, professional organisations, a formal code of ethics, a systematic theory base and, overall, an adherence to a public service ideal as the master norm of the professions (Elliott 1972: 147; Tunstall 1971: 69; Wilensky 1964: 138-146). Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman measure journalism against such a set of defined professional criteria in *The News People* (1976), but emphasise that such criteria are never fixed, nor are they easily agreed upon. They conclude that journalism has already moved through the five historical stages towards professional status (from the first

training schools to university education, the first associations locally and nationally, established licensing law and a code of ethics), falling short only in the trade union demand. Professionalism is thus the move towards self-sufficiency, or a “pursuit of occupational power” (Elliott 1972: 144). However, 10 years on, Weaver and Wilhoit (1986) maintain that journalism still has a weaker organisational identity than other professions (Weaver and Wilhoit 1986: 106). Tunstall even asserts the extreme unlikelihood of journalism ever becoming a profession, although he says it might develop into a semi-profession (Tunstall 1971: 69). The advantage of gaining professional status lies in the ability to protect the autonomy and self-regulatory freedom of the professional field (Golding and Elliott 1979: 13; Wilensky 1964). Threats to professionalism can therefore primarily be found in a vocation’s perceived lack of exclusivity and jurisdiction over its knowledge base (Wilensky 1964: 146-150). Abbott refers to such jurisdictional control as a socially accepted claim to exclusivity. To Abbott, professions are knowledge systems grounded in abstraction that enable survival within a professional ecology (Abbot 1988: 8-9, 33-34). To him, journalism is a permeable occupation, one characterised by heavy intra-professional mobility and competition (ibid: 225-226). The lack of exclusion and monopoly thus means boundary work is of great significance in the establishment and maintenance of the professional status of journalists.

Within the sociology of the professions we find Magali Sarfatti Larson’s *The Rise of Professionalism* (1977), a work often referenced in literature on the professionalization of journalism. Larson assumes a firm critical-Marxist stance in her treatment of the professions. According to her, professions are ideologically constructed, based on bourgeois individualism and a liberal market model, where their function is to support the dominant ruling class (Larson 1977: 209-225). As a result, she says, “The dominant ideology attributes to professionals and experts special prestige as well as ‘moral and intellectual superiority’” (ibid: 236). With his concept of boundary work, Thomas Gieryn (1983) here introduces a sobering and fruitful perspective on the function of professions. Gieryn discusses the ideological demarcations of the professional project of the field of science, but the theory can be equally applied to journalism.

According to Gieryn, establishing professional status is advantageous because it renders the field and its members material opportunities and professional advantages (Gieryn 1983: 781). To establish such a status, a process of demarcation is necessary – involving ideological efforts to distinguish the work of members from the practices and products of non-members. Such boundary disputes are contests for the authority of the title under dispute. The rhetoric mobilised in boundary work thus includes attributing selected characteristics to the discipline that demarcate it from its closest rivalling fields. Members engage in boundary work by attributing characteristics such as knowledge, methods, values and organisation to construct a social boundary that separates journalism from non-journalism. The purpose of such boundary work is to “enlarge the material and symbolic resources” and to “defend professional autonomy” (ibid: 782). The expression of this boundary work is ideology. In the end, boundary disputes often result in obtained professional advantages, with the subsequent loss of authority and resources by competing occupations. Gieryn says that,

“boundary-work is a likely stylistic resource for ideologists of a profession or occupation: (a) when the goal is *expansion* of authority or expertise into domains claimed by other professions or occupations, boundary-work heightens the contrast between rivals in ways flattering to the ideologists’ side; (b) when the goal is *monopolization* of professional authority and resources, boundary-work excludes rivals from within by defining them as outsiders with labels such as ‘pseudo’, ‘deviant’, or ‘amateur’; (c) when the goal is *protection of autonomy* over professional activities, boundary-work exempts members from responsibility for consequences of their work by putting the blame on scapegoats from outside” (Gieryn 1983: 791-792).

In order to obtain professional authority, the professional knowledge must be socially accepted as the preferred practice of performing the vocation. How this authority is obtained can be partly answered by investigating its professional ideology. The question is, to paraphrase Gieryn, what images of journalism do journalists present “to promote their authority over designated domains of knowledge?” (ibid: 783). Professions carry ideological vocabularies and cultural repertoires to construct ideological self-descriptions, such as norms, but also claims, in journalism’s case, to upholding democracy, serving citizens and

overseeing power. Once boundaries are established, the question becomes how to retain control over the resources of the field, amongst other things by keeping the discipline autonomous and free from government control or intervention. Hence, says Gieryn, “Boundary-work is an effective ideological style for protecting professional autonomy” (ibid: 789). Moreover, the continued autonomy of journalists depends on the effectiveness of this ideology.

Gieryn’s framework fits well with the findings of John Soloski (1989). In a study of news reporting and professionalism, Soloski argues that professionalism is achieved and retained by securing a monopoly on expertise. Professional status hence requires a stable body of knowledge that is mastered by its members through a combination of education and on-the-job training, and public acceptance of its expertise monopoly. Moreover, professional norms and values are embedded in journalistic myth. This myth makes up the professionalism by which the news organisation effectively controls the behaviour of journalists. This process supports the organisation, as well as “the overall politico-economic system in which the news organization operates” (Soloski 1989: 225).

In the Norwegian context, the journalism scholar Odd Raaum (1999) has conducted a thorough investigation of the professionalization process of Norwegian journalists by examining their emancipation from political parties – a process commencing in the 1960s. Because journalists in a liberal political system cannot claim the monopoly on knowledge and the public authorisation that characterise the classic professions, journalists and editors compensate for this lack of professional exclusivity by a strong use of professional ideology. In this ideology, professional ethics are used to demarcate boundaries to related professions, and thus to protect the profession’s territorial integrity. Journalists and editors invoke as authority for its emancipation demands a ‘social contract’ as the profession’s legitimacy basis. The inherent discipline in the professionalization effort serves an external as well as an internal function. It helps define the qualities and standards of the discipline to new members and old, to bordering disciplines, and to the surrounding society. Raaum uses the term ‘ethical cleansing’ to describe how the journalistic profession builds,

maintains and protects its own integrity. This practice cleanses the profession of unethical practices and breaches in professional norms. The public relations effect of this type of discipline convinces the outside world that the profession is willing and able to discipline its own members, and can therefore be left to its own devices (Raaum 1999: 34-36).

Summary

The attempts to establish whether or not journalism is a profession have been useful to the extent that they demonstrate the prevailing ambiguities in measuring journalism against a set of criteria primarily appropriate to law and medicine. These ambiguities are best expressed in the theory of boundary maintenance outlined by Gieryn, and in how such a practice can be recognised in the professionalization project as shown in Raaum's history of the emancipation of Norwegian journalism. In this regard, it might be more fruitful to assume the position that it is not so important to determine whether journalism is a profession or not. Rather, the interesting thing is that it acts like one. As such, all the values gained from the professional status – or in assuming the position of having one – aid journalism in its boundary maintenance. Because of journalism's lack of a fixed professional status, this type of boundary work remains a constant within the expression of journalistic ideology. It is this boundary work – and the professional insistence – that characterises the external expression of that ideology to sustain the legitimacy of the field as a whole.

2.3.3 Objectivity Research

The debate over journalistic objectivity is a pervasive, unresolved and somewhat heated topic that runs throughout the research history. Claiming that the issue is unresolved, however, perhaps amounts to something of an overstatement, as most scholars seem to be in agreement over its ideological purpose and its epistemological impossibility. While objectivity is not an aspect of the professional ideology that is addressed in this thesis, it is so distinctly linked to the emergence of journalistic professionalism that the subject must be engaged

nonetheless. Objectivity is in fact so closely associated with journalistic ideology, say Schudson and Anderson, that, “Understanding the emergence of objectivity would, in short, provide the key to understanding the emergence of professionalism” (Schudson and Anderson 2009: 92). While this is undoubtedly true, the vantage point for this discussion is that the epistemological frame within which this research has been undertaken is perhaps not the most fruitful of approaches. The ideological purpose of the objectivity ideal is not disputed here, neither are the many proofs of its consequential bias. What is unsettling, however, is the sometimes rather pointless effort to debunk objectivity as ‘impossible’. Whereas this argument is a valuable contribution to the research history, its constant affirmation even in contemporary research fails to contribute much insight to the ideological construct of journalism. This section will first list some of the major findings in this area, and then continue to focus more specifically on the core questions regarding objectivity by contrasting Gaye Tuchman’s article *Objectivity as a Strategic Ritual* (1972) with Judith Lichtenberg’s *In Defense of Objectivity* (1991).

Much of the early research on objectivity ties its emergence as a journalistic method to the development of journalism as profession. Schudson discusses the objectivity ideal in his book *Discovering the News* (1978). According to him, objectivity did not become a dominant norm in American journalism until after the First World War. When journalists realised that what they had once perceived as facts could no longer be trusted, they replaced their naïve empiricism with an adherence to “rules and procedures created for a world in which even facts were in question” (Schudson 1978: 7). The objectivity ideal thus became an institutionalised practice maintained by the mechanisms of autonomy that retains the profession as free and independent. Bernard Roshco also tracks the development of the objectivity standard of American journalism. He paints it as an institutional feature – one that emerged as a result of a competitive New York newspaper market at the end of the 19th century. Roshco says objectivity became a useful occupational ideology primarily because the rules of the objective method facilitate news selection and therefore rapid processing. Moreover, a predominant reliance on sources means reporters need

less extensive knowledge. It also moves journalistic judgements to a technical basis, something that serves to protect reporters from outside criticism (Roshco 1975: 123-125). Here, Hallin's research demonstrates how the objectivity ideal helped rationalise the connection between press and state (Hallin 1986: 69-70). The result of this process is a work practice adapted by the objectivity ideal. News judgement based on the conventions of objective journalism therefore entails the use of official sources (as 'the facts' are often found here, which is both effective and time saving); a focus on the president (as his newsworthiness overrides all other); an absence of interpretation or analysis; and a focus on immediate events (close proximity preferred because of deadline issues) (ibid: 71- 75).

Graham Knight's work provides an example of the critical approach to news ideology. Knight is mainly concerned with how journalism sustains the dominant ideology of society rather than with revealing the ideology *of* journalism, and links ideology to the question of bias in the news. He says news accounts are ideological through their selectivity (Knight 1982: 17, 33). Within the objectivity ideal lies the hidden assumption that facts are finite and identifiable, and that news can be easily identified in a world full of events (ibid: 18). Hence, "the ideological-ness of news is embedded at the level of form and methodology", and therefore "tends uncritically to reproduce relations of domination" (ibid: 34). While Soloski shares this perspective, he also accounts for how objectivity can be seen as a practical method for handling the complexities of news making. By presenting the news as "a series of facts", objectivity relieves journalists of the responsibility of veracity – if not embarrassment – as facts are provided by, and therefore the responsibility of, sources (Soloski 1989: 214). He says that, "While it is true that news legitimizes and supports the existing politico-economic system, it is not true that journalists' selection of news stories reflects a conscious desire on their part to report the news in such a way that the status quo is maintained" (ibid). Accordingly, journalists are not ideological, but they support the dominant ideology through the objectivity method.

Stephen D. Reese (1990) outlines the usefulness of the objectivity ideal for journalistic professionalism. He looks at how objectivity functions within the larger ideological framework of journalism, and how violations against this norm are corrected by paradigm maintenance. Reese circles back to Knight's perspective. Here, the news paradigm is seen to operate within a larger ideological sphere, and news contributes to maintain the authority of the political system as part of a larger hegemonic process. Objectivity remains central to the news paradigm, as the ideal fuels the journalistic practices that determine newsworthiness. However, says Reese, journalistic ideology contains contradictions, and therefore needs to be constantly negotiated and managed through a paradigm repair process (Reese 1990: 406). Hence the critical perspective contributes to the conclusion that objectivity is ideologically useful for the professionalization project.

These critical and historical researchers discovered how objectivity serves both as professionally legitimating, and as methodological facilitator. However, while Schudson maintains that objectivity can be used to legitimate power, he also asks why objectivity is the chosen defence of legitimacy within journalism (Schudson 1978). Hallin likewise points to the ambiguity of the objectivity ideal – one that not all reporters would recognise or subscribe to – and that “coexists in an often ambiguous relationship with other ideals” (Hallin 1986: 68). Objectivity is not a heterogeneous subject. Hereto, Roshco outright acknowledges the contentiousness of objectivity as research object:

“The epistemological confusion in discussing ‘objective’ reporting arises from differences between norms of role-performance governing reporters who seek objective acquaintance-with the facts of their story assignments and scientists who seek objective knowledge-about the facts of their research projects. The same term is applied to different modes of verifying data and asserting knowledge” (Roshco 1975: 56-57).

Generally speaking, the literature on journalistic objectivity gives a clear impression of the discrepancy between how objectivity is perceived among journalists, and how it is conceived among social scientists and in the

humanities. Journalists see objectivity as a method for collecting facts and writing news stories, while researchers see objectivity as the epistemologically impossible. The one thing these two conceptions seem to have in common is how objectivity is linked to a scientific positivist-empiricist ideal. Curiously, most researchers fail to investigate this gap in the perceived meaning of objectivity between these two groups. This gap is to some extent addressed by Tuchman and Lichtenberg.

Gaye Tuchman's seminal article *Objectivity as a Strategic Ritual* (1972) became a gateway to start thinking critically about the values and norms of journalism. Tuchman suggests that objectivity functions for journalism as a strategic ritual – used to defend the profession from outside attacks. Objectivity hence works as a risk minimiser, ultimately to secure newspapers as business operations (Tuchman 1972: 661-665). Methodologically, objectivity entails presenting conflicting possibilities or opposing truth claims, supplying supporting evidence, using quotations and arranging information according to the principle of the inverted pyramid. It is in this type of story presentation that Tuchman identifies the most problematic aspects of the objectivity norm, as news judgements occur in the writing process. This concept of objectivity as bias is stated in Tuchman's conclusion, where she claims that, "Although such procedures may provide demonstrable evidence of an attempt to obtain objectivity, they cannot be said to provide objectivity" (ibid: 676). This conclusion establishes a common refrain in journalism research. However, as Judith Lichtenberg argues, this lamentation that newswriters constantly fail to realise academia's epistemological assertion that 'objectivity is not possible', is beside the point. As an added bonus, however, Tuchman's claim that journalists' operational definition of objectivity amounts to statements such as "I am objective because I have used quotation marks" (ibid: 677), actually conveys a lot about what journalistic objectivity means to journalists, both conceptually and connotatively. As Judith Lichtenberg (1991) argues, we should in fact distinguish between objectivity as an ideal and objectivity as a method.

Tuchman's assertion that "the word 'objectivity' is being used defensively as a strategic ritual" (Tuchman 1972: 678) is just one of the many critiques launched against objectivity as a cornerstone of journalistic ideology. Lichtenberg explains this resilient criticism against objectivity as impossible, unattainable and even undesirable, as rooted in postmodernism and the sociology of knowledge. The misunderstanding, says Lichtenberg, lies in the perception that objectivity is still understood as a correspondence between an idea and reality itself. Criticism emanating from research on journalistic objectivity corresponds to a metaphysical idealism and a social constructivism that sees anyone who adheres to an objective ideal as dangerously deluded. A journalist working according to the objectivity ideal will therefore never present a "true" version of reality, and consequently inevitably reproduce and reinforce cultural and political hegemony in support of the prevailing ideological agenda. However, objectivity as method, according to Lichtenberg, "At the very least [means] that some questions have determinate, right answers – and that all questions have wrong answers" (Lichtenberg 1991: 223). Hence, the epistemological and metaphysical exercises that researchers engage in to unmask the objectivity myth serve little to explain how journalistic ideology functions as a self-sustaining power in the political realm. As Lichtenberg argues, "insofar as we aim to understand the world we cannot get along without assuming both the possibility and value of objectivity" (ibid: 230). Moreover, we need to distinguish between objectivity as ideal and objectivity as method, as much as "The problems of objectivity are political, not metaphysical" (ibid: 230).

Summary

We could continue to list and discuss studies on the journalistic objectivity ideal *ad infinitum*. Suffice it to say that the academic effort continues to refute the objectivity ideal as epistemologically impossible (e.g. Edgar 1992; Poerksen 2008). What we gain from this overview are the following insights: That objectivity is considered the dominant ideal of (American) journalism, that this ideal is strongly connected to the professional development and maintenance of the field, that objectivity is actualised through the journalistic method, and that

critical Marxists see it as instrumental in maintaining the hegemonic status quo. A more interesting question is of course why objectivity is the chosen name for the journalistic method. The simple answer is that a belief in the objectivity of the news media enhances their credibility (Lichtenberg 1991: 227). As Charlotte Wien explains, the contemporary journalistic objectivity paradigm is a positivist approach that can be attributed to Walter Lippmann, who emphasised the scientific method as the primary aspiration of journalism. Wien takes as evidence of the pervasiveness of the objectivity paradigm the fact that objectivity is perceived as synonymous with bordering concepts such as fairness. Underlying this equation is “the positivist faith in the possibility of distinguishing between opinions and facts” (Wien: 2005 9). As such, it remains difficult for journalism to break free from this paradigm.

We may further complicate the answer by adding that the news media is also a business, and one that competes in a crowded market. To gain a foothold in such a market, enterprises need to be perceived as being serious about journalism. Part of being serious is to follow the established news ideology, where the objectivity stance remains an important component. In any type of boundary work, then, some variation on the objectivity theme – whether epistemologically possible or not – is an important rhetoric in the contest for professional authority. The objectivity ideal thus serves the narrative-ideological purposes of journalism as a self-sustaining field. We should therefore remember to distinguish between journalism as ethos and journalism as mythos. Hence, some of the beliefs and values that fuel journalistic ideology are embedded in the scientific notion of objectivity. The fact that the word ‘objectivity’ still figures prominently in the journalistic discourse is proof of its value in journalistic mythology. More than anything, then, objectivity in this context should be perceived as a grammatical form, not as an epistemological concept that can be empirically tested.

2.3.4 Sociological Ideology Research

This thesis assumes a rather general sociological perspective on journalistic ideology. This means analyses are embedded more in the effort to understand journalism as a self-sustaining system, than fall specifically under the heading of professionalization studies, the critical tradition or the objectivity debate. Although it might be difficult to define exactly what lies in such a general sociological perspective on ideology, the four contributions discussed in this section should provide an impression, as they comprise the more substantial influences on this thesis. These scholars all present a view of journalistic ideology that considers the function of journalistic ideology for professional self-maintenance and for the boundary work necessary for the field.

A thoroughly fundamental investigation into the ideals behind American journalism can be found in J. Herbert Altschull's overview of how the western philosophers have influenced the profession. Altschull (1990) assumes the view that the ideology of the journalistic field is rooted in the ideas that have shaped the formation of our societies on a political-philosophical level. The benevolence inherent in this approach serves to shake off some of the suspicious attitudes regarding the presumed self-interestedness of journalism from the critical tradition. It also adds a welcome notion to the professionalization perspective, as it assumes journalism is a part of society, and that social and political institutions interact in symbiotic ways. This concept wakens us to the reality that ideas, values and beliefs do not appear out of nowhere, and that ideals that serve as boundary maintaining properties can also serve a positive function in society. Journalistic ideology is sustainable despite its lack of professional status precisely for this reason – the ideals behind journalistic ideology do not only serve journalism, they also serve society. Herbert Gans (1980) explains this connection when he notes that enduring journalistic values are not strictly professional values. As they centre on notions of the good society, they are also shared social values, with lay origins. Hence they in turn serve journalism's social standing and public respect. Gans calls this "aggregate of values and the reality judgements associated with it paraideology" (Gans 1980: 68). Essentially,

this paraideology makes up journalism's ideology. This is best proven, he says, by the fact that journalists do not perceive it as an ideology (ibid: 203).

Altschull says journalistic ideology is a belief system that journalists use to inquire about the purpose and function of their work. He identifies four sources of professional ideology, namely historically developed practices and codes of conduct, established opinions, attitudes rooted in feelings and emotions, and public statements made by the leaders and elites of the profession. The journalistic value system is derived from news judgements and news conventions, where pragmatism remains the guiding philosophical principle for American journalism (Altschull 1990: 21-25). Because journalists hardly concern themselves with philosophical thinking, says Altschull, their ideals come from outside the craft. Journalistic ideology is therefore grounded in the philosophies that have shaped liberal-democratic societies. For instance, Altschull attaches freedom of expression and the opposition to censorship to Milton; the idea that 'news is good for people' to Hobbes; the contract ideal and the right of revolt to Locke; scepticism to Hume; the people's right to know, the principle of education and the wisdom of the will of the people to Rousseau; the belief in education and the separation of powers to Montesquieu; and the ideal of enlightened understanding, scepticism and the scientific method to Voltaire, to name a few of the philosophers listed (ibid: 42-89). Adding to this, Gans outlines what he sees as some of the enduring values included in American journalistic ideology. The concepts discussed in this respect are ethnocentrism, altruistic democracy, responsible capitalism, small-town pastoralism, individualism, moderatism, social order and national leadership (Gans 1980: 42ff). Journalistic ideology is an aggregate of this type of flexible value system. The reality judgements that form the basis of assumptions underlying news selection contain values that create a "picture of nation and society as it ought to be" (ibid: 39). The process of news selection that includes such values and preferences is a process that simultaneously involves value exclusion (ibid: 182). Gans thus demonstrates how this journalistic paraideology, and the processes of value inclusion and value exclusion, contribute to the boundary work described by Gieryn (1983).

The work of Altschull and Gans illustrate well the value-laden nature of journalistic work. James Ettema and Theodore Glasser's analysis of investigative journalism helps to reveal the function of this ideology by looking at the paradox inherent in the profession's ability to conceal it through the 'objectification of standards'. Ettema and Glasser conceptualise investigative reporters as "custodians of public conscience" (Ettema and Glasser 1998: 3). What they find interesting about this occupational group is the inherent paradox in "its claim to confront the realities of vice and virtue without a moral sense of its own" (ibid: 7). The central question is therefore whether journalists can "make news judgements without also making moral judgements" (ibid: 10). The job of the investigative journalist is to report moral, legal and social transgressions. In order to rightly identify such transgressions, journalists and audiences need to operate on the same moral ground, sharing an appreciation for what is considered right and wrong in society. Transgressions are identified based on this shared morality, and reported through an objectification of these moral standards – making value judgements appear as news judgements. In this process, the hidden value judgements are presented as empirically verifiable facts, which makes news appear as empirically unambiguous. Hence journalists manage to maintain an objectivity ideal by which the separation of fact from value can remain. As such, say Ettema and Glasser, "By the logic of this process the moral order is made fact, and fact can be reported with detachment" (ibid 1998: 71). However, Ettema and Glasser do not consider the media as the uncritical legitimiser of the existing order. The media does not, in their view, contribute to a "complete or lasting ideological closure" (ibid: 83). Whereas journalism can support the dominant values in society, it can also "serve as an agent of change for those values" (ibid). Achieving change is after all one of the enduring professional ideals of investigative journalism. With the concept of the paradox of the disengaged conscience, Ettema and Glasser reveal the degree to which journalism is an occupation guided by moral principles. Moreover, this concept demonstrates how journalistic ideology is the result of a moral coexistence between journalism as an institution and civil, cultural and political society.

Norwegian journalism scholar Martin Eide offers one of the more comprehensive descriptions of journalistic ideology. Eide describes the occupational ideology as the very function by which the institution legitimates its own social, cultural and political role. He thereby locates the journalistic self-image as a professionalising force in itself (Eide 1992: 24). Eide explains that as the craft develops, journalism attains hegemony both inside and outside the profession. In this process, journalism is transformed from a vocation to an ideology. This ideological turn is described as a journalistic fallacy – a transgression where the journalistic world-view becomes the measure of all things and where journalistic practices and methods are elevated to ideology. This evolution entails an instrumentalist expansion of the media logic. Eide identifies this fallacy in journalism's vulgar understanding of its own power as the defender of the common man against the powers that be; in the expansion of the service ideology where audiences are addressed as clients, consumers and rights holders rather than as citizens; in an impresario-instrumentalism where journalism resorts to performing the technical function of staging conflicts rather than explaining them; and in the myopia of a professional ideology that overlooks the negative consequences of its own power and the combined effects of the journalistic fallacy (Eide 2004: 35-52). This journalistic logic is subsequently expanding to other fields. Not only is the news media a site where sources struggle for legitimacy, but thinking journalistically also becomes increasingly important outside the media sphere. Because of this expansion of the media consciousness, journalism is reduced to an instrumental question – a merely technical issue with pragmatic solutions. It is in this context that Eide maintains we are dealing with a journalistic fallacy. The problem with this instrumentalism, Eide explains, is that journalism itself perceives it as a manifestation of the increased autonomy of the profession. The journalistic fallacy is thus a transgression – an elevation of a journalistic logic to the measure of all things, and the promotion of craft to ideology (ibid: 57).

Raaum (1999) has pointed out how journalism's lack of professional status leads to ethical grandstanding. Eide connects this ethical stance more directly to the journalistic social contract ideal, a concept that plays a central role in journalism's ongoing ideological armament (Eide 1992: 29, 40). Eide's outline of

journalistic professional ideology is therefore useful for placing the news media within the democratic structure. Eide says that,

“In journalism’s professional ideology, society is constituted of three groups of actors: power brokers, ordinary people and journalists – in other words sources, audiences and newsrooms [Eide here cites Petersson and Carlberg, 1990]. A central element in the current expression of this ideology is the conception of the journalist as an advocate for his or her audience. In the representative plot here, the journalist appears as the fearless knight, who seems to bring about a solution and happy ending on behalf of the audience member” (Eide 2007: 23).

The worst-case scenario within this ideology would be the direct contact between the powerful and the people – a move that circumscribes the press (Petersson 1994 in Eide 2004: 44). When Eide places the journalistic logic so centrally within the public sphere – with the journalist as a self-ascribed arbitrator of public discourse – he demonstrates the extensiveness of *journalism as ideology*, particularly as it affects the strategies of other actors within the social structure (Eide 2007: 22). As the journalistic logic expands, the goal potential of actors within the democratic structure becomes more and more dependent on the outcome of their handling of the news media. Hence, Eide not only describes how journalistic ideology contributes to a ‘mediatisation’ of political society, and remains critical of the effects of this process, but also clarifies how this ideology serves to enforce the boundaries of the journalistic profession.

Summary

These perspectives all demonstrate the function of journalistic ideology in professional boundary work. While none of these works reference Gieryn directly, they all more or less fit into his theoretical framework, particularly as pertains to how boundary work functions in the expansion of the profession’s authority. In general, mainstream sociological research on journalism entails an understanding of news work from an organisational point of view. An important assumption within this approach is that members of organisations modify personal values in accordance with that of the organisation. In this view, the

organisational values and routines matter more than who performs the tasks. As such, it is embedded in any professional ideology to suppress personal beliefs and adhere to the standards of the profession (Schudson 1989: 273). Because of the weakness of the journalistic profession, occupational and institutional socialisation ensures that members contribute to maintain authority and jurisdiction by supporting, arguing and embodying journalistic ideology in their encounters with external spheres and neighbouring disciplines. The ideological orientation in journalism thus serves to maintain its communal boundaries (Zelizer 1993).

2.4 Conclusions

Much of the research on journalistic ideology is concerned with the question of how journalism achieves professional status and how it maintains its ensuing power and authority in society. Primarily, scholars within this tradition analyse the ideological boundary work performed by journalists within the presence of an assumption that one of the functions of journalistic ideology is to conceal something. This 'something' is not always easy to identify, but it predominantly refers to the constructed nature of news. As few other professions appear to be accused of such artifice, it seems probable that the 'construction thesis' is based in journalism's lack of theoretical foundation or exclusive expert knowledge base. It is as if the unuttered conclusion after 50 years of professionalization studies is that journalism is not a profession, and that its claim to the title creates an ideology that somehow corrodes its end product, the news. Interestingly in this context is Zelizer's characterisation of journalistic authority as "the ability of journalists to promote themselves as authoritative and credible spokespersons of 'real-life' events" (Zelizer 1992: 8). Journalistic authority is hence not only embedded in knowledge, but also in its ability to appear as authority. Journalism by this definition could be seen as a somewhat deceptive enterprise. From the vantage point of much of the research discussed here, it would seem the primary weapon of this deception is journalistic ideology.

At this point it seems necessary to iterate the function of journalistic ideology for the profession and its relationship to overall political and cultural society. The ideal functions of journalism are important for a well-functioning democratic society, for the maintenance of the public sphere and for the existence of some notion of an 'imagined community'. Because there are few legal measures to sanction 'bad' journalism, society overall is dependent on a strong working professional ideology that can keep its practitioners on the straight and narrow. Second, journalism is not a profession in the strict sense. Without the barriers to entry and the licensing procedures common to the true professions, ideology operates in a substitution capacity. The simple fact is that journalism can never attain true professional status. The legitimacy of journalism as a cultural-political institution rests on the principle of the freedom of speech as vital to the democratic system. As freedom of speech is a negatively defined liberal concept, in the sense that its function rests on the absence of interference on free expression (and by extension free publication), journalism by definition cannot be a licensed profession, as this would entail restrictions on expression. Such restriction would instantly shatter the basic legitimacy claim of journalism as a profession. Hence, journalism will continue to remain a semi-profession that is constantly in need of boundary maintenance to sustain its legitimacy. In the end, this is why journalistic ideology is so insistent, so paradoxical, and so controversial.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

To analyse the ideological projection of news and journalism in today's digital media landscape, the articles in this thesis employ theoretical perspectives from political philosophy, from media economy and from news sociology. These perspectives will not be repeated here. Instead, this chapter will discuss how the theoretical assumption underlying the work as a whole – the concept of the duality of structure and the theory of structuration (Giddens 1984) – serves as an explanatory framework in an effort to understand the forces influencing journalistic ideology. Each of the articles treats what can be identified as one of four forces influencing journalism and its ideology – the market, journalistic practices, media regulation and political philosophy. The duality at work between these forces and the journalistic profession will here be contextualised within the framework of the theory of structuration, focusing primarily on how this explains ideological boundary maintenance.

The concept of boundary maintenance was introduced in the previous chapter by a reference to Thomas Gieryn's work on the emergence of the scientific disciplines (Gieryn 1983). His terminology explains the effort that goes into attaining the advantages of professional status. While Gieryn outlines boundary work as a vital effort in the process towards gaining the professional seal, journalism should be regarded as an ongoing professionalization project that is in constant need of border patrolling. As the authority of the title is always under dispute, divisions have to be established and maintained between in-groups and out-groups as defined by the professional community (see van Dijk 1998: 6).

Such demarcation is usually performed through resorting to rhetoric that promotes journalistic trademarks and benchmarks³. This chapter links the boundary maintaining functions of such journalistic traits of authority with the balance of power in the duality of structure between journalism and the four analysed forces.

In the second part of this chapter the theory of structuration serves as a grounding effort to an explication of the three central terms used frequently throughout this thesis – strategy, institution and ideology. The aim here is primarily to discuss how the terms are helpful within the context of this thesis. Overall, the central argument lies with the explanatory power of the duality of structure for the complex function of journalistic ideology in institutional boundary maintenance. The theories outlining the role of the media in relation to structure, institution and ideology are instructive in terms of questions regarding the balance of power between agency and structure. How we conceptualise journalism's role within the larger social structure can therefore be discussed in the intersection between the agency-restricting economic theories of strategic behaviour, the expansion of agency within new institutionalism and the structuring properties of the dominant ideology. This chapter hence provides a framework for understanding the theoretical landscape in which the overall research is conducted. Placing the findings of the articles within Giddens' duality of structure prepares the ground for a discussion of the relations of power between agency and structure in the three central concepts of strategy, institution and ideology, while a concluding consideration of the connection between ideology and methodology connects the theoretical approach to methods of inquiry.

³ The specific analyses of boundary maintenance are primarily found in article 1 concerning the branding of TV 2 News Channel, and in article 2 concerning journalistic narratives. The relevance of boundary maintaining measures for the status of the profession as a whole is addressed in article 4 on the journalistic social contract. The concept has less relevance to article 3's analysis of the policy negotiations between TV 2 and the Ministry of Culture, as it concerns the structural framework conditions of journalism more so than its specific professionalization efforts.

3.2 The Theory of Structuration

The British sociologist Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration has achieved considerable recognition across academic disciplines. Its popularity is rooted primarily in its ability to transverse the opposing traditions of functionalism and hermeneutics in the concept of the duality of structure. Its recognition can therefore be traced to its ability to explain how the interaction between human agency and social institutions results in social change through the mutual effects that agents⁴ and structures have upon each other. The theory of structuration is useful in the context of this thesis not only due to the explanatory power of the duality of structure, but also because of the idea that social practices are recursive (Giddens 1984: 3). This concept explains how journalists, by doing what they do, continue to reproduce the institution that conditions their activities. Because, as Giddens iterates, "the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize" (ibid: 25). In this recursive position, however, Giddens has been amply criticised for attributing too little power to the restraining force of structural properties (e.g. Giddens 1991: 204; Kilminster 1991: 97-98; Thompson 1989: 57, 72-73). In his attempt to break free from the 'iron cage' inherited from Weber's diagnosis of the rationalisation of production society in the modern economic order (Weber 1956 [1930]: 181), Giddens strays considerably from the cage walls in detaching humans from their structural restraints. The pervasiveness of this noted criticism, and the extensive attention that many commentators give to

⁴ Giddens uses actor and agent interchangeably – as do most writers on the subject – without divulging specific reasons as to why (Giddens 1984: xxii). Bourdieu problematises this practice by rejecting 'actor' in favour of 'agent', as his formulation is grounded in the concept of *habitus*, in order to avoid the implication of the instrumentally rational 'subject' (c.f. Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu 1990; Sonderegger 2007; Sulkunen 2010: 504). As this thesis engages in an application of Giddens' theory of structuration, it follows his rather casual alternating use of actor/agent. However, Giddens refers exclusively to actors or agents as individuals. In the context of this thesis, the agent or the actor refers primarily to journalism on an institutional level. Agency therefore refers to the collective actions of journalism as a profession (c.f. DiMaggio and Powell 1983: 138; Zucker 1987: 459). Giddens maintains that when we speak of collectivities as agents we actually talk about individuals in consultation with one another. Hence, the shorthand statement 'journalistic institution' refers to an aggregate of professionals (Giddens 1984: 221).

this point, is nevertheless evidence of the extent to which Giddens' framework has impacted on social theory. It could hence be seen as a testament to the perceived relevance and usefulness of the theory of structuration, as well as to the flexibility of its essential terminology.

To the extent that Giddens has received considerable criticism concerning his modest attribution of power to the restraining force of structure on human action, this thesis follows a common thread. The articles in this thesis can be said to lean somewhat towards structure as the more explanatory force in the dynamics of the agency/structure relationship. This is expressed primarily in how journalism as an institutional agent mobilises professional ideology according to the rules and resources within the overall media structure. Here, however, the focus is more on the enabling force of structural restraints for the purpose of journalistic boundary maintenance. In this regard, Giddens' vantage point for the theory of structuration is to balance out the constraining influence of structure over human action embedded in the established sociological framework (Bryant and Jary 1991: 11-12; Giddens 1979: 110; Giddens 1984: 169, 207; Thompson 1989: 57). Bridging the gap between traditions emphasising structural explanation with that favouring methodological individualism, Giddens thus seeks to abandon "the equation of structure with constraint" (Giddens 1984: 220). Instead, he says, "structuration theory is based on the proposition that structure is always both enabling and constraining, in virtue of the inherent relation between structure and agency" (ibid: 169). As this thesis operates closer to the structure than to the agent, it does so within the recursive duality of structure.

As far as Giddens' theory of structuration operates on a largely ontological level, its 'sensitising' dispositions engages the concept of the duality of structure as an analytic tool more so than as a lever for hypothesis testing. The flexibility of the terminology of structuration theory invites a wide variety of uses – something that can be as disabling as it can be enabling in its application (Eide and Knapskog 1994). The duality of structure is therefore here assumed as an analytically fruitful vantage point for a discussion concerning the relationship

between institutional journalism and the larger structure in which it operates. Whereas Giddens' position is closer to methodological individualism, this thesis engages more structural explanations when approaching questions of power. In Giddens' exposition, social practices are recursive to the extent that practices are both medium for and outcome of social processes. Within the framework of this thesis, this understanding is applied to the institutional level, where journalistic ideology is seen as the recursive practice, where the aim of this practice is to sustain institutional power within the larger social structure. As far as Giddens' terminology is flexible enough to endure such appropriation, the theory of structuration offers a perspective from which journalistic ideology can be analysed within the duality of structure.

3.2.1 Structuration Theory and Journalism Research

In the study of journalism, elements of structuration theory are invariably – although often only indirectly – mobilised through the concepts of structure and agency. Throughout the research history of the sociology of journalism, structure has generally held primacy over agency, with limited attention as to how structure is both enabling as well as constraining. Efforts have mainly been directed towards uncovering the structural restraints on journalism – a practice most notably found in organisational studies of journalistic production (e.g. Epstein 1973; Fishman 1980; Schudson 1978; Tuchman 1972; see Chapter 2 for overview). Equally prevalent in the research history is the attention paid to the constraining force of professional ideology and its support function for the dominant hegemony – a custom approach among critical Marxists and within the political economy of news (e.g. Gitlin 1980; Golding and Elliott 1979; Hall 1982; see Chapter 2 for overview). Nevertheless, an awareness of a duality of structure is present throughout most of the works reviewed in Chapter 2. The academic study of journalism has always been based on the assumption that journalists help maintain the news system through their practices. The fluctuating question has rather been to what extent journalists follow professional norms and rules blindly, or if they indeed have any effect upon the rules that constitute practice.

For instance, in the research on the emergence of the objectivity norm in American journalism, the question is generally not how journalists developed this as a standard practice. Any attention paid to journalistic practice primarily asks how the professionals maintain objectivity as methodological myth. Instead, the focus is on the structural forces that necessitated the objectivity turn: the spread of literacy; technological developments such as the telegraph, the rotary press and the expansion of the railroad; social developments such as urbanisation and the standardisation of production and labour; economic developments that led to marketisation of the newspaper business; or cultural development such as enlightened rationality and the emergence of the scientific paradigm (e.g. Roshco 1975; Schudson 1978). This is just one example, but it is clear from the research history reviewed in Chapter 2 that in the effort to understand the social, professional, cultural and economic development of journalism, scholars primarily look to the structural level for answers.

Researchers also tend to look to structure in the study of journalistic practice. The questions raised within this framework are often related to how journalists can be said to exercise their agency within the framework of the journalistic institution, and what kind of resources news organisations have to control their environment. Studies have also been interested in the rules and resources of the journalistic institution, in how journalistic practices and routines contribute to reproduce the news structure, and how professional and organisational behaviour is modified when forced to adapt to a changing news environment (e.g. Altmeyden 2010; Durham 2007; Ryfe 2009). Journalism as a profession has always been portrayed in the sociology of news as a more or less constructive tug-of-war between the effects of the restrictions that curb the vocational performance from editorial, financial, managerial and regulatory structures, and the mythological freedom and individualism inherent in practicing journalism. Within this framework, news institutions and their journalistic products are maintained through established practices. These practices – the daily production of news and its universal methodologies (such as the interview and the inverted pyramid) – are continuously produced and reproduced through the intended and unintended consequences of agents' actions. This explains how the daily

journalistic routines further condition action in a causal loop that maintains the institution (Giddens 1984: 14). So whereas the constraining force of structure holds primacy over the agency perspective in journalism research, the awareness of the duality of structure is always present. The organisational and institutional news structure may have a restraining force on journalistic agency, and the political and economic structure may constrain the agency of news institutions, but it is the actions of journalists and news outlets that continue to reproduce and maintain the constraining system in which they operate on a daily basis.

Summary

In this thesis, the question is not which is the dominant force in the actor/structure relationship, but rather how the two work together in a duality of structure to maintain journalistic ideology as a boundary maintaining force. The argument underlying the works presented in this dissertation is that there are causal relations between the ideal concepts inherent in journalistic practice – such as the mythology of the social contract, the enduring hard news paradigm, journalistic methodology – and the rules and resources within the news market structure. Here, the interplay between what is generally seen as opposing forces – journalistic ideals and market realities – emerges as a rather cooperative duality in its mutual reinforcement of institutional legitimacy. We can therefore conceive of the news media market as a structure in which the actions and strategies of actors (news institutions) constitute the interplay between institutional and structural conditions, where these conditions must be seen in relation to the actions of the actors in question (c.f. Eide 2001: 17). Thus, by assuming the theory of structuration as the theoretical source of inspiration for this thesis, journalism's professional ideology emerges as the news media rule system. This conclusion rests on the premise that ideals constitute a structural force within the news market – a fundamental premise of the duality of structure that is traceable also in the Norwegian journalistic field.

3.3 Forces Influencing Journalistic Ideology

In this dissertation, structuration theory forms a framework for explaining journalism's ideological negotiations within the larger socio-economic structure. According to Giddens, collectives practice a form of self-regulation that depends upon a collation of information – the control of which can influence the circumstances of social reproduction. Moreover, this type of information control depends on a system of collective information storage, most often through myth and storytelling, and “in the practical consciousness of ‘lived tradition’” (Giddens 1984: 200). As such, this thesis is not primarily interested in the expressed practices through which journalists demonstrate their ability to ‘go on’, but rather in the mythological projection of the ideological value of these practices that are used for boundary maintenance. The struggle to protect the professional borders when challenged by policy measures, market changes and amateur performers contributes to influence the rules and resources within the journalistic field recursively. Moreover, these challenges put a strain on already weak structural properties inherent in journalism as a social system. Consequently, as journalism mobilises its ideological dimensions to protect its boundaries, the centrality of these ideal values within the journalistic institution reinforce themselves.

The four articles in this thesis each investigate how exogenous forces influence journalistic ideology, and how these forces challenge news organisations to perform boundary maintenance to sustain their positions – primarily in the competitive marketplace, but also in relation to the overall journalistic institution and the larger political structure. These forces are identified as the news market, journalism's professional practices, politics through media regulation, and political philosophy. Together these forces shape journalistic ideology to the point where ideals can be seen to perform an intangible rule-function within the larger media structure. How these forces work on journalism is analysed through specific case studies involving the Norwegian commercial public service broadcaster TV 2. This is an appropriate object of study primarily because the duality that exists within its double identity as being both commercial and public service, emphasises the extent to which professional

ideology ultimately serves both an economic and an ideal purpose. Whereas these studies allow only limited inferences to be made in relation to the specific cases, combined their conclusions allow for a further theorising of the function of journalistic ideology. The following section places each article within the context of Giddens' theory of structuration and explains how the various forces influence the professional ideology.

3.3.1 The Market

Article 1 investigates the branding of the hard news genre as a market strategy in the launch of TV 2 News Channel. Here, TV 2 can be seen to move strategically based on the ideological values within the news market structure to gain a position in a competitive journalistic landscape. The resources identified as appropriate in this branding effort do not conform to Giddens' description of allocative and authoritative resources, but are primarily ideological (Giddens 1984: 33). As TV 2 mobilises certain highly stable news values – most notably hard news, speed, liveness and immediacy – the channel not only recognises the prevalence and hence the currency of these values as the rules of the system, but also contributes to reinforce their primacy in the overall field. The fact that TV 2's fact-centred news service has gained a firm foothold in the market suggests that TV 2's agency within the larger media structure has had a transformative capacity in contributing to the further competitive rules of the market. As other agents establish their strategies to compete with the success of the news channel, they must factor in the rules that made the channel a success as considerable resources within the structure. The agency of TV 2 in the overall structure is established based on the rules and resources already existing within the field, but the channel's mobilisation of these rules and resources further contributes to the structure in a manner that subsequent competitors need to account for in their future strategies. This case is consequently an example of the power of agency within the duality of structure.

3.3.2 Professional Practices

In the second article, two case studies analyse how the competing Norwegian broadcasters TV 2 and NRK establish different narrative strategies to meet the challenges of amateur contributions to journalistic practice. The narratives display how the journalistic institution mobilises the rules of professional methodology – primarily methods relating to concepts of neutrality, sources and fact verification – to protect the professional borders. Here, the firmly established rules of practice emerge as assets through which the structural rules can be fortified and therefore remain unchanged. Journalistic agency thus works to reinforce the structure by shaping new narrative strategies that blend with established *praxis*. To this end, these new routines do not change the status quo, but rather function to ensure the rules stay the same. Amateur agency, in turn, has little power in facing such a firmly established structural rule system. This is an example of the power of structural properties in the duality of structure, and how agents, through their actions, help to reinforce those properties.

3.3.3 Regulatory Politics

Article 3 examines the regulation of TV 2 as a commercial public service broadcaster. The article analyses the balance of institutional powers in a policy negotiation process that ends up redefining the structural rules and resources. In this process, the broadcaster TV 2 – whose bargaining power is identified as resting with a threat of exit – negotiates with the Ministry of Culture for its future status as commercial public service broadcaster. The resources under dispute are primarily allocative (in the sense that their transformative capacity lies in commanding goods and materials), as negotiations revolve around geographic location and future remunerations for channel distribution. However, in order to ensure these assets, the resources mobilised in the negotiations are primarily ideological (in the sense that their transformative capacity lies in commanding social norms). The central question here is why the government should introduce changes to broadcasting regulation to ensure the financial future of TV 2 as a commercial operator. This question is answered with references to the ideological rules of the media structure – primarily the social-

political value of public service institutions. In order to ensure the continued balance of institutions within the structure – which helps maintain the public service ideology as a structural rule – the government effectively reregulates the cable sector. This demonstrates how agency can function to reinforce the dominant values within the structure. Primarily this is an example of recursive practice, and how agency supports the structure by reproducing it.

3.3.4 Political Philosophy

Article 4 analyses the reciprocity of the social contract of the press and considers the relationship between the journalistic institution and the larger political structure. The article explains how the journalistic institution has assumed the core values of liberal democracy – as found in the political-philosophical ideals of social contractarianism – and transformed these into a sectional mythology that ensures the rules and resources of the media structure are compatible with those of the political structure. This moral coexistence renders legitimacy to the journalistic institution. Such normative behaviour constitutes a boundary maintaining effort that reveals the interplay between value-standards and sectional interests. They also explain how such legitimate orders remain structural conditions of the actions of the members of a collectivity (Giddens 1979: 102). The article investigates the common moral ground between the journalistic and the social-political order to uncover the fundamental rules of the news media structure, and to explain agency behaviour in accordance with those rules. Approaching structural rules and resources in this manner illuminates the extent to which the journalistic institution is established and maintained by knowledgeable and motivated agents engaged in contextually situated activities (Giddens 1984: 288-289).

Summary

While the individual findings of each article can be said to demonstrate the duality of structure in the maintenance of the journalistic institution, the studies also have their limitations – both individually and in the aggregate. None of the articles utilise the structuration framework explicitly, but its basic presence

should nevertheless be apparent. Moreover, articles 1-3 represent case studies with highly concrete research questions and objects. The general lack of theoretical discussion in these three articles is outweighed by article 4, which is purely theoretical and largely anticipates the discussion in this chapter with its foundational outline of the relationship between the social contract of journalism and democracy. Overall, there are many potential forces that could be identified as influencing the practice and function of journalistic ideology. This thesis limits itself to investigating four such forces. To the extent that the primary research question of this thesis also aims to consider ideology in the context of technological changes influencing media across publication platform, this has primarily been addressed through the case studies as representatives of such challenges. Technology is therefore conceptualised as a contextual and structural feature more so than an exogenous force. As the vantage point for the overall investigation has originated with the case TV 2, the forces under investigation have naturally been directed by the situations and challenges facing the channel as a commercial public service broadcaster in a digital media landscape.

3.4 Key Terminology

There are primarily three terms used frequently throughout the articles that warrant closer review. The fundamental assumption underlying this work as a whole is that journalism is an institution within which news organisations deploy strategies to compete in a news market, and that part of such a strategy is the mobilisation of the professional ideology. The following will therefore account for what is meant here by strategy, institution and ideology. Of the three, 'ideology' remains the central keyword and therefore warrants the closest investigation, and while 'institution' is in need of clarification, 'strategy' merely calls for a basic exposition. The following section deals with each of these concepts in turn.

3.4.1 Strategy

Strategy is a term used throughout this thesis that denotes the fact that most media find themselves in a dual and competitive market in which they compete

for audiences as well as for advertising revenue. This is certainly true for the case used in this thesis – the Norwegian commercial public service broadcaster TV 2. TV 2's history and market situation is described in article 3 on the regulation of public service broadcasting. Its revenue and branding strategies are discussed in article 1 concerning TV 2 News Channel. Its specific circumstances and strategies will therefore not be repeated here. However, it should be reiterated that as an omnibus-type channel, TV 2 competes on multiple arenas. It competes for advertising revenue and ratings in the dual market, but also for prestige, scoops and awards within the professional journalistic field. This section will briefly define what is meant here by strategy, link the presence of a strategy to a market logic, and position journalistic ideology as a strategic asset in the overall economic and political structure. The concept of strategy therefore adds a perspective that serves to balance Giddens' tendency towards methodological individualism – the dominance of the agent within the duality of structure – with the restraining force of structure that emerges from economic theory. The stringent rationality with which agents presumably act within the economic framework thus conjunctly illustrates the flexibility of Giddens' perspective in applying it to research on the media sector.

In economic theory, strategies are defined as measures employed by companies to reach their goals (Picard 2002: 25). Strategies are therefore essentially about being different. As such, says Michael E. Porter “strategic positioning means performing *different* activities from rivals’ or performing similar activities in *different ways*” (Porter 1998: 38). As one of the greatest effects on strategy is the desire to grow, a firm can compete successfully either where it can produce a unique mix of value or where it can produce at a lower cost than rivals (ibid: 43, 66). Strategy means continuity of direction – a “matter of discipline”, as Porter notes (Porter 2001: 11). A successful strategy is one where every one of a company's activities is mutually reinforcing, and therefore harder to copy by rival competitors. Companies wishing to attain market leadership thus need stable and long term strategies, while at the same time aptly pursuing potentially fleeting opportunities found in chaotic markets such as the online world or the

digital television market (c.f. Eisenhardt and Sull 1996). From this perspective, investing in expensive news production should be seen as a long-term strategy.

For a television channel such as TV 2, success is measured in profit through advertising revenue, in ratings and in journalistic successes. These are goals that can be achieved primarily through establishing and keeping a reputation of quality. From this angle, agents such as TV 2 are seen pervasively as subject to the direction and condition of the structure in which it operates. The rules of the marketplace, and the assumed rational behaviour of its actors, essentially remove power from agents and render rules and resources largely structurally determined. Economic theory therefore has a rather poor grip on the concept of agency that Giddens' theory of structuration seeks to engage through the concept of the duality of structure. Economic theories do nevertheless refer to such a duality, as they certainly consider companies to have an influence on each others' strategies. This perspective implies that agency behaviour has the ability to affect the rules and resources of the market. Within this framework, however, explanations for agency behaviour are referred to the structural plane, leaving strategies with little agency. This reveals the flexibility of Giddens' terminology in favour of stringent economic theories.

Journalistic Strategy

Applying market theory to media entails looking at to what extent the news landscape conforms to the market as a place of exchange, where sales are based on consumer demand and customer satisfaction, and where competition creates a continuous expansion of offers and a drive towards efficiency. This perspective holds consumers to be rational and consumption to be based on freedom of choice (McManus 1994: 4-5; see also Croteau and Hoynes 2001: 15-17). John H. McManus refers to market-driven journalism, or news driven by the logic of the market, as news production directed by the desire for profit maximisation and audience expansion. To McManus, a purely journalistic news model determines newsworthiness based on an event's expected consequence for a proportionately large audience, whereas in a market theory of news production, newsworthiness

is determined based on its potential harm to investors, the cost of coverage and expected audience reach. McManus therefore claims the market logic results in news production routines designed to “hide the pervasiveness of the economic logic that forms them” (McManus 1994: 85). Whereas this position helps to reveal what can be seen as the structural bias of the news system, it also reduces agency within the journalistic institution. Hence, within McManus’ framework, structure is seen to largely determine individual behaviour. However, while news production predominantly takes place within a commercial framework, many news organisations are still for the most part (at least in the Nordic region) run by journalists. Because ideal news values function as rules and resources within the news structure, journalists do not primarily operate according to economic concerns, but are journalistically driven. To the extent that the market logic should have a subconscious effect on these journalists and editors, we should keep in mind that their ideology should have an equally strong – if not stronger – subconscious effect on operations.

The duality of journalism as both a business and a public service is a pervasive perspective in most media research (e.g. Hallin 1987: 11; Schudson 2003: 11). However, the often automatically drawn equation between market-driven media and low journalistic quality is frequently a casual one. In his study of the development of the inverted pyramid, Horst Pöttker argues against this commonplace assumption. In fact he claims that historically speaking, journalism’s professionalism and public discourse arose because of the dynamics of capitalism (Pöttker 2003: 507; see also Schudson 2003: 132). Here, Gans notes that even though we tend to think of commercial media as publishing only news that will attract a profitable audience, “In practice, however, they are not” (Gans 1980: 214). News competition is not based merely on economic value. Because news institutions pay careful attention to the content of other news providers, journalistic ideology becomes an essential factor in determining winners and losers in the market. Ratings provide only one measure of success within the competitive environment – journalists are also concerned with beating the competition on professional terms – through exclusive scoops and sources, breaking news and investigative coverage. This is an element of the logic of the

market that is present in the very foundation of journalistic practice, as “Journalists use competition to evaluate their own performance” (Gans 1980: 180). Here, note Glasser and Gunther, “Business motives alone do not explain the drive to compete. Journalists cherish *individual* competition” (Glasser and Gunther 2005: 395). Hence, there is a dimension of autonomy in journalistic agency that in the professional ideology unites ideals with business in a manner that benefits the strategy of organisations operating within a competitive news market. It is this duality in the power relations between journalistic agency and the assumed economic rationality of the structure in which it operates that Giddens’ structuration perspective helps to dissolve.

Summary

Economic theory is not particularly instructive for discussing strategy as a basic terminology of this thesis, although it appropriately defines the concept in a manner that brings the motivations of the company closer to the investigation. However, the interest here is not in how agents act according to an economic rationality. Nor is it in how the private media market operates. The fundamental assumption behind using the term strategy to describe a channel’s news operation is that journalism operates within a market, and that in order to gain an advantage in this market, a news organisation needs a strategy to differentiate itself from its closest rivals. As Porter points out, any strategy must account for the rules of the game and how the structure of the industry affects these rules (Porter 1980: xviii, 3). Within such a structure, competition can be both restraining and enabling for the strategies of a news provider (c.f. Eide 1992: 27). Any new journalistic venture wishing to enter an established market must account for the barriers to entry as they are expressed not only in audience habits and user expectations, but also in the more intangible norms and values of the field. A news market with a benchmark provider such as a public service broadcaster can often set high standards for journalistic legitimacy and credibility that new entrants need to account for (c.f. Cushion and Lewis 2009: 149). Currencies potentially mobilised within a journalistic marketplace are therefore not only based on the differentiation strategy, but also carry elements

of conformity. Norm compliance is an institutionalised practice that is maintained by the recursive actions of journalistic agents. This is because journalistic ideology constitutes the rules of the game. As the rules of the game can determine strategic success, all business ventures should attempt to turn rules into assets. The best way to capitalise on rule compliance is to ensure the durability of these rules. As normative behaviour continues to ensure legitimacy within the field, rules can be turned into assets through a branding strategy (see Lowe 2011 for a recent discussion).

3.4.2 Institution

One of the fundamental assumptions in all 4 articles is that journalism can be thought of as an institution. To clarify what this means, the following discussion will use as vantage point conceptualisations found in new institutionalism – a theoretical strand developed within sociology that is also utilised in economy, law, political science and psychology. New institutionalism is a useful perspective for discussing journalism as an institution as this theoretical position accounts for the agency perspective to a greater extent than the ‘old’ or established institutional perspectives. As such, it has a better grasp of the negotiation between agency and structure within the institutional setting. New institutionalism is consequently appropriate because of its compatibility with the theory of structuration. Giddens sees institutions as the more enduring features of social life, and describes their durability by how contexts condition action, and how this condition is reproduced by the motivations of individuals to engage in regularised social practices. As agents interact with the institution, they invoke the institutional order. Through this interaction they also make it meaningful, thereby contributing to reproducing it. Hence, institutions remain structurally stable, says Giddens, because agents accept them as such in their practical consciousness (Giddens 1984: 14, 24, 169, 331). When considering what institutions are in the context of this thesis, a productive angle is therefore the commonality between new institutionalism and structuration. This means the framework within which institutions are often considered in the sociological

traditions – namely the constraint/freedom duality, and the agency/structure dichotomy (c.f. Jepperson 1991: 146).

Most definitions of what an institution is take the political and social realms as conceptual points of departure – connecting them to such disparate concepts as the state bureaucracy on one side, and the handshake on the other. Such sociological definitions involve the notion of the durability of institutions, their norm- and rule-structured natures, and their effectiveness in controlling human behaviour. W. Richard Scott draws on the theory of structuration in his approach. He emphasises the reciprocal relationship between structure and action in defining institutions as, “multifaceted systems incorporating symbolic systems – cognitive constructions and normative rules – and regulative processes carried out through and shaping social behavior” (Scott 1995: 33). Victor Nee defines institutions as, “webs of interrelated rules and norms that govern social relationships” (Nee 1998: 8). Institutions to Nee thus, “comprise the formal and informal constraints that shape the choice-set of actors” (ibid). While to Ronald Jepperson, “*Institution* represents a social order or pattern that has attained a certain state or property” (Jepperson 1991: 145). Hence, an institution is, “a social pattern that reveals a particular reproduction process” (ibid). Institutionalisation, by extension, is the process whereby social practices assume a rule-like status in social thought and action. This in turn entails a progression of rationalisation that ultimately fuels state growth and creates stability and routines optimal for performance enhancement (Meyer and Rowan 1977: 341; Scott 1995: 66-67; Zucker 1987: 446-447). Hence, even though the handshake can be thought of as an institution, definitions tend to refer to political structures and state bureaucracies more so than to social norms.

Fundamentally, says Timothy E. Cook, institutionalism is motivated by a rejection of the idea that all social phenomena can be reduced to individual psychologism (Cook 1998: 66). In political science, institutionalism is the study of the role of formal and informal structures in political life and its organisation, the structural characteristics of the system, and the role of individuals within those structures. But, whereas ‘old institutionalism’ was shaped by formal-legal

analyses of the impact of institutions on society and the significance of structure in determining behaviour – new institutionalism focuses on the multiplicity and flexibility of goals within the system. This direction also considers political and social institutions to be more coherent and autonomous than did earlier traditions. Hence, new institutionalism considers political collectives to be in a reciprocal relationship with their socio-economic environments, where politics is seen to shape society as much as society shapes politics (DiMaggio and Powell 1983: 738; March and Olsen 1984: 138; Peters 2005: 16-18). Central questions in new institutionalism therefore concern the relationship between individuals and structure. One such question is whether or not we can reduce collective behaviour to an aggregate of individual behaviours – a question that Giddens' theory of structuration is also concerned with (Peters 2005: 19-21).

As a research direction, new institutionalism encompasses a range of approaches. According to an overview by Guy Peters, these include normative institutionalism (the study of the norms of the institution); rational choice institutionalism (the function of rules and incentives to behaviour where benefit maximation is seen as the goal of every individual); historical institutionalism (studying how early decisions determine subsequent decisions, also known as path dependency); empirical institutionalism (studying the impact of institutions on the political structure, essentially asking if institutions matter); and societal institutionalism (studying how patterns of structured interactions between interest groups and the state lead to institutionalisation) (ibid: 19-20). All directions, says Peters, "point to the role that structure plays in determining behaviour" (ibid: 155). Featuring in all versions is the fundamental paradox "of institutions being formed by human agents yet constraining those same actors" (ibid: 156). All directions therefore seek to explain why agents accept the constraints – or the values, norms and rules – of the institution. Here, the question of agency and structure is seen as best resolved through analysing institutional factors first and then considering the independent impacts of agency second. However, within new institutionalism as in structuration theory, institutions are not just considered constraint structures. Institutions simultaneously empower and control. They are vehicles for activity within

constraint, or as Jepperson puts it, they are frameworks for “establishing identities and activity scripts for such identities” (Jepperson 1991: 146).

The framework closest to the efforts of placing journalism within the theory of structuration is what Peters terms normative institutionalism. This direction attempts to explain how individual behaviours and values have been shaped by their membership in institutions. Of particular interest is the crucial role that norms, values and myths play. Myth is seen as particularly vital in the maintenance of institutions. Meyer and Rowan consider institutional rules to function as myths that “depict various formal structures as rational means to the attainment of desirable aims” (Meyer and Rowan 1977: 345). Because myths are highly institutionalised, they lie “beyond the discretion” of individuals or organisations, and are therefore taken for granted as legitimate (ibid: 344). An institution based on normative incentives would therefore remain rather stable as a result of the moral bind that institutions hold over their members (Cook 1998: 67-68; Nee 1998: 8-11; Peters 2005: 25-27). Important hereunder is the ‘logic of appropriateness’, where routines, standard operating procedures and symbols provide the context for behaviour (Peters 2005: 28). This strand thus focuses on the collective rather than individual roots of political behaviour, as agents’ choices are largely conditioned by their membership in institutions. In this view, explains Peters, “the structure-agency problem is resolved through the individual accepting and interpreting the values of institutions” (ibid: 43). From this direction, journalism can be described as one of the more norm-dependent institutions. This is not only due to its lack of proper professional status, but is further enhanced by the complexity of institutions surrounding the field. Here, the fragility of the journalistic institution means there is a constant need for boundary maintenance by its members. Such border patrol behaviour transforms the norms and myths of the profession to an orthodoxy that ensures stability within the field. The safety of such orthodoxy is embedded in how the institution protects its members from outside attacks. Jepperson’s assertion that “institutionalism invokes institutions as causes” (Jepperson 1991: 153) describes how institutions protect individuals by rendering them blameless as any alleged fault is referred to the structural setting. The centrality of myth for the

establishment of a profession is therefore echoed in its necessity to the establishment of an institution. Normative institutionalism hence directs our attention to the function of rules, myths and norms for the maintenance of the institution through the duality of structure.

Journalism as Institution

Journalism is routinely referred to as an institution within the sociology of news (c.f. Altschull 1990; Elliott 1972; Fishman 1980; Gitlin 1980; Hallin 1994; Roscho 1975; Schudson 1978). In Zelizer's overview of institutional research on journalism, the critical approach emerges as the dominant perspective. According to her, this position sees journalism as "a large-scale phenomenon whose primary effect is wielding power, primarily to shape public opinion, and controlling the distribution of information or symbolic resources in society" (Zelizer 2004: 36). As Berkowitz explains, institutional-level analysis of news emerged in the US in the late 1960s because instrumental perspectives from political economy failed to adequately describe an emerging media activism (Berkowitz 1997: 11). Hence the institutional approach coincided with the introduction of critical Marxism into the social sciences. John B. Thomson discusses the institutional aspects of the media when referring to the emergence of modernity as a process of institutional transformation. To him, media are paradigmatic cultural institutions that wield symbolic power in an interconnected relationship with the political and economic realms (Thompson 1995: 58-67). This is the type of socio-political framework in which the institutional aspects of journalism are usually debated (Zelizer 2004: 36-37). Expressed institutional approaches to journalism are however somewhat scarce. The two analyses that have most seriously treated the institutional aspects of journalism are Timothy E. Cook's *Governing with the News: The News Media as a Political Institution* (1998) and Bartholomew H. Sparrow's *Uncertain Guardians: The News Media as a Political Institution* (1999).

Cook approaches journalism as a political institution based on the separation of powers, where the news media is seen to occupy the function of the Fourth

Estate (Cook 1998: 1-2). Sparrow, on the other hand, rejects the notion of the Fourth Estate because he regards news organisations to be too constrained by their political and economic environments to be considered independent (Sparrow 1999: xii). According to Cook, the news media are institutions in so far as they “create the news based on distinctive roles, routines, rules and procedures” (Cook 1998: 71). Moreover, news production is institutional to the extent that journalistic practices are commonly accepted to serve a legitimate function, and because they have “evolved and endured over time” and “extend across news organizations” (ibid). To Sparrow, journalism is manifested as an institution through its regularised practices – practices that have been established with the intent to counter the uncertainties and complexities of the profession. Such practices include impartial reporting techniques, a limited set of news frames, the routine use of authoritative sources, and transparency of news production. The institutional features of journalism are thus embedded in the fact that the news media acts as a framework by which other political actors operate, in how it constrains their choices, and in how it structures (or guides and limits) their actions (Sparrow 1999: 10-16, 128).

Cook explains how organisations, as they move towards homogenisation and hence towards institutionalisation, undergo a process similar to the boundary work necessary to achieve professional status described by Gieryn (1983) (see Chapter 2). In order for institutions to arrive at such a status, they need to establish their own legitimacy and power. This is primarily attained, says Cook, by responding to the political force of other institutions and by looking to other organisations as to how to organise. This in turn leads to professionalization. This is a process that Cook maintains holds considerable power over reporters, due in large part to their shared preoccupation with methodological objectivity. Cook notes that, “journalistic professionalism is not inherent in formal structures or in particular individual attitudes but is instead *performed* as part of their daily work” (Cook 1998: 77). These performances grow in importance because of the profession’s poorly demarcated borders. The uncertainty of this situation leads to similar and ritualistic performances across the board. Like Sparrow, Cook points to the ambiguities of the journalistic profession as that which creates the

homogeneity and risk aversion behaviour that lead to institutionalisation. Consequently, news content is institutional rather than organisational because organisational aims tend to converge – not diversify – thus creating an environment that produces a common news perspective across the institution. Once established, journalism remains institutional because of the consensus among journalists, audiences and political actors of the media's social and political function (ibid: 69-84).

Efforts have been made in the last few years to properly introduce new institutionalism to the study of journalism, most notably through special editions of the journals *Political Communication* (2006, 23:2) and *Journalism Studies* (2011, 12:1). David M. Ryfe acts as guest editor of both editions. Ryfe maintains new institutionalism can contribute vital insights to news research. He says that, “part of [new institutionalism's] appeal lies in the way it builds a conception of meso-level organizational environments out of a micro-theory of rules” (Ryfe 2006b: 204). From this perspective, Ryfe questions which is the stronger influence on news production – the struggle for economic gain or the struggle for political legitimacy (ibid: 138-139). This debate is a popular theme among institutional approaches to journalism, as are questions concerning the macro forces affecting journalism, the competition for financial means among news outlets, and the role of journalism as a political institution (c.f. Kaplan 2006: 176-183). Ryfe also maintains new institutionalism provides new perspectives on news bias by exposing its theoretical rather than empirical grounding (Ryfe 2006a: 135). In addition, Ryfe claims new institutionalism can help media studies finally establish how the journalistic institution is sustained (ibid: 137).

New institutionalism also shares many insights with Bourdieu's field theory (Benson 2006; Ryfe 2006a: 137). Rodney Benson claims Bourdieu's field concept better facilitates an understanding of the ongoing production of difference within the journalistic field, whereas new institutionalism is more appropriately mobilised when studying the homogeneity hypothesis (Benson 2006: 189). The homogeneity hypothesis is a popular position from where to investigate journalism as an institution. This is the perception that news looks the same

across organisations, and the assumption that this homogeneity is the result of highly standardised institutionalised practices developed in a path-dependent pattern with the purpose of attaining stability and legitimacy in an uncertain environment (see Cook 2006; de Albuquerque and Gagliardi 2011; Lawrence 2006; Lowrey 2011; Peer and Ksiazek 2011; Ryfe 2006b; Ryfe and Kimmelmeier 2011). This thesis adds to the effort to include new institutionalism in journalism research by mobilising theoretical perspectives that help explain the stability of journalism as an institution within a larger social, technological, economic and political structure.

Summary

The assumption that journalism is an institution is common in research on news and journalism. The fact that this assumption often remains unuttered and unsubstantiated could denote a perceived lack of theoretical options for engaging in such analysis. By substitution, journalism is more often referred to in organisational terms, perhaps because research questions generally target the organisational level of news making more so than the institutional level. New institutionalism contributes to the research field by linking news on an organisational level with journalism on an institutional level. This is also the aim of this thesis – to analyse the actions and strategies of a news organisation from the recursiveness embedded in the relationship between itself as an agent and the ideology of the journalistic institution, within the complexity of the larger political-economic structure in which it tries to attain its goals. New institutionalism is therefore valuable in this context because it embraces the role of the agent to a greater extent than traditional institutional theories. As this thesis is concerned with the function of the myths and ideals of the journalistic profession, the normative approach of new institutionalism provides a valuable analytic addition. However, it seems clear that new institutionalism will fail to suit every study of the journalistic profession. For one thing, it remains grounded in the sociological tradition and assumes a macro/meso-perspective that to some extent underplays the autonomy of the individual within the system. On the other hand, it also opens up for some of the more social dimensions of the

institution. Here, institutions are not just conceptualised as organisations housed in buildings, but also as the practices that keep organisations going. Just as the handshake can be thought of as an institution, so can the objectivity paradigm, the inverted pyramid and the interview. Understanding such practices as institutional adds valuable insight to exactly what makes journalism an institution.

3.4.3 Ideology

Journalistic ideology is the focal point of this thesis. The question is not really what it is, although this is also addressed, but rather how it works. As such, the central inquiry regards the uses, or the function, of journalistic ideology in the relationship between journalism as an institution and the larger economic and political structure. Ideology as a term is therefore used in a rather commonsensical manner throughout the articles, with few serious efforts to ground the concept in theory. As the following overview will illustrate, there is a rather large gap between its appropriation in this thesis and its academic conceptualisations. This is partly because the concept has fallen genuinely out of fashion over the past 10-15 years – with a seemingly quiet agreement across the discipline not to engage in any new debates over it for the time being – and partly because here it is used in a neutral, non-political and non-pejorative sense. Discussions about ideology tend inescapably also to involve discussions about power. The difference between the traditional Marxist conceptualisations of ideology and power and how this relationship is perceived within the framework of this thesis is that here, ideology is seen not as a restraining aspect of structure, but rather as power or a resource – as a medium both of and for action. Ideology is therefore here understood in a more flexible way – as both restraining and enabling, as much a resource as rule system. In order to arrive at this difference, however, the research history needs to be revised along a focused path. As ideology has proven rather difficult to define it is also notoriously slippery to analyse. This has produced some highly complex renderings, as will be discussed in the following. Nevertheless, in order to properly understand the concept, and

thereby put it to good use, it is necessary to retrace the steps that have produced its current theoretical status.

In the academic discussion of ideology, two focal points can be roughly identified – one focusing on ideology as suppressive hegemonic practices and asymmetries of domination, and one focusing on ideology as shared values directing group life. Both generally assume a political understanding of what ideology is. That being said, the concept of ideology has been rather narrowly appropriated in media studies. The overwhelming majority of works that address the question of ideology in relation to journalism – or rather more frequently – the mass media, is produced during the reign of the critical Marxists. Ideology research on journalism therefore tends to look for the ways in which the media support the dominant ideology, and how the practices and contents of news favour an elite hegemony (c.f. Gouldner 1976) (see Chapter 2 for an overview of critical-Marxist journalism research). A more focused appropriation of the term within journalism studies discusses ideology in relation to news as an institution and as a professional system. Hereunder, ideology is primarily perceived as systems of ideas or shared values – socially constructed and oriented processes of meaning-making that order and direct group life (c.f. Barnhurst 2005: 241; Deuze 2005a; Eide 1992: 29; Zelizer 2004: 72). There is hence a significant conceptual gap between the ‘everyday’ use of ideology when referring to professional journalistic practices, and the theoretical discussion of the concept in social theory. In this section, this theoretical discrepancy will be addressed primarily through the works of John B. Thompson (1990) and Stuart Hall (1982), as their works represent the dominant use of the concept in reference to the discursive and political power of the media. As Hall and Thompson both hail from a Marxist heritage, this background will be briefly discussed before outlining how ideology is used within this thesis. In order to explicate what ideology means in the context of professional boundary maintenance, the following discussion will assume a neutral conception of ideology (neutral in the sense of being non-political and non-pejorative) by mobilising some of the perspectives advanced by Louis Althusser, Terry Eagleton and Slavoj Žižek.

Ideology and the Marxist Tradition

The academic history of ideology is usually traced from its original meaning as the study of ideas coined by the French philosopher Destutt de Tracy in 1796, via its polemic destruction by the paranoia of Napoleon, through to the firm establishment in the works of Marx as having a systematic role in the maintenance of the dominant social order (Giddens 1979; Hall 1982; Thompson 1990). Through Napoleon, says Thompson, ideology “ceased to refer only to the *science of ideals* and began to refer also to the *ideas themselves*, that is, to a *body of ideas which are alleged to be erroneous and divorced from the practical realities of political life*” (Thompson 1990: 32). From this vantage point, Marx and Engels perceived consciousness itself as conditioned by material circumstances. From *The German Ideology*:

“The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance” (Marx and Engels 1968: 21).

According to this perspective, ideology is a form of consciousness that can be explained by reference to the economic conditions of production – one that should be exposed and unmasked. From here, Thompson claims we can discern a latent conception of ideology as a system of symbolic constructions that holds some degree of autonomy and efficacy. This creates the impression that a society preserved through ideology is oppressive, and accordingly that the type of social change that ideology serves to curtail is inherently positive. This shifts the focus on ideology to a concern for the use of symbols in specific social contexts (Thompson 1990: 39-44). In Thompson’s historical account of ideology, Karl Mannheim’s sociology of knowledge here enters the field to neutralise the concept (c.f. Mannheim 1936). From this point on, says Thompson, ideology increasingly refers to a socially situated and collectively shared system of ideas,

rejecting the Marxist link between ideology and the phenomenon of domination (Thompson 1990: 51-52; see also Mannheim 1936: 49-51).

Nevertheless, ideology is still closely tied to the political. As such, academic preoccupation with the concept has tended to concentrate on the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic function of various historical political ideologies. However, with the rise of Fascism in 1930s Europe, its growing world-wide economic depression, global class struggles and racial imperialism, researchers increasingly came to see ideology as less relevant – a perspective that introduced decades of scholarly debates about the ‘end of ideology’ (Bell 1960: 393; see also Giddens 1979; Gouldner 1976). According to Herbert Gouldner, the optimism that surrounded ideology as a concept in the 1950s was rooted in a myth of progress that saw ideology replaced by technological, scientific and rational modes of consciousness (Gouldner 1976). Thus to Daniel Bell, the end of ideology meant an end to the belief that social change could be achieved from the ground – in other words an end to believing in the transformation of ideology into revolution (Bell 1960: 395-400).

The end of ideology in the form of political movements did not terminate the academic attention to ideology as a system of beliefs, ideas and values – theoretical directions that grow increasingly disparate towards the end of the 1990s. In this development, Giddens’ treatment of ideology emerges as a surprisingly generic perspective that in its critical-Marxist position largely contradicts the theory of structuration by re-attributing the power of constraint to the structural level. Giddens says ideology is “the capacity of dominant groups or classes to make their own sectional interests appear to others as universal ones” (Giddens 1979: 6). These ‘asymmetries of domination’ are achieved through the mobilisation of the transformative capacities that comes from commanding resources (Giddens 1984: 33). Such a position strongly echoes Marx’ historical materialism and actually gives back much of the power Giddens first moves from the structural plane to the level of social actors. As this contributes little to this discussion of ideology aside from confirming and exemplifying the pervasiveness of the Marxist perspective in ideological theory,

Giddens must here be referred to the backbenches. This should serve as a reminder of the limits to which Giddens' structuration can be said to serve as a 'grand theory' in the social sciences, and that rather his terminology is more appropriately mobilised as an analytical tool than as a coherent social theory.

A substantially more fruitful Marxist perspective can be found in Althusser's theory of Ideological State Apparatuses (1971). His work represents a benchmark thesis on the function of the ruling ideology that presents this as the subjection of each into social formations that continually reproduce the conditions of their production. Althusser says the superstructural level of society consists of two types of state apparatuses – repressive institutions and ideological institutions. The difference between the two is that Repressive State Apparatuses function primarily by violence, whereas Ideological State Apparatuses function primarily by ideology. Althusser lists the media within the plurality of Ideological State Apparatuses, which, because they function underneath the ruling class holding state (repressive) power, express and realise the ruling ideology (Althusser 1971: 124-142). Althusser hence claims the 'communications apparatus' contribute to this "by cramming every 'citizen' with daily doses of nationalism, chauvinism, liberalism, moralism, etc" (ibid: 146).

In Althusser's conception, ideology only exists by constituting subjects as subject – by 'hailing' individuals into the category of the subject. To Althusser, everything we do is ideological to the extent that we can either conform or not conform, in which case ideology functions to either recognise or misrecognise our concrete material behaviours. Althusser calls a handshake "a material ritual practice of ideological recognition in everyday life" (ibid: 161). No matter the extent to which we conform to the ruling ideology, we always relate to it to some degree, therefore we are 'always-already' subjects to that ideology. Bad subjects engaging in non-conformative behaviour are corrected by Repressive State Apparatus intervention, while good subjects simply work by themselves, by their insertion into practices governed by the rituals of the Ideological State Apparatuses. Being thus reproduced by the concrete material behaviour of subjects, the ruling ideology is recognised as true (ibid: 164-169).

To Althusser, ideology is a non-historical or omni-historical reality, in the sense that ideology's "structure and functioning are immutable, present in the same form throughout what we can call history" (ibid: 151-152). Here, he claims that, "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (ibid: 153). Ideology does not correspond to reality but rather constitutes an illusion. Althusser's central thesis is therefore that, "there is no ideology except by the subject and for the subject" (ibid: 160), meaning that it is the category and function of the subject that make ideology possible. The 'ideology of ideology' ensures that our ideas are embedded in our actions, and that our actions are inserted into practices that are governed by rituals of inscribed practices, and that these practices are located within the material existence of an ideological apparatus. Althusser emphasises that these ideologies are realised in the rituals and practices of institutions. Institutions therefore contribute to the reproduction of the relations of production (ibid: 158, 171). Stuart Hall's classic text "The Rediscovery of 'Ideology': Return of the Repressed in Media Studies" explicates how this ideological production takes place within the media institution. Hall traces how the media came to be seen as participatory in the structuring of reality and in the construction of meaning. In the ideological model of power the media is seen to contribute in reproducing – and thus in making it appear as natural and unchangeable – a social order favourable to dominant groups. How the media makes certain realities appear universal and natural, how it limits the perspectives on the world, and how it attains legitimacy for this reality, says Hall, is "the characteristic and defining mechanism of 'the ideological'" (Hall 1982: 133).

According to Hall, ideological power is the power to signify events in a particular way, especially regarding controversial or conflicting events or issues. This signification becomes a site of struggle because this is where social understanding, and hence consent, is created – a process which makes ideology important both as a goal and as a tool. Here, the media is seen as a vital component in the production of this consensus. As messages are seen to have a 'deep structure' of unconscious presuppositions rendering an obvious truth-

value to statements, meaning ultimately does not depend on how things are but on how they are signified. Because the practice of signification is a social accomplishment, the ensuing 'struggle over meaning' transfers ideology to a domain of relative autonomy. This type of ideological struggle is portrayed by Hall as the struggle for dominance or legitimacy in the public eye. He here uses media coverage of strikers as enemies of the state as a case of such signification (Hall 1982).

Hall's focus on ideological discourses breaks ideology free from a necessary class relation, and instead links ideology to dominance through cultural leadership. This assumption that the media is an instrument of social control is criticised by Thompson as a simplified conception of the overall role of the mass media in relations of power and domination. Thompson defines ideology as "*meaning in the service of power*" (Thompson 1990: 7). When studying ideology we therefore need to investigate construction of meaning and the communication of this meaning through various symbolic forms, particularly asking how this serves to establish and sustain asymmetrical relations of domination. Thompson therefore criticises the idea that ideology represents an illusion, primarily by claiming that all individuals participate in the social relations that reproduce our conceptions of who we are. Symbolic forms are therefore not ideological in themselves but through how they are understood in specific social contexts (ibid: 7-9).

Ideology and Journalism

In his interest in the 'mediation' of modern culture, Thompson criticises previous analyses of ideology for failing to account for the central role of mass communication in the development of modern society. This is because, says Thompson, "the analysis of ideology must address both the symbolic forms which are produced and diffused by media institutions, and the contexts of action and interaction within which these mediated symbolic forms are produced and received" (ibid: 265). As the media enables the vast dispersal of symbolic form, the relatively restricted access to the production of these forms and the relatively unrestricted access to the reception of these forms shape the

way in which media remains sites for the operation of ideology. Media messages must therefore be analysed in relation to the context of reception and appropriation. "It is only by analysing the structure and content of media messages in relation to these frameworks of interaction and encompassing sets of social relations that we can examine the ideological character of media products" (ibid: 268). Hence, like most academics linking ideology to the role of journalism and the mass media, Thompson's focus is on how the media contributes to disseminate the ideological content of cultural forms.

This attention to the role and function of the media in upholding some sort of stable order – whether political, material or symbolic – fails to account for how journalism and the news media spread their own ideology. Most research is focused on ideology through the media rather than the ideology *of* the media. This predominant perspective largely reduces the communication institution to mere technology. The media thus remains a system in which the production of cultural form infuses products with ideological meaning, but where the institution itself is not considered as ideological. Nor is its communication regarded as having an ideological content intent on maintaining the role of communications in society. This is the ideological aspect of the journalistic institution that this thesis argues is missing from academic attention. There is plenty of research on how the media maintains the dominant social order, but less interest in how (and why) it maintains its own ideology. As the ideology of journalism largely coincides with the 'dominant ideology', this generally explains such theoretical omissions.

The function of journalistic ideology is to sustain a system in which journalism remains an important social, cultural and political institution. As such, Althusser makes a good point when he emphasises that the function of ideology is to reproduce the conditions of its production. This element of self-sustainment is the key to understanding journalistic ideology. Because the professional ideology of the press is rooted in the fact that news is not only a public service but also (and perhaps primarily) a *business*, it is highly compatible with the dominant ideology whose central elements rest on the essential negative liberties –

freedom of speech and freedom of commerce (hereunder right to property, individualism and rationality), but also the democratic order in a broader sense. Journalistic ideology therefore works to maintain the profession and protect its privileged political position. The news media ideology that essentially says that journalism is important for the democratic system not only serves the journalistic classes but also the structure that surrounds the media – not least the electorate that depends upon the sustainment of an institution disseminating democratically relevant information. This basic ‘truth’ that democracy is desirable is of course in itself ‘ideological’. Even so, the effort to expose the lack of truth behind this ideology merely renders an epistemological dead-end that is not very productive in the effort to understand the function of ideology.

In fact, Žižek claims this conception of ideology is epistemologically outdated. According to him, ideology must be separated from its representationalist problem – meaning the notion that ideology is the same as illusion in the sense of a false representation of its social content. An ideology is not necessarily false, says Žižek, it can in fact be quite accurate (Žižek 1994: 3-8). The aim of ideological criticism is to remove the distorting spectacles of ideology and see things as they ‘really are’, but also “to see how the reality itself cannot reproduce itself without this so-called ideological mystification” (Žižek 1989: 28). Žižek questions this ‘naïve consciousness’ thesis and suggests instead that ideology works through the cynic – the subject that despite his awareness of the distance between the ideological mask and social reality still insists upon that mask – knowing full well what he is doing, knowing its falsehood and the interests behind an ideological universality, but still doing it without renouncing it. “This cynicism is therefore a kind of perverted ‘negation of the negation’ of the official ideology” (ibid: 30). For Marx, says Žižek, the ideological fantasy lies in the doing, while the critique lies in discovering the discrepancy between what people are doing and what they think they are doing. Žižek says instead that people know very well what they are doing, but they do it anyway (ibid: 30-31). In this sense, institutional behaviours (or rituals) are not merely externalisations but symbolise the very mechanisms that generate rituals – i.e. such rituals generate their own ideological foundations (Žižek 1994: 12-13).

Žižek's point is that whereas ideologies might constitute an illusion of reality, we engage in an ideological fantasy where we act as if we did not know what we in fact know. As ideology remains pervasive, the ideological fantasy helps structure social reality. The cynicism of doing despite knowing is one of the measures by which we create distance to ideologies (Žižek 1989: 33). Eagleton, on the other hand, emphasises that not everything is ideological. Statements are in fact ideological in context only, and are especially so if these contexts involve conflict – meaning the political need not be ideological until it involves beliefs (Eagleton 1991: 8-11). Eagleton is largely concerned with the question of false consciousness, and says statements are ideological only if they help to legitimate power. As examples of false consciousness he therefore uses statements such as 'jews are inferior' and 'women are inferior' (ibid: 15). These are appropriate examples where ideology is conceived as discourse, but seem less so as examples of false consciousness in a Marxist sense. This is a common problem with many theories of ideology – their tendency to focus on ideology at the level of language (such as Althusser's 'black is beautiful' and Hall's 'labour strikes' examples) to explain the function of false consciousness. More appropriate of what is false consciousness produced by the ruling ideology would be examples such as 'democracy is the best system of government' or 'progress equals economic growth'. Indeed 'women are inferior' can help legitimate political power, but this is discourse rather than ideology. In this context, 'democracy is the best system of government' remains part of the ideology of journalism – as does 'a free press is vital for the health of democracy' – whereas 'hard news' and 'live coverage' remain part of the discourse of that ideology.

Teun A. van Dijk's interest in ideology is in social representation and its function for social cognition. According to him, "ideologies characterize the 'mental' dimension of society, groups or institutions" (van Dijk 1998: 6), where discourses remain the most crucial components in forming and reproducing ideologies. Therefore, if we want to know what ideologies look like, how they are created and how they work, how they are changed and reproduced, we need to look at their discursive manifestations. van Dijk defines ideologies as organised

social beliefs, world-views or ideas that form the socio-cognitive representations of the basic self-serving beliefs of groups in the context of social struggle. "In other words, an ideology is a self-serving schema for the representation of Us and Them as social groups" (ibid: 69). The structure of ideologies hence includes the memberships, activities, goals, values and norms, positions, group-relations and the resources of a group that define the identity and interests of groups, empower them, create solidarity and sustain their positions, as well as protect their interests and resources (ibid: 69-70, 138).

van Dijk pays sporadic attention to the journalistic profession in his treatment of discourse and ideology. He claims journalists have an activity-oriented ideology. Journalists present themselves essentially as gathering and bringing the news, which they claim they do to inform the public and to serve as a watchdog. Obviously, van Dijk points out, "these are ideological goals, because we know that many journalists hardly do this" (ibid: 70). Such ideological goals serve as benchmarks that represent how journalists would want to be. "The same is true for their (professional) values, such as truth, reliability, fairness, and so on" (ibid). Nevertheless, and for the usual reasons, van Dijk maintains that, "the media play a central role in the reproduction of dominant elite ideologies" (ibid: 186). Whereas van Dijk admits that the news values of journalism are among the ideological systems that guide news practices, he refrains from examining the ideologies behind these values. Instead he goes on to conclude that the routines, the actors, the events and institutional arrangements in news making, as well as the content of programming, news and other categories of media discourses, news selection, quoting styles, source selection, agenda setting, access to the op-ed page etc, all illustrate the ideological condition of the news business as "biased towards the reproduction of a limited set of dominant, elite ideologies" (ibid: 188).

This is certainly true – we can look to the media to find ideologies. There is nothing really new in this conclusion. It is perfectly appropriate to assert that the media support the dominant ideology, and that we can look to the media's content and production routines to find this ideology, but this stops short of

investigating the ideology behind this ideological maintenance. The reason why the media reproduce and support the dominant ideology is because they are businesses. The media support the liberal-democratic ideology that happens to be the dominant ideology of today's political climate, not only because this is a favourable political-economic climate for the business components of the media institution, but also because this is the arrangement that most favourably sustains the existence of the normative function of the journalistic institution. As van Dijk asserts, group ideologies are rooted in the general beliefs (what he refers to as the knowledge, opinions, values, truth criteria etc) of whole societies or cultures (ibid: 314). Hence, this also explains the necessity of such inescapable common ground. As Žižek explains, we cannot help but to act within ideology. It is all around us. There is no 'outside' ideology. We cannot step outside it, but only act within it with the knowledge of doing so.

Summary

These theories of ideology manage to abstract academic inquiry to a considerable degree – inspiring not only lengthy detours and detailed discussions, but they also easily trap themselves in their evasive approaches to definition. Here, the effort has been to use this research history as an illustration of the manner in which the media is so pervasively painted as the medium of a dominant ideology. In applying ideology under a structuration approach, moreover, journalism as an institution as well as the individual journalist emerge as devoid of power in relation to the structural level. As the vantage point of this thesis is the duality of structure in the agency/structure relationship, the effort lies in discovering how the agent can be said to have a role in the reproduction of the social structure. Under the ideology paradigm, the role of this agent, and its contribution to social reproduction, is to 'go along' with established norms. However, the duality of structure also maintains that agents and structures influence each other equally in a process of social change – a perspective that is largely lacking in the theories of ideology here surveyed.

As journalism can be thought of as an institution like other institutions, it should also be considered that it has an ideology of its own – and one that serves its own institutional interests. Journalistic ideology serves to sustain the structure in which journalism remains an important political institution. As such, journalistic ideology does support the dominant ideology – in fact they largely coincide. To the extent that ideology can be expressed as statements, examples of the components of journalistic ideology can include the following: ‘(liberal-) democracy is the preferred system of government’; ‘the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is our common ethical foundation’; ‘progress equals economic growth’; and ‘journalism is vital for the health of democracy’. This ideology exists on the level of social, cultural and political interaction and largely applies to secular institutions in most liberal-democratic systems. It can easily be spotted in the media. In fact it is pervasive in journalistic coverage – in critical investigations into the actions of ministers, in economic reports of large businesses, in sports coverage, and in watchdog journalism. This ideology is institutional, and it serves to render journalism important in the overall political structure as much as it helps sustain subsequent democratic institutions. At the level of professional boundary maintenance, we find the type of ideological statements so often the object of ideological analysis – such as ‘journalists are professionals’ and ‘facts are neutral’. The level of ideology that is investigated in the articles in this thesis – such as journalistic narratives, hard news genres and public service stipulations – involves the continuous boundary maintenance performed by the members of the profession on a daily basis. As ideology here is conceived of as a neutral and non-political concept, the fact that journalism supports the dominant ideology makes little difference. What matters is that this ideological mobilisation is useful for the retention of journalism as a profession with social, cultural and political influence. In short, journalistic ideology, and its alignment with the dominant ideology, performs the boundary maintenance that sustains the journalistic institution. This duality in the relationship between the ‘dominant ideology’ and journalistic ideology also confirms the structuration theory as an overall explanatory framework for this thesis.

3.4.4 Appropriating Key Terminology

The central concepts within this thesis are mobilised to provide analytical tools to investigate TV 2 as a commercial public service broadcaster and how it operates within an uncertain technological and economic news media landscape. Fundamentally, the application of these three central terms – strategy, institution and ideology – point to the constant negotiation between the relative balance of power between the agent and the structure as seen through the position of the journalistic institution. Talk of strategy denotes not only that journalism is as much a business as a public service, but also calls attention to the application of strategy by media companies and to the power attributed to structural forces by such vocabularies. New institutionalism displays how institutions operate in relation to the larger socio-political structures within the constraint/freedom duality. It also calls attention to the function of rules and norms for maintaining institutions, and to the professionalised rituals necessary to uphold weak institutional borders in journalism. Essential in directing this institutional norm maintenance is journalistic ideology. As this chapter demonstrates, any treatment of journalism that discusses the professional ideology of news will tempt researchers to divert to the Marxist route from which contemporary ideological analyses originate. The result of such a move is to automatically transfer the power in the agency/structure relationship back to the structural level. It thus also illustrates the usefulness of Giddens' theoretical perspectives for liberating the analysis of journalistic ideology from the critical-Marxist paradigm.

3.5 Ideology and Methodology

Because the methodological choices underlying the analytical work of this thesis have been made as part of an effort to operationalise research questions, journalistic ideology has been approached predominantly at 'face value'. This entails an investigation where methods have been utilised not as part of a critical endeavour, but rather on a substantially more shallow level of enquiry. The aim henceforth has been to uncover the ideology on a narrative level, and to remain at this level of projected mythology rather than to seek to uncover its 'hidden'

meaning. As the interest of this thesis lies in the value of journalistic ideology for the news institution and its practitioners, methods have been mobilised to record how ideology is engaged. These ideological encounters have subsequently been analysed within the professionalization framework as efforts of boundary maintenance.

The primary methodological challenge in studying institutions rests with the fact that actor and structure entail disparate research objects that require different material approaches and therefore different methods to qualify conclusions. Regardless of the inherently mutual interconnectedness that these concepts inhabit within Giddens' duality of structure, their co-dependency must necessarily be disregarded to enable a practical operationalisation of research questions. The articles in this thesis approach the ideology of the journalistic field by studying the institution as an agent operating within a larger political-economic structure. Approaching such a recursive relationship between agency and structure requires a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods that can connect empirical cases, quantitative measures and textual analysis with the level of theory. A triangulation effort therefore emerged as the most appropriate means to analyse boundary-maintaining strategies employed at the level of agent as well as at the level of structure⁵.

The most comprehensive methodological effort undertaken in this thesis is a quantitative content analysis of one constructed week of continuous newscasts from TV 2 News Channel, comprising 125 hours of material resulting in 5480 news items the analysis of which is presented in article 1. The aim of using the quantitative content analysis method is to establish the content profile of the channel. This allows for an evaluation of the extent to which the channel adheres to the news channel genre. To establish if and how the journalistic output coincides with the ideological aims of the channel as expressed by its branding

⁵ The combined methodology for the articles in this thesis is outlined and discussed in a separate methodology report in Appendix 1. The purpose of raising methodology as an issue within this theory chapter is not necessarily to foreshadow Appendix 1, but to address the ideological dimensions of the overall methodological approach.

strategies, the analysis also includes interviews and document analysis. Such a triangulation approach has the desired effect if it renders additional findings from what the individual methods can deliver in isolation. In this instance, the quantitative content analysis substantiates and confirms the ideological value of the hard news genre for the strategic market positioning of an ambitious new competitor. Here, the method triangulation and its focus on the superficially expressed content of TV 2's ideological narratives reveal the pervasiveness of the firmly established hard news ideology within the rule system of the larger news structure of the Norwegian journalistic field.

In the analysis of the branding strategies of TV 2 News Channel, the ideological narratives of this effort have been deliberately approached on a non-critical, descriptive 'surface' level – i.e. the statements of the informants have been taken at face value. Hence, the information collected from the interviews have been analysed in context of the situation as being grounded in conversational practice (Silverman 1993: 107). The aim has been to allow informants to talk about themselves and what they do in an ideological fashion. The interviews therefore function as a source of journalistic ideology. In this type of interview setting, both interviewer and interviewee are aware of the constructed nature of the situation, the discourse of which attempts to ignore the purpose of the conversation. As Lindlof and Taylor note, interview talk is “the rhetoric of socially situated speakers” (Lindlof and Taylor 2002: 172). Seasoned reporters who are also accustomed to the academic interview hold a considerable amount of power in the interview situation, particularly in terms of the information revealed. As the informants in this case represent a news institution under academic investigation, considerable branding effort has been assumed within the discourse of the interviews. The value of this constructed situation is precisely the ideological nature of the outcome of such conversations. The research interviews in this thesis were conducted to obtain not only the informant's perspectives, but also to gain access to the ideological statements of representatives of an institution engaged in the branding of a newly launched news product (Kvale 1997: 61). Whereas information gained from interviews is always to some extent suspect (Berger 2000: 125; Jensen 2002: 240), here the

aim has been to remain at the surface level of statements, and not to critically analyse their underlying meanings, essentially because ideology can most readily be found at this surface level.

Once the ideological statements of the informants are collected, the second aspect of assuming a surface level analysis is to take those statements seriously, and not give in to the temptation of critical analysis. As Giddens emphasises, agents are knowledgeable about what they do and the contexts in which they do it, and are able to express this knowledge when asked (Giddens 1984: 281). When informants in this case study express a belief in the democratic function of journalism, and the professional practices to which this function is attained, it would be highly presumptuous not to believe them. Rather than assuming to critically unmask the journalistic appropriation of and belief in concepts such as 'objectivity' and 'the Fourth Estate', the question is rather how such beliefs function institutionally and within the larger structure of society. Revealing journalistic ideology as 'ideology' rather obscures the extent to which the function of this ideology sustains the larger structure of the democratic system. This is precisely the value of the professional ideology as it is expressed by practitioners, through news output and in the institutional boundary work – namely how the social contract of the press serves to uphold the political social contract (as discussed in article 4). As long as this ideological projection works, and as long as it remains valuable to systems outside the institution and to the larger political structure, it also continues to sustain and further the journalistic profession. To gain further knowledge of the balance of power between the agency of the journalistic institution and the larger social and political structure, a surface approach to journalistic ideology emerges as a fruitful methodological starting point. Such an approach should consequently also help dissolve the critical preoccupation with locating 'bad' journalism and hegemonic behaviour.

Such endeavours inevitably start with a dichotomous presumption of the proper boundaries of journalism – what journalism should and should not be, and what constitutes good and bad professional practice. The fact that these standards are fairly universal (c.f. Barnhurst and Nerone 2001; Kieran 1998; Kunelius 2006;

Schudson 1995; Thussu 2007; or see Deuze 2005b for the opposite view) presupposes an epistemological understanding of news as a form of knowledge (Ekström 2002; Ettema and Glasser 1984). How journalistic norms – and the evaluation of the performance of these norms – are understood, largely rests in the ideological projection of journalistic professionalism. This framework of understanding is evident of the success of journalistic ideology in establishing a common apprehension of the proper boundaries of professional practice. What could seem as a perspective of external judgement in academic analysis rather displays the extent of the professional ideology. This is because the agreement between the profession and the public over what makes good journalism is premised on the social contract of the press. As discussed in article 4, this basic moral presumption of the contractual relationship between journalism and society is founded on the political-philosophical basis of western liberal democracies – a basis that also establishes the contractual obligations of the press, or the tenets of good journalism. Judgements of professional practice therefore rest on a ‘democratic assumption’ (Anderson 2011) fundamentally present in any approach to news analysis, whether descriptive, analytical or critical.

Summary

The methodological approach to the boundary maintaining functions of journalistic ideology is in this thesis largely founded on the theoretical foundation for the endeavour as a whole. As outlined at the end of Chapter 2, the major theoretical influences on this project assume an analytical approach to journalistic ideology that investigates the function and composition of journalistic authority. Here, Altschull and Gans presume the professional ideology to work in accordance with the demands of the democratic culture and socio-political structure (Altschull 1990; Gans 1980). Rather than unveiling the hegemonic reality of journalistic ideals, they instead analyse them as part of a larger cultural system. Ettema and Glasser continue to describe in detail how the ideology of American investigative journalism works both in practice and as the flagship of the overall profession. More than anything they connect the

journalistic 'mission' with the larger structural properties of the society in which journalism operates, particularly by focusing on the necessity of this function as based on a common social morality (Ettema and Glasser 1998). Eide's conceptualisations regarding the journalistic fallacy hence demonstrate how journalism can be approached as a self-sustaining system of meaning, the basis of which is a media logic that makes journalistic ideology relevant far beyond the professional borders (Eide 2004). These are the analytical approaches that have inspired the methodological procedures from which the research questions in this thesis have been operationalised. Hence, there is no escaping the reach of journalistic ideology, as it inspires not only how we ask questions about journalism, but also motivates the methods by which we seek for answers to these questions.

3.6 Conclusions

This chapter has sought to fuse theoretical perspectives on structure, institution and ideology under the theory of the duality of structure in order to explain how journalistic boundary maintenance takes place. This effort has also intended to establish that this boundary work is performed through professional ideals and that these ideals make up the structural rules and resources of the journalistic field. The definition of journalism as an institution outlines how norms, values and myths become established within the profession. The institutionalisation of such norms thus ensures the endurance of journalistic practices and protects its longevity within the larger political structure. Within the framework of the institution there exist a number of news organisations that compete against each other on ideal as well as economic terms. In order to succeed in a field in which every organisation produces more or less similar products, companies need strategies to differentiate themselves from their closest competitors. The resources that these companies can mobilise to achieve this differentiation are largely ideological. Economic and professional goals are primarily reached by achieving the desired reputation as being qualitatively better than subsequent rivals. Journalistic ideology can therefore be said to comprise the rules and resources within the overall structure that largely determine not only how news

organisations act, but also how institutions maintain their legitimacy in the overall social, cultural and political structure. The ideology through which this stability is achieved is largely due to its compatibility with the 'dominant ideology', as journalistic ideology supports both the democratic and economic orders. This entire system – of which the institutional aim is self-sustainment – is maintained by the interplay between journalistic ideology and the various forces that affect its composition in a duality of structure. The four examples of such forces analysed in this thesis (the market, professional practices, regulatory politics and political philosophy) constitute the ground level at which this ideological boundary work is maintained – i.e. the practical application of the professional journalistic ideology.

Whereas the journalistic profession might contain internal struggles over the proper interpretation of its social contract, it is the commonality of the externally projected democratic imperative and its subsequent potential political power that constitutes the founding argumentation inherent in journalism's professional boundary maintenance. As such, this thesis does not attempt to analyse every aspect of journalistic ideology. Most notably, this excludes analysing and explaining boundary maintenance by ideological measures at the level of individual practitioners. Individual agents are more or less pervasively absent in this treatment. In this respect, this thesis does not fully conform to a structuration framework involving the analysis of the duality of structure as the relative power relationship between individual agents and their restricting or enabling structural properties. Instead, empirically grounded analyses take place on an organisational level, while theoretical analyses take place on an institutional level. Whereas Giddens, with his theory of structuration, leans towards methodological individualism and points to the agent as the dominant power in the agency/structure relationship, this thesis finds itself largely neglecting the individual actor and instead directs attention to the structural level. This does not signify an altogether diversion of power away from the institutional agent onto the structural plain. Rather, the concept of the duality of structure is mobilised to reassign attention to the recursiveness inherent in the agency/structure relationship that Giddens moves away from in favour of the

powerful actor. Hereunder, this thesis to some extent reiterates the constraining force of structure by incorporating the institutional perspective on journalistic ideology. This approach does not necessarily render the actor powerless and the structure powerful. Rather, the analysis of journalistic boundary maintenance illustrates how power is recursive within the duality of structure. Hereunder the purpose is to sustain the power of journalistic agency within the mutually beneficial coexistence of the overall structure through the function of boundary maintenance.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This thesis consists of two parts, of which part one contains the Summary and part two contains the articles. The Summary opens with an outline of the research objectives of the thesis as a whole and of the individual articles. This overview offers an outline of the content of the four individual articles comprising part two, and remains embedded in the central question of journalistic ideology. Chapter 2 contains the literature review. It devotes fairly focused attention to the sociology of journalistic ideology and is structured according to the historical development of the research tradition. Emerging from the literature review is the insight that this particular line of academic inquiry has been especially preoccupied with the constructed nature of news and the role of journalistic ideology in this construction. This is the combined paradigm of research on the professionalization of journalism and its objectivity ideal. However, from more sociological approaches to journalistic ideology comes the increasingly symbiotic view of the function of professional ideology within the larger social structure. This conclusion to the literature review provides a point of departure for the theory discussion in Chapter 3, which starts from Giddens' theory of structuration as an underlying principle of the thesis as a whole. The contextualisation of the findings of the individual articles in relation to the concept of the duality of structure is here intended to place the themes of the articles within the theoretical framework. From here, a discussion of the key terminology used throughout the articles serves to actualise further the theory of structuration within the theoretical framework of journalistic ideology. The power of structure over agency fluctuates as we move from the restraints of the

economic strategy perspective through the liberation of the agent in new institutionalism and back to the blinding and circumscribing restrictive properties of structure under the cover of the ideological assumption. Once the terminology has been clarified and appropriated to the case study follows a consideration of the ideological dimensions of the applied methodology. As the specific methodologies for the articles in this thesis are in some cases rudimentary and in other cases both detailed and extensive, these are outlined in a separate methodology report in Appendix 1. We arrive finally at the concluding chapter, which contains a brief description of the content of the chapters comprising the Summary, the preliminary findings specifically regarding the case studies, the predominant reservations and limitations pertaining to the scope and relevance of the findings and the final conclusion for the thesis overall.

4.2 Preliminary Findings

This thesis is essentially a case study of TV 2 as a media house with a dual identity. A fundamental assumption hereunder has been that ideal values have a strategic and economic value within the larger news market structure. Hence there is an underlying notion that ideal and economic considerations are not as dichotomous as one might presume, but rather that the professional ideology unites the purpose of both these aspirations as organisational goals. The empirical findings support this assumption in the case of TV 2 and its journalistic operations in the digitalised Norwegian broadcasting landscape. The case studies approach TV 2 as a news-driven organisation central within the journalistic institution in Norway – and as a strategic agent within the larger socio-economic structure. Its branding strategies, its identity management and its expansion efforts in an increasingly competitive digital television market make it a comparable case also internationally. More than anything, TV 2 is interesting as a research object because its competitive and commercial goals presently do not seem to significantly compromise its journalistic aspirations. As of June 2011, an additional two news channels modelled on the first one are in the process of being launched – a sports news channel and a channel devoted to business and financial news. This could speak both to the ideological value of an expanding

news channel portfolio as well as to the financial value of news within the niche market of television and online subscription channels. On the other hand, it could also be a testament to the advances in cheap production technology rendering such a multiplication of operations within the narrow framework of the hard news genre possible, viable and indeed desirable. The question of the quality of these novel news sources is reserved for the future analyses of the fragmentation and potential feudalisation of the public sphere and the role of journalistic ideology in its diffusion. However, for the purposes of this thesis, TV 2's expanding news strategy only increases the reach of journalistic ideology as the driving force in the professionalization of the journalistic field in the overall socio-economic and political structure.

4.3 Reservations and Limitations

The theoretical inspiration for the discussions in this thesis lies with the duality of structure found in Giddens' theory of structuration. The conceptual function of the duality of structure lies in its usefulness as an analytical tool in the investigation of journalistic ideology. The duality of structure and the negotiation of the relations of power between agency and structure within this duality operate as a perspective from which the articles analyse the role of ideology for professional boundary maintenance. Hereunder, the journalistic practices that can most directly be described and analysed as serving boundary maintaining functions are treated in article 1 concerning the branding of TV 2 News Channel, and in article 2 concerning journalistic narratives. Boundary maintenance as terminology is not equally applicable in relation to article 3 concerning TV 2's public service negotiation, and article 4 discussing the political-philosophical origins of the social contract of the press. Boundary maintenance as a concept rather serves as an analytical link between the institutional agency-level of inquiry engaged in articles 1 and 2, and the structural perspectives addressed in articles 3 and 4. Hence the connection between the duality of structure and boundary maintenance is developed within the context of the four forces influencing journalism and its ideology as identified by the articles.

Although boundary maintenance as a concept is fruitful for the purposes of this thesis, this does not necessarily entail that it is useful for the analysis of the journalistic professionalization project as a whole. The concept works well in this context because it intersects with similar aspects found in economic theories of market strategies and in new institutionalism, while it at the same time is effective in dissolving the critical-Marxist domination in theoretical ideology analysis. Boundary maintenance as terminology does however carry a tint of archaic romanticism reminiscent of a time when the definition of who was a journalist was relatively straightforward and stable in its institutional and organisational connection to the physical and hierarchical editorial room and its system of beats and regular deadlines. Homogeneity of professional identities and goals is less the case today than before, and as Eide has recently reminded us, boundary maintenance is not necessarily a unified professional goal, nor has it ever been (Eide 2011). Just as journalism in its idealised form is about challenging the status quo and upsetting established power structures through individual investigative reporting that reveals the 'real' problems of society, so too will the rebellious aspects of journalistic ideology continue to inspire insiders to revolt against the prevailing ideology of facts, objectivity, speed and hard news (c.f. Sjøvaag 2009). As a matter of consequence, journalistic ideology should be conceptualised as a highly flexible concept of which the democratic basis can be mobilised by conformers and rebels alike.

4.4 Final Conclusion

The primary research question for this thesis concerns how journalistic ideology is maintained and projected by the news institution in light of challenges posed by a digital and competitive market situation. This question is asked based on the assumption that journalism is essentially a vocation with a weak professional status. More specifically, the thesis investigates how the Norwegian commercial public service broadcaster TV 2 uses the professional ideology as a strategic asset in a crowded news market. Besides the actual findings of the four articles, the overall conclusion to this thesis is that journalistic ideology is a prevailing feature of professional life that is frequently mobilised to serve the function of

professional boundary maintenance. This activity is engaged on an institutional level to protect the profession of journalism, its specific news organisations and its individual journalists from outside threats, accusations and challenges to its authority. Journalistic ideology can therefore be conceptualised within a structuration framework as the news media rule system, where ideals constitute a structuring force that must be addressed in the strategies employed by news institutions to protect their professional boundaries and to advance as news enterprises. While journalistic ideology contributes to sustain the power and position of the journalistic institution in liberal-democratic societies, it simultaneously assumes the function of sustaining the liberal-democratic system in which its basic principles are rooted. As such, journalistic ideology remains a recursive and reciprocal feature of the duality of structure in which journalism operates.

As this thesis concludes it remains rather lonely in the ideology section of journalism research. Notable exceptions do exist (c.f. Anderson 2008; Lewis 2010), however this area has not been crowded since the fruition of the production and professionalization studies of the 1970s and 1980s. Even then it was not quite at the head of the emerging field of journalism studies, as it was often immersed in a critical-Marxist direction of sociological enquiry, where it stubbornly remains. Emancipation from the political economy strand of journalism research therefore seems necessary for journalistic ideology to achieve new analytical treatment. Professional ideology has largely been seen as the effort sustaining the political and economic interests of the news media and its surrounding structures of power. However, it is also likely that journalistic ideology serves important institutional dimensions. In fact this thesis argues that it is more likely that it serves the authority of the institution and the strategies of professionalism than any concept of hegemonic domination. If our interest lies in understanding how journalism attains, retains and administers social, political and cultural power; in how news organisations strategise and compete for market positions; and in how the profession faces economic, technological and participatory challenges, journalistic ideology offers a productive vantage point. The hope is that this dissertation – with the following four articles and the

Summary preceding them – may provide evidence of the continued relevance of taking journalistic ideology seriously.

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