“Truth is not the End in Itself but a Mill of Information” The Journalistic Construction of War: Professional Reporting for Daily Newspapers in Germany and the United States during the 2003 Iraq War

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Preface and Acknowledgments

Nobody in my family used to read newspapers; we all preferred novels. Printed on poor quality paper, and filled with ideological content, the print media in Soviet Russia nevertheless fulfilled a functional purpose in my home – we used it as toilet paper. Growing up, I never knew the names of the leading officials of the Communist Party or the events of Party conferences, and I almost failed the oral exam required to join the Komsomol. My family, however, profited from the newspapers in another way. For every twenty kilos of newspapers we collected, we received coupons that could be exchanged for up to five novels at a bookstore, including the classics of Russian and World literature. As a result, our small, fourth floor apartment quickly filled up with books and became a small library.

After my immigration to Germany, my insurmountable reluctance to reading newspapers was the first stumbling block on the way to my integration into Western society. After years of struggling with my own mistrust of newspapers, I now understand that the ability to become informed about what is happening around the country and abroad is like an entrance ticket, or an indispensable requirement of membership, into Western liberal society. As I have now gained a more positive attitude toward newspapers and read some of them, I feel that a significant part of my integration, at least as I understand it, has been successfully concluded. Considering the described situation I was born into, the question is: why write my doctoral thesis about working in newspapers?

While I was a student, circumstances dictated that I began to work on a linguistic-project about the Iraq War (2003). I developed a fascination with the topic, and it influenced me so much that I even changed my original proposal to write my Master's Thesis in Literature studies to the war correspondence on the Iraq War of two Canadian newspapers. For this project, I went to Toronto to interview war correspondents from *The Toronto Star* and *The National Post*. The journalists I met at the headquarters of these two newspapers impressed me and I began to see these articles, which I had previously perceived as sometimes dry and voiceless or ideological and value-laden, in a new light.

I thought that the interviews with the Canadian war correspondents highlighted a great dependence on war for some of them, almost like an addiction. I found this particularly fascinating. Having started war reportage from different continents at a

young age, some of them were constantly looking for new conflict situations and traveled from one to another, while failing to adjust to a normal life at home.[1] This reminded me of reading about the situation of some American soldiers who suffered from the same phenomena. Thus, I found it compelling to search for the reason that soldiers and journalists depend on war. However, I did not pursue this topic that had so compelled me because I supposed that it would be very demanding to organize this kind of research, which would likely be a large project including other disciplines like social psychology. Moreover, I would have to find participants for such a study, which I doubted would be a successful undertaking.

In the course of my Master's thesis, I conducted 16 interviews in Canada. For my doctoral thesis, I interviewed about 30 journalists: 18 in Germany and 12 in the United States. All interviews were based on the principles of qualitative social research. I also wanted to investigate whether the action of journalists whose countries had been involved in the war (for example American journalists) would be the same as those whose countries had not (such as the Germans and Canadians). However, to focus my research, I decided against including analysis of the interviews with the Canadian journalists, since it would go beyond the scope of my study. I also had to reduce the number of interviews used in this thesis from 30 to 12 or this thesis would have contained many more pages.

I also dismissed my original intention to interview Russian journalists about the Iraq war coverage, which I found interesting because of my personal origins and the general press situation in Russia. However, I was unsure whether the time and effort would be justified. Above all, I was uncertain whether I would expose the Russian journalists to a life-threatening situation coming from the West and interviewing them about war coverage. Consequently, only the interviews conducted in Germany and the United States were considered in this thesis. Thus, in the course of writing this thesis, my approach underwent an important evolution, refining my initial intentions with new goals.

The similarity between the journalists' professional action and my own action while writing this Ph.D. thesis became increasingly obvious. Like the journalists I

[1] One of the journalists even suggested that I marry him. He explained that he does not have time to find a life partner and to have a family. He even made a joke that he would be a perfect life partner as he is never at home.

interviewed, I principally divided my time between two professional action types, each with its own patterns of action. Similar to journalists, I first gathered information about the research subject, and second, applied this information in a specific text form – scientific writing. Both action types served as my two main action-goals, which I pursued in order to accomplish my project – finishing the thesis. In order to achieve that action-goal, I made plans and action-drafts. While I could repeatedly apply some of the action-drafts, I had to remove others, because they did not help me achieve my action-goals and thus develop new ones. In contrast to the journalists, however, I had no daily or weekly deadlines or an editor who would constantly discuss with me every single step I would attempt to execute.

Like many of the journalists, I preferred gathering information to writing the text. In fact, I suppose it must have something to do with the diversity of the activities and the communicative aspects of this type of the professional action. When gathering information, I could combine diverse activities such as reading; going to the libraries; searching for names of the journalists for interviews; locating and writing to the journalists; trying to convince them to meet me; meeting the journalists; and finally having a dialog with them.

In comparison, writing the text felt like a very lonely professional action that was based on an internal monologue. I often wrote my soliloquizing down in order to continue this conversation with myself another day. My orientation to the reader did not help much as I imagined only my supervisor and a dark group of people unknown to me who would or would not read this thesis. In fact, like some of the interviewed journalists, I sometimes thought that some of my colleagues would probably browse through the thesis.

Many of the interviewed journalists described the making of war coverage as constructing a jigsaw puzzle. My thesis also appeared to be a jigsaw puzzle. It had many different parts that I compiled in one virtual space but at different times and from different locations, as I often switched my working place at home to the library or an office at work. I tried to put all these pieces together, dismissing some and including others to draw a coherent picture of the topic of my investigation. Another metaphor that the journalists used to describe the nature of professional action in journalism was acting in complete darkness and making the best of it. Writing this Ph.D. thesis allowed me to feel the same, as if I was developing negatives in a dark

room without knowing how the picture would look like in the light. The journalists' professional action was a riddle or a mystery that I needed to unravel.

Working in a dark room is an appropriate metaphor to describe my action on this thesis for several reasons. On the one hand, writing a Ph.D. thesis is a single, unique action, most of the people engaging in this activity are doing so for the first time. There is no chance to exercise it – the workshops about writing a Ph.D. thesis are only an indication of how to complete it. In reality, one works alone with a machine (a computer) and has to find one's own way to produce a text mixed with theoretical and empirical knowledge (from the analysis and interpretation) seasoned with one's own thoughts, ideas, and mental states from euphoria to depression. I also put myself in a dark room because I chose to write a Ph.D. thesis in a discipline I had not studied. This schizophrenic situation raised existential questions along the way, forcing me into moments of personal crisis.

This Ph.D. thesis would never have been finished without a number of people who supported me in different ways during the various phases of my research and writing. These people helped to construct and reconstruct the scientific reality of this thesis. My supervisor, Professor Dr. Mathias Bös from the Department of Sociology at the Philipp University of Marburg and later Leibniz-University Hannover, guided this thesis by offering me great advice and comments. He helped me remain focused on my research and avoid distractions by other compelling research themes. Above all, I would like to thank him for his patience and for meeting with me regularly helping me adapt the relevant sociological perspectives. I came to perceive our meetings as a kind of therapy, with a solid doctor-patient relationship. He was always supportive and encouraging, and he never expressed any doubt that I could finish my project.

Furthermore, my great thanks go to the English editors of different backgrounds who accompanied the process of writing during different stages. Among others are David Smith, Benjamin Torode, Jacob Bourgeois, and Samantha Thompson. My editors' unique sense of the language helped to improve my expressions in English, a language that I began to learn unsystematically and auto-didactically after my immigration to Germany.

As a matter of fact, my writing in English was strongly affected by Russian, my first language, and German, my second language. Nevertheless, my editors could trace back the original meaning and edit my writing into more understandable

English. Lamentably, I stayed true to my linguistic instinct of avoiding or misplacing the definite article, “the”, in English and the structure of some of my writing still remains enigmatic. I also profited from the critical comments they made during their linguistic corrections and their questioning helped me rethink some details.

I would especially like to thank my family for their critical comments and for taking over the organization of our everyday life at home, and caring for our son, who managed to be born even before this thesis saw the light of day. My great thanks to my parents in Voronezh, Russia, who were eventually very supportive of me writing this thesis despite their initial skepticism. During our weekly Skype conversations, we initially and frequently argued about when I would be able to finish it, but they always supported me emotionally in times of uncertainty.

My thanks also go to my chief Professor Dr. Frank G. Koenigs and my colleagues in the Department of Education at the University of Marburg, where I was a part of the “Foreign language teaching” work group. Professor Dr. Koenigs gave me the strength to finish this thesis by advising me to stop living in parallel professional universes by writing a Ph.D. thesis in sociology and giving seminars in the didactics of foreign languages at the same time. He also encouraged me to pursue this topic as part of my professional career, which has helped me to further discover my professional abilities and myself.

I wish to thank Professor Dr. Una Dirks, for whom I worked as a student in her linguistic project about the Iraq War, which originally inspired me to write this thesis. While I had initially planned the project from a linguistic point of view, I eventually shifted to a sociological perspective and moved to the Institute of Sociology. There I solely concentrated my analysis on the interviews with journalists, which I found more compelling than the analysis of their articles.

Additionally, I would like to apologize to those friends I neglected because of this thesis. I had a guilty conscience that I was working too slowly and did not want to be asked about my progress, which I found embarrassing. This apology also goes out to my parents and my brother, whom I did not visit for the last three years, because I aimed to finish the thesis beforehand.

Furthermore, none of this would have been possible without the substantial grant I received from the *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung,* which covered my travel expenses to the United States and allowed me to complete the primary phase of my research. I really appreciate the lack of hierarchy, democratic structures, openness, and fairness

towards people of different political perspectives as well as the great range of opportunities for the further education that this foundation offers.

Last but not least, this project would not be possible without my interviewees, the journalists, who found some time to meet me despite their very busy professional lives. I would really like to thank them for their trusting me enough to share information and to provide interesting insights into their everyday professional lives. Indeed, those journalists' professional strategies helped me finish this thesis and I would like to close these acknowledgements with one particular piece of advice that helped me make a full stop and a final cut. One of the interviewed journalists from the *New York Times* described his strategy for dealing with the pressure of deadlines in the following way, "if you have to have it finished at eleven, then turn something in at eleven. It may not be perfect. It does not have to be perfect; it just has to be accurate and fair."

1 Wars Without War Correspondents?

1.1 Introduction

Most of the studies of journalism come from disciplines such as media and communication studies, history, politics, and social psychology, but only a few stem from sociology. Looking back to the end of the 19th century, when journalism as an occupation began to establish itself (cf. Requate 1995), this newcomer in the media industry seemed to be the matter of interest also for sociological research. Max Weber defined the task of sociology as that of scrutinizing the press during his lecture at the first annual meeting of the German Sociological Association in 1910. He spoke of two possible directions for the sociological research on journalism: on the one hand, the importance of international comparisons; on the other, the working environment and individual socialization of journalists (cf. Weber 1911). Even though concerns about journalism have such a long history in sociology, the sociology of journalism did not establish itself in the early 20th century.

According to McNair (1998), journalism is a social construction from the sociological point of view, due to the fact that journalists act in a particular time-space constellation within their own cultural, political, historical and social conditions. Relying on Klaus Bruhn-Jensen, he defines five "categories" or "social determinants of journalism" that affect the work of journalists such as professional ethics, political and economic systems, communication technologies and dealing with informational sources (the sociology of sources) (all quot. ibid.: p. 14). Therefore, the final product of journalists' professional action – the journalistic text – "... is viewed as the product of a wide variety of cultural, technological, political and economic forces that are specific to a particular society at a particular time" (McNair 1998: p.3). Furthermore, McNair observes journalism as a "form of cultural production."

> For the sociologist, journalism, like any other form of cultural production, always reflects and embodies the historical processes within which it has developed and the contemporary social conditions within which it is made. Concepts such as objectivity and balance – so important to journalists in their everyday work – have complex socio-historical roots which reflect the values and ideas of the societies in which they emerged. In this sense, too, journalism is a social construction. (McNair 1998: p. 64)

Together with the above-mentioned view of journalism, this thesis also observes journalism as a social construction as well as a form of cultural production. The

social changes of the 20th century gave rise to the so-called information society where journalism and journalists play an active role. Today, journalism is inextricably linked with Western democratic society. After World War II, the work of journalists became the figurative right hand of democratic policies in Western societies. At the same time, journalism is one of the instruments enabling the public to experience real living democracy. Journalism functions as an indicator of the level of democracy in a society: in societies with weak democracies or dictatorships journalists may be targeted. These developments changed the role and function of the journalist in society. The journalist is no longer simply a narrator of, or commentator on, events, but, depending on his position and field of research in the news media, he is also an active shaper and practitioner of democracy. At the same time, globalization, the ongoing development of technology, and availability of the internet raise questions about the professional responsibilities and tasks of journalism as a profession as journalists no longer have a monopoly on information about current events.

Summarizing various views on journalism from different disciplines (such as media studies, history or sociology), Zelizer (2005) finds the following five dominant journalism definitions that identify a center of gravity within the context of journalism research. Thus, journalism is "a text", "a set of practices", "an institution", "a profession", and "people" (cf. Zelizer 2005: pp. 72-76). All these definitions or identities of journalism are connected with each other and cannot be easily separated. They all embrace people or social actors who are acting in an institutional context according to the requirements of their profession, applying a set of practices in order to produce a journalistic text. Relying on these definitions of journalism, it will be assumed in this thesis that the journalists' professional action can be defined as an interplay between them. The intense interdependence between the structure and social action of journalists was strikingly pointed out by one of the journalists that I interviewed.

> When you have been working for a newspaper for as long as I have there's [...] a mutual socialization. That means the way this newspaper functions socialized me as a young editor and now as a senior [journalist and editor] and a 'Hierarch' [higher-up], I can socialize many of my colleagues. (Braun, *SZ*, lines 199-202)

Despite of the diversity of perspectives on journalism, media researchers complain that media is often seen as a system that relies on a monolithic structure. Still, one tends to forget that media is produced by single actors in this system – the

journalists. Furthermore, investigations in the field of journalism have been mostly concentrated, "... on normative models, models of what journalism 'should be,' rather than of what it is and why" (Hallin and Giles 2005: p. 5). Against this context, a detailed sociological analysis from the micro-perspective or the perspective of journalists on how they regard their working routines, how they attain their information about events and reproduce it in their articles is missing or has escaped scientific analysis.

1.2 Aims and Objectives of the Project

The goal of my thesis is to identify and to characterize the professional action of the interviewed journalists who were employed by the quality daily newspapers in the United States and Germany. The aims and objectives of the thesis consist of one major objective that has to be answered by means of subordinated aims. The main goal is to discover the problem: *How can the journalists' professional action be defined?* The subordinated research questions are the following: *What are the characteristic features of the professional action of the interviewed journalists? (description, patterns of action). How do the journalists act and why do they act in this way? (journalists' strategies to deal with professional problems, possible explanations). How do journalists construct the social reality of their newspapers by means of their professional action? How does the subjective reality of journalists become an objective reality of their newspapers?*

Linked to the ideas of Berger and Luckman (1991), it will be presumed that newspapers represent objective and subjective reality at once. On the one hand, the newspapers' reality is objective as the result of the institutional organization of newspapers, which includes requirements that journalists maintain professional values and norms that lead to the institutionalization of professional action. On the other hand, the newspapers' reality is subjective as it is an outcome of journalists' interpretation and construction of reality. Despite the newspapers' institutional frame, such as the obligation to write a report in a particular writing style, we may often state while reading an article that the (quality of) contents of same genres are presented by journalists very differently.

According to the interviews and statistical research and studies on journalism, journalists usually spend their working time gathering information and writing articles. The journalists' professional action consists of two main action-goals: gaining information and reproducing it in one of the journalistic text-genres. This

implies a chronological order or structure of time. Firstly, doing research (gaining, selecting and validating/verifying information) and, secondly, being involved in the process of writing an article. Both action-goals are parts of the journalists' project or their intention, for example, to finish an article by the end of their working day or gather a certain amount of information for a larger article.

Journalists' professional action will be investigated with regard to one event – the Iraq war in 2003. War is a situation of crisis for reporting and is, in many respects, very different from reporting at home and therefore is especially compelling for the research. War threatens human life and journalists working in war regions were aware they are risking their own lives. War coverage is more dangerous; it challenges the ordinary rules and daily routines of journalists' work. The journalists had to re-organize their working routines and be open towards unexpected situations. The professional actions of journalists may easily fail in wars. Furthermore, in a war situation journalists rely to a greater extent on their individual power of judgment and intuition.

War situations offer an especially compelling focus for the scientific investigation of professional action because they may disrupt the daily routines of journalists by unusual situations. Unexpected circumstances often force journalists to cease continuing with a planned action and rethink their initial action-draft. Journalists were forced to adapt to new situations and probably pause and sort anew their action-goals. They would wait until circumstances improved or make a new plan. For example, a journalist would decide to go to one of the districts of Baghdad and interview people there. On his way there, something would happen (a missile attack or something else) and he had to return to his base. He will either aim to complete his action-goal later that day, wait one or more days, or he will totally disclaim his initial plan and create another action-plan.

In the example described above, the professional action of journalists may easily fail in wars. Similar to any other social action, a professional action can either succeed or fail. On the one hand, journalists create their professional lifeworld and are able to manage it themselves. On the other hand, their professional action can fail if their professional lifeworld becomes intertwined with external negative factors that they cannot influence or did not foresee. In order to understand why journalists' professional actions succeed or fail, or which factors can influence the result, German and American journalists' professional lifeworld will be reconstructed.

Furthermore, journalists' understanding of professional requirements and their adaptation to the reality of war will be the matter of analysis. Moreover, what kind of professional strategies do journalists rely on in their daily routines?

Wars and crises are among the most dominant topics of news coverage. Academic research on media and war gave birth to countless frequently critical publications on this topic (e.g. Allan and Zelizer 2004, Dirks 2010). War correspondents also provoke the interest of various disciplines – above all, history, politics, literature, and media studies. Recent research on war correspondents is mostly undertaken from the macro-perspective and focuses, for example, examining how journalists fashion themselves in literature and film; or demythologizing presentations of military and war correspondents (cf. Korte and Tonn 2007). Some of the media studies of war journalism also contain collections of not-anonymized interviews with war correspondents or correspondents' essays about their time in war in order to show journalists' daily lives as they report from a war region (e.g. Katovsky and Carlson 2003, Foggensteiner 1993).

In addition to research on war correspondents, journalists themselves have published several autobiographical works about their experience covering wars. Using different literary genres, journalists retrospectively and descriptively reflect on their time in war regions and episodically depict their experiences (cf. Gaus 2004; Reichelt 2010). Axe and Bors (2010) even use the genre of cartoons to deal with the reporting on wars, using the incisive sarcastic title, "War is Boring: Bored Stiff, Scared to Death, in the World's Worst War Zones." Furthermore, war correspondents were a part of critical and satirical examinations in the novel "The Men Who Stare at Goats" (2004) by Jon Ronson, which was adapted to film in 2009. Hence, that image of war correspondents as a cool, strong Western cowboy-like adventurer who, having finished his day's work, drinks whisky at the bar of his hotel or as a selfless marathon runner "who collapses and dies after his mission is accomplished" is debunked as myth (Marchal 1995: p. 108, own translation).

These journalists' works possess historical, psychological and entertainment value that might be considered *oral history*. Due to the unsystematic and personally based information contained in the works, they might only play a complementary role in sociological analysis and form one part of the previous knowledge of this field but they serve as a first impression of the problems that can occur in war coverage and of the process that journalists go through in order to solve them. Such works

arouse curiosity and prompt further questions about what hides behind the image of a newspaper war journalist in an actual daily working routine situation. In order to develop preliminary categories, accounts of on-site war coverage experience by the following correspondents proved to be very useful. Summarizing information from the memories of war correspondents, some basic categories can be elaborated upon.

Modern journalists must confront the constantly changing ways in which wars are waged. The German journalist Bettina Gaus (2004) asks laconically, "What is a war – and who are its victims?" (own translation), but nowadays it is not so easy to define precisely what war is. On the one hand, changes in the methods of war, the state of affairs and their indications, or terms such as, new weaponry, long-range missiles, asymmetric warfare, terrorist acts, and privatization of the military as well as the problem of distinguishing between combatants and non-combatants blur the distinction between war and armed conflict. On the other hand, the definition of the term "victim" has also become blurred. For example, it is difficult to distinguish between civilians and insurgents in civilian clothing. This became especially relevant for war correspondents because the topic "victims of war" often falls within the theme of war coverage.

In addition to changes in the definition of war, the last century has also seen changes in the relationship between the press and the military. Initially, war correspondents were reluctantly accepted by the military and were only allowed to cover war to assist in creating propaganda in order to gain support for the war and increase domestic participation (as seen, for instance, during the First and Second World Wars). Now militaries have strategically shifted their attitudes towards war correspondents and allowed them to travel under certain conditions with the military troops (e.g., the embedded program), since the military now considers journalists as a necessary component of war operations.

Since war coverage is usually associated with the news coverage from a war area, nobody seriously concerns with the definition of "war correspondent". A war correspondent is usually understood as a journalist who reports from a war region. That may be true for the journalist who works as a freelancer for different newspapers. Journalists that are hired by a newspaper as staff writers report on different topics in their daily routines and war coverage can be one of them.

Almost all journalists I interviewed who covered the Iraq War 2003 were employed by the political section of their newspapers and did not identify

themselves with the image of a war correspondent. This is why the question about how to define proper war coverage confused the journalists I interviewed. In my study I observed journalists who reported on the Iraq war not as war correspondents but as staff writers of newspapers I selected. Furthermore, during interviewing I concluded that not all journalists who reported on the Iraq war went to Iraq. Indeed, contemporary war coverage is *made at home*. It is a patchwork or a jigsaw puzzle. War coverage is patched together by responsible journalists and their editors from different parts to form one picture.

The war coverage from the war zone does not constitute a homogeneous picture and is based on many different perspectives. Journalists embedded with the military reported differently than journalists who lived in hotels and couldn't move freely around the country. Also, the work of translators, drivers, photographers and stringers (informants) was part of war coverage. For the technical reasons, it wasn't always possible for journalists to write the text but they had to dictate it by telephone to their editors that wrote the stories down. They couldn't always conduct their research and testing of information from the war zone and left it to the journalists in their home country. Taken this situation into account, editors and journalists at headquarters also participated actively in the war coverage. One of the journalists interviewed described this professes the following:

> What would usually happen is that the reports that I would send in would be merged with another writer's reports, [someone] who was in Kuwait [would] try to coordinate things and that would become the main lead-off story of the day. By lead-off, we mean sort of a broad overview. (Werner, *FAZ*, line 58)

The Iraq War was covered from at least three perspectives: coverage from the war zone, from the neighboring countries (for example, Kuwait) and the headquarters of newspapers. These places of war coverage offered different working conditions for the journalists and their professional reporting. This is one of the outcomes of this thesis: war coverage constitutes news coverage similar to any other topic. It takes place not only in the geographical place of war but can be situated somewhere else (in journalists' home countries, neighboring countries to that of the war country or capitals of politically significant countries for that war).

1.3 Some Tools of the Trade

This thesis focuses on daily working routines of journalists in a situation of war in Iraq in 2003 from the point of view of the sociology of professions and sociology of

knowledge. Journalism will be discussed as a semi-profession that is stuck in between being a profession and not. Nevertheless, journalists' reporting activities will be examined here as one type of social action – the journalists' professional action (cf. chapter 2). Not only will journalists' professional acting strategies during war be the matter of analysis, but also the issue of professional socialization. Journalists begin their professional socialization not as a tabula rasa, but rather as an attempt to find a way for their primary and secondary socialization to co-exist. Primary socialization was the main reason interviewed journalists were prevented from pursuing the postulate of journalists' professional ethics – objectivity. They developed action strategies in order to deal with the permanent latent conflict between their primary and secondary socialization. During secondary socialization, journalists learned how to act professionally. Teachers on their way to becoming professionals were the so-called significant others. The question of who these significant others were for the interviewed journalists in Germany and the United States will be one focus of analysis.

A qualitative analysis of retrospective problem-centered interviews, which the author of this thesis made in Germany and the United States, will help to reconstruct journalists' working experience covering political events in the past and provide an inside perspective on it. Interpretation of the interviews was based on of the principles of the Grounded Theory. The following daily quality newspapers were chosen for analysis: *The New York Times* (*NYT*), *The Washington Post* (*WP*), *Die Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (*FAZ*), and *Die Sueddeutsche Zeitung* (*SZ*). The challenging issue involved with investigating journalists' professional activities in these countries stems from the similar political systems that are based on the ideals of democracy in which they are embedded.[2] The central aspect constitutes the freedom of speech and freedom of the press. In other words, that means that every

[2] Hallin and Mancini mention three types of journalism. Hallin and Mancini (2007) differentiate between three media models in democratic societies. While the United States embodies the "North Atlantic or Liberal Model" (p. 75) of the media, Germany represents the "North/Central European or Democratic Corporatist Model"[2] (p. 74). The third type is the "Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralist Model". According to the authors, Italy, for example, represents the third type of journalism (p. 73).

citizen can express his opinion openly in an oral or written way and so be engaged in journalistic activity.[3]

Nevertheless, the analysis of the interviews will show substantial differences in the process of construction of reality that can be extracted from the interviews with German and American journalists. Two newspapers from each country will be scrutinized here as one model of journalism or ideal-type of journalism. That means that two American newspapers will represent here one ideal-type of journalistic system and two German newspapers will also present another ideal-type of journalism. This decision was made due to the following considerations. The small number of interviews (about 30 in total) did not allow me to clearly separate the cases. Furthermore, the analysis of the interviews showed that while the utterances of journalists from two newspapers within one country were similar, there was a substantial difference in some questions between German and American journalists in general.

1.4 The Structure of the Argument

An overview of the state of the art of how professional action is defined in the scientific literature and how professional action is defined in this thesis will be presented in the chapter 2, entitled "How Do Journalists Act Professionally? The State of the Art". Methods of evaluation of the interviews, selection of samples (newspapers and journalists) as well as categories for further analysis will be introduced in chapter 3, "Study Design of the Research Project". The presentation of the analysis and interpretation of the empirical data are subdivided into chapter 4,

[3] What differentiates these models according to Hallin and Mancini is, above all, the market role. Thus, a closer relation to economic issues rather than politics characterizes the Liberal model of the media. The Democratic Corporatist model refers "to both the political and economic worlds" (ibid.: p. 76). Hallin and Mancini acknowledge, however, the tendency of the countries in the Democratic Corporatist model to become more similar to the Liberal model, because of the ongoing processes of "...commercialization of the media and professionalization of journalism" (ibid.: p. 76). The adaptation and assimilation of values in norms of the Liberal media model correspond to the idea of "globalized journalism" (Resse 2008: p. 240) with its positive (democratic journalistic values) and negative sides (e.g., "McDonaldization" or commercialization of the media and journalism). See the overview comparing characteristics of the three models in Hallin and Mancini 2007: p. 67. The countries belonging to the "Democratic Corporatist Model" apart from Germany are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland (cf. Hallin and Mancini 2007: p. 75).

"Reconstructing journalists' professional lifeworld", chapter 5, "Newspapers as Objective Reality", and chapter 6, "Newspapers as Subjective Reality". Issues like journalists' views on some ideals of professional ethics as objectivity, their definition of proper war coverage, their professional strategies and their interactions with their significant others will be the focus of analysis. Finally, the outlook for further research will be summarized and discussed in the concluding chapter 7.

Before moving on to chapter 2, some brief notes: In this study, the term "Iraq war" refers only to the Iraq War of 2003. By speaking of "American journalists", the U.S. American journalists interviewed for this study are meant. The interviews with German journalists were conducted in German, and the U.S. American journalists were interviewed in English. And for the sake of confidentiality, all the interviewees' names are pseudonymized. All citations from the interviews with German journalists were translated into English for this study. Furthermore, quotes from scientific literature in German were also translated into English.

2 How Do Journalists Act Professionally? The State of the Art

The previous chapter introduced the current field of research in general terms. The focus of this analysis will be the professional action of journalists in the situation of war. In this chapter, the perspective of the sociology of professions and the approach of sociology of knowledge will be considered in order to understand the meaning of the term "professional action". Journalism will be acknowledged as a knowledge profession based on journalists' expert knowledge about how to prepare information for the public and transmit it into a newspaper's article-genre. Journalists' professional action as an institutionalized form of action participates in the construction of reality in newspapers. By acting professionally, journalists transform their subjective reality or the reality of their informational sources into the objective reality of their newspapers. The mechanism of this kind of action is based on a repertoire of professional solutions for recurring professional problems, which will be also discussed in the following chapter.

2.1 Journalists – Professionals Without a Profession?

"Journalism is not a profession and we don't want it to be one", insisted one of the *NYT* journalists interviewed for this study. During the interview, however, the same journalist distinguished between "what journalists do" and "what bloggers do". He contrasted these types of action as professional versus unprofessional practice. In fact, he was surprised to discover that a group of students he lectured did not realize the distinctive differences between these types of action. As a professional journalist, he felt frustrated that the growing variety of occupations and activities in the media seems to blur the differences between professionals and non-professionals in the public's eyes. This ambivalent attitude was aptly described by Weaver and Willhoit (1986): "The modern journalist is *of* a profession, but not *in* one. [...] The institutional forms of professionalism likely will always elude the journalist" (p. 145).

Indeed, according to classic sociological definitions, journalism does not belong to the group of professions such as lawyers or doctors. From this point of view, professional status is only the result of a long-term complex process of

professionalization.[4] This process can occur autonomously or be regulated, for instance by the government. Siegrist (2001) described professionalization as "a social project, which articulates itself in discourses on science, performance, honor, public welfare, and society and, in the ideology of professionalism" (p. 12155). Accordingly, the definition of the term "profession" has changed through decades of sociological debates and societal transformations. Goode (1957) offered one prominent classical definition by establishing eight main criteria for assessing a potential profession concerning its status of a community:

> (1) Its members are bound by a sense of identity. (2) Once in it, few leave, so that it is a terminal or continuing status for the most part. (3) Its members share values in common. (4) Its role definitions *vis-á-vis* both members and non-members are agreed upon and are the same for all members. (5) Within the areas of communal action there is a common language, which is understood only partially by outsiders. (6) The Community has power over its members. (7) Its limits are reasonably clear, though they are not physical and geographical, but social. (8) Though it does not produce the next generation biologically, it does so socially through its control over the selection of professional trainees, and through its training processes it sends these recruits through an adult socialization process. (p. 194)

Furthermore, he notes two more preconditions for an occupation in order to potentially become a profession – "the occupational behavior of members is regulated by law" (p. 195) and the community's "education is evaluated by the larger society as crucial in both individual and societal matters" (p. 196). Apart from these two criteria, those concerning the status of a community are otherwise quite smoothly fulfilled, for example, by criminal organizations.[5] This triple – existence of a unique community, legal regulation, and specialized education that is also rewarded by the surrounding society – comprises the core of many subsequent approaches to define the term "profession". One frequent issue in sociological debates about defining professions has been the proper balance between pursuing a

[4] Larson (1977) conceptualized this transitional period with the term "professional project".

[5] The characteristics of organized crime's professional structures are also recognized by Kaube (2010), when he notes at the beginning of his review of Gambetta (2009): "Some are criminals by profession. They apply, make a kind of career, have clients whose problems they solve, [...] or they make them a service offer, which creates its own demand because it cannot be refused. They have Standard Terms and Conditions, their own business managers and a legal department; they maintain professional ethics, relations to other companies within their line of business as well as a corporate culture" (Kaube 2010: p. 30, own translation).

high degree of conceptual differentiation and being receptive to new forms of professional work.[6]

Recapping definitions of professions, Siegrist (2001) excerpted the following fundamental criteria: "Professions are characterized by special functions and structures, motives, representations, forms of knowledge, and sociocultural styles" (p. 12154). While still acknowledging the various conceptual differences, he nevertheless points to the fact that various aspects of knowledge seem to have become one common significant characteristic of contemporary sociological approaches to professions:

> The professions are characterized ideally by the following series of interrelated dimensions. Capabilities and skills are justified scientifically or systematically. Professional knowledge is described in such terms as "exclusive," "more profound," "inaccessible to lay persons," and "not easily understandable." It is acquired in special institutions such as universities, professional schools, and internships with professionals. It forms the basis of the superiority of the professional over lay persons and clients. Also included in this body of knowledge are rules and attitudes which govern its application in a way, which promotes trust between the professions and their social environment. This includes formal procedures, ritual, titles, a professional habitus or studiousness, collegiality, and altruism, and a general orientation toward the common good. (pp. 12154-12155)

Against this background, Hoerning (2005) stated that journalism is not a profession even though it has gone through various stages of professionalization. She noted that there is "a lack of control regarding the access to journalism, no binding educational standards, a low degree of professional organization, [and – in many cases –] a vague occupational status" (p. 158, own translation). As a result of these four insufficiencies, and referring to Lepsius (1964), the absence of an explicit, institutionalized mechanism of criticism is introduced as another obstacle on the path of professionalization. Hoerning (2005) delineated criticism within occupations or professions as a necessary method to advance their norms and ethics, including their interpretation and application. But since professional unions and associations of journalists have no coherent structure and – in principle – anybody can be a journalist, there is no sanction to exclude journalists of the profession in case of deviant behavior (Hoerning 2005: pp. 158-159). Kepplinger (2011), offering similar arguments when discussing journalism's status of professionalization, with

[6] For synopses of debates and conceptions from different perspectives, see Pfadenhauer (2003: pp. 31-54), Mieg (2003), Burrage (1990), and Kurtz (2002: pp. 47- 66).

reference to Schumpeter (1950), particularly highlighted the significance of the lack of direct responsibility of journalists for their actions.

Moreover, Hoerning (2005) claimed that journalism can, on principle, not be entirely professionalized (cf. 2005: p. 159) and will retain its status of a "quasi profession" or a "semi-profession" – a term used by Etzioni (1969). Above all, due to the freedom of the press, it is not acceptable to permit the government to control and regulate access to journalism as a profession (Hoerning 2005: p. 159). From a journalist's point of view, Smith (*NYT*) described this as a fundamental dilemma:

> [I]t's extraordinarily important that the state not have the ability [...] to restrain who can become a journalist. This is both good news and bad news. The good news is that it gives the United States one of the freest presses out there. [...] The problem is that it leaves open the question of who is a journalist. Is it somebody who works for a big newspaper like *The New York Times*, or *CBS*, *NBC*, or *CNN*? For sure. Is it somebody who works for a small town newspaper that's a weekly? Yeah. Is it a blogger, who gets up in the morning, reads the paper, sits down and throws their opinion out on the web? Not in my mind. [...] The other problem is that there are no professional standards. So we may have [...] internal rules about how many sources we need before we go with a story, but that is very different from newspaper to newspaper. And while *The New York Times* may have rules up here, the supermarket tabloid [...] may have a different set of rules, and bloggers may have no rules. They don't have to verify anything. [...] And to readers, who don't understand how news is collected, this becomes very confusing. [...] So, that's the challenge (lines 4-25).

As these remarks indicate, not only does journalism not seem to be a classic profession, but "[t]here is [also] no consistent and generally obligatory definition of what a journalist is" (Donsbach 2004: p. 78, own translation). While a journalist was initially defined as "someone who systematically kept a public record of events in a given time frame" (Zelizer 2005: p. 66), the contemporary notion of journalism corresponds to a wider working field, comprising a group of "individuals with a range of skills, including publishers, photographers, field producers, internet providers, and bloggers" (p. 66) and represents a very "heterogeneous, segmented, inconsistent professional field" (Weischenberg 1995: p. 506, own translation).[7]

Notwithstanding these issues with finding an appropriate, consensual definition for the term "journalist", journalists have been a frequent subject of surveys and

[7] For a concise overview of various aspects of this "problem of demarcation" (Raabe 2008), see Weischenberg (1995). The journalists interviewed for this study were all staff writers working for newspapers widely recognized as quality newspapers; therefore, these definitional issues might be less controversial.

other quantitative studies in media and communication studies, for example concerning their age; sex; education; salary; political and religious beliefs; working hours; working conditions; and so forth. By periodically repeating their – usually national – surveys, they also aim at delineating developments over a longer period of time in the field of journalism.[8] Some of the questions in the previously-mentioned surveys refer to the journalists' professional role-perception[9] or their self-conceptions as journalists, their motives for working in journalism, and the extent to which they follow the principles of professional ethics like objectivity and impartiality. As a result, although – or maybe because – there is no distinct definition of journalism, journalists belong to one of the most surveyed occupations.

Considering the various problems of defining journalism, not to mention discussing journalism as a profession, McNair polemically asks: "Where is the line to be drawn between journalism and not-journalism, and does it matter?" (p. 4). Why is it important to know the difference, for instance, between bloggers and professional journalists? Is it not sufficient to just refer to all of them as professional workers in

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[8] For the United States, arguably the most influential surveys are those by Weaver and Wilhoit (1986, 1996) and Weaver et al. (2007). Representative studies concerning German journalists have been conducted by Weischenberg, Löffelholz, and Scholl (1994) as well as Weischenberg, Malik, and Scholl (2006).

[9] Fundamentally, there are at least two contrasting ideal-typical roles to find – those of the *gatekeeper* and the *advocate* (cf. Janowitz 1975). Both are also influenced by the journalists' perception of their readers. If journalists assume that their readers are able to properly deal with information, they would rather perceive themselves as a deliverer of information or a *gatekeeper*. By contrast, the professional role of an *advocate* would mean that journalists are defending and giving voice to underprivileged people. Other scholars suggest similar categories of journalists' self-perceptions, for instance *neutral* and *participant* (Johnstone, Slawski, and Bowman 1972) or *mediator* and c*ommunicator* (Langenbucher 1974/1975). According to the survey by Weaver and Wilhoit (1996), American journalists' self-conceptions of their professional role can be summarized under three types: the *interpreter-investigator* – a journalist who critically analyses the complexities of politics and interprets them for the public; the *disseminator*, who tries to quickly deliver information that will be interesting to as much of the public as possible; and finally, the *adversary* – when a journalist proclaims himself to be an opponent of the government. In Germany, Weischenberg (1995: p. 440) distinguishes four self-concepts: the *mediator*, the *critic*, the *controller*, and the *advocate*. In the role of *mediator*, the journalist views himself similarly to the US-American *disseminator*, but also to the *interpreter-investigator*. He tries to understand complex events and prepare them for the public. The closest equivalent to the *critic* would be the *adversary* – a journalist who sees his role as criticizing ongoing societal developments. In the role of the *controller,* the journalist examines societal values and norms, and as an *advocate,* he defends and gives voice to underprivileged people.

the field of media? According to McNair (1998), the necessity of this differentiation is primarily due to the audience's expectation to receive information of a certain quality regarding its form and content:

> It does matter, because the sociological significance of journalistic communication arises largely from the audience's expectations of a distinctive form and content and from their agreement that when these distinguishing characteristics are present the resulting communication enjoys a special status over others, which are not journalistic. (p. 4)

Drawing attention to the social attribution of professional statuses, McNair (1998) agreed with Siegrist (2001), who states that "[p]rofessionalization refers to processes affecting the social and symbolic construction of occupation and status" (p. 12154).

The characteristics of the special form and content that journalists offer to the public are well and widely analyzed in linguistics, media, and communication studies.[10] But *how* do they meet the audience's demands and expectations? *How* do professional journalists accomplish furnishing their works with that special status? Such questions will be the matter of analysis in the empirical part of this thesis. For now, this study adopt the previously-cited quotation by McNair assuming that professional journalists achieve a special status for their work by means of distinctive practices or professional action.

Notwithstanding the status of journalism as a semi-profession, the aim of this study is to research professional journalistic action as a special type of social action based on its specific patterns of action. That is, when using the term "professional", the focus is on the question of how this action is conducted. Furthermore, this action type has to be a problem-solving response to their working situation, which is bedeviled by dilemmas, paradoxes, or contradictions such as, for example, balancing between professional ideals and reality of the praxis; professional ethics and economic efficiency of their media; distance and proximity to the events they cover; and working fast and researching carefully (Loosen, Pörksen, and Scholl 2008: pp. 17-18).

By examining contemporary developments in the sociology of professions, Pfadenhauer (2005) noted a two-fold meaning of the term "professional action" (p. 9). Pfadenhauer suggested (2005) distinguishing between two possible

[10] See Jäger and Jäger (2007). For an analysis specifically of the media coverage of the latest Iraq War, see Dirks (2010).

perspectives regarding how to define professional action: (1) "*Who* acts?" and (2) "*How* does somebody act?" (p. 9, own translation). On the one hand, any action of members of groups defined as professions can be designated as professional action if it is carried out in the context of the respective profession. In other words, when acting as professionals, people always act professionally. Referring to Schutz (1971), Pfadenhauer (2005) delineated this perspective on the definition of professional action from the perspective of "Personaltypus" (p. 9).

On the other hand, it is "an action of a certain quality" and signifies the definition of professional action from the point of view of "Handlungsablauftypus" (Pfadenhauer 2005: p. 9). Indeed, in everyday life, people use the adjective "professional" and the adverb "professionally" to emphasize a certain quality of action in a very positive sense that stands in contrast to "unprofessional" or "amateurish" action (Pfadenhauer 2005: pp. 11-12). This quality may principally be attributed to any kind of work, not only to that of professionals in conventional terms of the sociology of professions. Even though everybody would understand what the adjective "professional" means, there is no clear profound definition how to describe this action quality, "Typically, this quality is not elaborated on any further" (Pfadenhauer 2005: p. 11, own translation). In fact, there is no clear definition of professional action in both cases: professional action as action of professionals and professional action as a special type of action of non-professionals. Mieg (2003) explained,

> In everyday usage, 'professional action' means something like: somebody proceeds *systematically* and *efficiently* and his actions are not driven by *emotions*. This is true for a lawyer, who reacts unperturbedly to threats or tears by clients or parties, just as it is for an electrician, who is neither stopped from working by construction noise, nor by quarrelings on the construction site. Thus, we can also interpret professionalism as a feature of professional action. From the sociology of professions' point of view, this leads to the question, by which means action qualifies as professional: Is professional action based on an own inner logic of problems and action? Or does professional action (only) consist of an occupationally characteristical presentation, for instance the wearing of white lab coats and the usage of an esoteric professional language? (pp. 21-22, own translation)

Mieg (2003) questions whether the research subject of the sociology of professions must be definition of the term professional "Leistung"? (p. 23) However, he states that this German word is challenging to translate in English. He summarizes three

ways that "Leistung" has been translated into English: "performance", "achievement", and "power". Each of them has a slightly different meaning.[11]

> It may astonish that the term of professional *Leistung* [emphasis added] – to my knowledge – has not been explicitly made the subject of a study in the field of the sociology of professions. While the term has not played a significant role, its subject – professional *Leistung* [emphasis added] – is at the center of the discussion of both the sociology of professions and the policy of professions. (p. 23, own translation)

Kurtz (2002, 2005) stressed that discussions about exclusive categories for defining profession are rather outdated in the modern society of knowledge with the rise of a wide range of highly skilled academic jobs that require higher education. He pleaded to switch the scientific interest of the sociology of professions to investigate the so-called "knowledge occupations" and "professional work" (Kurtz 2005: p. 243). Kurtz's statement reflects a general shift of paradigms within this sociological discipline. In the beginning, the sociology of professions was concerned with the typology of professions and favored theoretical approaches that defined the term "profession" owing to its unique functions and special characteristics, as delineated above. Abbott (2001) also described the shift within the sociology of professions to reestablish itself by outlining its research subject as "the analysis of expert occupations" and their occupational practices (p. 12166).

In light of these perspectives on professional action regarding who acts and how they act, Meuser (2005) suggested that either research on professional action has to become independent from the sociology of professions or the sociology of professions must find a new and more appropriate definition of professions (p. 261). He suggested analyzing professional action as a special action type, regardless of the respective actors' status as profession, non-profession, or semi-profession. Meuser (2005) also suggested a procedure for analyzing professional action. Accordingly, the researcher has two fundamental strategies for researching professional action from a sociological point of view: either to conceptualize professional action beforehand theoretically and prove concepts afterwards according to the empirical material, or to analyze the empirical material and how actors' understand their professional action, and then define professional action theoretically.

[11] Due to this equivocality, the term "Leistung" is not translated when citing originally German quotations in this study.

Meuser (2005) favored the second strategy, or an "ethnographic" perspective on the professional action, and starting with the "description of empirical reality" (p. 253, own translation). This study of journalists' professional action aims to conceptualize the subject of research first and then prove it according to the empirical material. This ethnographic perspective is compelling, but it goes beyond the scope of this study. As the subject of this study is a semi-profession, there is no appropriate definition for the structure of action of semi-professionals. Hence, this study will use a theoretical perspective to structure the analyses. The empirical findings of this research should help explain journalists' professional action and further conceptualize the term "professional action".

Journalism is a part of the heterogeneous and growing group of knowledge occupations,[12] which does not contradict being labeled with an exclusive term of "profession". However, as members of a knowledge profession, journalists act professionally. Notwithstanding the issue that members of knowledge professions neither represent functions of society nor solve relevant life problems of their clients, the structure of action of knowledge workers has similarities with that of members of professions (Kurtz 2005: p. 250). Members of professions and knowledge occupations both rely on specific form of knowledge in their practice – how to interpret problems of clients in a way that leads to solutions. Professional action focuses not on solving problems of clients, but rather interpreting, defining, and redefining these problems in interaction with clients such that available solutions would solve these problems:

[12] Donsbach (2009) designates journalism as "the new knowledge profession", without specifying his theoretical approach and giving the following argument: "Society live on knowledge. From a technical point of view, knowledge is important as it enables people to master the environment's challenges – e.g. how to build a fireplace, how to store water or cure diseases. In a sociological sense, knowledge is the foundation of functioning societies as shared knowledge is the basis of communication and collective actions in a society" (p. 198, own translation). Donsbach uses the idea of journalism as a knowledge profession primarily to criticize and amend the existing training programs for journalists. According to him, considering journalism as a knowledge profession would classify journalism as a special form of communication demanding high quality standards, since it would require from journalists special professional competences. The latter Donsbach (2009) summarizes as the following five types of knowledge journalists have to have mastered. Firstly, knowledge of historical and current events; secondly, an expert or at least a profound knowledge of the topics they cover; thirdly, knowledge of communicative processes (e.g. from social psychology); fourthly, knowledge of journalistic skills; and last but not least, knowledge of their professional ethics (p. 200, own translation).

> Consequently, one can say that the specific kind of the relation between knowledge and action within the few professional occupational groups constitutes the model, which today we adopt for many knowledge occupations and therefore discover as generalized. And while today professions more and more become an ordinary occupation, which nevertheless depends on distinguished competences and promises an above-average income, knowledge work, which is not limited to single functional systems – and comprises professions, but also professional action –, becomes the ideal typical occurrence of the modern way of occupation. (p. 251, own translation)

In his considerations about the structure of professional action, Kurtz (2005) refers to Pfadenhauer (1998), who applied the perspective of the new sociology of knowledge in the sociology of professions. Kurtz (2005) characterizes professionals' action as following the principle to define problems by managing solutions (p. 16). Pfadenhauer (2005) adapted the concept of expert knowledge from Bauman (1995) as a "system of solutions in search of problems" (Bauman 1995: p. 263, quoted in Pfadenhauer 2005: p. 16, own translation). For these reasons, the problem definition is supposed to be "the first phase of professional action" (Sombre and Mieg 2005: p. 60). Following this perspective, journalists seem to possess an expert knowledge in their profession and so a "system of solution in search of problems". Hence, journalists' action relies on a specific structure – the problem definition as the first phase of professional action and its interpretation by journalists in order to find a solution – a particular way to act professionally, which is the second phase of professional action. In the end, acting professionally, journalists rely on a system of solutions that help to solve professional problems. The professional problems of journalists will be the matter of discussion in the next chapters.

2.2 Professional Problems of Journalists – Professional Action in a Journalistic Lifeworld

Researching information and writing texts or newspapers' articles constitute the two main daily professional activities of journalists working for print media. These activities are observed here as subtypes of journalists' professional action and as two main professional problems that journalists solve during their working routines. Both activities are directed towards solving the problem of information for the readers. First, journalists gather, select, and verify information. Second, they transform this information about a particular subject they cover to the public by using particular text-genres and so construct newspapers' reality in texts. The journalists' subjective interpretation of reality becomes the objective reality of the

text, which represents an achievement of their professional action. For that reason, newspapers are observed here as both as objective and subjective reality.

Readers often take for granted, for example, the reality of war as it is presented in a newspaper if the war is not occurring in their home country and they cannot prove the events for themselves. Newspaper readers also look for the opinions of particular authors of articles, namely, the journalists. Researching and revealing these mechanisms that move this process forward or how journalists' professional action constructs the social reality of war for readers is the main research question of this thesis. In other words: How does the subjective reality of journalists becomes an objective reality of their newspapers? By answering this question, this thesis shall apply the perspective of the sociology of knowledge that also put into question: "How is reality socially constructed?" (Knoblauch 2005, 2008) or in the words of Berger and Luckmann (1991):

> How is it possible that human activity (*Handeln*) should produce a world of things (*choses*)? In other words, an adequate understanding of the "reality *sui generis*" of society requires an inquiry into the manner in which this reality is constructed. This inquiry, we maintain, is the task of the sociology of knowledge. (p. 30)

Berger and Luckmann (1991) answered the question concerning the construction of social reality or "How is it possible that human activity (*Handeln*) should produce a world of things (*choses*)?" by assuming that society is simultaneously both objective and subjective reality and that there is a deep inward connection between these realities that they call a "dialectical process" (p. 149). Accordingly, this "dialectical process" consists of three mechanisms: "externalization", "objectivation", and "internalization". Berger and Luckmann (1991) explained that an individual "simultaneously externalizes his own being into the social world and internalizes it as an objective reality" (p. 149). The process of internalization signifies the beginning of how an individual becomes a member of society, as Berger and Luckmann (ibid.) put it, internalization is "the basis, first for an understanding of one's fellowmen and, second, for the apprehension of the world as a meaningful and social reality" (p. 150). Berger and Luckmann described the internalization as "the immediate apprehension or interpretation of an objective event as expressive meaning, that is, as a manifestation of another's subjective processes which thereby becomes subjectively meaningful to myself" (p. 149).

This thesis applies externalization, objectivation, and internalization in the following way. Journalists externalize themselves into the professional lifeworld of

journalism and simultaneously internalize this professional lifeworld as an objective reality. The internalization of the value of professional ethics may serve as an example here. During the process of internalization, journalists become members of their professional lifeworld and gain their professional identity. By means of internalization, journalists learn, for example, to understand professional jargon and the meaning of events in the context of their professional life. They internalize the value of professional ethics in general and the journalistic values of their newspapers (i.e. employers) in particular. While entering the professional lifeworld and internalizing its objective reality, journalists learn to interpret objective events within this lifeworld in a way that they become subjectively meaningful to them.

While the processes of externalization and internalization will be observed as given in this thesis, the process of objectivation needs a more profound analysis. This consideration follows the following argumentation: the journalists interviewed for this study were staff-members of the researched newspapers. This fact can be interpreted to mean that the process of externalization had already occurred. Furthermore, the journalists often espoused their professional ethics in the interviews, which can be seen as a sign of their internalization of the values of their profession. Further investigation is required to determine how the process of objectivation takes place.

Berger and Luckmann (1991) considered the process of objectivation to be a significant link that translates the subjective reality of social actors into an objective reality – that is, the objective reality of institutions. Following this logic, the journalists' subjective interpretation of their news coverage becomes the objectivated reality of their newspapers in the process of objectivation, which can be chronologically separated into two parts. Gathering information can be acknowledged as the beginning of the process of objectivation. Journalists' interpretation of the gained information and transforming it into the institutionalized form of text using one of their newspapers' genres, such as reports, opinion pieces and lead articles, can be described as the final step in the process of objectivation:

> The objectivity of the institutional world, however massive it may appear to the individual, is a humanly produced, constructed objectivity. The process by which the externalized products of human activity attain the character of objectivity is objectivation. The institutional world is objectivated human activity, and so is every single institution. (Berger and Luckmann 1991: p. 60)

Schutz (1970) designated communication as a significant mechanism for forming social reality. Language plays the main role in terms of objectivation, because it translates subjective meanings that social actors attached to events into an objective structure (Luckmann 1992: pp. 99-100). Luckmann (1992) stressed that the social actor mentally interprets the social world using the objective structure of language (p. 99). In fact, a significant part of the process of objectivation is the journalists' reporting of an event in an objective structure of language that follows some rules in the professional lifeworld – e.g. the kinds of words that are allowed – and which is additionally framed in the institutionalized form of genres. In this process of objectivation, a newspaper becomes an objective reality.

How the subjective reality of journalists becomes the objective reality of newspapers and how this dialectical process occurs is the main research question of this thesis. It will be assumed that, by means of their professional action, journalists simultaneously encounter two genuine sub-problems in their working routines: a) the problem of subjectivity and b) the problem of objectivity. The analysis and interpretation of the interviews will help identify a wide range of solutions that the journalists used to fulfill their work. These solutions will be ordered into categories that, in turn, may shed light on these professional problems that the journalists faced during their war coverage. Eventually, this thesis will identify a catalog of professional problems that journalists encountered as well as solutions that the journalists applied to solve or to re-interpret these problems in their daily working situations.

This study aimed to answer the research question, adapted from Berger and Luckmann (1991), by applying tools of ideas provided by these authors and by Schutz (1970, 1993) and developing them for the purposes of this research. For this reason, next, I will introduce the terminology applied to conceptualize and investigate journalists' professional action.

2.3 Newspapers as Objective and Subjective Reality

2.3.1 Newspapers as Objective Reality

Text is the outcome of journalists' work and journalists use professional practices in order to produce a journalistic text. In this text, journalists transform their stock of knowledge of past and present experiences to readers and preserve it for future generations. Newspaper articles – but also literature and other oral or written

informational sources – form a *reservoir* or a space for the social stock of knowledge. Anchored in written text, societal knowledge becomes easier to reproduce in time and space. Newspaper articles communicate with their readership by means of language. Journalists construct the reality of their newspapers, and so of their readers, by interpreting and reproducing the existing societal stock of knowledge in their articles.

On the one hand, understanding "journalism as text" (cf. Zelizer 2005) means distinguishing between different journalistic genres such as a lead article, report, column, or analysis and topics (war, sport, politics, entertainment, etc.). On the other hand, journalists apply "a set of practices" and professional strategies to do the research and reproduce reality in specific journalistic text-genres (e.g. the news report, the feature article, the editorial, the commentary, or the column) by using appropriate language (e.g. using or dismissing stylistic devices). Additionally, different styles (Anglo-American, French, etc.) and types (investigative, literary, etc.) of journalism and technological support for news-making strategies constitute the topics of interest within these issues.

Even though Luckmann (2002) applied concepts of communicative genres to everyday life and described them as social (specifically conversational) practices, his theoretical approach can also be applied within the context of the institutionalization of the professional action of journalists. The professional action of journalists relies on different communicative genres – written and oral ones that help journalists to practice their profession. Journalists use oral communicative genres for gathering information and written communicative genres for writing articles. Throughout history, genres such as news reports, stories, headline articles, opinion pieces, and recently online journals, blogs, and the news in general have been shaped and institutionalized within the context of journalism.

Indeed, there is a mutual dependency between genres and journalists' professional action. On the one hand, newspaper genres can be seen as outcomes of publishing and practicing journalism, but on the other hand, journalists' professional action depends on the newspaper genre. Journalists writing a news report act differently than when they are writing a feature story. Together with Luckmann (2002), the internal and external structures of communicative genres will be differentiated in the thesis. The internal structure includes the syntax, semantics, and phonetics of language. By contrast, the external structure is framed by the social

context of the communicative situation, which places two actors (one who speaks and one who listens) between the internal and external structure of communicative genres, for example, their gender or social status (Luckmann 2002: p. 168). Cresswell and Hawn (2012) drew a parallel between Schutz' and Bakhtin's ideas how they both rely on phenomenology for understanding human action.

> Each text presupposes a generally understood (that is, conventional within a collective) system of signs, a language (if only the language of art). If there is no language behind the text, it is not a text, but a natural (not signifying) phenomenon, for example, a complex of natural cries and moans devoid of any linguistic (signifying repeatability). [...] And so behind each text stands a language system. Everything is the text that is repeated and reproduced, everything repeatable and reproducible, everything that can be given outside a given text (the given) conforms to this language system. But at the same time each text (as an utterance) is individual, unique, and unrepeatable. (Bakhtin 2010: p. 105)

On the one hand, the language system is open for use by everybody. On the other hand, a text or an utterance is individually produced. Pursuing the idea of text as the result of journalists' professional action presumes that language plays a significant part in the construction of the social reality in texts. Journalists translate their understanding and interpretation of social reality by using language. During the writing process, the journalists' stock of knowledge becomes objectified. In doing their work, journalists repeatedly apply several communicative genres in order to interpret and transmit the existing subjective knowledge of the other social actors they interview into the social stock of knowledge of a certain society.

Luckmann (1992) admitted that communicative genres play a key role in the construction of social reality. Knoblauch, Raab, and Schnettler (2002) explained that, in his considerations, Luckmann relies on "Volosinov (1973) and Bakhtin (1986)" (p. 31). Bakhtin (2010) differentiated between "simple" and "complex" genres of speech. While simple speech embraces daily speaking activities, complex speech refers to written text types such as novels or dramas. In their everyday communication with sources of information, journalists use different kinds of genres that rely on the norms and expectations of their profession. Firstly, they use simple or oral genres of speech to interview people. Secondly, in transforming that information into a text, for instance reportage, journalists apply the rules of the relevant text genre. Hence, journalists have a range of communicative professional genres at their disposal that they use depending on the situational context of the news coverage. Journalists will interpret the information in different communicative

genres differently depending on its form, for example, an official war report vs. a witness statement.

2.3.2 Institutionalized Professional Action

According to Berger and Luckmann (1991), communicative genres not only participate in the construction of social reality but also in the social construction of institutions, since they deal with the problems of a given society and offer solutions to them. Using the recurrent professional communicative genres of journalism, journalists interpret a great amount of information, and in doing so, manage the problem of incomprehensibility of information for the newspaper audience. These are the professional communicative genres that lead to the institutionalization of journalism. Hence, the professional action of journalists involves the application of professional communicative genres. Therefore, one of the features of the journalists' professional action is that it is deeply anchored in an institutional context.

Journalists produce text according to rules imposed by their professional culture and requirements of the journalistic text-norm. Additionally, journalists adapt to the rules, norms, and traditions of their employers' organization and under the working conditions they impose. Furthermore, journalists pursue requirements of their professional ethics. Journalists can also become members of professional- and trade unions, which also offer an institutional frame for professional acting. Indeed, journalists' professional action of quality journalism is an institutionalized norm-oriented social action. Zelizer (2005) underlined the institutional setting as a fundamental feature of journalism:

> [...] the institutional setting, the behaviors that constitute the setting, and the values by which the setting is organized, including organizations or formal groups that work according to collective standards of action, regarding journalism as an institution is by definition to address the historical and situational contingencies against which journalism performs a range of social, cultural, economic, and political tasks or functions. That said, journalism by this view must exist institutionally, if it is to exist at all. (pp. 73-74)

In accordance with Gehlen, Luckmann (1992) understood the term *institution* to be a substitute for instinct (pp. 129-131). Accordingly, institutions help individuals decide how to act because they offer pre-formulated solutions for actions in specific situations and therefore relieve actors from having to constantly consider their actions. Furthermore, they "relieve" actors because they offer predetermined solutions for specific societal life-problems such as work, gender, and

power (pp. 148-159). The fact that different societies identify diverse life-problems in different ways means that institutions will differ from society to society.

In their professional lifeworld, journalists continually deal with professional problems. They learn how to solve them and re-use solutions in their working experience. Luckmann (1992) did not equate routinized actions with action-drafts, but rather finished actions, which constitute "one of the most important preconditions for institutionalization" (p. 150). Therefore, when different journalists solve related professional problems in similar ways, one may speak about journalism as a social institution and the professional action of journalists as institutionalized actions. Journalists profit from the use of institutionalized professional action. Hence, journalists do not waste time discovering new solutions for professional problems, since they can re-use pre-existing solutions obtained from their colleagues or from work experience. Furthermore, journalists do not have to spend valuable time discussing and choosing a solution with their colleagues. As long as the professional action of journalists is institutionalized, they can act "automatically" (p. 156).

In terms of social action and the process of institutionalization, Luckmann (1992) spoke about a "collective memory of action" (p. 160). If the same social action repeatedly appears in the course of history, it not only undergoes the process of institutionalization, but also enters the collective memory of the relevant society. Collective memory offers an institutionalized social action, which includes the rules, prohibitions, and explanations that show the younger generation how to act. Thereby, useless or irrelevant solutions are erased from the collective memory by "transgenerational transmission" (Berger and Luckmann 1991: p. 98). A successful professional action will be legitimized by future generations. Therefore, the institutionalized action transmits the experience of the past action into the future. Hence, Luckmann (1992) implied that institutions are Janus-headed:

> Institutions have two faces, one that faces backwards and another that faces forwards. On the one hand, they are the result of the past actions of previous generations; sometimes they were set up intentionally, then perhaps later they were intentionally changed and re-established, on the other hand they are the cumulative result of action with originally totally different goals that took on a mandatory character over time. At any rate, they determine the action of the future generations at the same time. (pp. 160-161, own translation)

Historically, dealing with societal problems has formed the professional action of journalists, which could be, for example, dealing with how information should be

transmitted to the public and how present and past events should be reconstructed and transmitted. These issues have been constantly tackled and some professional groups, including writers, historians, and journalists, have elaborated different solutions. By writing articles, obtaining information and a process of trial and error, journalists repeatedly attempted to solve these problems by developing acting strategies and transmitting them to the next generation. Journalists not only collect, reflect, and maintain the social experiences of the past, but also reconstruct them, solving this problem of communication (in terms of Luckmann) – the reconstruction of the past.

2.3.3 Newspapers as Subjective Reality

The journalists act as authors of their newspapers' articles. Similarly to authors of other fictional and non-fictional texts, journalists represent at least two contrasting types of actors at once: journalists as private persons and journalists as professionals. As professionals, they aim to follow the requirements of offering an objective presentation of reality. As people, journalists have their subjective understanding of reality. Their personal attitudes to the reality they are reporting about, their feelings about it, and their socialization may influence their professional practice. McNair (1998) makes the point that,

> No story can be told, no account of events given, without contextualization around a set of assumptions, beliefs and values. This is in the nature of storytelling. (...) Journalism, therefore, like any other narrative which is the work of human agency, is essentially *ideological* – a communicative vehicle for the transmission to an audience (intentionally or otherwise) not just of facts but of the assumptions, attitudes, beliefs and values of its maker(s), drawn from and expressive of a particular world-view. (pp. 5-6)

The journalistic text in the newspaper and that is based on genre-conventions is, above all, an expression, or, as Bakhtin (2010) described it, the "utterance" of its author. Hence, in every text we find or "perceive, understand, sense, and feel" (p. 109) an image of the author. The conventions of the journalistic text-genre require journalists to be text-authors to different degrees. In commentaries, for example, journalists can express their opinion about the subject of their topic. In reports, journalists let other people express their opinion. Bakhtin (2010) also pointed out a dialogic notion of the text, because "any utterance always has an addressee", and "a higher *superaddressee*" (p. 126). Journalists' texts also have a dialogic nature, because journalists always address their articles to somebody, to their readers. However, journalists' articles may also be directed to higher principles

such as professional values. Bakhtin (ibid.) explained the process of how an author's expressions become objectified in the text:

> To express oneself means to make oneself an object for another and for oneself. [...] This is the first step of objectivation. But it is also possible to reflect out attitude towards ourselves as objects (second stage of objectivation). In this case, our own discourse becomes an object and acquires a second – its own – voice. (p. 110)

Journalists attribute their own meaning to such political events like war, but they may understand the meaning of war for their war coverage in another way in the institutional context of their newspapers. Berger and Luckmann (1991) pointed out that the meaning and the individual interpretations of an objective event are not necessarily the same, as in their words, there is rarely a "full congruence between the two subjective meanings" (p. 150). Indeed, two journalists from the same newspaper may interpret the same event differently. Nevertheless, they write for the same newspaper. The newspaper as a whole becomes a totality of journalists' different realities.

Berger and Luckmann (1991) acknowledged socialization as a significant part of the social construction of reality. Their line of argumentation relies on Mead's concept of socialization (Berger and Luckmann ibid.: p. 141, footnote 3) and develops it further by distinguishing between primary and secondary socialization. In the process of primary socialization, social actors internalize the norms of their significant others (pp. 152-153). In the interactions with others, actors fill their subjective stock of knowledge with contents "from the socially objectivated results of Others' experiences and explications" (Schutz and Luckmann 1973: p. 244). As the result, "The larger part of the stock of knowledge of the normal adult is not immediately acquired, but rather 'learned'" (ibid.).

Due to the "social distribution of knowledge" (Berger and Luckmann 1991: p. 158) and the division of labor, secondary socialization occurs after primary socialization. While primary socialization serves as a "base-world" for social actors, secondary socialization presents their many "sub-worlds" or "partial realities" (p. 158). In the course of secondary socialization, social actors internalize their role behavior in society. Berger and Luckmann (1991) pointed out that

> [...] secondary socialization is the acquisition of role-specific knowledge, the roles being directly or indirectly rooted in the division of labor. [...] Secondary socialization requires the acquisition of role-specific vocabularies, which means, for one thing, the internalization of semantic fields structuring routine interpretations and conduct within an institutional area.

> At the same time 'tacit understandings', evaluations and affective colorations of these semantic fields are also acquired. (p. 158)

According to this definition, journalists' undergo secondary socialization in their newspapers. As part of secondary socialization journalists comprehend how to act in their professional world by learning "role-specific knowledge". Journalists know the tasks that the role or position in the newspaper entails and which obligations they are required to follow. Berger and Luckmann (1991) recognized socialization as the process that conveys internalization by defining it as "the comprehensive and consistent induction of an individual into the objective world of a society or a sector of it" (p. 158). Therefore, a parallel can be drawn between the professional socialization of journalists in their newspapers and the process of internalization. Finally, journalists' professional identities are formed as soon as they have internalized their professional role.

Berger and Luckmann (1991) ascribe "a central position" (p. 170) to the significant others in secondary socialization. Primary socialization is mainly conducted by parents. Secondary socialization can be undertaken by teachers or other individuals. Similar to how children learn actions and attitudes from significant others in the process of socialization, journalists learn and acquire their professional action from their significant others during their professional socialization at one or more newspapers. These significant others may provide orientation, support, or be a counterpart for journalists who are struggling with the topic during the process of gathering information and writing. In this way, these significant others play a major role in the construction of an individual's subjective reality (p. 170). Moreover, significant others are vital "for the ongoing confirmation of that crucial element of reality we call identity" (p. 170). According to Berger and Luckmann (ibid.),

> [...] the self is a reflected entity, reflecting the attitudes first taken by significant others towards it; the individual becomes what he is addressed as by his significant others. This is not a one-sided, mechanistic process. It entails a dialectic between identification by others and self-identification, between objectively assigned and subjectively appropriated identity. (p. 152)

Journalists' socialization takes place at work, hence their professional identity is formed during the process of interaction between journalists and their significant others. According to Luckmann (1980), two factors are necessary in order for identity formation to occur. The first condition is the intersubjective "mutual mirroring"

during "face-to-face" encounters with others (p. 131). The second condition is a "mutual remembering of the other's action in past face-to-face situations and the mutual ascription of responsibility for past action" (p. 131). The direct encounter with significant others was often but not always the case in the interviews, hence it would be appropriate to enhance possibilities for encounters with others. The following four types of actions proposed by Luckmann (1992) can be included: the "one-way direct action", "two-way direct action", "one-way indirect action", and "two-way indirect action" (p. 110).

The role of significant others in primary and secondary socialization differs, however. Thus, Berger and Luckmann (1991) pointed out that a child "apprehend[s] his school teacher as an institutional functionary in a way he never did his parents, and he understands the teacher's role as representing institutionally specific meaning" (p. 161). A child's attachment to its parents is much more emotional than to its teachers. For Berger and Luckmann (ibid.), there is a sort of hierarchy between the significant others – some of them are more important than others: "Less significant others function as a sort of chorus" (p. 170). Furthermore, "[i]n primary socialization there is no *problem* of identification. There is no choice of significant others" (p. 154, emphasis in the original). Furthermore, "[s]ince the child has no choice in the selection of these significant others, his identification with them is quasi-automatic" (p. 154).

> The child identifies with the significant others in a variety of emotional ways. Whatever they may be, internalization occurs only as identification occurs. The child takes on the significant others' roles and attitudes, that is, internalizes them and makes them his own. And by this identification with significant others the child becomes capable of identifying himself (p. 151).

The actor's knowledge about the world is saved in the so-called "stock of knowledge" (Schutz 1970: p. 74). In these terms, Schutz mentions his allusion to William James, who differed between "knowledge about" and "knowledge of acquaintance" (p. 74). While the first type is based on "commonsense knowledge of everyday life", the second one is, in Schutz' terminology, the "practical knowledge". This "the knowledge of the man who acts and thinks within the world of his daily life is not homogeneous; it is (1) incoherent, (2) only partially clear, and (3) not at all free from contradictions" (p. 75). Indeed, this reference of Schutz to two types of knowledge can be called an actor's declarative knowledge (knowing what) and procedural knowledge (knowing how).

The actor's "stock of knowledge" is based on his varying types of experiences – his own experiences (the previous and immediate) as well as foreign ones that he adapts from other actors in his social surroundings, particularly from significant others such as parents, friends and teachers. He uses these experiences to act within his everyday lifeworld. This stock of knowledge preserves information about the world around him, which he experiences in the form of typifications. For example, his stock of knowledge contains his concepts about animals and trees and other objects in the world (Schutz 1970: pp. 6-7).

Journalists' stock of knowledge includes their declarative and procedural knowledge. On the one hand, they have knowledge about the world and their profession; on the other hand, they know how to achieve the goals of their professional action-drafts, how to interpret professional problems, and how to solve them. Journalists' professional stock of knowledge is not a *tabula rasa* at the beginning of their professional career. It is already filled with private knowledge and experience in the form of, for example, education, socialization, and limited professional knowledge such as from the professional experience of a newspaper internship or writing for school newspapers.

The professional stock of knowledge forms a dynamic space that grows and develops over time by collecting and saving knowledge about professional action in different situations during the journalists' working routines. By sharing this knowledge with colleagues, journalists constantly recheck their existing drafts of action by applying them to their current professional situations. Some drafts will be saved and others deleted from the professional stock of knowledge.

2.4 Journalists' Construction of Reality

An actor's consciousness is the place where reality is constructed. Pursuing the logic of the theory of social action proposed by Schutz and Luckmann (1989), action is "a performance of consciousness" (p. 1). Thus, social action constructs reality. In considering this topic, they relied on the tradition of phenomenology. Schutz (1970) described consciousness, as "consciousness is always consciousness of something" (p. 5). Furthermore, conscious processes are not guided, but happen by themselves. They synthesize what has happened consciously and what has yet to consciously occur. According to Luckmann (1992), "Consciousness means nothing in itself, but is always the consciousness *of* something" (p. 29, own translation). He (ibid.) delineates social action as containing two parts: "a subjective accomplishment of

consciousness" and "the objective pre-condition for the structure of a social world" (p. 37, own translation).

According to this definition, journalists' professional action is both a subjective accomplishment of their consciousness and the objective pre-condition of the objective social reality of news media and readers. Journalists' professional action serves as a mediator between the subjective reality of each journalist and what readers perceive as the objective reality of the newspapers. The conscious processes of journalists must first be analyzed to understand their professional action and the meaning they attach to it. However, how can one analyze the consciousness of journalists? Even though it is not possible to directly examine journalists' consciousness, their first-person perspective about their action should help provide access to it.

Schutz and Luckmann (1989) determined that the goal of the phenomenological sociology was to describe the taken-for-granted reality of the actor's everyday lifeworld, and to understand the actors' social action by interpreting the subjective meanings they attach to their action and their lifeworld and then forming objective scientific explanations of this. Thus, in order to understand one's actions, a sociologist must begin with the description and analysis of the everyday life of this actor.

> The sciences that would interpret and explain human action and thought must begin with a description of the foundational structure of what is prescientific, the reality, which seems self-evident to men remaining within the natural attitude. This reality is the everyday life-world. [...] The world of everyday life is consequently man's fundamental and paramount reality. (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: p. 3)

Therefore, in order to understand and interpret the professional action of journalists, it would be reasonable to start by attempting to understand their everyday reality as it can be reconstructed from the interviews. As Bakhtin (1986) underscored, the social action can be understood by analysis of its "content":

> Understanding. This dismemberment of understanding into individual acts. In actual, real concrete understanding these acts merge inseparably into a unified process, but each act has an ideal semantic (content-filled) independence that can be singled out from the concrete empirical act. [...] The content of a true symbol, through mediated semantic coupling, is correlated with the idea of worldwide wholeness. (pp. 159-160)

For the purpose of investigating journalists' professional action, a concept of the professional lifeworld was developed by applying the terminology of Schutz and Luckmann (1989). It will be assumed that the lifeworld[13] can be broken down into two subsections: the private and professional lifeworlds – (at least) two worlds or dimensions of life that co-exist. In the following, the journalists' professional lifeworld will be considered as a part of the everyday lifeworld and understood as the reality that journalists inhabit and experience every day at work.

2.4.1 Journalists' Professional Lifeworld

The lifeworld does not signify something unknown, but it rather refers to the reality that accompanies each of us every day from the day we are born. This world, however, "...existed long before our birth, experienced and interpreted by others" (Schutz 1970: p. 72). As a personal space, it cannot be removed but it can be arranged and rearranged as we acclimatize ourselves to the situation in which we find ourselves; the given "physical and sociocultural environment" (p. 73). Work, as a social action, is "central to social organizations of everyday reality" (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: p. 12).

Schutz and Luckmann (1973) visualized the idea of lifeworld and the relationship between social actor and the lifeworld by using a conceptual metaphor[14] of the coexistence of a social actor and nature. The social actor constitutes a part of nature, but is also independent of it. As a result, the everyday lifeworld includes two parts. First, it includes a geographical space, a territory, or a "region", which the social actor has at his disposal (p. 3). Second, the authors present the social actor as an "animate organism" (p. 3). Both the region and the social actor constitute two parts of the same lifeworld, as both the organism and its living space are inseparable parts of nature. "The everyday life-world is the region of reality in which man can engage himself and which he can change while he operates in it by means of his animate organism" (p. 3). This lifeworld is something that existed before a social actor enters the world and will exist after social actors exit.

> World of daily life' shall mean the intersubjective world which existed long before our birth, experienced and interpreted by others, our predecessors, as an organized world. Now it is

[13] In this thesis, the spelling "lifeworld" is used, not "life-world".

[14] The term "conceptual metaphor" refers to a metaphor used to illustrate an idea or a concept. This term stems from the work of Lakoff and Johnson "Metaphors we Live by" (1980).

> given to our experience and interpretation. All interpretation of this world is based upon a stock of previous experiences of it, our own experience and those handed down to us by our parents and teachers, which is the form of "knowledge at hand" function as a scheme of reference. (Schutz 1970: p. 72)

Journalists and their professional lifeworlds are also characterized by mutual dependencies. On the one hand, journalists can change their professional lifeworld, but on the other hand, this lifeworld constitutes a set of limitations for journalists. The professional lifeworld contains institutional and professional frames that prevent journalists from fully unfolding their actions. For example, if journalists change newspapers, their professional lifeworld will be also modified and adapted to a new working environment. If they have to cover a topic such as war from a war zone, the journalists' professional lifeworld must adapt to the new situation. Journalists can change and affect their workspace and subsequently the professional lifeworld by their professional action.

The architecture of the professional lifeworld is based on two foundations: the journalists and their workspace. The journalists and their workspace are mutually dependent on each other because journalists always carry their workspace with them. They may change their workspace, or other working conditions of their workspace can influence journalists. If the professional action of journalists incorporates the micro-level, the workspace would constitute the macro-level. According to Luckmann (1992), the link between the micro- and macro-levels is obvious, because society is a "product of action" and how people act is a "product of society" (p. 92). The lifeworld "is something that we have to modify by our actions or that modifies our actions" (Schutz 1970: p. 73).

Schutz and Luckmann (1973) presented complex, but comprehensible structures that form the architecture of our everyday lifeworld. This study will assume that journalists' professional lifeworlds rely on the same structures. The everyday lifeworld encloses spatial, social, and temporal dimensions. The spatial dimensions of the everyday lifeworld include two regions: the world within the actor's actual reach and the world within the actor's potential reach (Schutz and Luckmann 1973: pp. 36-37). "The world within actual reach" is the space where the social actor finds himself and is connected with the actor's immediate experience; it is the actor's starting point, while the "world within potential reach" embraces the actor's past experiences and those he will gain in the future (ibid.). Furthermore, Schutz and Luckmann (1973) distinguished between actor's primary and secondary "zones of

operation" (p. 41). While the actor's physical body constitutes the territory of "*the primary zone of operation*", the action in "*the secondary zone of operation*" is only possible with the help of technology and depends on "technological conditions of a society" and is a mediated action (p. 44, underlined in the original).

The temporal dimensions in the everyday lifeworld constitute the "unalterable limits" of action and are influenced by the following three issues (Schutz and Luckmann 1973: p. 49). First, the dimension of time includes the knowledge that life is finite; "I know that I will die and I know that the world will continue. I know that there are limits to my duration" (p. 47). Schutz and Luckmann (1973) called this issue of time the "permanence/finitude" (p. 50). Second, one's concept of time is also influenced by the issues of the "fixed course of temporality/first things first" (p. 50). This includes "the subjective time" ("the stream of consciousness"), "biological time" ("the rhythm of the body"), "world time", and "social time" ("calendar") (p. 47). Third, the social actor is always born into a specific historical time. Therefore, Schutz and Luckmann (1973) described this issue of time as the "historicality/situation" (p. 50).

> The imposed, fixed course of the temporal structure affords a plan for the day alongside the life-plan determined by my finitude. This plan for the day is only mediately determined by the hierarchy of plans conditioned by finitude. But it depends importantly upon the principle of "first things first", the fixed courses of events in everyday existence. (pp. 48-49)

The social dimension of the everyday lifeworld includes "interactional relationships" (Schutz 1970: p. 163) with other social actors. We share it with others as "we are simply born into a world of others" (p. 163). Schutz (1970) explained "this world is not only mine but also my fellow men's environment; moreover, these fellow men are elements of my own situation, as I am of theirs" (p. 164). He wrote about "mutual relationship" (ibid.) and "mutual understanding" (p. 165). The social dimension contains different kind of relations that we enter with others such as "intimacy and anonymity", "strangeness and familiarity", and "social proximity and distance" (Schutz and Luckmann 1973: p. 41). Personal identity is finally formed by "intersubjective mirroring" of behavior from infancy (Luckmann 1980: p. 132).

Defining the structures of the everyday lifeworld constitute an indispensable part of investigating journalists' professional action. Describing their professional lifeworld will provide a context for journalists' professional action. Furthermore, it can help to reconstruct the journalists' definition of the situation at work, including the context as well as how journalists' define and redefine their professional

problems in order to solve them. The journalists' professional lifeworld also consists of spatial, temporal, and social dimensions. The journalists' spatial dimension is the workspace or physical place where journalists work. Journalists' working place is the place of actual reach. If they, for example, need to make interviews with people from distant locations via phone or the Internet, these places become secondary zones of operation. If journalists travel to other countries, these locations become the first zones of operation and their working space at home becomes the secondary zone of operation.

Under the temporal dimension in journalists' professional lifeworld, the issue of time such as time to work on article, gather information, and working day time will be understood. Journalists' colleagues, family, and friends are a part of the social dimension of the journalists' professional lifeworld. They have relationships of "intimacy and anonymity", "strangeness and familiarity", and "social proximity and distance" with others in their professional lifeworld. Journalists, for example, can become friends with their informants or colleagues and be familiar with them, or they can maintain a safe, professional distance from them. Through their interactions with others in their professional lifeword, journalists exchange their experiences and gain professional socialization and professional identity.

The lifeworld serves as a personal space for an actor; it "is something that we have to modify by our actions or that modifies our actions" (Schutz 1970: p. 73). As human beings, we cannot live outside the lifeworld. Inside the lifeworld, we can arrange and rearrange, create, form, and influence our everyday lifeworld by our action. Schutz and Luckmann (1973) pointed out also the limits of actors' lifeworld: "At the same time, the objectives and events which are already found in this realm (including the acts and the results of actions of other men) limit his free possibilities of action" (p. 3). Action is the central object of analysis in the lifeworld: "The life-world is above all the province of practice, of action. The problems of action and choice must, therefore, have a central place in the analysis of the life-world" (Schutz and Luckmann 1973: p. 18).

2.4.2 Acting in the Professional Lifeworld: an Improvisational Dance

Luckmann (1992) noted that analyzing action means accounting for the difference between acting and action (p. 48). Acting signifies a process and implies such categories as time and the goal of the actor's action, in Schutz's terms. Luckmann (ibid.) underscored an intentional character of action, which signifies a special

meaning to an actor connected with it. Therefore, an action contains a goal. In order to achieve that goal, a social actor makes a draft or a plan regarding how to act. This main action-draft consists of some subordinate drafts. Schutz and Luckmann (1989) explained that, "By action we designate primarily the step-by-step performance of an act; by act, however, we mean the finished chain of the action-history, the completed act" (p. 14).

The social actor consciously plans his action, "Every action [...] is preceded by a project. [...] In the project, the goal of action, the completed act, is first imagined" (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: p. 14), or "[i]n the project the goal of the act is envisioned in advance" (pp. 18-19). The actor's imagination about the result of his action is part of the preparation for an act, although "nothing but fantasies" (p. 47). Nevertheless, this imagination is significant because "without a project there is no act" (p. 46). Moreover, actors have to choose between conflicting projects, which is "an act of interpretation" (p. 47). Finally, the decision has to be made by the actor himself, "the *ultimate* impulse to realize the project comes from himself" (p. 47).

> He [the actor] knows that he can later interrupt the action or bring it to complete stop; he also knows that what has begun has begun. In most cases, this boundary is crossed without particular significance: in habitual action one hardly notice it. In the crisis situations of life, by contrast, when it is a matter of "life and death," one knows very well that by this first step one is in the process of burning down all the bridges behind oneself. (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: p. 47)

The journalists' project in reporting about the Iraq War can be their imagination of reporting from the war region or not. While deciding to go to the war region, they must deal with issues of life and death. Journalists must be conscious that they are putting their lives at risk by making this decision. Furthermore, journalists have to decide whether to work embedded or not. In addition to the decision to participating in war coverage from the war region, journalists also have to envision a project or the kind of result they want and must achieve by the end of their working day or investigation on particular subject.

Talking about motives of actor's action, Schutz (1970) differentiated between two types: "in order to" and "because" motives (pp. 126-129). The "in order to" motives signifies the meaning of action that actor applies to his action currently before the action is performed and directs and is oriented towards the future goal of a particular action-draft (Luckmann 1992: pp. 56-57). In contrast, the "because" refers to the "reflexive meaning" of action (p. 56). After the action is finished and

the goal of action is achieved, the actor can explain his "because" motives by looking back at his action. Schutz (1970) illustrated the differences between these two motives with the following example:

> The murderer has been motivated to commit his acts because he grew up in an environment of such and such a kind, because, as psycho-analysis shows, he had in his infancy such and such experiences, etc. Thus, from the point of view of the actor, the because-motive refers to his past experiences. These experiences have determined him to act as he did. What is motivated in an action in the way of "because" is the project of the action itself. In order to satisfy his needs of money, the actor had the possibility of providing it in several other ways than by killing a man, say by earning it in a remunerative occupation. His idea of attaining this goal by killing a man was determined ("caused") by his personal situation or more precisely, by his life history, as sedimented in his personal circumstances. (p. 127)

Before acting, journalists make a draft for acting and connect it with subjective meaning, which becomes the first meaning of acting (Luckmann 1992: p. 53). This draft contains the aim of the action as well as subordinate drafts on how to achieve this goal. After acting is successfully finished and supported by the first subjective meaning attributed to it, it becomes an experience saved in memory. When rethinking or reinterpreting this past action, a second meaning emerges. In the draft, the goal of acting is imagined and the making of the draft is based on the process or thinking. Each draft contains the following issues: the actor's considerations about whether the acting is realistic or not, how important and urgent it is, and in which order to take the steps to fulfill the acting (p. 65). Despite planning, not all actions succeed,

> The life-world is the quintessence of a reality that is lived, experienced, and endured. It is, however, also a reality that is mastered by action and the reality in which – and on which – our action fails. (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: p. 1)

If the draft refers to actions that they have made routine, we do not need to spend much time in deciding whether to act or not (Luckmann 1992: p. 52). A lot of everyday acting becomes customized for because of repetition. However, after generating these "pre-fabricated" acting drafts, it is not always necessary to recreate them (p. 63). This draft becomes "*monothetic*" (p. 66), or the draft can be easily and quickly recalled in our consciousness. If such a draft, however, fails to solve a particular problem of action, we have to create a new draft using the thinking process described above or make it "*polythetic*" (p. 66). While "monothetic" action-drafts refer to action-drafts that are already prepared or "pre-fabricated", "polythetic" action-drafts signify the opposite – when an actor deals with an action

problem for the first time and has not yet developed a particular pre-fabricated action-draft that he usually applies in that situation (p. 66).

Schutz and Luckmann (1989) defined work as a social action; work is "central to social organizations of everyday reality" (p. 12) and is "the basis of human live" (Luckmann 2002: p. 92, own translation). It is a condition and consequence of the organization of our life. Schutz and Luckmann (1980) give a very imprecise very open definition of work, "The actor works when he wants to achieve something definite in the surrounding world" (p. 13). In other words; "Working, [...] is action in the outer world, based upon a project and characterized by the intention to bring about the projected state of affairs by bodily movements" (Schutz 1970: p. 126). Work as social action participates in "the constitution of the reality of the world of daily life (Schutz 1970: p. 126). Schutz explained,

> The wide-awake self integrates in its working and by its working its present, past, and future into a specific dimension of time; it realizes itself as a totally in its working acts; it communicates with other through working acts; it organizes the different spatial perspectives of the world of daily life through working acts. (Schutz 1970: p. 126)

Relying on Luckmann (2002), who designates work as a special type of social action "that creates and changes reality" (p. 94, own translation) the professional action of journalists will be observed as work or social action within their occupation. Journalists create and change reality by working or by their professional action. They may aim to achieve objectivity in their reporting, for instance. Luckmann (1992) delineated social action as containing two parts: On the one hand action is, "...a subjective accomplishment of consciousness", while on the other hand, it is, "...the objective pre-condition of a social world" (p. 37, own translation). Journalists' work is "a pre-condition" of the objective social reality of news media and readers, while on the other hand, it serves as a mediator between the subjective reality of each journalist and what readers perceive as the objective reality of the newspapers.

The professional action is above all a meaningful action; when deciding action-goals, action-drafts, and projects, journalists ascribe their subjective meaning to them. Similarly to any other social action, journalists' professional action contains action-drafts and action-goals. Each draft includes both the aims and means for achieving the professional action. Journalists constantly update their professional action by applying different professional action-drafts, monothetic or polythetic, to their current professional situation. Journalists constantly prove by their professional action the prepared, standardized, monothetic, or routinized

professional action-drafts. When covering, for example, the White House or German Parliament, different journalists can apply the same action-drafts and action strategies.

Unusual or unexpected working situations show the fallibility of some drafts. Unexpected circumstances that journalists face, for example, in war, can make the application of usual monothetic action-drafts impossible. In this situation, journalists are forced to deal with the problem of how to act for the first time and develop polythetic action-drafts. Journalists select between their projects, action-goals, and action-drafts; some drafts will be saved, and others dismissed or deleted from their professional practice and the professional stock of knowledge. The journalists' professional action relies on these action-drafts of action saved in their professional stock of knowledge. Journalists' action-drafts include professional action-goals aimed at interpreting professional problems and finding solutions for them.

In fact, action as plans can serve to cut journalists' action into smaller pieces and interpret them as part of the analysis. However, neither social actors nor journalists are intelligent machines that are programmed to follow particular plans and strategies. There might be (new) situations, interests (of journalists, their newspapers, informants, etc.) and other factors that can influence the decisions of journalists and their action such as fears and anxieties in a war situation, among others.

The dimensions of the journalist's professional lifeworld can be filled with new contents that change the whole professional lifeworld and the journalists' everyday reality in it, creating a new basis for the journalists' professional action. Furthermore, the journalists' interests, based on previous interests to fulfill particular action-goals and projects, might also change. Additionally, the journalists' interests intersect with and involve other actors' interests within their professional lifeworld and newspapers' interests. Choosing between two professional action-goals, journalists might decide which kind of goals and action-drafts are most important. Finally, the choice between action-goals and the decision to act in a particular way is always situational:

> In every moment of conscious life, I find myself in a situation. In its concrete contents this situation is indeed endlessly variable: on one hand because it is biologically articulated, so to speak as a "product" of all prior situations; on the other hand, because it is relatively "open",

> that is it can be defined and mastered on the basis of an actual stock of knowledge. (Schutz and Luckmann 1973: p. 100)

Even though their professional action is institutionalized, it is up to journalists to determine how to act within this structure, including which choices to make and which interests to pursue. Schutz (1970) summarized the issues of free action as "the problems of choice, decision, and freedom" (p. 146). On the one hand, journalists have the freedom to choose how to act and whether to decide in favor of one action-goal or another. On the other hand, they feel obliged to follow their professional ethics and the requirements of their newspapers. Schutz (ibid.) described the situation of actor's dependencies as "there is no such thing for the actor as an isolated interest. Interests have from the outset the character of being interrelated with other interests in a system" (p. 149).

On the one hand, actor's action can be planned, affected by interests of different groups and institutional norms. On the other hand, people, including journalists, act freely:

> He who lives in the social world is a free being: his acts proceed from spontaneous activity. Once the action has transpired, once it is over and done with, it has become an act and is no longer free but closed and determined in character. Nevertheless, it was free at that time the action took place; and if the question concerning the intended meaning refers, as it does in Max Weber's case, to the point in time before the completion of the act, the answer must be that the actor always acts freely. (Schutz 1970: p. 146)

Despite the limitations, journalists act freely in their professional lifeworld. Similar to dancers, they improvise their action in particular situation while interacting with other actors in their professional lifeworld. This is a challenge of the journalism as a (semi-)profession – how professional actors can combine institutional requirements with freedom of action. In this sense, the next two sections will introduce the steps of analysis of journalists' professional action. As a result of this discussion, newspapers will be assumed to represent objective reality or reality based on institutional norms such as professional ethics that institutionalize and affect journalists' actions.

Since professional ethics has been often the focus of analysis of journalists' work, another aspect of journalists' work that appears to be relevant for the institutionalization of journalists' action will be illuminated here. This will be the issue of the text production framed in particular journalistic genre-norms. Journalistic text genres such as lead, news articles, and reports are significant guides

that pre-program journalists' actions. Writing a lead or an opinion piece follows a different professional logic and search for informational material than writing a report.

2.5 Summary

A newspaper's reality is constructed by means of journalists' professional action. The journalists' professional action is a meaningful social action directed towards achieving its goals. It is, above all, a strategic action that includes solving professional problems such as searching for information and writing text, which can be summarized to the problem of information in general. Journalists direct their action towards somebody – "an addressee" such as their readers, family, friends, or editors. When different journalists solve unrelated professional problems in similar ways, journalism becomes a social institution and the professional action of journalists as institutionalized social action. Journalists profit from the use of institutionalized professional action. Applying this action, they can rely on previously elaborated action-drafts and not waste time discovering new solutions for professional problems, since they can re-use solutions they have obtained from colleagues or their own work experience.

The notion of the journalists' professional lifeworld has to deal with professional problems of transmitting information to the public. During their working experience, journalists learn how to (re-)interpret professional problems and solve them by using and re-using solutions and memorizing successful action-drafts. The term professional action is used here as a generic term for different kinds of action including action-drafts that are targeted the same goal – how to solve professional problems while researching for information and writing a text in a particular journalistic genre-form. In their working practice, journalists would rather use monothetic action-drafts, because journalists' professional action is a routinized and institutionalized social action oriented towards such institutional norms and values as that of the profession (e.g. the professional ethics, text-genres) and newspapers as employers (e.g. quality standards).

The journalist's individual and professional socialization and education can influence their professional action, which later becomes experience. The experience of prior professional action is saved in the journalists' professional stock of knowledge, which in turn constitutes part of the journalist's lifeworld. It consists of both the individual and the professional experience of each journalist. The

typifications and formulas for professional action lead journalists to take their professional lifeworld for granted. By covering the war in Iraq (2003), journalists had to typify anew their professional lifeworld as they found the one that they had come to take for granted no longer applied to their situation.

3 Study Design of the Research Project

The previous chapter explored the theoretical positions with regard to the concept of journalists' professional action. This professional action will be observed in this thesis as problem-centered social action that embodies the professional strategies repeatedly applied by journalists to solve their professional problems. Such decision-making processes integrate a variety of influences from both the analytical macro- and micro-levels. Methodical instruments that can be used to analyze the professional action of journalists will be discussed in the following chapters. The interviews were formatted as problem-centered qualitative interviews that included orientation on professional problems in their structure. The analysis and interpretation of the interviews will follow the principles of Grounded Theory. The main categories will be presented in this chapter, and the selection of newspapers and journalists will be explained.

3.1 Qualitative Approach

Research on journalism in general and journalists in particular has primarily been performed using quantitative methods of empirical social research. The journalists' employment environment has been a matter of interest in some national and international quantitative but not qualitative studies. The surveys of Weischenberg et al. (e.g. 2006), Weaver and Wilhoit (1986, 1996), Weaver (1998) and Weaver et al. (2007) offer special examples of continually updated quantitative data on journalism. These surveys were made at regular intervals and explored such categories as age; salaries; the number of men and women employed; the media (radio, television, etc.) they were employed by; the lengths of the working day; the time spent on different working activities; journalists' political sympathies and their attitudes to professional ethics, among other things.

The previously mentioned quantitative surveys presented a rich variety of representative and informative content about journalists that can be used for explorative but not explanative analysis. Unfortunately, this data is not helpful in answering questions about how journalists work; how their action at work or their professional action can be described in basic terms; and what journalists do throughout the whole day. For these reasons, a qualitative approach was favored in this thesis. Corbin and Strauss (2008) described qualitative social research as a way "to step beyond the known and enter into the world of participants, to see the world

from their perspective and in doing so make discoveries that will contribute to the development of empirical knowledge." (p. 16) Furthermore, Weinburg (2006) listed the following advantages of qualitative social research:

> (1) it reduces the risk of putting words in respondents' mouths; (2) it allows investigation of unanticipated themes that emerge in the course of the interview; (3) it allows the study of people or themes about which very little is already known; (4) it allows us to maximize the extent to which respondents' "own voice" may be preserved in our data; (5) it allows analysis of not only what respondents tell us but how they do so; and (6) it allows us discretion to pursue particular themes with respondents in depth. (p. 485)

This is what the above-mentioned statistical results are missing –an inner perspective on the journalists' perceptions and interpretations of their professional life. Qualitative methods of social research, based on personal conversations (i.e. interviews) with journalists, may best fulfill the aims and objectives of this dissertation, namely to look *behind the scenes* and explore how journalists practice their profession in a concrete war situation. This may help to understand how the reality of war is constructed by journalists and the mechanisms participating in this task. Methods of qualitative social research are applied in order to understand the single latent structures of meaning and reconstruct the subjective meaning that the investigated individuals attribute to their life (Helfferich 2009: p. 23; Kelle and Kluge 2010: p. 10).

Journalists' subjective meaning and my interpretation of it constitute only a small extract of reality. Helfferich (2009) pointed out that in Schutz' terminology, the researcher's understanding is the second degree of the social reality. In fact, journalists' subjective perceptions of their working situation narrated in qualitative interviews are already interpreted, constructed realities. Furthermore, the reality of informational sources that journalists use for their articles also represents a constructed reality. Interpreting the narrated reality, I will construct my understanding of the reality of the researched object, transforming it into one version of reality without pretending that it will become a universally acknowledged reality of every journalist in every newspaper. In the words of Flick (1996):

> (1) The version that someone narrated in an interview must not correspond with the version he had formulated at the time of the event. It must also not match the version that he would have presented to another researcher with another question. Even the researcher, who evaluates this interview and presents it as part of his results, produces a new version of the whole. (pp. 19-20, own translation)

Qualitative social research, however, should not be merely reduced to a reproduction of subjective or descriptive meanings. In line with Behnke and Meuser (1999), Ernst (2010) showed a critical dimension to the qualitative social research, "...to make the invisible visible" (p. 85). As she explained, it means, "...to understand work-flow, analytical models and structural characteristics and to use the foreign, the unexpected and the deviant as a source of knowledge" (p. 85, own translation). A qualitative approach was applied to gain a deeper insight into the nature of journalists' professional action in wartime. The outcomes – the structure of professional action – will finally be used to elaborate similarities and differences of the professional action of German and American journalists.

3.2 The Problem-Centered Interview

Journalists' professional action was described in the theoretical part of this thesis as problem-oriented action, namely that journalists solve problems of information for their readers. The decision regarding what kind of qualitative interview to choose not only requires a certain interview strategy, but also "pre-structures possible outcomes" (Friebertshäuser 1997: p. 375). The problem-centered interview (PCI) (Witzel 1982, 1985, 2000) appeared to be the best way to do the research on the problem-oriented action. According to Witzel (2000), PCI focuses primarily on the identification and systematic research of the relevant problems of the subject of the research. Witzel and Reiter (2012) described the PCI-method as being "suitable to investigate actions and experiences, their justification and evaluation, as well as individual opinions" and this method "considers people as self-reflective" (p. 8). The self-reflection of the interviewed journalists on how they acted when generating war coverage constitutes the focal point of this investigation.

The previous identification of some of the key problems in war coverage allowed this research to focus the interviews on these problems and their explanatory factors, beginning the questions with the questioning words such as "how" and "why". Such questions are deemed explanatory and, "...deal with operational links needing to be traced over time", in contrast to exploratory "what" questions that deal with "frequencies or incidence" (Yin 2009: p. 2). The problem-centered questions were oriented on the central problems mentioned above, for example, how journalists gain information and write their text. These helped me answer the central questions of my research proposal. These are, for example, "How did journalists make decisions?", "How did journalists portray the situation of war in

their newspapers?", "How was war coverage planned?", "Why did journalists for these U.S. and German newspapers decide to go to the war zone? (What factors influenced their decision?)", "How did journalists follow their working routines while covering a war? (What strategies did they use to deal with situations involving unusual working routines or professional problems?)", and "Why did they act in this way?"

The PCI approach allows flexibility in choosing methods for the interview's interpretation. For this study, the Grounded Theory, which favors the logic of Peirce's abduction (Peirce 1979), serves as the methodical approach for the interview's interpretation. Whereas a deductive scientific perspective usually starts with a hypothesis and tries to verify it by empirical data, the inductive perspective starts with empirical data in order to make a hypothesis, and abduction combines awareness of both theory and praxis (Kelle and Kluge 2010: p. 21). Peirce (1979) put it this way: "Deduction proves that something must be; Induction shows that something actually is operative; Abduction merely suggests that something may be" (p. 171). The concept of abduction is combined with the idea of incorporating of the researcher's prior theoretical knowledge about the field of research. In their Grounded Theory, Glaser and Strauss (1967, 1998) introduced the term "theoretical sensibility", which might help to reflect the empirical data by means of theoretical terms.

This study follows the three basic principles of the qualitative social research and PCI: "1) centering on a problem", "2) process orientation", and "3) orientation on the subject of research" (Witzel 1985: pp. 230-231, own translation). The first principle refers to the research question or problems that the researcher will investigate. "Metaphorically speaking, the pollution of the field by the researcher's prior knowledge is, after all, inevitable" (Witzel and Reiter 2012: p. 24). The second principle of process orientation is linked to Grounded Theory and aims at revising the preconceptions of the researcher based on previous subjective knowledge about the field of research. The third principle "concerns the appropriateness of methodical and practical approaches to the research issue" (ibid.: p. 29).

Witzel and Reiter (2012) divided working with the PCI into three steps: preparation, interviewing, and processing. The preparation step contains such issues as research interest, prior knowledge, and sampling. The interviewing step embraces the interview situation including introductory explanation; warming up; opening

question; opening account (different topics); social and personal characteristics; followed by the transcription, analysis, and interpretation of the interview material (p. 36). While preparing interview questions, this study included research on gathering information about journalism, identifying the key professional problems of journalists, and choosing the journalists. In order to gain the journalists' trust, the whole communication process with the potential interviewees was carefully organized from the beginning onward, from the first attempts at contact all the way through to the interview.

Witzel (1985, 2000) stressed that having previous knowledge of the field of research (here meaning knowledge of journalists' professional problems) before the interview is crucial for conducting a problem-centered interview, as such knowledge would effectively sharpen communication regarding specific problems during the interview. Witzel and Reiter (2012) used the metaphor of "well-informed travelling" (p. 2), which refers to getting information about a travel destination to help deepen knowledge about it during travel. Kelle and Kluge (2010) also underlined the significance of previous knowledge in the research process. Relying on an argument by Anderson (1987), Kelle and Kluge (2010) postulated that mixing together the researcher's previous and new knowledge of the subject of research, "...would lead to the revision of old knowledge and developing new scientific ideas" (p. 26). Also Glaser and Strauss (1967, 1998) noted:

> Of course, the researcher does not approach reality as a *tabula rasa*. He must have a perspective that allows him to abstract the relevant data (even if it is still unclear) and the significant categories from his examination of the data. (p. 13, footnote 3)

In fact, the back-and-forth movement from the previous knowledge to the new information was the main strategy for the analysis and interpretation of the interviews material. The combination of the previous knowledge in the field of war coverage and working conditions of journalists in wars with new information was also helpful for developing categories, as this strategy either confirmed or rejected the previous hypotheses about specific professional problems. For example, one of the initial hypotheses was that reporting about a war always implies news coverage directly from the war region and thus, journalists must always travel there. This hypothesis, however, was called into question as only a few of the German journalists went to Iraq, in contrast with many of the American journalists who had been there.

Accordingly, the previous hypothesis, "the professional action during war coverage creates an obligation for journalists to go to the war region", was modified to, "journalists do not have to go to the war region". This led to a new perspective in this research to revise the understanding of war coverage, questioning whether war coverage necessarily requires reporting from the war region. Are other forms of war coverage possible? What did journalists understand under war coverage and how did they view their role in it? What kind of professional action did they anticipate in war? How did they act in this particular situation (i.e. the Iraq War of 2003)? Finally, how did they maintain the ideals of their professional ethics?

The previous knowledge embraced gathering information about the "objective conditions" (Witzel 1985: p. 230, own translation) of journalists' work. This includes journalists' personal and institutional characteristics such as gender, age, and socialization, as well as the internal organization of working processes in the newspapers (e.g. the division of labor) and journalists' location during war coverage (e.g. Iraq or the neighboring countries, the United States, Germany). These conditions constituted a context or a framework consisting of dependencies between professional action and its influences.

The previous knowledge about journalists' professional problems was gained from scientific literature about journalism in general and war correspondents in particular (cf. e.g. Korte and Tonn 2007). Apart from this, additional information from the autobiographical memoirs of journalists who reported on wars was helpful for supplementing the list of potential problems and for understanding journalists' views on them. Their initial interpretation eventually facilitated the later interpretation and the analysis of the journalists' interviews. The memoirs of war correspondents like Julian Reichert (2010), Bettina Gaus (2004), Oskar von Schwartz (1907), Bob Woodward (2003), David Axe and Matt Bors (2010), Claus Christian Malzahn (2005), and Carolin Emcke (2006) illustrate just a few examples of how journalists cover wars.

3.3 Methods of Interpretation

Witzel and Reiter (2012) suggested a basic approach to the analysis and interpretation of interviews linked to the ideas and principles of Grounded Theory (cf. e.g. Corbin and Strauss 2008). Hence, the open, axial, and selective coding of Grounded Theory can be simultaneously called open, axial, and selective analysis. Witzel and Reiter (2012) suggested following steps for analysis and interpretation of

PCIs: (i) "basic coding and reconstruction of pre-interpretations", (ii) "vertical analysis and interpretation", and (iii) horizontal analysis and interpretation (p. 102). Vertical analysis means to "summarize the main feature of a single case on a few pages" (p. 104). Horizontal analysis refers to a "thematic cross-case analysis" (p. 109).

This thesis presumes that professional action is dependent on and influenced by its context, including countries (cultures of journalism, journalists' professional ethics, ethical codes, and position of the state to the war in Iraq) and newspapers (institutional organization, hierarchy within the newspaper, and division of labor). In analytical terms, after the content analysis, a question still remains about how the micro-level (level of the journalists' professional action) and the macro-level (level of institution setting and country) are linked. In other words, identifying the processes between the macro- and micro-levels constitutes the main question of this research; specifically, "how is it possible that human activity (*Handeln*) should produce a world of things (*choses*)?" (Berger and Luckmann 1991: p. 30).

In fact, Luckmann (cf. 1992: p. 92) also pointed out the relationship between these two levels. The question of how to integrate the micro-level (level of action) and the macro-level (level of structure) plays a central role and constitutes "one of the most contentious issues" (Turner 2005: p. 405) in international debates about contemporary social theory and methodology. While evaluating the state of the art of the macro-micro-macro linkage in journalism research, Löffelholz (2008) argued that existing research resembles a primordial state: "We have just started on the long path toward an integration theory in which the links between macro-meso-micro-levels of journalism are consistently explained" (p. 22).

Having discussed the significance of previous knowledge, the determination of analytical categories emerged from the interpretation of the collected data and from the previous knowledge in the field of research. In short, there are two layers of categorization: one made before the case study and another one specified in the interpretative process of the data. The first level of categorization contained categories like time, information (gathering, selecting, and verifying information), text, risk, and security, while the second level includes space, technical equipment, and other limitations, particularly in war situations. As journalists' interactions with their significant others (e.g. editors, colleagues, readers, and family) played an important role, which was not expected to such an extent before the interviews,

these significant others became one of the main categories. These categories also represented the main professional problems of the journalists' action in wartime.

The professional problem of time means journalists' being on deadlines, which largely depend on the genre of the newspaper story. For example, news has to be constantly updated, but journalists writing feature stories or reports have more time. This category is not specific for wartime reporting, but is significant for war coverage and the work of journalists, specifically as it relates to the time difference between the warzone and their home country. Furthermore, time delays can occur if something unpredictable happens and the article cannot be delivered to the newspaper on time. However, when something important happens, this information must be delivered very quickly. It was not without reason that one of the journalists who reported from Iraq described his work there as a 24-hour job.

The professional problem of space can be observed in many respects. On the one hand, the definition of war coverage in terms of finding the best locations for war reporting can be seen as a problem of space. On the other hand, space contains the notion of mobility, or perhaps mobility is a subcategory of space. This includes a notion of how far journalists can physically move in their reporting locations. In Iraq, for example, mobility was very limited and depended on the safe places available for reporting. When journalists took part in the embedded program, they moved all the time. The professional problem of security and risk can also belong to this category and can serve as a subcategory, because it depends on the places journalists choose for their reporting. The problem of technical equipment can also be an essential part of war coverage, though it is also a subcategory of space. The problem of space is essentially the problem of working conditions.

The professional problem of information constitutes the key problem of journalists' professional action. Gathering, selecting, and verifying information are part of journalists' daily activities. Through these activities, journalists solve the problem of information for their readers. As most readers cannot go to Iraq or other places around the world to do their informational research, the informational state of the public largely depends on the work of journalists, particularly on how carefully they research their information. The problem of text is the next essential professional problem that journalists deal with in their daily professional routines. Journalists solve the problem of information in their text. The question of how this

gathered, selected, and verified information can take the form of text is the fundamental question confronting journalists.

When struggling with the professional problems of information and text, journalists interact with their significant others. The American and German journalists demonstrated different relations with their significant others, but for both groups of journalists, these significant others can be editors, colleagues, readers, and family. The interaction with the significant others was sometimes helpful, sometimes problematic. In particular, American journalists signaled tense interactions with their editors, who often affected their decision-making processes while reporting.

3.4 Sample of the Newspapers and Journalists

The theoretical sampling of this thesis was conducted through the research questions and the theoretical framework. The professionalism of journalists depends on the rules and the available resources. They also reproduce the existing stock of knowledge of a particular society in their articles. The professional action of journalists is based on their professional knowledge, which is derived from their general knowledge and specialized knowledge about their profession. Lamnek (2010) formulated the target of the theoretical sampling as such: "the selection of study units aims at finding systematically a case (or a unit of analysis) that can make the theoretical concepts of the researcher more complex, sophisticated and profound" (p. 286). To achieve this, the present study used a strategy of collecting similar and contrasting cases (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Kelle and Kluge 2010: p. 40). The extraction of the "typical and a-typical cases" attempts to contrast the cases and modify the hypotheses (Pauwels and Matthyssens 2004: p. 129).

The strategy of *searching for contrasting cases* means first developing a hypothesis about the subject of research, and then searching for cases that would contradict the hypothesis. If there are cases that demonstrate the opposite of the hypothesis, then the hypothesis must be modified and redrafted. Contrary examples must also be found. This task must be repeated again and again until no contrasting cases can be found. According to Kelle and Kluge (2010: p. 44), this strategy only works if the hypothesis is quite clear before the data analysis.

The initial hypothesis of this research was that war coverage always takes place in the war region. However, after finding a case that did not verify it, as with the

German journalists, the preliminary hypothesis was modified. This procedure was the starting point for determining two polar (main) cases: journalists' professional action in Germany and the United States. For the comparability of these two cases, journalists from similar types of newspapers were chosen – high-quality daily newspapers in Western democracies – as I assumed that the professional action of journalists working for daily newspapers would differ, for example, from those working in weekly newspapers. The size of the newspaper and its style also played a significant role. The basis for comparison, then, was the size and the type of the newspaper, as well as the relationship between journalists and their newspapers.

The selection of journalists was based on their employment status, whether they worked as freelancers or direct employees of their chosen newspaper. This study focused on direct employees because the researcher presumed that journalists who were officially employed by a certain newspaper had a higher degree of identification with their newspaper. Again, this would be significant for professional action because newspapers, as institutions, affect the professional action of their journalists in the normative sense. Furthermore, journalists, rather than editors, were the center of interest. However, German journalists often had both functions and worked in both areas of responsibility. Finally, the sample was limited to journalists who reported on the 2003 war in Iraq.

In light of claims in the previous chapters, the following points concerning the professional action of journalists are especially salient. Firstly, since the professional designation of "journalist" is not state-controlled in democracies and embraces a variety of employment possibilities by different media, this dissertation focuses on journalists whose professional status is officially defined. These journalists are a) employed as staff writers by the selected daily quality newspapers in Germany and the United States and b) have been personally involved in the 2003 war in Iraq.

As previously mentioned, the data for this thesis consists of interviews with professional journalists as defined in the previous paragraph. The data material also contains memos about each interviewee. These notes were generated directly after the interview so as to preserve the interviewer's personal impressions of the interviewee. These memos describe the person, their body language, and their behavior before, during, and after the interview. Details such as tardiness or frequent rescheduling of appointments may help draw conclusions about the personal or professional habits of the person and his actions.

The initial plan for this study included interviewing 10-15 journalists from each newspaper. In the end, however, a total of 30 journalists in both countries were interviewed for this research. This list includes six journalists employed by the *New York Times* (*NYT*) in New York and Washington, as well as two former *NYT* journalists of Iraqi origin in New York and Boston, both of whom had initially worked as translators for *NYT* journalists in Iraq and, because of their interest in journalistic activities, had become journalists themselves, writing and contributing war coverage to the *NYT*. In Washington, interviews were conducted with four journalists employed by the *Washington Post* (*WP*). In Germany, the interviewees included nine journalists employed by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (*SZ*) in Munich and seven journalists from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (*FAZ*) in Frankfurt/Main. The names of the journalists were changed in the analyses to ensure anonymity. The software application "HyperRESEARCH" was used to structure the analysis and interpretation of the interviews.

The interviewees worked as staff-writers on their newspapers and were not freelancers. All of the journalists were Caucasian, between 35 and 85 years old, and most were male. Only three of the female journalists who had covered wars for the *SZ*, the *WP*, and the *NYT* could be interviewed. The duration of each interview depended on the time journalists had available, ranging between 20 minutes and 2 hours. Most offered to stay in contact or allowed to send them further questions. Two of the German journalists consented to a second interview.

Organizing the interviews was very time consuming. The archives of the *NYT*, *WP*, *SZ* and *FAZ* were investigated using the free electronic access to the archives of these newspapers offered by the library of Mainz University to identify which journalists had reported on the 2003 war in Iraq. Although the war officially only lasted about two months – from late March to the beginning of May 2003 –, the region was still in a war-like state, so the study also considers war coverage of the period before and after the official Iraq War.

The names and articles of journalists who had covered Iraq in the period between January 2003 and January 2005 were collected to create a database for preparing the next step – making contact with the journalists. This was problematic and the greatest challenge was finding the contact details for the chosen journalists. The American journalists were contacted through the homepages of their newspapers, but this was not possible with their German counterparts. Furthermore, the

information services of the German newspapers refused to provide the relevant contact details. Finally, a process of trial and error led to obtaining a few of the journalists' email addresses.

The next problem was how to persuade journalists to meet for an interview. Although some journalists replied to my emails and found the project interesting, they claimed that they could not spare the time to meet for an interview. For example, Bob Woodward replied personally, but mentioned that he was working on his new book at that time and could not meet for an interview.

After emailing journalists, interviews were arranged in Frankfurt and Munich, and later in New York and Washington. The journalists suggested the meeting places themselves – either in a café or the offices of their respective newspapers. After the interviews, most of the journalists recommended other colleagues from their newspapers and often provided personal introductions. This process led to a snowball effect in which the opportunity to meet one person for an interview often translated into opportunities to interview others at their paper.

The first *SZ* journalist to be interviewed humorously compared the interview with a visit to the dentist. When he introduced me to other colleagues of interest, he remarked that my conversation with him had been "painless" (Memo 1), because I "had not drilled his teeth a lot" (ibid.). I supposed that he was hinting at one of the reasons why journalists tend to avoid being interviewed – because they give up control over the situation. As journalists are usually tasked with interviewing others, they often become cautious and apprehensive when taking on the role of interviewee.

In fact, relying on a spontaneous narrative flow as well as the principles and methods of qualitative research, with its emphasis on guided interviews, the journalists were not given the questions in advance, even when this was specifically requested. As hoped, this led to the positive effect of forcing journalists to deliver spontaneous answers. Apparently, the journalists expected to talk about the political reasons for the Iraq War, which were being widely discussed at the time.

The media faced heavy public criticism when one of the main reasons the media presented for the Iraq War, the threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) turned out to be false. Therefore, the interviewed journalists expected the interview to focus on this topic and metaphorically "drill their teeth." Hence, the German journalists tended to give very long answers regarding the political situation before

the war started and the reasons for the war. They were interested in having deep discussions and thus had already prepared some arguments.

After the interviews, most of the journalists admitted that they were pleasantly surprised to answer questions about their work processes during their war coverage. Most of the journalists seemed stressed at the beginning of the interviews, but they were visibly relieved by the end. Most of the interviewed journalists even thanked me for the interview, as they were very happy to talk about their work and considered the opportunity to reflect on their professional lives to be a kind of therapy for which they would not usually have had the time.

American journalists were also very grateful for the opportunity to talk about their deployments in Iraq and often treated the interviewer as a kind of confidant. Some of the journalists related stories about deaths they had witnessed or their anxieties about being killed or kidnapped, as they never had the chance to discuss these problems with anyone. Thus they had cultivated the image of being strong and courageous.

For example, one of the *WP* reporters told a story off the record after the interview. She had gotten to know a German, a Spanish, and a French reporter in Iraq. One evening, they spent time together and she befriended her German colleague, who told her about his girlfriend and their plans for the future. The next day, they all traveled to different locations for their reporting. The *WP* journalist was the only one who came back alive that day (cf. Thurman, Memo).

The analysis will focus on the three aspects. First, journalists find themselves in unique situations, be they wars or elections to the Bundestag, so the first stage of analysis will embrace journalists' perceptions of war and their professional role in it. In the second stage of analysis, the decision-making processes of journalists covering wars will be analyzed using concrete examples of professional behavior. The third stage focuses on journalists' socialization and the significant others that journalists consider important for their professional work. Each stage of analysis includes a simultaneous comparison of journalists' professional action from all four newspapers (*NYT*, *WP*, *SZ*, and *FAZ*).

Here, situation refers to how journalists interpreted the real situation (in comparison with their ideal understanding of war coverage) when covering the 2003 war in Iraq, the problems they identified from their working place (Iraq, Kuwait, Washington, New York, Frankfurt, and Munich) and the strategies they used to solve

these problems. At this stage, journalists' professional action includes such action dispositions as the proving of information, dealing with information that is impossible to prove, interpreting conflicting sources of information, and handling mistakes. Following the logic of choosing an action: How did they arrive at decisions for or against particular professional strategies?

4 Reconstructing journalists' professional lifeworld

After having discussed theoretical approaches and methods of the interview analysis, this chapter focuses on empirical findings from the interviews. Talking about people and their everyday actions, Schutz (1970) suggested first analyzing their everyday lifeworld to understand their actions. Following this logic, journalists' professional, everyday lifeworld has to be reconstructed first, in order to identify and understand the notion of their professional action in the situation of war. The aim of analysis in this chapter will be to identify what the situation of war means for journalists' professional daily routines. The journalists' professional action regarding the core issues of the journalists' work, such as gathering and selecting of information, as well as journalists' strategies about how to approximate one of the core requirements of their professional ethics – namely objectivity in war coverage – will be discussed in chapter 5, "Newspapers as Objective Reality". Finally, the question, "How is reality constructed anew in the course of interaction with significant others as an ultimate authority before the article is printed?" will be the matter of analysis in chapter 6, "Newspapers as Subjective Reality".

4.1 The War of the Lifeworlds

The journalists' professional everyday lifeworld and situations of war intertwine when journalists have to integrate a war into their professional lifeworld. When reporting from a war zone, the journalists transform their professional lifeworld physically and mentally to another new region: the reality of war becomes their professional reality. Journalists have to adapt physically and psychologically to the new situation of war. War can be seen as a type of lifeworld as well. War also comprises a spatial, a temporal, and a social dimension. Although its boundaries are often fuzzy, it extends over a period of time and over hundreds and thousands of square kilometers. A large variety of social actors such as civilians, military personnel, insurgents, medical staff, and journalists inhabit the scenery of war. Hence, "a war consists of millions of simultaneous actions" (Lang, *FAZ*, line 163) that can be the focus of war coverage.

The American and German journalists were conscious about a great gap between the requirements of the professional lifeworld in peacetime and the reality of a war. The notable complexity and specific characteristics of war affect the professional

lifeworld and action of journalists. War can easily overcharge journalists and their professional action. Journalists should be aware of their own physical and emotional limits (cf. Thurman, *WP*; Hartmann, *FAZ*). The physical capabilities of journalists, of course, make it impossible for them to be omnipresent and omniscient. In the interviews, the journalists showed their frustration about their physical limitations by complaining, for example, "I am only one person" (Thurman, *WP*, line 51). Furthermore, the journalists were also concerned about the physical limitation of the article space. Lang (*FAZ*) described his inner struggle as "the newspaper wants to know everything, of course, but it should not cost that much [article] space" (lines 166-167).

Recalling their experiences of war coverage in general, the interviewed American and German journalists stated that their ideal of maintaining their professional values was always challenged by the reality of the war situation. The journalists' working conditions during war coverage are usually inherently different from those during other types of news coverage, because "the rules of war [are] different than those of peace, and journalists get to notice that" (Lang, *FAZ*, lines 242-243). War coverage is more intense than other news coverage and tends to dominate the news by replacing other news items. In the words of Faber, "these are the moments when we become very mono-thematic and we only see one topic" (lines 104-105). Last but not least, journalists risk their lives when they report from the war region.

Notwithstanding the issue that war challenges professional everyday reality, the interviewed American and German journalists highlighted the similarity of professional requirements regarding their articles' quality, regardless of the conditions they have to write them in – whether it is a war with all its particular challenges or any ordinary, nonviolent context. They expressed their internalized obligations to the norms of the institutionalized system of quality journalism and stressed that those quality standards for journalism should remain the same in any situation: "a good story would obey the same criteria as a good story written from Germany or from the streets of New York, from Washington or anywhere" (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 232-234). The journalists' ideal of proper war coverage was equal to that of any other type of press coverage:

> Basically, it doesn't make any difference, whether one is writing a news report or an analysis, a report about the burning-down of a clubhouse in Germany, or about a war. The basic standards a good journalist upholds are valid, as said, in local news coverage as well as in war coverage. (Hartmann, *FAZ*, lines 214-217)

In short, these criteria involved carefully researched, objective, balanced, and detailed reproductions of information that contain an extensive and many-sided picture of the war. Journalists should write in a sober, analytical, and restrained manner. Furthermore, war coverage, like any other news coverage, should contain new and truthful detailed information that is verified by facts. Journalists should neither propagate for or against the war, nor emotionalize or dramatize events. War coverage should be written in such a way that the reader would enjoy reading it (cf. e.g. Faber, *SZ*, lines 101-102; Hartmann, *FAZ*, line 174). Therefore, war coverage should be deictic, i.e., it should be directed towards the reader.

When confronted with the new working routines of a war correspondent, the German and American journalists were required to re-evaluate their attitudes regarding professional ethics. They described war as an event outside their control. Reporting about war was like "being sucked into a maelstrom" (Donne, *FAZ*, line 61). From the point of view of the reporting and its organization, war is "a very big, complex story" (Goldsmith, *WP*, line 85). Due to the complexity of the topic of war, war coverage must be carefully organized in advance and is more challenging than any other type of news coverage. The journalists often started doubting how they should cover war, while staying true to reality. Particularly, the journalists questioned the issue of neutrality in a war situation. Before these issues will be profoundly discussed in chapter 5, the question of how the American and the German journalists retrospectively perceived the situation of war in Iraq 2003 in their newspapers will be the next matter of analysis.

4.2 Acting under Conditions of Uncertainty

Schutz and Luckmann (1989) link the beginning of an action to uncertainties and "problematic situations" (ibid.: p. 29), because it "stems from a situation in which several projects are available for choice" (ibid.). An actor is confronted with doubts about reasons and legitimacy of his upcoming action and has to decide "should it be done or not?" (ibid.). The definition of the situation of the war in Iraq before it began can be observed as a highly problematic and uncertain situation. The interviews showed that both the American and German journalists found it difficult to define the situation in the run-up to the Iraq war, because of its notable complexity and a range of uncertainties. The ambiguity about the war in Iraq in the sphere of politics

and diplomacy, and doubts about the legitimacy of the war were also reflected in the newspapers (cf. Fichte, *FAZ*).

Due to the lack of clarity whether the war in Iraq was going to begin and if so, when, the American and German editors and the journalists felt left in the dark. They wondered about whether the war was going to begin or not. The uncertainty in politics about the reasons for the war and their doubts about the political situation and existence of the weapons of mass destruction led the newspapers to doubt whether or not to organize the reporting in advance at all. The German editors doubted, for example, whether they had to invest time and energy in overcoming administrative burdens, such as applications for visas and participation in the US embedded program.

Doubts about the definition of the situation led to further doubts concerning the professional action-goals and drafts for both the journalists and their editors. On the one hand, it was unclear to the editors how many journalists to send to the war region, when, or if at all. According to the journalists, above all, it was a question of expenses for their newspapers. These economic factors affected the organization of war coverage in advance. How long would the journalists have to spend in Iraq or on its borders waiting for the war to begin, and would they be paid for the waiting, which could possibly turn into the situation of waiting for Godot? The German and American journalists, on the other hand, had uncertainties about whether they had an option to go to Iraq or not and how long they had to choose between these two options.

According to the interviewed American and German journalists, their editors had no choice but to continue to observe the situation as best as they could. Either way, or perhaps because of the mentioned uncertainties, some of the American and German journalists were sent to Iraq or Kuwait for short or long trips in order to get an impression of the situation. The interviews illustrated that the professional role of American and German journalists was that of 'observers' before the war. They had to observe among other aspects the political situation, watch news, read newspapers, use contacts at the Secret Services, interview politicians, etc. Journalists collected and interpreted facts in order to come to the conclusion or whether the war in Iraq was going to begin or not and if so, when.

Based on journalists’ observation of the situation on Kuwait's border with Iraq some time before the Iraq war started, the journalists concluded that the war in Iraq was going to begin very soon. The interviewed American and German journalists interpreted the increasing number of military troops on the border as a clear signal for the beginning of war. They adjusted this meaning to the upcoming military action because “you didn't put several hundred thousand troops on the ground, unless you were prepared to actually go to war” (Goldsmith, *WP*, lines 21-22). The German journalists interpreted other signs such as the fact that the American embassy invited their newspapers to participate in the embedded program by the end of 2002 (cf. Zimmermann, *SZ*, lines 32-34). This was interpreted as a definite signal of the war to begin.

The described circumstances and signs switched the initial situation of uncertainties to one of more certainty regarding the war that was about to begin. The American and German journalists began to interpret the war as real. It was then that American and German newspapers began making decisions about the organization of reporting and created action-goals and -drafts. With regard to the organization of reporting, one of the central points of discussion within the newspapers was the question of how to cover this war professionally. Accordingly, with the analysis of the interviews, the American and German journalists had several reasons to use a different approach than the above-mentioned. The traumatic death experience of one of the reporters (German) and concerns about security in war on one hand are in contrast to the one-nation feelings on the other (Americans). In the following, the focus will first be on German journalists and then on American journalists and their definition of the situation.

4.3 German Journalists: “To Be or Not to Be?”[15]

One of Shakespeare's most famous quotations addresses the inner conflict that Hamlet faces in choosing between two goals, those of life or death. Hamlet’s contemplation on his further action appears ambiguous to the reader: either it raises an ontological question or it refers to Hamlet’s personal situation definition. Even though Hamlet aims to fulfill the clear project or an action-goal of revenge and death, doubts pursue Hamlet throughout Shakespeare's tragedy. Due to the

[15] Shakespeare. *Hamlet*. 3.1.56.

uncertainties regarding the legitimacy of his proposal to become a murderer and the action-drafts performed by him, the initial image of a hero becomes that of a rogue. Finally, his environment perceives him as a mad and foolish villain.

> Any initial uncertainty we might have about Hamlet's ethical identity [...] is intensified by 'revenge' as a course of action that simultaneously draws us to and alienates us from him: as a 'revenger', Hamlet is transformed instantly into both hero and villain. (Davies 2008: p. 51)

Even though the permanent uncertainties and paranoia that dominate Shakespeare's play is different from war coverage, the way in which journalists (especially the interviewed Germans) recalled the atmosphere and debates within their newspapers regarding participating in on-site war coverage can nevertheless be linked to Hamlet's question. Drawing a parallel to Hamlet, it will be acknowledged here that – whether one should report from the war region or not, and which possible dangers as well as opportunities that might entail – is one of the existential questions of war coverage. This question is also a contentious issue concerning responsibility that both the German journalists and their employers, the newspapers, were confronted with.

The interviews showed some of the factors that influenced the newspapers' and journalists' preparations for their war coverage and how they decided whether to send their staff-journalists to the war region or not. On the one hand, there were internal factors that existed within the newspaper, and on the other hand, there were external factors that influenced this situation from outside the newspaper. External factors were factors such as visa regulations or number of places in the embedded program. The internal factors concerned the debates for and against participating in war coverage in Iraq that took place in German newspapers. The internal factors will be the matter of my analysis in order to find out how journalists and their newspapers made decisions and what the factors were which influenced them.

Contrary to the American newspapers, which supported the idea of sending their journalists to Iraq immediately after the war started, German newspapers and their journalists were doubtful. The German journalists expressed considerations and concerns of their editors and themselves regarding the issue of their presence in Iraq or its bordering regions. In this question, the proportions of power between journalists' and the editorial boards' decisions remained unclear after the interpretation of the interviews. Some of the journalists worked as editors and

offered some pieces of information about this decision from both sides in the interviews.

However, this information was confusing; namely some journalists insisted that the editorial staff, not the journalists themselves, had a more crucial role in making the final decision about whether the journalists should be sent to the war region (cf. Fichte, *FAZ*), while others stressed that each journalist was able to individually decide whether to go to Iraq or not (cf. Lang, *FAZ*). In the interpretation by the *FAZ* and *SZ* journalists, the organization of the newspaper's war reports was guided by the editors’ considerations regarding the following topics on macro- and micro-levels:

Macro-Level:	**Institution / Employer / Newspaper**
Strategic organization of the reporting	From which locations should journalists report about the Iraq war? What are the advantages and disadvantages?
Economic factors	What can we afford with money we can provide from our newspaper?
Information sources	What kind of information do we need for professional reporting and how do we get it?
Micro-Level:	**People / Employees / Journalists**
Security of the journalists	Can the newspapers guarantee the journalists' security in the war region? How can they do that?
Status of the journalists / State of the art to report	What is the best way to report from the war region? Should journalists report on-site, on a freelance basis, and/or participate in the embedded program?

Table 1: Pre-Coverage decisions on Macro- and Micro-Level

Although the editorial staff of the German newspapers demonstrated a predominant reluctance to send staff members to Iraq, the internal factors that influenced their decision and the exact arguments made by the editorial board concerning this topic remained unclear for all the German journalists interviewed. To the journalists, it seemed that the editorial board had made their decision – not to send journalists to Iraq – for the following four reasons: (1) strategic considerations about the organization of war reporting; (2) doubts about the quality of the reporting from the war region in general and from the position of embedded journalists in particular; (3) doubts about security for journalists in Iraq and on its borders; and (4) economic factors.

4.3.1 Strategic Organization of War Reporting

The German journalists, who had years of experience of working as journalists and as editors as well as covering political issues and wars, juxtaposed the advantages and disadvantages of deploying journalists to Iraq. Thinking out loud, they considered how to organize and manage war coverage in advance and foresee problems at hand. This phenomenon, to philosophize about possible outcomes of a project (here, war coverage) as well as to make relevant theoretical considerations, came into light above all else in the interviews with German journalists. They used and enjoyed this communication form the interview in order to develop their ideas about this subject. They often used conceptual metaphors in order to visualize their viewpoints.

For example, Zimmermann (*SZ*) implicitly drew a parallel between the organization of war coverage and the scientific investigation of earthquakes. According to him, in order to gain the most insight, knowledge, and information about war, one has to be as close as possible to the source of the "vibration" (line 114), the epicenter. This promise always has to be balanced with the dangers of getting too close to the epicenter. He said that, "the vibration that was triggered off by war is of course better to feel in neighboring countries" (lines 114-115). It means that it might be better to report from neighboring countries such as Kuwait to get an overview of what was happening, rather than in Iraq itself. To the contrary, in the war region, journalists might be able to see and hear bombings and shootings, but they would not have an overview; rather, they would have a very narrow impression of events.

In fact, journalists in a war region may see and hear shooting and fighting directly but cannot get a general overview of what is happening. They cannot perceive what is happening around them or which military strategy the combatants are using. In this situation, journalists are neither able to get independent information, nor to prove pieces of information they get (cf. Werner, *FAZ*, lines 68-70). What may help to improve the quality of information gathering in a given war, according to Lang (*FAZ*), is to employ journalists not in the war region itself but rather in the capitals of other countries involved in the war. As an experienced war reporter, Lang explained that information from the war regions always flows to the governments first, because they already have their intelligence services and diplomats in place (lines 125-128). Hence, having a network of people close to ruling powers may be very helpful for proper war coverage.

Another example shows how Lang (*FAZ*) foresaw the professional problems the German journalists faced when reporting from Iraq or Kuwait, referring to the hierarchy of information. Journalists' previous knowledge of the military organization in wars can serve as the basis for a meta-analysis of primary sources of information. Such analysis represents a central part of the organization of war coverage and its management in advance. According to him, the military information always flows from the bottom-up: Every front line military unit is obliged to report the state of affairs of their location to the military headquarters. This information regarding military action is compiled into the military status report at headquarters. Using this information, the general can choose which strategy he and his army need to use to win the war. Hence, both the general and his military status report constitute the best informational sources for journalists and not the single military units on the front line.

This knowledge about the flow of military information does not necessarily help to gain information, as journalists are usually neither welcomed by generals, nor at military headquarters (cf. Lang, *FAZ*, lines 216-238). When journalists tried to interview generals in the past, they have often been left waiting “outside the door” (Lang, *FAZ*, line 226) and could only gain information from the responsible press officer, whose task, however, is not to present information objectively, but rather to shape it according to the military communication policies set by the general. Thus, a press officer prefers to report successful military operations more often than military defeats or problems. The military commanders will generally avoid releasing

negative information, because, "bad news is depressing and does not boost the stamina of the fighting force" (ibid., lines 231-232). Lang made the conclusion that it is not necessary for the quality of the reporting to send journalists to the military's press conferences.

If it is known that a journalist knows more about front-line strategic military operations than the press officer has reported, he could be suspected of spying, because he could not have gained the information legitimately. Only the general can authoritatively identify what pieces of information are legitimate (cf. lines 239-241). Lang believed that in order to avoid the previously mentioned problems and to improve the quality of information about the war, a proper strategy for newspapers is not to send their journalists exclusively in the war region itself, but rather in the capitals of involved or neighboring countries. Information flows to the government from the war regions. The government, in turn, gains information from the commander of its armed forces and from its intelligence services and diplomats in the region.

> As a journalist, who is a good listener and has good relationships, he can learn more about the war in Afghanistan from London than all of the journalists deployed there, because the journalists there stand in front of the door and not behind it. (Lang, *FAZ*, lines 387-389)

Fichte (*FAZ*) noted the role of the readership in the debate about proper war coverage. He stated that the average reader does indeed not only expect war coverage from the front lines, but reads the newspaper in order to understand the reasons for war – its background and the political discussions related to it – to be able to form an opinion. Not only should the readership be able to make opinions about war, journalists have to be able to "comprehend" and "judge" the situation of war and draw conclusions. Journalists' professional action also includes intellectual capability: Their professional task consists of gaining an overview of the relevant aspects and events of a war and as a consequence come to logical conclusions. In this regard, Fichte compares journalists and the military; namely that the professional action of journalists matches that of the military:

> To comprehend the situation, to judge the situation and to come to a conclusion, this is the rule of three that is valid for the military as well as for journalists. (Lang, *FAZ*, lines 63-64)

Organizing war reporting means taking into account different perspectives on one problem. Ideally, proper war coverage should present a balanced picture of a war. Such a picture should provide information about fighting on the front line as well as

the situation of the civilian population, about crimes and breaches of human rights, and should take note of every single party involved. A newspaper has to be sure to provide information from all these sides and to organize the reporting in this way.

Lehmann (*SZ*) stated the ideal of employment in three groups of journalists. These groups correspond to the following three article genres: reporting; background-analysis; and commenting (line 299). This is an essential that can be seen as a keynote throughout the journalists’ interviews from the American and German newspapers. Repeatedly underlined was the significance of differentiation between genres for quality of the reporting. The presence of these three genres in newspapers “marks a proper war coverage” (line 300). The action-goal of the project “proper war coverage” should be reports, analysis, and comments about war. In order to transpose this directive, the following groups of reporters should be employed (cf. lines 286-300). These groups indicate a functional differentiation.

The first group should go to the war region or some of its neighboring countries and cover the news from there. They should be experienced and know how to behave in different situations. These experts should provide an overview about the situation in war and not allow themselves to get impressed by things or combat units. The journalists need to have a “professional distance” in order to do this (Lehmann, *SZ*, line 304). Their primary task in the war region should be to collect as much information as possible. Above all, they should examine the situation of the civil population. The second group of journalists should be analysts who write the background articles while located in their prospective newspaper headquarters or in other areas relevant to the war. Their task consists of selecting and checking the information coming from the war. These journalists should write a “classical diplomatic and strategic analysis” (ibid., line 495) of the war. The third group of journalists should write their opinion and comments on the war. These journalists should always cover at least two sides of the story and be able to discuss the pros and cons of the war in question. They would have to explain the political, humanitarian, and economic consequences of the war to their readership (cf. Meyer, *SZ*, lines 177-180).

4.3.2 Doubts about Quality of Information from the War Region

The *SZ* and the *FAZ* put one or two journalists on the placement list for the embedded program, but were not informed as to whether the application had been

successful until the war began. Thus, according to this situation, the original action-goal was to participate in this program. In the meantime, the *FAZ* and *SZ* sent their journalists to Northern Iraq and neighboring countries such as Kuwait and Jordan. At the beginning of the war (March 20th, 2003), the investigated German newspapers were told that their application for the embedded program had been too late. The interviewed editors and journalists blamed each other for the late application. Both newspapers *SZ* and *FAZ* finally obtained a single placement from May 2003 onwards, which turned out to be the official end of the war. The journalists traced this course of affairs back to Germany's non-participation in the war in Iraq, which meant that the German journalists traveling embedded with the US military were unwanted and their places were limited, as Braun (*SZ*) explains:

> The German media was not terribly important for the Americans. We, the Germans, were against the war. That means we were given relatively few embedded placements and in cases of doubt they tended to go to the television networks or to Spiegel or Focus if they had a placement, but I believe it was difficult for the daily newspapers to get one. (lines 290-292)

The presence of journalistic staff in the war region required participation in the embedded program; otherwise their mobility would have been curtailed (cf. Lang, *FAZ*; Fichte, *FAZ*), because covering the war from the Iraqi side was far too dangerous (cf. Lanow, *SZ*). Nevertheless, all German journalists acknowledge both advantages and disadvantages regarding having staff members in Iraq. Without taking part in the embedded program, it would not be possible for a journalist to follow the tanks, either walking or in a car, and interview soldiers and civilians on the road. At the same time, it was a "normal journalistic reflex to want to go where the stories are" (Zimmermann, *SZ*, lines 70-71). Participating in the embedded program was also the best way to gain an intensive insider's view into the military and was the only possibility for journalists to get close to the war zone. The limitations of embedded reporting and witnessing only one part of reality could be compensated for by the employment of several reporters embedded in different units.

Many journalists were of two minds concerning the embedded program. On the one hand, they found it "a good method" (Lanow, *SZ*, line 371), but doubted the quality of the information when traveling with military troops (cf. Zimmermann, *SZ*; Fichte, *FAZ*). It would have been difficult for journalists to maintain their professional distance; they would produce a one-sided, dependent report, losing

their critical perspective and being unavoidably exploited by the military (cf. Lehmann, *SZ*). On the other hand, there was no better solution for reporting directly from Iraq. German journalists were relieved not to participate in the embedded program, after they had heard about the death of some embedded reporters, for example, Christian Liebig from *Focus* magazine.

4.3.3 Doubts about Security of Journalists

While some journalists believed that because of the unpredictable security situation in the war region it would be irresponsible for the newspaper to send journalists over, other journalists thought it would be irresponsible not to send journalists. The latter group only considers war reportage that had been produced in the region to be truly legitimate (cf. Hartmann, *FAZ*). For other journalists, the inherent risk was a weighty counter-argument against journalists reporting from Iraq (cf. Baumann, *FAZ*). It would be “irresponsible” (Lehmann, *SZ*, line 273) for a newspaper to risk its journalists' lives in order to get a good story, as, in military jargon, journalists belong to the category of “soft targets” in conflict regions and it would be impossible for the employer (newspaper) to protect them.

One of the *SZ* journalistic editors confirmed that there were internal debates within the editorial boards concerning the question of security of staff-members in the war region. In his view, editors were usually very careful when deciding to send someone to a conflict region. He states that one should follow the credo “never send somebody to a place, that you wouldn't visit yourself” (Zimmermann, *SZ*, line 59), which can be interpreted as a variation of the Golden Rule “one should not treat others in ways that one would not like to be treated.” Hence, none of the German journalists were forced to go to Iraq, and only journalists who really wanted to be sent to the region were chosen.

The *FAZ* and the *SZ* journalists and their editors were proud to mention that their newspapers tried to avoid putting their staff at risk on principle. They criticized other newspapers for taking fewer precautions for their staff-members. Journalists from the *SZ* pointed out the traumatic event that the newspaper underwent because of the death of its reporter Egon Scotland right at the beginning of the Balkan wars. This tragic event affected the editorial board and led them to be more cautious about sending journalists to dangerous regions. Editors from both newspapers had serious

concerns about security in Iraq, which was confirmed when news about the first journalists killed in Iraq was first made public.

> It also played a bit of a role that one did not want to endanger the lives of the employees. We are always a little more cautious than in the other newspapers, which would rather put lives at risk. And I mean, there are still a lot of journalists who died during the war, and not afterwards. (Brunner, *FAZ*, lines 166-169)

The German journalists' positions on reporting from the war region were very ambiguous. Their opinions differed, with some of the journalists agreeing that at least part of the war coverage should come from the war region itself, but not all of the interviewed journalists shared this point of view. The same ambiguity can be stated regarding the personal attitude regarding this issue, as both attitudes – wanting to go there or not wanting to be sent – are expressed by *SZ* and *FAZ* journalists. The journalists also expressed that the position of their editors concerning this issue was also unclear. As the interviews showed, some of the *FAZ* and *SZ* journalists claimed that it would be necessary for them to have their own staff correspondents in Iraq, while others pointed out that they were able to obtain a better standard of information about the war from outside the region.

One group of German journalists expressed admiration for their colleagues from different newspapers who travelled to the conflict regions. Another group criticized them. The journalists who were eager to travel to the war region were occasionally stigmatized by the interviewed journalists as people who do "not [do] good journalism" by doing so (cf. Braun, *SZ*, line 331). They are sometimes accused of going to the war region for personal experience rather than for professional reasons. These journalists could be seen as "courageous" or "bold", but at the same time they were dismissed as "frivolous" or "imprudent" journalists (all quot. Braun, *SZ*, lines 332). Their action was criticized by the lack of awareness regarding their personal safety.

Another journalist, also an experienced war reporter from the same newspaper who was reporting from Kuwait, complained about his anxieties related to security and whether he would be able to return to Germany, especially in the post-war period. He felt inhibitions because, "I am not really an 'ace' among war correspondents, one of those guys who's experienced everything a hundred times [who are] emphatically cool" (Werner, *SZ*, lines 135-136).

Ilmert (*FAZ*) noted that working in Kuwait was dangerous, as missiles landed there too (lines 71-73). Sometimes the interviewed journalists could cross the borders into Iraq, but it became increasingly difficult to do. The best way around this was to join a humanitarian organization, for example, *International Red Cross*, or the American military units. Zimmermann (*SZ*) remembered that he and his colleagues were shocked by the deaths of some British reporters and journalists from other countries who had not returned from their day trips to Iraq (lines).

4.3.4 Economic Factors

Furthermore, the journalists Fichte (*FAZ*) and Ilmert (*FAZ*) pointed out that there are increasing economic factors, which handicapped proper news coverage in their newspaper. In order to provide war coverage of a good quality, a newspaper requires a staffed team of journalists who can be sent to different locations relevant to their respective coverage. Notwithstanding, due to the crisis in the newspaper market, in which the staff was generally reduced, meeting the self-set claim of ideal war coverage has become even harder. Sending journalists to other regions, including war zones, implies an additional financial burden on newspapers in general.

Quality war news coverage demands some extra costs, because newspapers are charged not only for journalists’ salaries but also for foreign bureaus and employment of local staff such as translators, security guards, and cooks. Furthermore, newspapers incurred additional expenses if their journalists had to accompany high-ranking officials on their trip to Iraq, such as the President of the United States and the U.S. Department of Defense. Moreover, according to Braun (*SZ*), a newspaper requires a large editorial board, and journalists with specialist knowledge who could submit longer articles in their field of expertise when required. Additionally, a newspaper must have enough money in the budget to pay for external expertise and information from news agencies.

These demands apply to larger newspapers, as smaller newspapers could not afford to employ several journalists at a time. But due to the crisis in the newspaper market, whereby staff was reduced, meeting the self-set claim of ideal war coverage became even harder. Therefore, according to Schmid (*FAZ*), “at least bigger newspapers can afford” proper war coverage. However, Fischer (*SZ*) complained that German newspapers, even the larger ones like the *SZ*, cannot afford it and have to

make clear economical calculations when planning newspapers' news coverage, especially if it will take place abroad.

4.4 American Journalists: "Should I Stay or Should I Go?"

The interviewed American journalists noted that their newspapers were very concerned about profound war coverage organization and the quality of reporting because their home country was involved. For example, Bloom (*NYT*) compared the intensity of these preparations to the situation after 9/11. Additionally, the journalists were made aware by their editors that they have to work "very strenuously" (ibid., line 17) in the war region and to maintain the reporting "as high of a quality as possible" (ibid., line 22). Newman (*WP*) noted that, "a lot of the resources at the newspaper just converged on the war" (lines 69-70). The *WP* hired approximately ten extra journalists for the upcoming war coverage. These journalists were young reporters, who until then had only gained experience in local news coverage. They were supposed to be sent to Iraq to be embedded within military units (cf. Goldsmith, *WP*, lines 65-66). Furthermore, the number of journalists covering the Pentagon was doubled. At least five journalists were sent to Baghdad, Kuwait, and Qatar. Decisions concerning logistical considerations (technical supplements, accommodation, and so forth) were also made, as an example from one *WP* correspondent shows:

> We had schedules for when reporters would come in and who would be with what unit; who would not be with a US unit but would travel independently, to talk to Iraqis; how we would organize ourselves in terms of transportation and supplies and communication and all those things. (Goldsmith, *WP*, lines 24-28)

In terms of the decision about the journalists' presence in Iraq, the interviewed American journalists did not mention or remember any highly contentious debates about this question within their newspapers. The journalists acknowledged it as an obligation of their profession (cf. Thurman, *WP*, lines 199-200) or even as a reward and therefore desired to be sent to the war region. They were either chosen by the editorial boards or applied to go abroad themselves. In some single cases, journalists applied for traveling to the war regions several times until they got permission (cf. Schulz, *NYT*).

For example, by the time of the interview, Thurman (*WP*), a female military correspondent had been to Iraq about ten times, often making rather short trips with

military officials. In the interview, she stressed that on the one hand, it had been her own decision to go to Iraq; she had not been “forced” (line 196) to go there. On the other hand, it was “an expectation” (line 198) of her employer. She also identified her role and reason for being in Iraq as a necessity, otherwise she “wasn't doing [her] job” (lines 198-199) properly and would not be able to witness combat situations.

Thurman described traveling to the war region as her “vital purpose” (line 283) as a journalist, as part of doing her job “in a responsible way” (line 209). Despite her experience of working conditions in Iraq often being “hard and unpleasant” (line 211), Thurman expected to gain special knowledge about the state of affairs and to witness the situation in the region with her own eyes. This would help her get to know about the military equipment, strategies and so forth, and she would be able “to understand things that I could never understand otherwise” (lined 211-12). Without such trips to Iraq, Thurman would feel “limited” (line 210) and “partially blind” (line 215).

Furthermore, for Thurman, participating in war coverage in Iraq has had a deeper personal meaning for her since 9/11. She felt responsibility for her family, for her four children. She became a military reporter even though she claims she was neither interested in the military nor in Middle Eastern politics. She felt that she needed a lot of stamina being a female military reporter in a male-dominated field and had acquired background knowledge on this topic in a very short time by herself without any previous knowledge and experience.

4.4.1 Working Conditions – Reporting from Iraq as a Sisyphean Task: Trying to move the Boulder Uphill

Taking into account the journalists' statements in their interviews, their work in Iraq was characterized by a working situation whereby journalists were repeatedly confronted with risks and uncertainties. In general, the journalists compared reporting in Iraq to a Sisyphean task as one of them put it, as the “whole day is just trying to move the ball forward” (Schulz, *NYT*, lines 221-222). Whereas the US-based journalists had regular working hours, the journalists who went to Iraq stated that the daily working routines they had been accustomed to in the United States were altered due to the fundamental changes in their living and working situation. The examples in this chapter will show that the journalists’ situation in the Iraq war required a high degree of spontaneous action. They had to have some previous

knowledge as to how to act in dangerous situations but also required the ability to re-adapt quickly to find new action-plans.

Every single day in Iraq brought a number of unexpected difficulties and obstacles for the journalists. Each of the interviewed journalists reported "bad memories" and "nightmares" about having difficulties such as "meeting the deadline, sand storms, [and] bullets flying around" (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 515-516). This definition of the situation that journalists were facing while working in Iraq, with pressures from their newspapers to finish articles on time, natural phenomena such as sand storms, and the life-threatening situation the war presented, were additionally worsened by issues of lacking foreign language skills, and the generally unstable situation regarding security, restricted mobility, and technological constraints. All of these issues can be summarized under the main issue of limitations and dependencies that the journalists faced. During the interviews, journalists mentioned the following problems that challenged their professional action: (1) unstable situation regarding security and restricted mobility; (2) fears and anxieties; (3) gender as a strategy; (4) lack of the language knowledge/skills; and (5) helpful but insufficient technical devices that sometimes did not work.

4.4.2 Unstable Situation Regarding Security and Restricted Mobility

The journalists' ability to move freely around the war area and gather information, as they would do in the United States, was hindered in many respects. They could not spontaneously travel to any location in and outside of Baghdad. The journalists needed Iraqi drivers because of restricted mobility and because they were not allowed to drive themselves. Tallman (*NYT*) longed for the working routines he had in the United States where, "you can jump on the A-train and go one stop and pop off at 59th St. and go talk to a shop owner" (lines 331-332). In contrast, moving around Baghdad was very time-consuming because of the numerous checkpoints and traffic jams:

> In Iraq I found that a lot of times it took up a lot of our energy just getting from one place to another, because often there were check-points throughout the city, so you had terrible traffic jams and we would be sitting in traffic jams, and wasting hours traveling, just to go a few miles. And that meant that we couldn't be as efficient, perhaps, as we wanted to be. Like, we couldn't go quickly from interview to interview often. Maybe there is just time to do only one thing, so to have two or three reporters working on different aspects of the city, it made it more organized. (Bloom, *NYT*, lines 46-52)

Due to their restricted mobility, the journalists in Iraq had to rely on their colleagues and work in teams. The journalists came to understand their physical limitations in the war area just as Thurman (*WP*) noted that she could not be omniscient. They needed to reassess the efficiency of their professional action. The journalists' productivity was measured as a result of their teamwork. The quality of reporting began to depend to a high degree on the team's daily organization. The professional working routine that one single journalist had in the United States became a shared working routine. What would be one professional action-goal in the US became a sum of innumerous action-goals and drafts being disseminated internally between colleagues of one newspaper.

The interviewed journalists distinguished between different degrees of the security situation in Iraq, making an exception for Northern Iraq/Kurdistan, where it was “relatively safe” (Tallman, *NYT*, line 338). These were, on the one hand, the dimensions of time, and, on the other hand, the dimension of space. The dimension “time” included the stages of the U.S. invasion: the periods during and after the war (with many different security stages) that could be distinguished. After the official end of the war, the security situation worsened and it became much more dangerous for journalists to travel around the country on their own than it had been during the war (cf. e.g. Thurman, *WP*; Bloom, *NYT*).

Thurman (*WP*) differentiated “in terms of how [she] would work” (line 143) during and after the war. She described the time during the war as “unique and different” (line 124) from working in Iraq after the official end of the war in terms of security and mobility. She had a lot more “freedom” (line 153) during the war in terms of travelling around the country, staying in hotels and eating in local restaurants while accompanied by an Iraqi driver and interpreter. She could spontaneously decide where to make stops in order to interview people. One interview took place at a military base, while another one was with Iraqis in the streets.

At the beginning, journalists could travel to different places and gain first-hand information “by seeing things” (Bloom, *NYT*, line 30) themselves. During the Iraq War Tallman (*NYT*) had only been traveling “with an interpreter and photographer, no guards” (line 339). When he returned to Iraq in 2005, driving without guards in Baghdad or beyond it was unthinkable because the situation “was getting tense” (line 340). As Bloom (*NYT*) put it, “we couldn't ordinarily go ourselves, just

independently" (lines 168-169). Thus, the journalists had a driver, who often served as an interpreter and guard at the same time.

There were different levels of security in some locations, for example, between the districts of Baghdad or other cities. The journalists themselves lived outside the safety of the Green Zone, albeit in a relatively safe district of Baghdad. All of the interviewed journalists pointed out that security in Baghdad was generally better than in other places. This meant that they could "move around fairly freely" (Tallman, *NYT*, line 344), especially at the beginning of the war. The security situation within Baghdad's districts, however, was changing constantly; "some neighborhoods are okay one day and then terrible the next" (Tallman, *NYT*, line 345). The security situation was changing "from one block to the next block" (Thurman, *WP*, line 227). Traveling outside of Baghdad to places like Fallujah, Basra, or Tikrit caused a lot of difficulties.

The embedded journalists who were interviewed also differentiated between security situations because it was also not always the same: "it differ[ed] from one seat in a vehicle to the next seat; it differ[ed] from what type of vehicle you [were] riding in" (Thurman, *WP*, line 228). The position and the function of the unit also had an impact on security. Thus, journalists who were embedded with units on the front lines had other security situations than those who were in units further behind. They had high-ranking generals on board and were not directly involved in combat operations. Even though these journalists generally described their security situation as "less dangerous" (Goldsmith, *WP*, line 38) than that of the journalists who were embedded with military units on the front line, they were not safe either, due to attacks with missiles at one stage.

4.4.3 Fears and Anxieties

The journalists' everyday professional lifeworld included the regular experience of frightening and dangerous situations. Working in dangerous situations meant that journalists had to deal with daily existential anxieties such as the possibility of being killed. Even gathering information—a routinized professional action at home – could cost journalists their life. Dealing with anxieties seemed to be a daily practice for journalists in Iraq: "anybody who tells you they didn't feel fear is lying to you or they're insane" (Tallman, *NYT*, line 384). Due to the unstable security situation in Iraq, the editors asked the journalists "to be very careful" (Thurman, *WP*, line 25).

Mostly, the journalists had to ascertain the security of their particular district of the city, relying on their “networks of sources” (Tallman, *NYT*, line 346), among other things such as eliciting the knowledge of the civilians living locally.

The journalists had to assess the security situation themselves too, trusting their instincts and “the instincts of the Iraqi staff who [knew] the city well” (Tallman, *NYT*, line 347). The constantly updated local security situation was “almost like a science” (Thurman, *WP*, lines 228-229) and “almost an intellectual process of making clear calculations” (ibid., line 225). This process included: (1) searching for information about the security situation in a particular district of Bagdad; (2) making logical observations of the security situation there; and (3) making conclusions regarding whether to travel to one or another district. Thurman (*WP*) explains the logic of her professional action concerning security as follows:

> Nobody wants anything to happen to me for the purpose of covering an article. My editors here place a lot of emphasis on safety and clearly I have a personal obligation to my family to make the best decision I can and prudent decision about what risks I take in order to gather information. (lines 220-223)

Some of the journalists also believed in coincidence and fate. In order to improve their personal safety, journalists had to develop and apply safety strategies. Even though many situations in Iraq were beyond journalists' control, they had to “try to control [their] environment as much as possible” (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 386-387). The following two basic safety strategies that deal with the physical appearance of the journalists and their mental control of the situation can be summarized according to the interviews: (1) the mental dimension – retaining composure in dangerous situations by exercising self-control such as avoiding panicking and trying to “stay extremely calm” (Bloom, *NYT*, line 209); and (2) the physical dimension – trying “not [to] attract attention” (Schulz, *NYT*, line 178). Both strategies cannot be separated as white American journalists always attracted attention as foreigners by their outer appearance. Using safety strategies was “a constant balancing act” (Thurman, *WP*, line 223). This was a constant struggle and discussion with one's inner self, considering “Have I done the best I can to make the right decision? Have I asked the questions I need to ask? Is it worth it, what I'm trying to do?” (ibid., lines 230-232).

At the same time, the journalists admitted that calculations and safety strategies were only one side of the problem and made life difficult. The other side of the war

situation is uncertainty. As Thurman (*WP*) pointed out, "you can't avoid the completely unpredictable" (line 229). Some of the journalists remembered unpredictable situations they went into. Bloom (*NYT*) mentioned an incident in which the car behind her exploded after driving over a land mine. Another time she recalled a situation when she was in Fallujah interviewing civilians in their house, when masked, armed men entered and demanded to see her ID. Nothing happened, and she was allowed to return home. However, while these armed men were checking her documents, she was terrified as to what the outcome might be—she could have been kidnapped or murdered. On another occasion, masked men on motorcycles surrounded the car she was traveling in. As soon as they noticed that she was a foreigner, they demanded to see her ID (cf. lines 230-237).

Other journalists, such as Tallman (*NYT*), tried to block fears by developing a rather casual relationship with regards to living and reporting in dangerous situations in a war region. As Tallman explained, it had been his decision to go to Iraq and there was nothing he could do about it except continue reporting. Reflecting on his time in Iraq and the repeated difficulties he encountered, Tallman gained a new perspective on his experience and finally came to see it as an adventure. During the interview, he retrospectively notes that the danger was "kind of fun too but it wasn't fun at the moment" (lines 527-528). According to him, he often realized the danger of the situation after the incident, especially when reporting the situation to his colleagues and his family. He was surprised that he had risked his life for the text of an article on a number of occasions, as he said, "afterwards you start talking about it and you think, 'my God, what you have to suffer sometimes to get [...] a few paragraphs of text into [the] newspaper the next day'" (lines 528-530).

Applying the strategy of "mental control" meant that the journalists had to keep their self-composure in dangerous situations, identified their fears and "regulated" and "modulated" them. Ideally, they tried to avoid becoming "paralyzed" by fears and prevent their anxieties from "consuming" them, even though it was not always possible in the real situation: "it's always a very fine line not to get into trouble" (Bloom, *NYT*, lines 203-204). In the interview, Thurman presented herself as being self-confident to be able to control dangerous situations, because she was mentally "prepared" (line 224). Her general attitude was to avoid being "scared all the time"

(line 230) when reporting from war regions, else/otherwise she would not have been able to do her job as a war correspondent.

Most of the journalists interviewed found it uncomfortable to have face-to-face encounters with Iraqis after the military operations of the U.S. Army, such as interviewing victims in hospitals after bombings (cf. Bloom, *NYT*). The journalists were afraid of being identified with the invaders. The journalists had experienced the same situation when they were embedded with the military (cf. Schulz, *NYT*). This was not only an unpleasant situation for everyone involved, but also a difficult situation to report about. On the one hand, the journalists understood that some of the Iraqis preferred not to be interviewed by American journalists. On the other hand, they had no other choice in the matter, because it was their job (c.f. e.g. Bloom, *NYT*; Thurman, *WP*).

The journalist’s ability to remain calm and not to panic could help mediate dangerous situations. In one situation, for instance, in which Thurman (*WP*) was interviewing patients at an Iraqi hospital, she first apologized for her presence and then explained to the Iraqi victims why she was there. She felt that it was inappropriate to show her fear or give the interviewees the impression that she wanted to flee. However, looking back over several trips to Iraq during and after the war, Thurman presents herself in the interview as very composed and courageous when confronted with dangerous situations. She remembered only “a few situations, where [she] felt nervous” (Thurman, *WP*, line 217).

A strategy of not attracting attention applied, for example, to the situation of being surrounded by crowds. Bloom (*NYT*) designated this strategy as “a crowd control issue” (line 220). She remembered an incident whereby she was talking to people in the streets and was suddenly surrounded by a large group of people. Even though she understood that these civilians were probably only curious and did not mean any harm, she was very frightened indeed. As she explained, she was afraid of losing control of the situation. In these terms she spoke about a “dangerous crowd mentality [which] can spread like a fire if it's not managed” (lines 225-226). Apart from this situation, Bloom experienced “a few times when a crowd didn't seem friendly” (line 230). Her strategy in this particular situation was to leave:

> [...] if you're talking to someone and the crowd starts to build, you sort of have to think, okay, maybe I should end this conversation; in my head I'm not feeling comfortable. There

> are too many people, some of them are shouting at me from over here, then someone behind me. (lines 226-229)

Metaphorically speaking, it was important to move as secretly as a military spy plane, "to go under the radar" (Schulz, *NYT*, line 178). This meant that journalists should avoid being "an obvious target" (ibid., line 174) when traveling to the different districts of Baghdad. They should not use a high-profile method of transport such as going "in an armored car that looks like a tank and has a bunch of guys with guns" (lines 171-172). By contrast, the rule of thumb was to avoid travelling with the American troops and instead to use a low-profile mode of transport.

> [G]o with a regular beat-up Iraqi car driven by Iraqi drivers with Iraqi security guys, who are carrying guns but they're not caring them out, like this. They are just carrying them low. If there's trouble, they can use them, but the whole point is to go under the radar and not attract attention. And so far that's worked. (Schulz, *NYT*, lines 175-178)

Another example of applying the strategy of avoiding attracting attention is Schulz's experience of leaving his lodgings at night and accompanying an Army patrol. Schulz remembered a time when he was sitting on "a pile of rubble" (line 517) of a house that had recently been bombed. It was dark and he was not allowed to bring a flashlight, because the snipers might have seen him. Additionally, he had to put "a blanket over [his] head" (line 519) in order to not to get recognized. Additionally, in some cases the journalists had to be careful when using technology in combat zones:

> It's dark and you can't have any light shining, because then the snipers will see you. You've got [...] a blanket over your head. I once filed the story line lying on my back on a top of a house [...]. I was with the marines and they were sweeping this town, trying to clear out the insurgents, who had taken over this town. And I had to file the story. It was night time and everybody had gone to sleep. They had guards posted on the top of these two buildings [...] where everybody was sleeping and I couldn't sit up, because the light from the laptop is gonna shine and give a target to snipers on buildings. (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 518-524)

The experience of being involved in dangerous situations every single day had an impact on some of the journalists. Tallman (*NYT*), for example, admits that fear had changed his personality. While before he had been an easy-going person, now his behavior and attitude to life had changed dramatically (the statement he said off records). According to Tallman, he became a more thoughtful and careful person. During the interview he refused to answer some of the questions because he thought that I would misinterpret his expressions against him by misinterpreting his articles

and that it would get posted on the internet. At the same time, he apologized for his mistrust and labeled himself as being “paranoid” (line 609).

Most of the journalists who have been to Iraq pointed out that they do not blame their colleagues who spent most of their time in their hotel rooms for safety reasons. One journalist said, “there is a lot written about this unfairly” (Bloom, *NYT*, line 35). Some sources accused war correspondents of relying on the information gathered by their Iraqi staff and by watching the news. The journalists stated that this would only happen in the worst-case scenario. If the security situation was so bad that journalists could not leave the hotel, then they said that they did not have any other choice but to stay in. The journalists noted, however, that in this situation there was no reason to go to Iraq at all, because in a hotel they were not able to report independently. They would be very limited in their reporting when only observing the war from their hotel window only.

Some of the journalists not only took their own security situation into account, but also that of their Iraqi staff, whose security was even more in danger than that of the American journalists, because they were employed by newspapers from the invading country. The interviewed journalists were very concerned about TV journalists who had a much worse security situation than print media journalists. They were often unable to apply the safety strategies of their colleagues at the newspapers to the same extent. For example, one strategy that they were unable to follow was avoiding attracting attention, as their crews had to carry large amounts of conspicuous technical equipment such as cameras, which could easily make them a target. Therefore, TV journalists went onto the streets of Baghdad rather “rarely” (Tallman, *NYT*, line 379), while the print journalists in Iraq made an effort to leave their offices at least once a day (ibid.).

To summarize, the American journalists tried to be as careful as possible in Iraq. Journalists applying different safety strategies to avoid and to control dangerous situations characterized the journalists’ professional action. Some examples of dangerous or difficult situations in which the journalists felt very threatened included, e.g., reporting from crowded places, being in a situation they could not control, interviewing Iraqi civilians after American bombings and being identified with the invaders, being outside at night, and seeing dead bodies. The journalists had to observe the security situation in districts of Bagdad and decide for themselves whether or not to travel to the locations of interest and relevance.

4.4.4 Gender as a Strategy

In the United States, I interviewed three female reporters: two from the *NYT* and one from the *WP*. Thurman (*WP*) and Bloom (*NYT*) had been to Iraq several times and when asked if they had particular experiences or problems that would relate to their gender, both reported rather positive experiences. Additionally, they felt that they benefited from being women, as their gender helped them to gain information. In contrast, Bloom assumes that a male US journalist would likely be associated with the US military and therefore could pose a threat to the Iraqi population by provoking negative memories and emotions. Female journalists were trusted a lot more by civilians of both sexes. In some cases, they even tried to use their gender to their advantage: "we all use what we have" (Bloom, *NYT*, line 96). Moreover, Bloom is familiar with the culture of the Middle East from her studies and speaks Arabic. Thus, Bloom "often wore a hijab" (line 19) and "wore something long and black and…didn't attract too much attention [and] didn't look 100 percent like a foreigner" (lines 82-83). As a positive result, both for her work and her safety:

> As a woman dressed really conservatively […] most of the time I was treated like I was very non-threatening and that I was respectful of their culture. And basically I feel like I wasn't suspected of having any sort of […] ill intent, I was just there as a sincere woman who just wanted to sort of learn about them, […] to show some kind of willingness to just listen very carefully and a willingness to hear their side. (Bloom, *NYT*, lines 88-94)

WP journalist Thurman stated that in her view, she was treated with equal respect in comparison to her male colleagues: "there was really no difference" (line 78). According to Thurman, she "talked to Iraqi men a lot more than to Iraqi women" (line 108), but it was always "a formal situation" (line 109). Thurman noticed that Iraqis talked to her frankly. She supposes that this was the case because they preferred to speak to people who were not part of the US military. Thurman also reported that she controlled her western habit of shaking hands because she knew that this would seem inappropriate to conservative Muslims.

In Thurman's view, Iraqi men viewed "Western women in different categories" (line 99) as opposed to Iraqi women, and in her opinion they perceived her primarily as a journalist and only secondarily as a woman. She did not seek to emphasize the fact that she was a woman, so she "[did not] ask to stay in the women's quarters or dining area" (lines 109-110). Instead, she "would stay with the men and eat with them at their table and associate with them" (lines 110-111). She stresses that she did not travel to Iraq because she was a woman, but because she was a professional.

Thurman (*WP*) remembered that she was “openly discriminated against for being a woman” only once (lines 84-85). She stated that this was the only negative experience as regards to her gender. The person who had discriminated against her was a senior American military officer. It occurred while she was embedded with the US Marines. Thurman tried to explain this incident by the fact that in general the Marines had fewer female soldiers than other American units and were not used to the presence of women in their units. In the unit with which Thurman was embedded, there were no women at all. She noticed very soon that one senior military officer felt very “uncomfortable with [her] presence” (line 91). By contrast, she had never had problems with younger soldiers and officers. In her words, “others in the unit who were younger guys were fine with it” (line 92). She explained, “[t]hey could talk more openly to me, because, they might have felt more comfortable sharing their feelings than they would with a male reporter for whom they might have felt that they had to put on a more strong front.” (lines 80-82)

4.4.5 Lack of Language Skills

The journalists’ professional action was rendered more difficult by their lack of language skills. They had to rely on the Iraqi staff in their planning of action-goals and -drafts. Only one of the journalists I interviewed – Thurman (*WP*), as mentioned above – spoke Arabic. In consequence, before they were able to interpret information and construct reality via their articles, this information had to run through several levels of interpretation and translation they could not really control. They always needed an Iraqi translator or interpreter to accompany them. Thus, the journalists received descriptions of the situation in Iraq that were constructed by their translators as material to work with. Journalists had to trust these translations, since they could not prove their translators' information:

> There are obviously greater obstacles when you're abroad. The language that you’re interviewing in perhaps may not be your first language. You may not even be able to speak it. I don't speak Arabic. You're depending on interpreters or translators to convey information to you accurately and your questions to the interviewee accurately. (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 567-570)

Journalists and their Iraqi translators spent a lot of time together and the latter ones faced similar or even worse dangers than the U.S. journalists, because they were working for people from an invading country. According to the interviewed journalists, Iraqi translators had the chance to contribute to their reports in

numerous ways. If they wanted to, they could do more than just translate and become journalists with support of the American journalists themselves (cf. Bloom, *NYT*). For example, Iraqi translators were given the chance to prepare an interview with the help of journalists (by suggesting who and what to ask and contributing their own ideas) or even conduct the interview themselves, by taking notes and discussing them with the journalists who would finally put together an article making use of the pieces of information provided (cf. Tallman, *NYT*).

These translators would be mentioned in the authors' byline of the article. However, the names of translators who translated the interviews without changing its content would not be mentioned in the byline. Over time, the American journalists developed collegial relationships with their Iraqi translators and often regarded them as equals. One of the female journalists even became romantically involved with her translator and the couple later moved back to the United States together. Many of the Iraqi translators developed an interest in contributing to the reporting and were later hired by American newspapers as journalists or received scholarships to study journalism in the United States. I was able to meet two former Iraqi translators in New York and Boston, who had started to work for the *NYT* as translators in Iraq and thereafter became more involved in contributing to articles in the *NYT*.

4.4.6 Technical Devices – New Possibilities meet the reality of war

The limitations and dependencies of the journalists such as restricted mobility, lack of language skills, and dependence on civilian population and colleagues were compensated by the use of technology, which they perceived as a facilitation of their professional action. Computers and satellite phones helped journalists to minimize the geographical distance to their homes and compensated for the slowness in achieving action-goals during their working days. Emails from home provided emotional support and by way of email communication with editors, journalists could quickly discuss their reporting process and receive feedback regarding their articles.

Reporting from Iraq not only required journalists to possess the appropriate technical resources, but also to have a high degree of knowledge of how to solve technical problems. All of the journalists interviewed had frequent problems either with their computer or with the internet access in Iraq. As Tallman (*NYT*) said,

“there [was] no end to the difficulties” (lines 497-498) due to “logistical problems” (line 497) journalists had to cope with, because breakdowns happened “all the time” (lines 501-502).

For example, Tallman noted an error that occurred while he was on a military base using an internet cable. While getting up, he stumbled over the cable and his notebook fell down and broke. After this he went without a computer for several days and dictated his news reports to his editor via phone. When he got a new notebook, he thought it was child-sized and too small to work on comfortably, so he continued to report over the phone. Additionally, laptops were damaged by sand. In fact, almost every day in Iraq it was part of the journalists' professional action to dictate their articles to their editors over the phone. They wrote their articles, as Thurman (*WP*) stated “by pen and paper and [dictated them to their] editors over the satellite phone” (lines 131-132). Given tight deadlines, the journalists transmitted their stories by phone without writing them first.

Even cell phones, however, caused problems, because they failed to receive a satellite signal outside of big cities. Even if the satellite dish could receive a signal, it was often not strong enough to use the internet and send a report to the editor by email. Some of the interviewed journalists were lucky to use a “BGAN” (Broadband Global Area Network) (Tallman, *NYT*, line 489). They spoke fondly of their portable wireless internet devices and personified it as “my little thing” (lines 488-489). Using it, journalists could receive a satellite signal anywhere. The users of the BGAN did not report in my interviews, whether they had to purchase it by themselves or if their newspapers paid for it.

Besides getting internet access, another problem the journalists faced in Iraq was where to get and how to maintain electricity. Tallman (*NYT*) stated that “the computer battery would die” (line 499) because of the lack of electric power and the journalists would not be able to send their articles to editors in the United States. The embedded journalists especially had little possibility to recharge batteries in their computer. From time to time, they were allowed to get electrical power from a “humvee” military vehicle (cf. Thurman, *WP*, line 126), but it was not always the case.

The journalists also underlined the positive sides of using technology and compared their working conditions to those of reporters in World War II and in

Vietnam who, "didn't have the benefits of any of this technology" (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 511-512). Despite the technical hitches mentioned above, the interviewed journalists felt that they were in a better position than their predecessors and "should not complain" (ibid., line 510). At the same time, they mentioned that reporters in earlier times had different kinds of pressures and working rhythms. While advanced technology helps journalists, it can also be a burden, as they have to work faster and constantly update information on their newspaper's homepage. For example, Tallman (*NYT*) had to "feed" information to the *International Herald Tribune* (line 513).

4.5 Two Examples of Journalists' Daily Routines

It was challenging to gain information about the journalists' usual working routines, because the interviewees were surprised by the questioning and reluctant to talk about this topic. Many of them refused to reconstruct their working days and claimed that they were not exciting enough to be mentioned as they have the same returning working routine every day. The German journalists only gave fragmental descriptions of their daily work routines in Germany or Kuwait, so they could not be completely reconstructed. Therefore, they will not be mentioned in the further analysis.

Only two American journalists gave a description of their working routines. The embedded American journalists also refused to describe their working routines exactly. On the one hand, these journalists found many of the days they spent traveling embedded with American troops as "uneventful and boring." On the other hand, "every day was completely different, because [they] were moving" (Thurman, *WP*, lines 133-134). For these reasons, the situation definition of a working day in the United States and in Iraq as reconstructed from the interviews with one *NYT* (Tallman) and one *WP* (Newman) journalist will be compared and contrasted.

4.5.1 Working Routines in the United States: A Family Guy

I contacted Newman when I was in the United States, as I had regularly encountered his name in the *Washington Post*. He was a Congressional reporter who wrote about topics concerning the decisions made in the US Congress about the Iraq war. He did not want to make an advanced appointment and asked me to call him when I got to Washington, D.C. so that we would meet spontaneously. His voice appeared very severe to me on the phone, and, as he pointed out that he would not have much time

for an interview, there was anxiety my behalf prior to meeting him. Finally, we arranged to meet for a coffee during his lunch break near Congress. Newman was very forthcoming with information and took more time to talk about his everyday professional life than he originally suggested he would by telephone.

As the reconstruction of Newman's (*WP*) working day shows below, the project of his everyday professional lifeworld is not to search for information or to write an article, but to finish his working day on time—at 6:30 in the evening—and go home. This project is his ideal wish, and guides his daily professional action. Newman struggles to fulfill it every day. All of his professional action-goals and drafts are oriented towards this goal. In the words of Schutz and Luckmann (1989), "the goal of an act motivates action" (p. 19).

Newman creates a mental plan to achieve his day-project. He puts a great deal of emphasis on maintaining a "rhythm" during his usual working day and doing the same actions at the same time every day. His day consists of a repeatable chain of action-goals and monothetic prefabricated action-drafts. Newman does not need to rethink how to act and what to do every day; he just follows his usual professional action-drafts. Therefore, his action-plan is characterized by its predictability. Due to the success of his prefabricated action-drafts, Newman claims he usually finishes work earlier than most of his colleagues.

Using Schutz' concept of the "in-order-to motives" and "because motives" and applying them here, Newman plans his working day so that he can spend more time with his children at home. Retrospectively, one can speculate about Newman's possible "because motives." Thus, Newman prefers to finish his working day and go home at the same time, because he values his private life; he is a family person who wants to be a good father and keep his everyday lifeworld in equilibrium – combining the private and the professional.

Newman usually starts work at 9:00 in the morning every day. First, he checks his emails, then reads the latest news. By doing this, he can already consider his action-goals and recall his prefabricated action-drafts from memory. He brainstorms for current issues that he thinks are significant to the public within his field as a Congress reporter (cf. line 169). For the rest of the morning Newman tries to gain as much information as possible about the events he would like to cover. He makes a lot of telephone calls so he can get an overview of the particulars of the news

coverage he is interested in and arranges interviews. This can be designated as the preparative phase of his reportage.

After all the preparations have been made, the next goal of his professional action is to travel to Congress to be in place to cover current events. Newman considers it very important to be there, so that he can witness events for himself and gain access to primary sources of information. At Congress, he always has the opportunity to talk to people in Congress, even if it is just in passing. Newman often drives directly to Congress, where he and his colleagues work in the media room. This phase can be designated as the "fulfillment" phase.

Newman begins to write articles at 3:00 or 3:30 in the afternoon. He usually skips lunch and uses his lunch break for further research. For example, when I was arranging the interview with Newman, he suggested that we meet at lunchtime because it was the only time he could afford to take a break. This includes the period of time after he had finished researching and before he had started writing. He always plans to have at least two hours to write and usually finishes his article by 5:00 or 5:15pm. After finishing his article, Newman sends it to his editor and gets feedback. This is the final phase of article writing and communication with his editor. Because of the intensity and productivity of his working day (non-stop without breaks and no lunch), he usually completes his prefabricated action drafts (cf. lines 180-190).

Newman designates himself "a workhorse of his paper" (line 166). He not only achieves his goals according to plan, but he also writes more articles than he needs to and sometimes finds time to help his colleagues gather information. According to him, some of his colleagues avoid going to Capitol Hill because they feel, "intimidated by this place" (line 242) and are inhibited when talking to high-ranking politicians and may have problems finishing their articles on time. Newman complained that these colleagues preferred to stay in their offices and try to find information about Congress' doings without making personal contact with congressmen.

As a result, Newman, who spent most of his time on Capitol Hill, assisted his colleagues in their research by interviewing congressman for them. This tended to regularly "frustrate" (line 229) Newman as he valued direct contact with the primary sources of information and expected his colleagues to share his professional ethics

with him. Newman traced his productivity back to his work ethic: he is a very organized person, with a high degree of self-discipline who enjoys doing research and writing articles. According to him, he never suffers from writer's block and can work efficiently throughout his everyday professional life.

Newman's day project:	To finish the working-day at 6:30 p.m.
Action-goals:	1. Getting an overview of events by means of internet research 2. Finding an interesting topic to cover for his newspaper 3. Witnessing the events 4. Talking to the primary sources of information 5. Writing the article
Action-drafts:	1. Checking emails 2. Reading current news 3. Making phone calls 4. Traveling to the location of the news event 5. Communicating with his editor
Work phases:	1. Preparing of information 2. Witnessing the events 3. Writing
Professional problems:	1. Gathering information 2. Verifying information 3. Writing text

Table 2: Newman's daily routine in the United States

To conclude, Newman's main goal of action – to finish his working-day at 6:30 p.m. – is approached by completing the three work phases that guide his professional action in this order: preparing; witnessing; and writing. These phases are linked to the five subordinate goals of action: getting an overview of events; finding a topic to

cover; witnessing the events; talking to the primary sources of information; and writing an article. The phase of gathering information appears to be the longest and the most intensive, as two of the three phases deal with it. In contrast, the next example illustrates an average working day in Iraq.

4.5.2 Working Routines in Iraq: "More than a Full-Time Job"

I had already contacted Tallman (*NYT*) from Germany. When I was in the United States I contacted him again, but he first refused to meet as he explained that he was about to be sent to Afghanistan. Therefore, he needed time to make preparations. He gave an impression of being very busy and also surprised to be sent to Afghanistan so unexpectedly, only two days before the trip. Later I was able to arrange another appointment, but he postponed it. Finally, we were able meet early one morning at a cafe in the Bronx and spent over an hour talking.

After his arrival in Iraq, Tallman was confronted with difficult working routines, which differed greatly from those in the United States. Tallman insisted that the expression "working routine" could not be applied to the situation in Iraq at all. He had to be ready to work up to 24 hours at a time. Mostly, the journalists had to work seven days a week without any time off, "[w]hen we're there, we're working every day, all day, without a day off." (lines 65-66). Even if they did have spare time, they did not have the chance to relax, or catch up with their families and friends. They perceived working in Iraq as more than a full time job.

Tallman's private and professional lifeworlds were intertwined in Iraq. He and his colleagues had been accommodated outside of the Green Zone[16], which was located to the east of the River Tigris in the Karada neighborhood and enjoyed a secure reputation. As Tallman mentioned in the interviews, the fact that the journalists were accommodated there led to it becoming central to their news coverage from Iraq. The journalists worked, ate, and slept there. Tallman's main professional action goal was to finish at least one article per day or to gather enough information for a larger report. He spent all of his time and energy on achieving this goal as well as he could, despite the circumstances.

[16] The Green Zone is the part of Baghdad occupied by the American military.

Tallman's working day in Iraq was strictly regulated by the following structures. He usually woke up early in the morning, either naturally or because of the sound of explosions in the distance. He then had a quick and small breakfast in front of the computer while checking his emails and the news on the wire services and reading military reports. He would then consider what to write about. Eating in front of the computer and checking emails was already an aspect of his home working routine that he brought to the war region.

After breakfast, he would go to the common room downstairs and read *The New York Times,* which had been printed by the Iraqi staff. He would also read *The Washington Post* in order to see what the competition was doing. This was important preparation for his reporting later; getting an overview of the state of affairs was important for thinking about which topics were urgent or compelling to report about. The ideas for the reporting were developed on the basis of "what happened yesterday, or what's happening immediately." (line 122)

Tallman often had a morning conference with his colleagues from the *NYT*. Each correspondent would write up and discuss "a long list of ideas" (line 320) with their colleagues during this team meeting. Together they would decide which issues should be covered in the next few days and how to organize the reports so that they could cover different aspects of everyday life in Iraq. In this meeting they discussed the division of labor for the day. The journalist would choose together who would work on what kind of story such as the daily news or feature stories, whether alone or in teams. According to Tallman, journalists usually had more ideas for feature stories than they could pursue and realize. These ideas were also discussed in the group and finally with the editors in the United States. The editors decided on which topics to cover or at least expressed their preferences. After all the discussions and the final distribution of tasks, the correspondents would go into the city to search for information on their respective topics.

Lunch was served around one o'clock, in the form of a buffet cooked by Iraqi staff. The journalists would eat at the same table. Between lunch and dinner, which was served at nine or ten o'clock in the evening, the journalists either began to write or attended news conferences in the Green Zone. After dinner, the journalists continued to work on their news reports. In the meantime, they constantly checked the news, because they felt that their daily reports should be as up-to-date as possible. Due to the seven-hour time difference between the east coast of the United

States and Iraq, the journalists' working schedules were shifted, whereby a 5:00 p.m. deadline in New York would translate to 12:00 a.m. in Baghdad. Tallman often continued to work on his articles after dinner or he would aim to improve his articles according to his editor's feedback. Meeting these deadlines brought both advantages and disadvantages for the journalists.

On the one hand, journalists in Iraq felt that they had more time to write an article than in the United States, because the deadline was at midnight. On the other hand, this was deceptive, as journalists had to keep working on their reports late at night, and then had to get up early in the morning. Sometimes their working day went on for 20 hours, which was very exhausting for the journalists. Hence, they had the impression that their working day was longer than at home and that it took them longer to find information for their articles than in the United States.

Tallman's day project: To write an article by the end of the day

Action-goals:

1. To have breakfast
2. Gain an overview of the news
3. To collect ideas for a news report or feature story
4. To find out what the journalist's own newspaper and its competitors are reporting on
5. To participate in the morning conference
6. To witness events
7. To have lunch
8. To participate in the press conference/or to write
9. To have dinner
10. To write an article

Action-drafts:

1. Eating and checking emails and news
2. Reading the *NYT* and *WP*
3. Discussing the day's topics with colleagues
4. Consulting with the editor

	5. Dividing labor 6. Going out and searching for information 7. Eating 8. Going out for searching for information 9. Writing an article and submitting it to the editor in the United States 10. Eating 11. Continuing to write the article
Work phases:	1. Preparing for the day 2. Preparing to gathering information 3. Gathering information 4. Witnessing events 5. Eating 6. Gathering information 7. Writing 8. Eating 9. Writing
Professional problems:	1. Gathering information 2. Verifying information 3. Writing a newspaper's text 4. Negotiating with the editor about the text

Table 3: Tallman's daily Routine in Iraq

Tallman noted that his daily working routine in Iraq had "no fluidity, no flexibility and everything [was] very tightly controlled, regimented." (lines 333-334) The journalists had little or no control of their professional life in this situation. For example, they could not decide where to live for themselves; they all had to live together in one house. Furthermore, the journalists were highly dependent on the Iraqi staff. This staff was hired to support the journalists in a number of different ways. They served the journalists as guards, translators, and cooks. As the journalists were not allowed to drive in Iraq, they were driven to places of interest by the Iraqi staff.

The daily structure was determined by the fixed mealtimes. All other professional action was based around these times. That meant that breakfast, lunch, and dinner were always served at the same time. The journalists did not have to buy or cook food as everything was cooked for them. The fact that they had one less problem to worry about meant that they could more fully concentrate on their work. However, the strict timetable served as a means of social controlling whether the journalists had safely returned to base on time. During their time in Iraq, the journalists sacrificed elements of their private lifeworld to achieve their professional action-goals.

Tallman's day was even more organized than Newman's working day in the United States. While Newman had the freedom to plan his day independently, the journalists in Iraq did not. There, the journalists worked in highly interdependent groups. Mealtimes served as orientation points in their daily structure. In the United States, Newman could skip lunch as he pleased, but for the journalists in Iraq lunchtime was the only chance to take a break and relax with their colleagues. The private and professional lifeworlds were intertwined in Iraq. By contrast, Newman clearly separated his private and professional life in the US. Finally, Newman's dominant, everyday action-goal or project was to go home and Tallman's action-goal was to do the reporting and to deliver his articles.

	Common project:	War coverage
	Iraq	**The United States**
	Low level of predictability for achieving the action goals	*High level of predictability for achieving the action goals*
1.	Having breakfast in front of the computer	not mentioned
2.	Checking emails and news	similar
3.	Finding the topic to cover/brainstorming	similar
4.	Meeting with colleagues and discussing topics	not mentioned

5.	Consulting with editors in the United States	not mentioned
6.	Dividing the labor	not mentioned
7.	Gathering information	similar
8.	Having lunch at a regular time	optional
9.	Going to press conferences	not mentioned
10.	Writing articles	similar
11.	Having dinner	different
12.	Submitting articles to the editor	similar action, but not after dinner
13.	Getting feedback from the editor	similar
14.	Improving articles	similar
15.	Going to bed	Going home

Table 4: Comparison of daily working routines in Iraq and the United States

However, both Tallman and Newman had a lot of similarities in their working routines. They both spent most of their work time dealing with information. The journalists' professional action and the order in which they gained an overview of the events, found topics, gathered information, wrote articles, and consulted with their editors were all similar. Despite these similarities, there was a significant difference in working conditions, in which journalists in Iraq tried to maintain their usual professional action and the high quality of their reporting. In order to understand their professional actions in Iraq, in a next step the working conditions the journalists faced over there will be reconstructed.

4.6 Summary

To conclude, the journalists separated between their ideals of how proper war coverage ought to be and how they perceived their experience of covering wars. Ideally, the reporting process in wars should be the same as in any other situations. Within their usual professional lifeworld, journalists can apply their pre-fabricated action-drafts to solve their professional problems, which leads to the conclusion that they could make use of the same pre-fabricated action-drafts in wars. In a real situation of war, journalists are risking their lives; they have more difficult working

conditions, they face physical and psychological challenges, when compared to peacetime. Journalists' professional action can be characterized by limitations or shortfalls and understood as the result of the interplay between professional requirements (professional ethics), war coverage organization (newspaper), and the individual decisions of the journalists.

The interviews confirmed and illustrated that the journalists' point of reference was always their professional ethics as an overarching goal of action. The journalists felt that the quality of war coverage is more difficult to maintain than in other types of news coverage. Nevertheless, as pointed out by both the American and German journalists, high-quality news coverage remains the ultimate goal of their professional action in war coverage and other news coverage, even though the working conditions in war and peace are different and journalists experience unusual or life-threatening situations. They had to be aware of their security and develop strategies for working safely. However, they could not foresee all of the dangers that could arise. The American and German journalists had to find ways to control their fears and anxieties and to avoid and/or escape potentially dangerous situations.

The following features can characterize the situation definition in Iraq that the American journalists remembered. The journalists were faced with new or unexpected working routines that forced them to redefine their working day. Firstly, they lived within a constantly unstable security situation, which hindered them from pursuing their professional action, both physically and mentally. On the one hand, their mobility was restricted, and on the other hand their anxieties delayed their reportage (researching and writing an article text). Secondly, they often had to deal with technical problems such as power outages or breakdowns in electrical equipment, which especially hindered the writing process and the ability to send article texts to the editors. Thirdly, most of the journalists had language problems and had to rely on help from local civilians. Fourthly, all of the journalists needed drivers, translators, and bodyguards. Finally, the female war correspondents defined their situation as either equal to or more positive than that of their male colleagues. These issues were constituent parts of the journalist's professional action in Iraq.

The following issues were typical for the interviewed German journalists: dominance of the decision of the editorial boards from which locations to cover war and final decision to cover the war from outside the war region (Jordan, Kuwait, and Northern Iraq). Security of journalists played a significant role for the editorial board

in Germany. Most of the German journalists were rather restrained to go to Iraq. Journalists who went to Kuwait defined the situation there as potentially dangerous; they were worried about the safety of their colleagues in the media; no technical problems were reported; no language problems were reported; and they did not have female correspondents. German journalists raised the question of which locations are appropriate to cover in wars. After having discussed working conditions of the journalists and decision-making process in the run-up of the war in Iraq, core aspects of journalists' work and professional action will be discussed next – gathering, selecting and verifying information – in the context of war.

5 Newspapers as Objective Reality

In this chapter, the analyses will be focused on the issue of information in the context of journalists' professional action: gathering, managing, and evaluating. First, based on the conducted interviews, this chapter discusses the problem of objectivity in reporting and objectivity as a professional action-goal, guided by the following questions: Is objectivity possible in journalism? Do journalists remain true to their professional ideal of objectivity when they face a genuine combat situation? If so, how do they successfully follow their ideal, and how do they prove the reliability of information? Second, this chapter analyzes the problem of informational sources of unknown trustworthiness, an issue the interviewed American and German journalists faced in Iraq, and how they dealt with this problem. Third, the chapter analyzes strategies for achieving objectivity.

5.1 The notion of Objectivity in Journalism

The management of information constitutes a focal point in journalism and the central element of journalists' professional action. The question of how journalists gather, select, and verify information will be the focus of analyses in this chapter. The transformation of collected information into a newspaper article is the culmination of the journalists' constant process of interpretation and reflection on information that they have gathered. The construction of reality accompanies these procedures: the process of objectivation in the sense of Berger and Luckmann (1991) introduced in theoretical part of this thesis begins when journalists work with and on information. Professional journalists should know how to handle information in accordance with professional ethics.

The issue of objectivity was one of the most frequently discussed topics in the interviews. The interviewed journalists were very interested in philosophizing about the nature of objectivity in their daily routines. This frequent occurrence created the impression that an understanding of the nature of "objectivity" constitutes a core issue of journalists' professional action. Journalists' opinion on this topic occupied even more time during the interviews than explanations of their views on any other topic combined. The journalists' answers demonstrated that they constantly face this issue during their professional daily routines and have well-founded opinions on

this topic. The similarity between the answers from US and German journalists was quite striking.

Among the journalists, the crucial point of discussion about objectivity was the concept's definition. According to the interviewed journalists, all internal debates about objectivity in reporting are a product of the concept's unclear definition. The interviewed journalists strongly noted that they felt "confused about what the term 'objective' means" (Schulz, *NYT*, line 25) and underscored that objectivity never existed in their personal working experience, stating that it "only exists theoretically" (Lang, *FAZ*, line 52). The journalists used the term "objectivity" as a synonym for truth and vice versa. They considered presenting information truthfully as journalism's main task, but were puzzled how truth might be definitively ascertained (cf. Meyer, *NYT*).

Some of the more senior journalists addressed debates about objectivity in terms of journalists' age and (in)experience. This group of senior journalists put the question of objectivity in the same category as thoughts about such existential questions as the definition of truth and the meaning of life. When they were young and inexperienced reporters, they debated passionately and frequently about such questions with their colleagues. However, the time constraints of the newspapers' daily working routines did not permit journalists the leisure to discuss this issue for much longer (cf. Lehmann, *SZ*; Braun, *SZ*; Fichte, *FAZ*). Nevertheless, journalists should at least attempt to make their war coverage "as objective as possible" (Zimmermann, *SZ*, line 156). As Lehmann (*SZ*) summarized it, this profession's credo for survival is "do the job and do it as well as possible." (line 76)

> I don't think that [journalists] in their daily routines are particularly guided by such [ideas]. Every good journalist has a sense for how close he can come to truth [...]. Still, truth is no end in itself but a mill of information. (Lehmann, *SZ*, line 176)

The interviewed American and German journalists raised various reasons why objectivity is unfeasible and more of an ideal than a reality. The journalists underscored that while reporting, they were "human beings" (Tallman, *NYT*, line 625) first and foremost. Tallman also rhetorically asked, "how can I be objective when I am a living breathing human being with emotions and feelings and passions and prejudices[?]" (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 638-639). The profession's primary (at home) and secondary (here: at work) socialization has the capacity to affect journalists in both their types of professional action: gathering information and

writing text. All journalists have their own family upbringing, educational background, and region of origin, which have influenced their individual views of the world (cf. Fichte, *FAZ*). Smith (*NYT*) provided a personal example:

> I have built-in bias from where I grew up, where I went to school. [...] I'm an East Coast kid [who] grew up in New York [and] went to Harvard. [...] That environment creates a worldview. (lines 125-127)

A number of journalists also acknowledged the challenge of omitting their own opinions and bias from their reporting. In the words of Rosenfield (*NYT*), "you can't exclude all bias from your stories as a reporter," (line 45) and "to be really neutral is very difficult" (Lehmann, *SZ*, line 89). Journalists can unconsciously reveal their attitudes about a given topic in every newspaper genre through the use of tiny details such as stylistic devices, vocabulary usage, or choice of information sources (cf. Meyer, *SZ*; Braun, *SZ*). Lehmann (*SZ*), for example, claimed to have become cynical after years of experience as a journalist, because he felt that anything he or his colleagues wrote would be subjective (cf. line 200).

Conflicts of interest may emerge between primary and secondary socialization when journalists are members of political parties or other interest groups. In view of Braun (*SZ*), professional journalists, especially those who cover politics, should avoid involving themselves in such a situation and hence should not "...be members of a political party" (lines 121-122). In contrast, a *WP* reporter, Costner, openly and publicly discussed his and his family's liberal background in the interview. He underlined that he did not hide it; "everybody [at the *WP*] knows my background, when I write I am very conscious of it" (lines 93-94). His professional strategy for handling the conflict between his personal feelings and his professional responsibility was to consciously avoid writing about some topics. "When Clinton was President, my wife and son were working for him, I avoided writing about the White House" (lines 94-95).

Indeed, according to the journalists, the issue that inhibits their objectivity the most is the dilemma of separating their private and professional lives. This dilemma leads to a constant internal struggle between the journalists' feelings and professional values: "one has an internal bias which says, I do not want something that could damage the party I support to become known" (Lang, *FAZ*, 173-174). This group of journalists also admitted that omitting their own opinions and biases from their reporting was very challenging. When journalists unconsciously use newspaper

articles as a space to express their own opinions on topics in newspaper genres that do not allow it, it can jeopardize the ideal of objective reporting. Tallman (*NYT*) described such a phenomenon as articles becoming "mirrors" (line 620) of political debates.

At the same time, political discussions and controversial debates can move journalists emotionally, unconsciously influencing them and their reporting. Furthermore, over years of experience covering the same political topics, journalists might fail to maintain a professional distance and develop an understanding of and sympathy for politicians or political parties (cf. Krause, *SZ*). Additionally, the interviewed journalists were conscious of the well-known fact that politicians try to influence the press. For example, Lehmann (*SZ*) pointed out that as a German journalist writing for a large daily German newspaper, he was aware that he can be very useful to German diplomats and politicians due to his position by serving to transmit their political message to the public (cf. line 254).

Defining objectivity turned out to be a professional action-strategy tool to help achieve objectivity itself. Goldsmith (*WP*, lines 96-97), for example, suggested the following definition of objectivity: writing objectively means, for example, "to avoid having opinions [...], to write in a fair, balanced, accurate, non-ideological kind of way" (Goldsmith, *WP*, lines 96-97). Both the American and German journalists felt obliged to adhere to the central requirement of their professional ethics. Hence, they aimed to maintain objectivity in any kind of news coverage they were working on – as Smith (*NYT*) put it, "no matter whether one is reporting about Iraq or reporting about Westchester County." (lines 628-629)

After all the aforementioned arguments about the impossibility of true objectivity, one may ask the question; if objectivity is only an ideal, why does it still exist as a requirement for journalists' professional action? According to the interviewed journalists, the main arguments for maintaining the ideal of objectivity are journalists' professional ethics on the one hand and readers' expectations on the other. Both the American and German journalists acknowledged that readers view objective or independent reporting as a measure of journalism's quality and thus the quality of journalists' professional action. In terms of a newspaper's public image, objectivity's effect is "more compelling than anything else" (Zimmermann, *SZ*, line 156), and the ideal of objectivity cannot be removed from professional ethics.

The journalists assumed that if newspapers as institutions publicly acknowledged that everything they publish is relative and subjective, it would "cause a loss of trust among readers" (Zimmermann, *SZ*, line 160) and destroy the journalists' and newspapers' credibility. Readers "believe what is in the newspaper as the ring of truth" (Costner, *WP*, line 356), and they expect a truthful presentation of reality from quality newspapers and that neither journalists nor newspapers would "twist" their reporting in favor of someone's interests or to propagate certain views. To conclude, the interviewed journalists not only philosophized about objectivity in general, but also in terms of newspaper text-genres that require different degrees of objectivity. Strictly speaking, in contrast to opinion pages and commentaries, for instance, pure news should contain only objective information.

5.2 Newspaper Genres and Objectivity

5.2.1 "You have to be a short time sprinter and a long time runner"

The interviewed journalists' professional action was oriented to fulfill the requirements of their particular article-genre. Every interviewed journalist's primary action-goal was a particular newspaper article-genre. According to their particular action-goal, the journalists planned their action-drafts. The journalists strictly distinguished between the writing styles of different article-genres such as commentaries, news and day stories, feature stories, backgrounds, opinions, and reports, and all these article-genres required different kinds of professional action-drafts. In turn, journalists trusted their readers to be able to differentiate between these article genres and recognize their placement in the newspaper (cf. Scholz *FAZ*, line 84; Zimmermann *FAZ*, line 156). This differentiation between genres helped readers navigate newspapers and choose the form and style of article from which they received information.

Readers should also know how to find neutral news coverage as well as journalists' or editors' opinions and comments in their newspaper. In a standard newspaper, the news articles are typically placed on the front page, while entertainment and sports are located towards the end of the newspaper. Each genre has a "totally separate function" (Goldsmith, *WP*, line 93), and is "run by a different staff" (line 94). However, the placement of these genres differs from newspaper to newspaper. For example, the *FAZ* presents both the news and its lead article on the front page. In contrast, the *SZ* places its lead article in the middle of the newspaper.

The journalists assumed that readers of quality newspapers prefer reading commentaries, backgrounds, and reports about different aspects of society to reading the news (cf. Meyer, *SZ*). Such article genres are easy, pleasant, and enjoyable to read; they are not as exhausting to read as pure news coverage, which is "a very dry and strenuous business" (Hartmann *FAZ*, line 200). Readers are interested in learning the opinions and arguments of journalists even if they do not share their views, because such articles help them interpret current events and to form their own opinions about them.

Even though most of the journalists preferred writing feature stories, they agreed that writing "day stories" or news was "essential" for a daily newspaper. Because of newspapers' Internet presence, day stories tended to be written faster and require constant updates. The news business was "racing against TV and radio, and everything" (Schulz, line 35). All of the journalists interviewed preferred gathering information to writing. At least one journalist admitted that he regularly suffers from writer's block and "hate[s] writing" (Krause, *SZ*, line 690). He always finished his articles shortly before the deadline, when the articles went to press.

Krause (*SZ*) often experienced writers' block and gained a reputation within his newspaper for taking a long time to write. When analyzing his own writing ability, he observed that the earlier he began writing, the longer it took him to finish. In contrast, the closer to the deadline he began to write an article, the faster he could finish it. Krause described his problem with writer's block as one of distraction. He would often go to the kitchen and make coffee, repeatedly go to the bathroom or talk to colleagues, and wasted a lot of time "messing around" in this manner (line 724).

In trying to explain his problem, Krause (*SZ*) attributed his behavior to his skepticism towards his profession and to his perfectionism with reporting. On the one hand, Krause was very skeptical about the image of the media and the idea that it can influence public opinion and public behavior. For him, that was rather a "myth" (line 695) that positions the media as an invisible power. Despite the fact that he recognized it as a myth, however, the idea would nevertheless bother him when he was trying to write in a relaxed manner because he expected his articles to possess this power. On the other hand, Krause became frustrated in his attempts to explain complex political events within the EU in a manner that his readers could comprehend without boring them, all the while concurrently facing the problems of limited time and space.

5.2.2 News is "the boring story you see in the paper that we all hate writing"

According to the interviewed journalists, opinions and information should be presented separately and with the use of different research techniques and writing styles. Writing news, for example, requires a very accurate, objective, and thorough representation of information. This is a time-consuming, bureaucratic process that requires journalists to fully concentrate on comparing news from different national and international agencies in order to avoid mistakes (presenting incorrect information). Because the news must be written very quickly, journalists often find writing it a very strenuous and tedious activity (e.g. cf. Hartmann, *FAZ*).

Writing news or "a day story" involves summarizing data and facts about the main events of the day: "putting it all together, giving [the reader] a picture about what was going on" (Bloom, *NYT*, line 140). Tallman (NYT) called such stories "violence stories" (line 316) because they typically contained facts such as the number of casualties in an attack. Such daily news stories are published in the newspaper the following day and consist of plain text in which "there isn't a narrative flow" (ibid., line 191). The journalists stay in their offices and follow the events of the day by reading the Internet and newspapers and watching TV, paying particular attention to local news coverage. In Iraq, journalists needed to contact officials such as the Iraqi Ministry of Information and the police in order to receive government statements and police reports on the day's incidents. Writing the daily news was unpopular among *NYT* correspondents because:

> [...] that is typically the boring story you see in the paper that we all hate writing. [...] thirty people were blown up here, two soldiers died here, there was a kidnapping here. It's just a big mush of everything that happened that the *Times* is obliged to write every day, but none of the journalists enjoy writing it because it's the same story almost every day. (Schulz, *NYT*, lines 203-206)

The composition of a day story requires well-organized teamwork. Journalists would work with Iraqi translators who would evaluate the Iraqi news reports. The journalists responsible for feature stories would sometimes help provide information, quotations, or references. If an incident occurred outside Baghdad, in Karbala, Najaf or Basra for instance, journalists could obtain information about it from "stringers" or local informants. These stringers would contact journalists in Baghdad via email or telephone and deliver insider information, such as the death toll from violent incidents. Schulz (*NYT*) justified such methods thusly: "we can't be everywhere at the same time." (line 355) The journalists had to wait until the end of

the day to start writing their news text, once they had gathered the necessary amount of information. The allocated time for writing would be very short, "around one or two hours maximum" (Schulz, *NYT*, line 356). The length of a day story would be no more than "six or seven hundred words on average."

5.2.3 A commentary as "a long-term project"

Writing a commentary, in contrast, is based on a completely different procedure. Journalists use different informational sources (interviewees) than they would for the news. They are guided by their impressions and intuition when choosing the appropriate interviewees. The process of writing a commentary begins in the journalist's mind well before the actual writing begins, while the style and composition must be carefully planned in advance. This time-consuming activity will reap rewards later in the form of reader feedback if readers find the commentary enjoyable and interesting to read.

Ideally, the journalist should play the role of the "loudspeaker of the people" (Hartmann, *FAZ*, line 401) while preparing a commentary, regardless of whether the journalist personally agrees or disagrees with the interviewee. Ideally, journalists should abandon their personal convictions, but in reality they can and do directly influence the outcomes of their interviews by choosing their interviewees and questions. Some of the German journalists had the impression that their country's newspapers were presenting the US government's political decisions in a hostile manner in their news articles and commentaries, which they explained as a consumer-oriented action; "it appeals to the German news consumer better" (Scholz, *FAZ*, line 145).

Despite the fact that writing a feature story constitutes "a long-term project" (Tallman, *NYT*, line 240) requiring ample time for investigation and writing (days, weeks, or months), journalists preferred working on such stories to daily stories. They explained this preference using the following reasons. First of all, the journalists enjoyed having time to gather background information about an event's causes and later analyze, interpret, and explain this event's meaning to the reader. Second, a feature story allows for a narrative style compared to the plain prose style of a day story. When writing feature stories, journalists felt free to be creative and write in their own style. Third, while working on feature stories, journalists could

pursue their interests if for example they encountered or witnessed something fascinating by chance.

The journalists did not differentiate between how they discovered the topics for their feature stories in Iraq and how they did so in any other place; it happened in "the same way you do [it] every place else" (Tallman, *NYT*, line 550). "You have to bring a range of measurements, a range of evaluative techniques (...) as much as you do here, on the streets of Manhattan" (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 566-567). Tallman's strategy was to "just keep [his] eyes open" (ibid, line 557). In order to gather ideas, Tallman read newspapers, watched the news, and talked to the people in the streets, asking questions like:

> Why so many attacks in this neighborhood? What has happened to this Shiite militia? We haven't heard anything from them. What's going on there? Did you see the other day some guys playing football down the road? What was that all about? They were playing football? [...] Is there a league or something, you've got to check it out. (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 552-557)

Daily life in Iraq was a regular topic of feature stories. All aspects of daily life were interesting for the journalists. For Bloom (*NYT*), such topics included, among other things, "burying [the] dead or going to school or cooking or planning weddings." (line 243) As Bloom explained, "[there] never seems to be any shortage of things to write about, it's just a question of time really." (line 245) The Iraqi staff was very helpful for finding topics for feature stories because of their familiarity with the traditions of different parts of Iraqi society. Furthermore, they knew where to gain information about a particular theme and whom it would be suitable to interview for a particular topic.

Schulz (*NYT*) provided an example of how he once found an interesting feature story. One day, he asked his Iraqi driver and translator to drive him to a "very poor" district of Baghdad, a so-called "Shi'ite slum". This was "the center of the anti-American militia": Sadr City. A chicken restaurant he saw at a crossroads impressed him; as he put it, "it seemed to be the McDonald's of Sadr City." He saw many cars parked outside the restaurant, which he found "rather unusual for Baghdad because of the car bombings." Looking at this almost "surreal picture," Schulz thought that this restaurant might make "a story." What fascinated him about it was the fact that "people are getting blown up every day in any place they congregate: the markets, the gasoline lines. But yet they're willing to still go out, and park the cars and sit outside and be together." (all quotations lines 80-85)

After this trip Schulz (*NYT*) returned to his office, but the image of this restaurant remained in his mind. He thought about it again and again and ultimately decided to write a feature story about it. It took him about a month to plan the story. In his words, "it wasn't [a snap decision], it had to be carefully planned." In order to write the story, Schulz had to prepare a great deal of details such as arranging security staff and translators and organizing an interview with the restaurant's owner. Finally, Schulz completed an article about this restaurant, its owners, and its visitors. This was the story he was "most proud of" because it was unusual, "hard to get to," "required some adventure," and "required a lot of security to go there and spend forty-five minutes in one spot." (all quotations lines 80-98) After this story was published, Schulz received positive responses from readers who had enjoyed reading it:

> It's a story about people living, yeah! And it's how they live and how different it is from the way we live. Like, we don't have to worry about getting blown up when we go to a restaurant. So, there is no death-defying bravery required to go to a restaurant. Well there is in Iraq. So, making that point through this restaurant was a way to show some new angle to the conflict. (Schulz, *NYT*, lines 99-103)

Not every feature story ended up being an investigative piece; often it was just "a modest story." (Tallman, *NYT*, line 288) Sometimes journalists lacked sufficient information for a story and had to decide whether to continue reporting on the topic or to wait in the hope of uncovering more information. Bloom (*NYT*) described this constant doubt over having enough information – "my God, do I have enough?" (line 372) – as a professional disease or paranoia. If the feature story would be long, journalists had to plan the story's clarity and composition and index possible chapters.

As we have seen, first of all, journalists use the text-genre of their article as an orientation for their professional action. This institutionalized form of text demands a particular professional attitude from journalists, how to achieve such an action-goal. The overarching goal of objectivity and the goals of a particular text-genre must be coordinated somehow by journalists' professional action in a reporting context. This challenge will be discussed in the context of a particular situation: wartime.

5.3 Objectivity in Wartime

The journalists underscored that, based on their experiences, adhering to the ideal of objectivity is especially challenging in wartime. Both the American and German journalists were convinced that no neutral information is available during wars, since opinions and attitudes towards wars are often polarized and informational sources always represent the interests of the parties involved. In wartime, journalists either receive "no information or false information, and the possibility to prove information is extremely limited" (Werner, *FAZ*, lines 66-71) or even impossible. Journalists lack the resources to fly to the front line, observe a battle objectively, and accurately describe it in an article (cf. Lang, *FAZ*).

In wars, journalists are unsure how they can obtain an informational balance and often fail to write impartially (cf. Faber, *SZ*). Lang (*FAZ*), who had a lot of experience covering wars, wondered who the recipients of objective war coverage might be. A journalist who tries to report objectively from a war region may be perceived by the combatants as "a highly disruptive factor" (Lang, *FAZ*, lines 155-173) or as a threat to the conduct of war. Furthermore, a journalist's reports about a military action in question could have consequences for members of the German or American government or military.

Lang (*FAZ*) illustrated the inconvenience of truth for all parties involved in war by speculating that if *CNN* had a chance to send a satellite that could precisely observe every tiny detail that happens in a war region, that satellite would become the first target of the belligerent parties (cf. lines 455-459). Objective coverage of a war has the potential to adversely affect the careers and public image of the military commanders and politicians involved. However, such coverage may also affect the journalists themselves. For instance, as already mentioned, if a journalist reveals otherwise secret information in his article, he may come under suspicion from the relevant countries' intelligence services (ibid., line 160).

During the interviews, the credibility of information from the war zone was a central point of discussion. According to Lang (*FAZ*), both sides during the recent war in Iraq heavily manipulated information. Throughout the war, the United States understood its communication policy as part of its military strategy with the embedded program as only one, but very prominent result and planned this policy before the war started. The United States military had learned from the Vietnam War

and wanted to avoid the damaging news and photographs that had been prevalent there (cf. Lang, *FAZ*, lines 209-210). As Lang put it:

> The control of public opinion is a part of war. And public opinion is best controlled by the selection of the messages that the public receives, if possible without bad news. (Lang, *FAZ*, lines 462-465)

According to some of the interviewed journalists, information from the Iraqi side was more heavily manipulated than that from the United States (cf. Fichte, *FAZ*, lines 354-356). These journalists reported that the Iraqi Minister of Information, Muhammad Saeed al-Sahhaf, consistently released dubious and unreliable information in press conferences at the beginning of the war. Unfortunately, he was the interviewed journalists' main official source of information from the Iraqi side. Since the journalists were aware that the minister was manipulating information, they dealt with it carefully, did not trust him, and therefore avoided publishing incorrect information in their newspapers (cf. Becker, *SZ*, line 564). Additionally, the journalists also criticized the quality of the war coverage from the Qatari news company Al Jazeera for its lack of objectivity (cf. Fichte, *FAZ*, lines 396-398). Lang stated, "from the beginning, this type of reporting is extremely suspicious to a journalist who feels obliged to do justice to reality" (Lang, *FAZ*, lines 165-166).

Another issue that calls objectivity into question in the context of reporting from Iraq was the embedded program. As mentioned previously, the only opportunity journalists had to access some locations outside of Baghdad was with the US military. The embedded program allowed journalists to join military units for either long or short trips. The American and German journalists had a very ambivalent attitude towards the embedded program (cf. section 4.3). On the one hand, the journalists doubted the reliability of information from embedded journalists even before the program had begun, but on the other hand they defended the embedded journalists. They argued that it was neither the journalists' intention nor their fault for having been exploited by the military, but that this was a product of the circumstances of the war situation itself.

The embedded journalists did not have any chance to move independently and spent all of their time in enclosed quarters with military personnel, sharing a small space such as a vehicle with them. Such conditions made maintaining professional distance very challenging (cf. Lang, *FAZ*). Despite this challenge, in the view of the German journalists, embedded news coverage was an indispensable source of

information. Some of the German journalists even complained that the quality of their newspapers' war coverage had been negatively affected by the fact that they had not embedded their staff journalists with American troops at the beginning of the war (cf. e.g. Fichte, *FAZ*). To address the problem of the lack of information from primary sources in Iraq, *SZ* and the *FAZ* had to buy reports from embedded journalists employed by other media organizations.

The American journalists described the introduction of the embedded program as "wildly successful" (Tallman, *NYT*, line 414), even though they had possessed a negative opinion of it at the outset. Goldsmith (*WP*) compared the press's situation in Iraq in 2003 to that in the Gulf War in 1991. According to him, journalists gained more insight in the 2003 Iraq War because of the embedded program. He remembered, "in the first Gulf war, the press had a bad experience reporting about that war [because they were] kept away from the action" (line 416). Therefore, the press received only carefully chosen information about the events of the war, which resulted in "frustration for the press" (line 418).

According to Goldsmith (*WP*), the embedded program broke through the negative concept of "Press vs. Military". It "helped to demystify" both the press in the military's view and vice versa. He alluded to the "distrust," "antipathy," and "animosity" (lines 415-418) that existed in the relationship between the military and the press. He felt that the embedded program demonstrated to the military that journalists were "not all running around with horns and tails and pickaxes breathing fire" (line 415), trying to damage the military's public image by criticizing it. On the other side, journalists could see that the US military was made up of "ordinary people, regular people, and a lot of very sincere people" (line 419). Goldsmith (*WP*) described his experience being embedded as follows:

> My experiences were all very good. I was well treated, was respected, was allowed to do most everything I wanted to do. There were certain bylaws that [journalists] have to follow and we signed this agreement saying, we're not going to reveal strategic information that will identify locations and everything, which is all understandable. And [the military] didn't censor our stuff. (lines 456-59)

Goldsmith (*WP*) even demonstrated paternal feelings toward some soldiers who were "typically very young guys with typically not much experience in the world anywhere outside of their little hometown or home state" (line 413). While living with these soldiers, Goldsmith developed "respect" for them and "their jobs" since they had

been "putting their lives on the line" (line 415). Goldsmith and the other embedded journalists interviewed confirmed that it was difficult for them to remain neutral; as he points out, "I definitely had sympathy for [the military]" (line 420).

Many German journalists valued and praised the work of embedded reporters after their first news reports and pictures were published. Some of the interviewed German journalists were very impressed by the results of the embedded program and the authentic quality of the resulting war photographs (cf. Fichte, *FAZ*). Consequently, they adjusted their initial attitudes toward embedded journalism. The German journalists observed that the embedded journalists had been able to ensure that their news coverage did not become propaganda for the US military or promotion of the war in Iraq, despite the journalists' proximity to the military (cf. Hartmann, *FAZ*).

Contrary to the general perception that embedded journalism would become a tool of the United States, the images of war embedded journalists delivered to the public were appraised as truthful, open, direct, and realistic (cf. Hartmann, *FAZ*). Embedded reports revealed the war's severity by presenting the participating soldiers in moments of insecurity and fear. One report from an embedded *NYT* journalist, for example, described a situation in which a US soldier fired on a car for no apparent reason and killed an entire family in the process. This soldier was heavily dressed down by his commanding officer, and the embedded journalist authentically described the contents of this conversation in which the officer had scolded the soldier with words like "idiot" and "twit" (cf. Hartmann, *FAZ*, lines 268-273).

Tallman (*NYT*) described his journeys in military vehicles as "rather uneventful" and "boring" (line 483). However, he found that the experience of being embedded was necessary for war correspondents to gain a better understanding of soldiers and "the rhythms of military life" (line 484). Tallman had to obtain the ability to interpret everyday life in the military in order to write about it and "to give meaning to the words" (line 486), such as military jargon. Acquiring such an ability is most likely if journalists experience military life for themselves and "feel it" (ibid.) with their own body. Sometimes Tallman attempted to put himself in the soldiers' place and "started to feel what it is like to be at war" (line 487). He came to the conclusion that "It's no fun. It's awful. I'm not a big fan of war" (line 489).

Despite their proximity to the military, the journalists tried to maintain a professional distance that reduced the degree of common identification between themselves and the military. Tallman (*NYT*) stated that the difference between the two roles was made clear based on the tasks and the purposes of their jobs. Soldiers were employed by the military and had to participate in the war, as it was "their job" (line 110). In contrast, journalists did not necessarily need to be there. These pre-conditions "certainly stopped" (line 109) journalists from identifying with the military. The embedded journalists were also visually distinguishable from the soldiers with whom they traveled because they were unarmed and plainly clothed, albeit in bulletproof vests. To underline the differences between himself and the soldiers, Tallman did not wear a uniform, grew his hair long, and stopped shaving, which, according to him, the soldiers did every day. That produced "a fundamental divide between the two experiences" (line 113) of being at war. As he put it, "I knew that I was there to report on these guys. So there was always in my mind a very clear separation" (lines 111-112).

Having covered the journalists' views on objectivity and their experiences of objectivity in wartime specifically, the next focus of analysis will be informational sources that the American and German journalists used covering the Iraq War in 2003. As crucial differences in access to information existed between journalists from Germany and the US, first the situation of German journalists and their informational sources will be presented. Next, the situation of American journalists and their access to informational sources will be analyzed.

5.4 Information Sources

5.4.1 German Journalists: Recycling of Second-Hand Information Sources

The professional action-goal to gain access to primary information sources about the Iraq War in Iraq posed a considerable challenge, especially for German journalists. The German journalists characterized their reporting situation in the Iraq war as disadvantageous, as Germany had not participated in the Iraq War Coalition. The journalists believed that they had very few chances to gain information on the Iraq War as a result, regardless of whether they reported from Kuwait, Germany, or the United States. From the perspective of the interviewed journalists, the American military viewed the German media as an enemy, and, "as a German journalist you receive[d] no information" (Zimmermann, *SZ*, line 142). They described this

situation as a "scandal" (Zimmermann, *SZ*, line 134) because it resulted in "more suppression of information than mediation of information" (ibid., line 136f).

In general, the German journalists criticized the US and NATO's information policies toward non-American journalists, especially toward their French colleagues (cf. Krause, *SZ*). For example, Krause (an EU correspondent in Brussels for the *SZ*) noted EU and NATO's clearly differing attitudes towards him while he was gathering information about the Iraq War from Brussels. The European Union and its parliamentarians viewed German journalists from the *SZ* and *FAZ* as "First Class Clients" (Krause, *SZ*) because of Germany's leading role in the EU and supported them with all kinds of information. However, gaining information from NATO was "a lot more difficult" (ibid.).

> In NATO there is a dominant nation and a dominant delegation and if you really want to know what is happening there, you should go to the US Embassy and I was able to do that during the crisis in Iraq. (Krause, *SZ*, lines 28-31)

Other examples demonstrate that reporting about the war in Iraq from the US also caused difficulties among German journalists, as they complained that they could gain little or no access to primary sources of information (cf. Faber, *SZ*). For example, German journalists would never have had the opportunity to gain an audience with the President of the United States or high-ranking generals. A US politician would prefer to give an interview to a journalist from a small US newspaper than to a journalist from a large German newspaper (cf. Hartmann, *FAZ*, line 76).

Thus, the German journalists' initial action-goal to gain access to primary sources of information was thwarted. They had to adapt to the new situation by considering new action-goals and changing their primary action-drafts in order to achieve their final goal or project: high quality war coverage. Thus, the original action-draft of communicating with primary sources became the action-draft of obtaining information from secondary sources. The action-goal switched its focus from primary to secondary sources of information.

On one level, this shift from the original draft to its alternative affected the journalists' emotional state. Their frustration with the treatment they had experienced negatively affected their professional self-esteem. One of the interviewed journalists felt so belittled by an American general that he could not bring himself to talk to him again for at least three days (cf. Zimmermann, *FAZ*, lines

146-149). However, Hartmann (*FAZ*) emphasized that the German journalists' problem gaining information from American sources is well established and had long belonged to their professional routines while working abroad. Hence, to avoid being stressed by their failure to gain information from the Americans, German journalists needed to learn to cope with this problem without losing their self-esteem (cf. Hartmann, *FAZ*).

On another level, in a situation that shuts off access to primary sources of information, journalists must rely on their intuition, creativity, and professional stock of knowledge to find new sources of information (cf. Lang, *FAZ*, lines 343-344). The journalists who reported about the Iraq War from Kuwait used the sources of information that were available to them there. Journalists designated all informational sources in Kuwait as secondary, as they were not from Iraq. As the border between Kuwait and Iraq was partially closed at the beginning of the Iraq War, journalists could not enter Iraq to find primary sources of information there (cf. Schmid, *FAZ*, lines 443-447; Zimmermann, *SZ*, lines 384-385).

To ensure the consistent quality of their news coverage, German journalists in the United States and Germany had to tackle the above-mentioned problem and compensate for the lack of primary sources by rewriting secondary sources. They had to openly reference the secondary sources and attempt to maintain high standards of quality news reportage. Furthermore, using secondary sources of information required journalists to handle a large quantity of information, as they needed a greater number of sources to fill the gap of primary source material. Therefore, one journalist metaphorically compared his professional action to that of an archivist as he had "to gather information, put it in order, and archive it" (cf. Hartmann, *FAZ*, line 107).

In Kuwait, for example, the journalists' new action-drafts sought to include the following informational sources. First, the German journalists tried to gain contact with the military forces stationed in Kuwait. They visited the US and British military forces' press conferences at the Hilton Hotel in Kuwait City, and if they were lucky, they were able to personally talk to the US press officer there. Furthermore, the journalists would speak with the German Federal Armed Forces based in Kuwait. In addition, the journalists interviewed Iraqi opposition leaders, various diplomats, representatives of Iraqi governmental and non-governmental organizations, and Red Cross staff members. To gain an overview of the war, the journalists informed

themselves by watching television news, above all *CNN*. This dependence on *CNN* often made journalists feel as if they were embedded with *CNN* in Kuwait (cf. Zimmermann, *SZ*, line 98).

In the United States in particular, the quantity of information from various US media sources (television and press, both conservative and liberal), news agencies, and think tanks is excessive, or as Hartmann opined, "overkill" (Hartmann, *FAZ*, line 58). By speaking with US government members or their staff; watching the news on *CNN*, *BBC*, and *C-Span*; and reading a wide spectrum of US, British, and German newspapers and magazines (above all *Die Welt*, *Die FAZ*, *Die Frankfurter Rundschau*, *Die Bildzeitung*, *The Tribune*, *Financial Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Nation*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Euro Public*, *The Foreign Affairs*, *The Economist*, *The Independent*, and *The Guardian*), the journalists had sufficient information to gain an overview of the situation in Iraq.

In Germany, popular informational sources for journalists included the print media mentioned above. Journalists favored the US broadsheets in particular, especially *NYT*, believing in its unassailable journalistic quality. The German journalists also developed a great deal of respect for the news reports on *CNN* and the *BBC*. They also named Pentagon briefings, military status reports, news reports from embedded journalists from different countries, the US embassy in Germany, members of German political parties, and the German government as additional informational sources (cf. Becker, *SZ*, lines 79; Fichte, *FAZ*, line 93). Additionally, journalists drew on their contacts in the *German Federal Intelligence Service*, the *BND*.

The interviewed German journalists preferred purchasing information about the Iraq War from international press agencies rather than risking their own lives in Iraq. They believed information from the news agencies was of high quality because these agencies had typically sent twenty or thirty journalists to the conflict regions and combined their information into one report. However, to properly decode the meaning of this information, the journalists needed experience understanding composite texts from the *dpa* (*German News Agency*) themselves and to know how such reports are created (cf. Meyer, *SZ*, line 40).

Many of the interviewed German journalists formed opinions about embedded journalism by gaining knowledge from American journalists' experiences as described in non-fiction literature such as *In the Company of Soldiers* by Rick

Atkinson (cf. Becker, *SZ*, line 253). The German journalists trusted American journalists' opinions, especially if they were as well-known as Rick Atkinson, "one of the best American journalists in the field of the military" (Becker, *SZ*, line 254). Atkinson freely admitted it had become impossible for him to report independently while embedded because he had shared everything with his vehicle's soldiers, including their time schedule and above all the risk during military operations.

In terms of information about the war, the German journalists also relied on the *BND* as a source (Fichte *FAZ*, line 356). From their perspective, the *BND* had the same information about Weapons of Mass Destructions (WMDs) as the *CIA* and *FBI* because the allied countries' *Secret Services* were cooperating (cf. Scholz, *FAZ*, lines 139-140). The German Armed Forces were another source of information about the state of affairs in Iraq. Though they had not participated in military action there, they were well informed (Fichte, *FAZ*). The journalists also trusted information from the *BBC*.

In addition, German journalists blindly trusted US broadsheet newspapers to obtain informational details. These newspapers had a positive reputation with the interviewed journalists from *FAZ* and *SZ* who believed that they only published reliable information (cf. Hartman, *FAZ*, line 126). As Hartmann remarked, it was relatively unlikely that papers such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Washington Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal* would print incorrect information. In reality, the mistakes of American media were reproduced in German newspapers. Next, we will examine the kinds of sources the German journalists used in more detail followed by a presentation of American sources.

5.4.2 American Journalists: Open Access to Firsthand Sources of Information

In contrast, American journalists in Iraq could reuse their traditional monothetic pre-fabricated action-drafts because they continuously enjoyed access to primary sources of information. Due to the professional ethic of providing a comprehensive picture of an event, American journalists "[were] trying to get as much [information] as they could" (Thurman, *WP*, line 185). The journalists doubted the existence of a single, all-encompassing source of information, and so they used "a wide range of sources," presenting many different interpretations and views of the Iraq War in order to present a "full picture" of the war.

According to the interviewed *WP* and *NYT* journalists, American journalists essentially used the following two types of information sources: personal contacts (human informational sources) and non-personal sources, which included other newspapers, institutions (e.g. think tanks), documents, briefings, and Internet articles. The journalists generally preferred personal contacts because they delivered more profound information; they viewed their personal contacts as the Alpha and the Omega of their work. Personal contacts also helped journalists gain access to secondary sources such as military documents. The type of articles the journalists wrote and their location (for instance, Iraq or Washington) determined what kind of informational sources they could acquire. Embedded journalists primarily contacted the military staff around them, including generals, officers, colonels, and soldiers (Goldsmith, *WP*, lines 40-45). Generals at headquarters (HQ) were especially interesting for journalists, as they provided valuable information for understanding "high security combat operations" (line 53).

The military HQ was the most important location in the war: a tent equipped with laptops and monitors providing a satellite overview of the battlefield, manned by technical staff. In this environment, journalists could observe the general's actions, how he made decisions, and what commands he issued to his subordinates. The journalists were fascinated to be allowed in HQ and described the experience as "very enlightening" (Goldsmith, *WP*, line 60). They had "access to the same information" (line 59) as the generals and could observe "how the colonels and generals who were running the war operated" (line 60).

During the rest periods on military bases, journalists could interview military staff. These interviewees included medical staff, soldiers, and officers who had just returned from military operations or who were preparing to participate in them. After military operations, journalists could also interview wounded soldiers in field hospitals and reconstruct what had happened on the battlefield. One of the interviewed journalists, for example, had the opportunity to interview the Iraqi who had revealed how to find Jessica Lynch, a female soldier captured by insurgents. Generally, though, the informational sources for embedded journalists were very limited: "[...] it's true that if you're an embedded reporter you only can report what you see and hear and the people you talk to, and those would be American soldiers in that case." (Goldsmith, *WP*, line 79).

Due to the division of tasks between journalists, they primarily concentrated on their own topics. Thus, a military reporter would mainly interview military personnel and only seldom interview civilians (cf. Thurman, *WP*). Journalists had the freedom to interview whomever they wanted, but they always had to keep in mind how to gain sufficient information for the topic for which they were responsible. Embedded journalists were not only limited by the sources available to them but also by the topics they were permitted to write about freely:

> There were limitations in the sense that for military security reasons I could not report our future movements, which is normal. I mean, I could not report where they were going to the next day and the next day, because that would put people's lives in danger, so but other than that I could report anything. (Thurman, *WP*, lines 137-140)

In Washington or New York, journalists searched for information about the Iraq War from Congress, the Pentagon, and the White House. Since they had experience working in Washington, they had many personal contacts and knew the right people to ask about the war. Their informational sources also included blogs, websites, and competitors' newspapers and magazines (e.g. the *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Los Angeles Times*). Additionally, journalists drew on think tanks, intelligence services, universities, local analysts, regional experts, the US government (including the defense and state departments), Congress (because "it administrated the budget of the military"), foreign governments and their embassies, and even "private companies" as information sources. (cf. Newman, *WP*, lines 300-305)

American journalists avoided reading the British newspapers because they did not "trust their information" (Newman, *WP*, line 28) and had doubts about their professional ethics. To American journalists, British newspapers were biased towards "a particular viewpoint" (ibid., line 282). However, some American journalists criticized Americans in general for being "embarrassingly" ignorant about information written in languages other than English, described such an attitude toward foreign journalistic cultures as "a weak spot of the United States" (ibid., line 285), and tried to determine an explanation or possible justification for it. One such justification is that their country is "so big, it's not so much that you don't care about the rest of the world, it's just the rest of the world is so far away" (ibid., line 291).

American journalists' most favorable informational sources were personal contacts. One senior journalist from the *WP* came from a family that was friends with prominent American politicians such as the Clinton family. While reporting on the Iraq War, he benefited from his contacts: He knew Hans Blix and was able to acquire official information from him. This included information about the WMDs and Blix's personal impressions of the issue, about which there had been a great lack of clarity (cf. Costner, *WP*). The ability to make contacts with decision-makers on the political level is also the result of work experience: "it's just something that happens if you're here longer" (Costner, *WP*, line 65). During the forty years Costner worked as a journalist, he had met many contemporary politicians or high officials long before they came into their positions. For example, he "knew the head of the CIA when he was a legislative assistant in the Senate" (ibid., line 64.).

The American journalists found it important to challenge their readers by providing contrasting sources of information and allowing them to draw their own opinions about the state of affairs in Iraq. Bloom (*NYT*) stressed the importance of "finding a sort of balance between what [they] could see firsthand as reporters and what information [they] could get from other sources." (lines 255-256) Journalists acknowledged that gaining information was an inherent challenge of their profession, as it required more physical action and social interaction than the writing process. Although the interviewed journalists complained about having to gather "a huge" (Costner, *WP*, line 134) or "tremendous" (Thurman, *WP*, line 236) amount of information daily and the difficulties of managing it, however, they preferred this task to writing articles. For example, Thurman (*WP*) remarked that she found writing unspectacular and boring.

Even though German and American journalists had access to different informational sources, they applied similar professional strategies to handle them, for example in how to prove information or verify facts. Subsequently, this chapter will discuss the professional strategies that US and German journalists used in order to maintain the requirements of their professional ethics and to approach the idea of objectivity. Indeed, the question is what kind of strategies the journalists used in their daily routines when covering the Iraq War in order to construct reality and support the process of objectivation.

5.5 A Decalogue of Professional Strategies

Journalists' professional action in war situations includes managing inherent limitations and problems, as was already discussed. The professional action of the interviewed German and American journalists included handling informational problems on the subject of the Iraq War from their working locations. These problems included verification of information and the problem of objectivity. All the interviewed journalists sought to stay true to their principles of professional ethics including objectivity and faithfulness to reality throughout their professional action, though they were all skeptical about being able to remain truly objective. However, professional action requires journalists to at least attempt to fulfill these ideals.

Analysis and interpretation of the interviews revealed ten professional strategies for achieving and maintaining objectivity as well as dealing with information in general that both the American and German journalists applied daily in their work. These strategies demonstrate interdependencies between the field's macro- and micro-levels, namely the way newspapers plan news coverage and journalists' professional action. On the macro-level, newspapers attach great importance to employing journalists from a range of different backgrounds both to guarantee a diversity of perspectives for their readers and to better address the well-known problem of objectivity. On the micro-level, the journalists attempt to do their best to select and verify informational sources with an approach similar to that of their newspapers, for instance, by choosing interviewees with different backgrounds.

Rules for newspapers (Macro-level)

Rule 1:	Newspapers should employ journalists with different backgrounds. The more educational, ethnic, and political backgrounds represented, the more objective the newspaper.

Rules for journalists (Micro-level)

Rule 2:	Think first, act later, analyze the situation, and plan your actions carefully.
Rule 3:	Triangulate information and present different sides of events.
Rule 4:	Maintain a professional distance from the subject of your reporting.
Rule 5:	Do not take sides and do not dramatize events.
Rule 6:	Use technology to prove information.
Rule 7:	Rely on facts and use quotations.
Rule 8:	Think about the limitations of your informational sources and your newspaper.
Rule 9:	Cooperate with colleagues.
Rule 10:	Admit your mistakes.

Table 5: A Decalogue of Rules for Journalists' Professional Action

5.5.1 Employ journalists with different backgrounds (newspaper)

What a single journalist fails to achieve the newspaper as a whole may offset. Presenting different perspectives in reports has helped solve the above-mentioned dilemma of journalists' backgrounds. This problem could be solved in part if newspapers, as employing institutions, hired journalists with different backgrounds. The presence of so-called "antidotes" (Smith, *NYT*, line 129) may help establish informational balance in newspapers. Journalists suggested that it was essential that their newspapers "had reporters from a variety of different [ethnic, social, geographical, educational] backgrounds" (ibid.: lines 129-130). Employing journalists with different educational, political and ethnic backgrounds would

automatically lead to a "diversity effect" (ibid.: line 133), which refers to a situation where different perspectives and interpretations on an issue are found in one newspaper. The German and American journalists underscored that an entire newspaper could profit if it included different points of view on any given event in its articles and articles' introductions contained information explaining their authors' opinions.

The German journalists mentioned that their newspapers employed journalists with divergent or controversial political opinions. Interestingly, the German journalists, in contrast to e.g. Smith (*NYT*, see above), did not mention journalists' different backgrounds (but different opinions) as an employment strategy to prevent newspapers from becoming one-sided. Donne (*FAZ*) referred to a strategy of antagonism, such as criticism-counter-criticism or opinion-counter-opinion, as something characteristic of critical-rational thought in Western societies. In his words, "this is what makes Western people tick" (line 268). For the same reason, political discussions in newspapers ideally contain opposing opinions.

During coverage of the wars in Kosovo and Afghanistan, Lehmann (*SZ*) argued there were "cracks in the newspaper" (line 221): the foreign policy section of his newspapers "had an opinion" (ibid.) that justified these wars; the feature pages, on the other hand, hosted correspondents who expressed positions counter to those in the foreign policy section. Lehmann noted that, on the one hand, reading opinion "A" and opinion "B" in one newspaper might confuse its readership. On the other hand, "this is pluralism, a dialectical process that an author proposes a thesis, another one – an anti-thesis and the reader can think of it" (lines 225-226).

Interestingly, the journalists themselves pursued a parallel strategy. They attempted to draw on different informational sources or interview people with different opinions and social backgrounds in order to promote objectivity and verify information, since drawing on a variety of viewpoints about an event or war facilitates approaching objective news coverage: "that's the only way to get good coverage" (Goldsmith, *WP*, line 84). For some journalists, variety meant giving voice to people with different social backgrounds (cf. e.g. Thurman, *WP*, later in this chapter). Next, this chapter will scrutinize journalists' action in different situations where they planned war coverage or experienced the Iraq War in order to determine a possible structure of professional action in form of action strategies.

5.5.2 Think first, act later, analyze the situation, and plan your actions carefully

First, journalists must adapt and orient themselves quickly to new reporting situations, be it war or another event. According to Braun (*SZ*), journalists should not waste time contemplating how difficult or even impossible it is to achieve objectivity, but instead should define their reporting situation first. After that, the journalists' quick analysis of the situation should lead to an action-plan that they formulate for themselves with or without help from their editors. This action-plan should contain a tool kit of action-drafts, by which journalists would control and manage their professional action in order to approximate the goal of objectivity in their reporting.

Lang (*FAZ*) drew a parallel between a journalist and a general at headquarters. Journalists must gain an overview of a war, for example, by gathering and selecting information. This overview should help journalists evaluate as well as judge the situation and form an opinion of it. Of course, the quality of such judgments may vary. Lang emphasized that the "ability to judge" (line 394, lines 379-381) appropriately is not easily acquired and journalists must learn it. The quality of their judgment can be evaluated only retrospectively; only time will tell whether their judgment was correct (cf. lines 394-397). In Lang's view, judgment is the most significant competence within journalists' professional action, as a judgment always has consequences. To return to his metaphor, every single decision a war general undertakes regarding war is based on his judgment of the situation, such as whether to return fire or not, and would have consequences for the course of the war. Likewise, journalists' decisions about how to act, which action-goals to pursue, and which action-drafts to choose, influence the process of reporting. In the context of war reporting, journalists' judgment of situations and their decisions about how to act can even cost them their lives.

To define the reporting situation and make judgments about the quality and credibility of informational sources, journalists should draw on their professional knowledge. For example, in war reporting, an intimate knowledge of military strategy and military communication policy may help journalists understand and examine information from military press officers in order to better distinguish between reliable and unreliable information. Such military knowledge and experience with war coverage will also help journalists improve their writing skills and better explain the complexity of war to their readers (cf. Lang, *FAZ*). Journalists,

however, cannot be omniscient and should make use of the professional expertise of specialists in particular fields. Such experts can help journalists understand and interpret information and then draw "major conclusions." Being in possession of exclusive information or a secret war report is, as Lang concluded "not the whole thing" (ibid., line 78).

5.5.3 Triangulate information and search for different perspectives

Despite the aforementioned fact that information in war is constantly manipulated, obtaining as many information sources as possible is still the best way for war correspondents to resist untruthful information and achieve an informational balance in their reporting. By combining their own descriptions of the war with information from interviews and official documents, they can present a more complete picture of the war to the reader (cf. Hartmann, *FAZ*, line 184). A balance of informational sources will ensure independent reportage and the text's high quality. For Schulz (*NYT*), striving for informational balance means to witness events oneself, to gain "first-hand information," and finally to compare it with information from other sources. Journalists should try to get "all sides [of] the story and [to piece] together a picture from that" (ibid., lines 223-225).

Bloom's (*NYT*) strategies for acquiring information in Iraq did not differ from those she used in any other country. She always "follow[s] the same process" (line 577). To verify information, she used "a range of measurements, a range of evaluative techniques [in Iraq] as much as [she did] on the streets of Manhattan" (line 576). Bloom summarized her strategies as a checklist of questions that journalists should ask themselves:

> In complicated political military situations like in Iraq, it behooves you even more than any other place to make sure that you are triangulating information. If somebody served you well as a source, your trust in them will increase. So the next time you go to them. (...) in New York, in North Carolina, in Miami, Bogotá, all over the places and you follow the same process. You have to ask yourself, why is somebody telling you this? How could they know this? Do you have any doubts about it? What's their agenda? Do they have an agenda? Are they being forthright [with information]? What's their track record with the newspaper? What's their track record with the press? What's their world? And you go again with what you know. (Bloom, *NYT*, lines 579-592)

Such a "many-sided picture" (Schmid, *FAZ*, line 34) is what readers expect from quality war reports. While reading a quality newspaper, readers do not wish to be influenced by one particular opinion, but merely seek to become informed about the

state of affairs in order to form their own views about the war or other events. Journalists should use sources that represent "all the different points and possible angles" (Goldsmith, *WP*, line 85) and "as many facets" (Schmid, *FAZ*, line 56) of war as they can uncover. Independent war coverage should present the opinions of all parties involved in the war (Meyer, *SZ*, line 67), and proper war coverage should provide information about the fighting on the front line as well as information about the situation of civilians in terms of human rights.

> Good war coverage must try to reproduce the real front line or battle situation as truthfully as possible, but must also take care of the details; for example whether international humanitarian law is being respected or not, which may even not have been possible; that is to respect the suffering civilian population at the same time. (Werner, *FAZ*, lines 115-122)

Presenting different perspectives in reports also helps address the above-mentioned dilemma of journalists' backgrounds. On the one hand, newspapers employ journalists with a "variety of different backgrounds" (Rosenfield, *NYT*, line 654). Employing journalists with different educational, political and ethnic backgrounds would automatically lead to a "diversity effect" (ibid.), which means that different perspectives on and interpretations of an issue would be found in one newspaper. The journalists felt that newspapers as a whole could profit from including different points of view on any given event in their news articles and supporting them with an introduction explaining these opinions. The German journalists also mentioned that their newspapers employ journalists who express different or controversial political opinions. However, in contrast to e.g. Smith (*NYT*, see above), the German journalists did not mention journalists' different backgrounds as an employment strategy to prevent the newspaper from becoming one-sided.

On the other hand, the journalists themselves pursued a parallel strategy, using different informational sources or interviewing people with different opinions to promote objectivity. Drawing on a variety of viewpoints about an event or war facilitates approaching objective news coverage. For Thurman (*WP*), variety entails giving voice to people with different social backgrounds. She elaborated that this approach is what makes a war report "powerful [and] realistic" (lines 278-279). When she was embedded with American marines, Thurman tried to interview both officers and soldiers. Goldsmith (*WP*) echoed this perspective, claiming, "that's the only way to get good coverage" (line 84).

Thurman (*WP*) described her strategy for testing information's reliability as a "reality check" (line 260). She invented a "rule of thumb" (line 254), questioning people from as many different social backgrounds as possible. By interviewing "different categories of people" (Thurman, *WP*, line 237) situated at different levels of the military hierarchy, the information obtained would be more balanced. As she observed, while officers may have detailed information about combat operations and the organization of their units, the inexperienced soldiers would be better equipped to offer information about the atmosphere and interpersonal relationships within these units as well as how they perceived the war. In her interviews, Thurman (*WP*) took account of the soldiers' body language, which, she asserted sometimes betrayed more than their verbal answers.

> I could have a colonel who is in charge of three or four thousand people tell me how wonderful everything is in that area, but obviously I read the body language of the soldiers, I can tell from them how dangerous it is, I can tell by how much they talk to one another, how quiet they are, I can tell by what precautions they take, I can tell by how nervous they are. (lines 246-250)

Bloom (*NYT*) emphasized the special responsibility journalists have to verify information in Iraq. As she explained, "[i]n complicated political military situations like in Iraq, it behooves you even more than any other place to make sure that you are triangulating information" (line 450). In Iraq, journalists knew that interviewing only one person could deliver only one "piece of information" (line 453). As a result, journalists had to search for other interviewees to gain more information about an event and to verify their existing information. Journalists could then "build" their article upon these layers of information. Bloom felt this strategy was more appropriate than talking to a single person, "who has got the whole thing" (line 452). In her view, journalists must be "sure to attribute what's said and who's saying it" (line 455).

In Iraq, the *NYT* and the *WP* demanded that their journalists ensure that their news coverage remain the same high quality as it was at home. According to Schulz (*NYT*), reliability of information was a "fluid" concept during the Iraq War but also a "luxury" (line 380). The quantity of informational sources could be reduced or disseminated among colleagues. Nevertheless, information had to be confirmed by "at least two sources" (Hoffman, *NYT*, line 493).

In Schulz's view (*NYT*), working in opacity is generally part of "the nature of war reporting" (line 284). For example, while it is normal to report a war's number of casualties, accurate numbers can be difficult to obtain. Schulz described a situation in which an Iraqi official responsible for informing the press about "the body count" announced, "fifty people in Baghdad [were] killed today," but the "Americans [said] thirty" (lines 274-278). In such a situation, journalists needed to search for accurate information by going to the location of the killings or asking the Iraqi police. Schulz suggested that if it was impossible to determine an accurate figure, the journalist should report both figures and their respective sources. Accordingly, a German journalist suggested that the only way to deal with information that cannot be proven is to name at least two differing sources; in this case the Iraqi official, the Iraqi Police, and the US Army. Alternatively, Zimmermann (*SZ*) noted that if information could not be proven, his newspaper would write "the sources sometimes cannot be verified" (line 172). Furthermore he said, "in practice, we can only write down what we are told or copy what is said. But we cannot judge to what extent it is true" (lines 172-174).

Another strategy to demonstrate the accuracy of information, specifically in the Iraq War, was to compare information from US politicians with information from colleagues in Iraq. Smith (*WP*) described this strategy as determining "the delta, the difference between what the president was saying and what reality was on the ground in Iraq" (line). This gap between decisions that had been made in Washington and their realization in Iraq would reveal the real state of affairs. To uncover the truth by comparing different informational sources in a short amount of time was possible only with the help of technology due to the great distance between Iraq and the United States

On the one hand, a greater quantity of informational sources might help to approximate objectivity in reporting. On the other hand, the quality of these sources is crucial to their usefulness. The journalists had to constantly verify their information sources because the reliability of information is central to newspapers' reputation and credibility. The quality of information newspapers offer to their readership distinguishes them from other newspapers. Maintaining reliable information involves handling information cautiously and demands careful work. Though readers may agree or disagree with newspapers' presentation of everyday life, people "believe" what is published in newspapers (cf. Costner, *WP*, line 234).

This belief is necessary for readers, as they usually cannot witness and prove information about events themselves. The readers' trust in newspapers is an important reason why they buy and read them.

Journalists described this trust as the way in which the quality of their professional action is measured and their employment at quality newspapers is justified. In the words of Smith (*NYT*), "that's why you're here and not at the *Baltimore Sun* or some other newspaper" (594). Bloom (*NYT*) stressed a direct link between the quality of a journalist's work and the reliability of his information sources. As she put it, "you're only as good as your contacts," and in terms of proving information's reliability, "you're only as good as your sources" (line 543).

Publishing incorrect information could cost a journalist and his newspaper credibility and regard among their readership. Therefore, all facts that journalists seek to use in their articles should be carefully confirmed (cf. Lang, *FAZ*, lines 392-393). Smith (*WP*) ascribed an immaterial value to the reliability of information, as reliability causes a newspaper to gain credibility and in turn increases the newspaper's influence on its readership. As he put it, "in order to achieve that influence, you have to have credibility" (line 354).

5.5.4 Maintain a professional distance from the subject of your reporting

Journalists must manage a paradox of closeness to and distance from the subject of their reports by means of their professional action. On the one hand, journalists should aim to stay as close to political decision makers and events as possible, while on the other hand they should maintain as great a professional distance as possible. If they do not follow the latter, journalists run a great risk of becoming used by political or other partial interests. At the same time, however, they must become close to their subjects in order to obtain information and insights. Lehmann (*SZ*) described the paradox of maintaining distance and seeking closeness as "schizophrenic" (line 79), as if journalists live in parallel worlds: trusting their sources and subjects in one world and simultaneously mistrusting them in the other. Lehmann (*SZ*) hoped every journalist would ask himself the following questions while writing news coverage: "Am I still writing objectively? Have I been influenced by the prevalent opinion? Have I become a propagandist for or against the war?" (line 89)

The interviewed journalists pointed out that verifying the reliability of information is a product of their working experience and intuition (e.g. Thurman, *WP*; Schulz, *NYT*). While employed at a newspaper, journalists learn and develop professional skills and intuition to evaluate information critically and to judge whether it is reliable. On the one hand, they rely on their professional instincts to determine whether to trust information: "you kind of have to just use your inner sense to see how trustworthy the person is you're talking to" (Schulz, *NYT*, 58). On the other hand, journalists rely on their experience obtaining information from certain sources over time: "if somebody tells you something and it turns out over time to be true, you can trust them" (Hoffman, *NYT*, line 80). If Schulz (*NYT*) was able to disprove information he had received, he would subsequently mistrust this information source. Sometimes he would contact the source of false information and confront it with the mistake and would do the same when this information source was an institution such as a think tank.

> [He] thinks this distrust towards certain sources [is] almost always healthy, because one can easily become instrumentalized, of course, one should try to avoid becoming instrumentalized. (lines 493-496)

Verified, confident sources of information may spare journalists a lot of time in their daily routines, as Bloom (*NYT*) explained with her "rule of thumb": "If somebody served you well as a source, your trust in them will increase. So the next time you go to them, if the information sounds plausible, you won't necessarily feel compelled to talk to five other people or find the written documentation" (lines 122-125).

5.5.5 Do not take sides, do not dramatize events

Maintaining professional distance and independence in reporting also means presenting contrasting opinions about war; journalists should not take sides or attack people they mention in their articles on a personal level. They should neither propagate for nor against the war, nor should they emotionalize or "over-dramatize things to make a good story" (Thurman, *WP*, line 242). Even if journalists personally agree or disagree with a belligerent, they should write about the war "impartially." However, the American journalists experienced many situations in which it was difficult to remain neutral. They had to learn to deal with their feelings. As the United States had invaded Iraq, the US journalists were conscious that they might be associated with the invaders, particularly when they interviewed Iraqi civilians. In the words of Thurman (*WP*):

> I always do emphasize [...] a neutrality element and the point of our reporting is always to get a full picture of the story and how it's important for us to get an accurate understanding of what Iraqis are living through. Sometimes this makes it even harder to deal with, because then they'll get furious and they say, 'well, look at what we're dealing with, we have no electricity, our people are getting killed' etc. (Thurman, *WP*, lines 243-349)

Thurman (*WP*) shared her experience interviewing an Iraqi man whose "entire family" (line 270) had been killed in an attack by the US military. The circumstances of the interview were especially dramatic because this Iraqi "was a provincial official who had been helping the Americans for more than a year" (line 272). Thus, Thurman was confronted with the Iraqi's poignant grief after the attack. He blamed himself for his decision to accommodate his family in a building that had just been bombed by the Americans. While he did not blame her for being American, she felt certain guilt by association.

To stay true to the journalistic principle of objectivity, Thurman (*WP*) interviewed both the Iraqi man and the US tank commander "who gave the order to fire" (line 273). In her article about the battle, Thurman addressed both sides and allowed both to speak without passing any judgment, though it was difficult for her. She noted, "after the article came out, both the Iraqi man and the tank commander thanked me for portraying it in a way that they felt was fair" (lines 275-277). She was very satisfied by this result.

5.5.6 Use technology to prove information

Despite the technical problems described previously, the journalists emphasized the positive qualities of advanced technology that made their work easier. Especially in terms of verifying information, technology was of great assistance. For example, Smith (*NYT*) remembered an incident in which he was participating in a press briefing in the White House. He received information that he suspected was wrong, and in order to disprove it, Smith took out his Blackberry smartphone and emailed his colleague in Baghdad. At the moment his colleague "was out on the streets working on some other stories, but [the message] came across his Blackberry" and he was able to respond immediately, saying, "'It's completely false, ask him about this'" (line 78). Smith was especially captivated by the fact that the answer had come from Baghdad "in real time" while he was still in the briefing, and therefore, "I was able to go pursue the issue right there" (line 87). With great enthusiasm, he concluded, "You could never have done that in earlier days of technology" (line 90). The quick

exchange and information verification was only made possible by technology. As Smith (*NYT*) put it, "email and instant communications have made it much easier" (line 91).

5.5.7 Rely on facts and use quotations

Another strategy to approach objective news coverage and also help avoid emotionalizing events is a reliance on facts and quotations in the text in order to overcome uncertainties in information. As one of the *WP* journalists noted, "facts are the basis of everything" (Costner, *WP*, line 124). First, gathering facts is necessary to gain an overview of what is happening. Second, journalists must attempt to understand situations by analyzing them, and thirdly, they must evaluate situations and form conclusions on the basis of previous analyses. The quality of the outcome of such a process depends on the journalist's personal abilities.

Costner, however, criticized the excessive use of quotations and diagnosed it as a problem of contemporary reporting. In his view, young journalists in particular "tend to wanna put too many quotes" (Costner, *WP*, lines 124-125) into their articles. Quotations are necessary but should be used carefully (cf. ibid.). According to Costner, the first problem with excessive quotations is that the text becomes longer. Secondly, the quality of the text degrades because of the quotations. Furthermore, all facts and quotations have to be "verifiable and confirmable" (Lang, *FAZ*, line). If the informant prefers to stay anonymous, journalists are unable provide their information source and make it clearly reproducible.

Quotation usage does not always serve the goal of objectivity in reporting, and journalists must remain careful and critical toward quotations. According to Costner (*WP*), journalists sometimes use quotations to present themselves and their own opinions rather than the position of the interviewee: "people say whatever they want to see in the paper rather than [what is] accurate" (lines 126-127). Furthermore, politicians also utilize the media as a forum in which to make public relations statements, and therefore "people say things to the media that may or may not be true just to get policies across" (line 83). Rosenfield (*NYT*) also agreed that quality news coverage involves the judicious use of quotations from interviewees. Journalists must be careful with quotations and only use them "accurately," "not misinterpreting" them, "not manipulating" them, and "not obscuring the facts" with

them (line 456). At the time of the interview, she claimed that she had never been accused of misquoting anyone in her eighteen years as a journalist.

5.5.8 Think about limitations of your informational sources and your newspaper

Despite the advantages of the aforementioned strategies, their application was not always possible in Iraq because "it might [have been] too dangerous" (Schulz, *NYT*, line 117): reporters could lose their lives trying to get a story. In such cases, journalists should determine other action-drafts to achieve the action-goal of objectivity in reporting. If journalists were unable to obtain balanced information, they would draw on all other possible informational resources they could find in that environment. For instance, they would speak with "residents by telephone," with "aid agencies or doctors who were in there," and with the military "about what they saw" (line 126). It was not always possible to prove information in Iraq, but if journalists refused to use uncertain information, other journalists would. If a newspaper fails to present information that might be important, it is "bad journalism" (Braun, *SZ*, line 69). A perfect balance, however, is not always feasible or always desirable, as Schulz (*NYT*) noted:

> Despite trying to get all sides of the story and presenting all those sides in an article you may not present the information exactly proportionally because you're trying to make a point in your story. But if there's an important factor, a point of view, that should be included in the story. (lines 118-124)

When handling uncertain information, journalists should not attempt to present themselves as omniscient or all-knowing reporters but should recognize "the limitations of the [informational] sources, their own limitations, and those of the newspaper as a whole" (Schulz, *NYT*, line 128). For a reporter to admit to the reader what he does and does not know (cf. ibid.) and where he obtained or could not obtain information is a strength, not a weakness.

5.5.9 Cooperate with colleagues from your newspaper to gather information

The interviewed journalists drew on the strategy of information sharing because of the limitations they experienced. Sharing information helped them to assess the information they had gathered, to acquire a broader overview of their topics, and to fill in the missing information. Information sharing and teamwork with colleagues was at times both coincidental and deliberate. In the interviews, journalists not only reported collaborating with local colleagues but also with reporters stationed in

other locations: some journalists collaborated both with colleagues in Baghdad and with reporters based in Washington and New York. The reporters used their separate information sources and combined them into one article-text. In particular, the *NYT* articles on the Iraq War were often the product of teamwork, and many articles named several journalists as authors and contributors.

If an article's subject turned out to be a "big story," involving complex or inscrutable information, information exchanges and cooperation with colleagues became indispensable components of the working processes required to do "justice to the story" (Tallman, *NYT*, line 245). For example, Bloom (*NYT*) described the cooperative division of labor as follows: one journalist would go out "on the street" and interview "local Iraqis" (line 341) while the other would talk to the military or the government. Later, the two would combine their efforts to find different informational sources and create a "full story" with a deeper presentation of the event. Therefore, Bloom viewed teamwork as a necessary process for revealing "the entire picture" of a war event. As Bloom noted (*NYT*), "sometimes two people are working on parallel tracks and they realize 'whoa, we can combine our efforts here,' and their stories become combined" (lines 347-348).

Above all, as Thurman (*WP*) put it, teamwork was necessitated by the physical limitations of journalists. She knew that she was "only one person" (line 283) who could be in only one place at a time and that she could not gain more than a "snapshot in time" by interviewing one person (line 282). In turn, to express gratitude to those colleagues who had helped her, she would credit them for any information they had contributed to her article. Bloom (*NYT*) also mentioned including contributors' names in the byline as an expression of fairness and would mention them even if they had offered her only "one sentence or one quote" (line 253).

In contrast, Ilmert (*FAZ*) characterized the gathering of information in Kuwait as a competition between individual journalists. From his perspective, British journalists competed with each other in "a very mean way." (line 120) Ilmert viewed competition as "a great obstacle" to journalists' professional action and even expressed outrage about the British journalists' behavior. He noted that these journalists often worked against each other and even hindered their own colleagues' ability to gain information, as they all aimed to find the most original and exclusive story. In contrast, he noted, the German journalists from different news media were

more "cooperative" (cf. lines 123-125). They supported each other with information, which Ilmert deemed "very praiseworthy." (ibid.) He remarked that the cooperation amongst the German journalists abroad was not detrimental to their news coverage, since each of them handled and rewrote the information differently (cf. lines 177-179).

Krause (*SZ*) also maintained contact with some colleagues from *FAZ* and discussed aspects of his news coverage with them. He also made note of how helpful his colleagues in other international newspapers had been while he was gathering information. To account for the fact that he could not be physically omnipresent, he would call journalists from other newspapers who could help him gain "the essence" of what had been reported, for instance, during press conferences or political negotiations. Due to the lack of competition between European newspapers, Krause found the working atmosphere abroad to be "exemplary." At the same time, he emphasized that this had occurred only while he was working as a foreign correspondent, as he had heard about the competitive situation in Germany from his *SZ* colleagues. Krause explained,

> During the Iraq crisis, the relevant diplomats had a lot to do so it was difficult to get access to them, and it was sometimes the case that we went to the same appointment with six or seven German journalists because we all wanted to talk to [him] – he only had a very short amount of time – 'why don't we all go together because we don't have any secrets from each other' – and it worked out well. (lines 130-136)

In contrast, American journalists from different newspapers avoided sharing information with one another. Due to their competing interests, the *NYT* journalists had complex relationships with the *WP* reporters. Although the *WP* journalists lived and worked in a different part of Baghdad, however, it was nearly impossible for the *NYT* reporters to avoid contact with them. According to Schulz (*NYT*), journalists from the *WP* and the *NYT* socialized with one another in their spare time. As Schulz (*NYT*) described it, "they would have a party or we would have a party, they would come over" (line 89). The US journalists also met other Western journalists working in Iraq socially. However, he emphasized that they did not share information on the topics they were both investigating because of the "competition" between them; this would be "crossing the line." Only information exchanges about security or personal matters were permitted (Bloom, *NYT*, line 90).

Newman (*WP*) distinguished between the personal and professional relationships he had with his *NYT* colleagues. He explained that while he was friends with one of the *NYT* journalists and that their families often met together after work, the friend was a competitor and he would not share "work" information with him. According to Newman, competition is a central issue in journalism. In his words, "people outside of journalism don't appreciate how much competition drives us to excel" (lines 268-269). As a product of this competitive spirit, Newman kept an eye on the competition and read the *NYT* every day. However, he did not believe that the *NYT* journalists read his newspaper:

> I'm not necessarily thinking about my editors, I'm not necessarily thinking about my readers, what I think about is, I want the reporter of *The New York Times* to pick up the paper and say, 'damn, why didn't I have that' and they feel the same way. Journalism is driven by competition and if we lose that competition, it's really going to affect the whole industry. (Newman, *WP*, lines 271-275)

Thurman (*WP*) also remembered situations in which it was impossible to avoid contact with her colleagues from the *NYT*. Once, when she returned from one several trips to Iraq, she met one of the *NYT* Pentagon reporters in the airport by chance as he was going on holiday with his family, and she spoke with him and told him about her time in Iraq. Another incident occurred on an official trip with some high-ranking politicians in Iraq; Thurman was seated next to a *NYT* journalist in a helicopter. In such situations, journalists inevitably spoke with each other as they both had exactly the same information sources (cf. line 364). However, Thurman did not describe such conversations as sharing of information, but rather designated her attitude towards her *NYT* colleagues as "cooperation [...] on a personal level" (line 363). On a professional level, she was conducting "independent reporting" (line 365).

5.5.10 Admit your mistakes

Despite the aforementioned strategies for achieving or approximating objectivity in reporting, false information nevertheless finds its way into newspapers at times. Before the Iraq War began on March 20th, 2003, one of the main points of contention among journalists was whether Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). US journalist Schulz (*NYT*) expressed his problems writing about WMDs and lamented, "[they] were trumpeting the words of certain sources, which proved not to be true" (line 592). In fact, the *NYT* published information confirming that Saddam

Hussein possessed WMDs. As the absence of the WMDs became obvious, the *NYT* apologized to their readers for printing invalid information.

Schulz (*NYT*) stressed the occasional necessity of apologies in professional action: "you have to be willing to say 'we fucked up, we were wrong'" (line 87). Even though Schulz asserted that his newspaper had "a hard time saying, 'I made a mistake'" (line 89), he was proud that they nevertheless apologized. While in politics "nobody excuses [themselves] for wrong doing [...] it became clear that *The Times* had to acknowledge a mistake" (line 90). According to Schulz, it was both difficult and useful for the newspaper to apologize, because without it, they would have lost "their credibility" and "their reputation." In the words of Schulz, "in journalism all you have is your credibility." Apologizing "only enhances your credibility with readers and with your peers and with the people you're reporting about" (lines 93-100).

In general, the interviewed journalists wanted to discuss mistakes. On the one hand, journalists identified themselves as the parties to blame for mistakes if they "were too willing to believe what they were being told" (Bloom, *NYT*, line 565). On the other hand, some mistakes were a product of editors' failures. Schulz (*NYT*) believed such mistakes were unintentional and designated it as "half intentional [when] the reporter appeared to have a bias and the manager didn't know it" (line 569). According to him, the editor's task is to supervise the journalist. If mistakes occur, "there is blame on many levels including the upper echelons, which also makes it hard to apologize" (line 570), because both the journalist and the editor are responsible. Schulz described an example of a *NYT* journalist who had been suspended from the newspaper because she had used false information. (cf. line 569)

Rosenfield (*NYT*) only used information in her articles she was sure about. In her words, "[I] hate getting stuff wrong" (line 253). Rosenfield (*NYT*) advised journalists how to behave should they possess information of unclear accuracy: "there is no other way to do it except just say what you know, say what people are telling you they know and let the reader decide. That's all you can do." In general, journalists should be very meticulous with the information they use; as Rosenfield put it, "you're not gonna print what you don't know, you can only print what you know [and] what you are sure of." (line 250) She pointed out that that it is every journalist's intention and "hope" (line 251) to present accurate information in an

article text, but that there is no insurance against making mistakes and "sometimes [journalists] get [information] wrong." Furthermore, as Rosenfield clarified,

> We all try to avoid these things. We all suffer from it, if the paper gets hit because of shortcomings in our reporting, our writing, we all feel it. Especially at a place like *The New York Times*, where there is so much scrutiny of the paper. (lines 254-257)

To address this problem, one strategy within journalists' set of professional action is to write openly about their working circumstances in war regions and about their limitations in terms of gathering and verifying information; journalists would be well served by not pretending to their readers that "they were completely informed and would now communicate the actual events of war" (Donne, *FAZ*, lines 45-46). The interviewed journalists generally felt that they could cover only one single aspect of the war and never the war in its entirety. Additionally, journalists should recognise that their coverage reveals only one aspect or area of a war, since a war may extend over thousands of kilometres and involve an enormous number of actions and simultaneous events.

Information about and within a given war is often characterized by both its uncertainty and its lack of verifiability, therefore posing extraordinary challenges to journalists and to their strategies for acting professionally in such a situation. One way to manage this problem and hence part of this professional action would be to speak honestly to hypothetical readerships, disclosing when information was unverifiable and describing the circumstances under which it was gathered. Where war coverage is concerned, some gaps in information should be accepted (cf. Hartmann, *FAZ*). War's opacity, journalists' physical proximity to dangerous events, the restriction of movement, and emotional involvement may hinder journalists from developing the professional distance necessary for truly independent reporting.

5.6 Summary

The interviews revealed that the topic of objectivity was a cornerstone of journalists' professional action on both continents. Journalists' enthusiasm over debating about objectivity demonstrated not only the term's central significance for their professional action and ideals but also their extensive, everyday professional experience struggling with the concept. One of the reasons the concept was associated with such struggle might be the ambiguity surrounding it in terms of the great discrepancy between theory (objectivity as an ideal) and practice (how to

accomplish objectivity). These methods for better achieving objectivity in practice will be understood in this PhD as professional strategies or professional action.

To summarize, objectivity is generally impossible to achieve in its ideal form when reporting, as journalists are human beings who are socialized in specific ways, which influences their thoughts and perspectives. Furthermore, journalists can be influenced by political debates and become emotionally embedded in personal attitudes towards the events they are investigating. Second, truth is inconvenient in wartime for the parties involved in the conflict, and information is always manipulated. Nevertheless, according to the interviewed journalists, objectivity must occupy a permanent place in the professional ethics, as readers of quality newspapers expect objective reporting. Moreover, objectivity serves as a criterion for the measurement of journalistic quality. Professional actions in form of strategies are needed in order to achieve objectivity.

These strategies can be summarized with the following maxims that demonstrate how newspapers as well as journalists participate in the construction of reality in newspapers. First of all, the newspaper should take an active role in the journalists it employs and therefore 1) employ journalists from different backgrounds. The remaining rules concern journalists: 2) think first, act later, analyze the situation, and plan your actions carefully; 3) triangulate information and search for different perspectives; 4) maintain a professional distance from the subject of your reporting; 5) do not take sides, do not dramatize events; 6) use technology to prove information; 7) rely on facts and use quotations; 8) think about limitations of your informational sources and your newspaper; 9) cooperate with colleagues; and 10) admit your mistakes.

6 Newspapers as Subjective Reality

In the beginning of this thesis the statement was made that newspapers can represent both an objective and a subjective reality. On the one hand, newspapers are institutions with their own norms, rules and traditions. On the other hand, a group of social actors – professional journalists – "inhabit" these institutions. The reality of a newspaper is constructed by people and their subjective perspectives due to their primary socialization, as discussed in the last chapter, where objectivity or newspaper as objective reality was put into question. During communication with the so-called significant others and negotiation about ideas and action plans, the reality will be constructed anew. The significant others can be seen as an ultimate authority, which allows certain reality to be born and put into the world in the form of a printed article. Apart from the question, "Who are these significant others for the interviewed journalists?" The journalists' interaction with their significant others will be the matter of analysis in this chapter.

6.1 The Significant Others

During their professional socialization, the interviewed journalists learned how to achieve a professional distance from the events they covered and how to observe and analyze reality in a professional way, keeping in mind that this reality comes to light in a printed form in a particular newspaper, their employer. Journalists developed strategies that enabled them to handle the reality they experienced or witnessed during the reporting in a professional manner. In the course of their professional socialization, the journalists learned about a newspaper's working culture in a step-by-step process, while climbing the journalistic career ladder, and began to internalize its values and identify with their newspaper. The so-called significant others played a major role in this process of professional socialization, and supported the journalists on their way to becoming professionals.

But who were these significant others for the interviewed journalists? According to my interpretation of the interviews, the following groups of significant others can be distinguished: editors, colleagues, readers and families. During the process of writing, the journalists interacted both directly (face-to-face, at home and in the office) and indirectly (e.g. by email and telephone from Iraq or other places) with their significant others. While direct or face-to-face encounters with significant

others relied on simultaneous presence and communication, indirect communication implied an inherent time delay. The professional socialization of journalists took place in the process of direct and indirect communication or interactions with their significant others.

For example, when journalists wrote an article directed toward an unspecified readership, it was usually a one-way indirect action. If the readers reacted to the articles via email or letter, this was a two-way indirect action, since the readers did not necessarily respond to the journalists. However, if journalists used articles as a means of conveying a message to a particular person, this could be seen as a latent one-way direct action, but if they got a personal reply, this action became a two-way direct action. Applying the same terminology to the process of gaining information, an interview would be a "two-way" direct professional action, while researching documents would be a "one-way" indirect professional action.

Taking into account the above-mentioned hierarchy between the significant others, one can trace this hierarchy by tracking the number of times the journalists mentioned these social actors in their interviews. While interactions with the significant others, such as readers, were widely discussed in the interviews, interactions with family members and colleagues were only marginally mentioned. Due to the circumstance that family members took on the role of readers, I will acknowledge them as significant others and describe them as a part of section 6.4, "Readers and Family".

6.2 Editors

The degree of interaction and communication between editors, as significant others, and journalists depended on the newspapers' internal hierarchical organization, the division of labor within the institution, and its journalistic traditions. Even though both American and German journalists attributed the role of superior authority to their editors, the communication and division of labor between editors and journalists differed greatly between newspapers. While American journalists admitted that they had obligatory and intensive contact with their editors, from the beginning to the end of the reporting process, German journalists had more opportunities to work independently. German journalists regarded the interactions with their editors as a marginal issue. Apparently, German editors did not control reporting to the same extent as American editors did.

Due to a low degree of hierarchy in German newspapers, journalists often took on the function of both editor and journalist. This explains why they did not have as clear a division of labor and control power as their American colleagues. The limited hierarchy in German newspapers raises two questions: "What role did German editors, as significant others, play in the professional socialization of journalists?" and "How was the professional identity of journalists formed in German newspapers, if, according to Berger and Luckmann (1961), significant others play an important role in its formation?" Might the formation of professional identity in German newspapers, therefore, follow other principles or mechanisms than in American newspapers?

During the interview analysis, two compelling issues arose, which might help to approximate the notion of professional socialization and identity formation in the examined German newspapers, or they might raise new questions. The first issue was the frequency of change of employer, and the second issue involved a conscious decision for a certain employer. While the American journalists often shifted from one newspaper to another, most German journalists worked for the same newspaper for their entire career. From this point of view, American editors fulfill a more significant function for their journalists than do German editors. The examined American newspapers needed editors who would teach newcomers to their papers how to report professionally in accordance with the values and styles of their newspapers. The constant change of media employers of the American journalists, hence, required the support of professional insiders, which was provided by experienced editors, and a continual renewal of professional socialization.

By contrast, working for one newspaper, German journalists tended to undergo professional socialization only once. Editors in German newspapers were thus not required to fulfill the same function as in American newspapers. By merely relying on the interview material, it is difficult to identify the role of editors in journalists' professional socialization. Perhaps, the interviewed journalists underestimated the role of their editors in their professional socialization or they took it for granted or had a different reason for not talking about their socialization process. There was one exception, which shows how the lack of experience in interacting with editors left one of the interviewed German journalists unable to interpret his editor's reaction to his article.

Krause (*SZ*) reflected on a tense situation he had experienced with his chief editor. In one of his commentaries Krause allowed himself to express a critical position toward Gerhard Schroeder, the German Chancellor at the time of the Iraq war in 2003. He knew that his editor would not support such a position. Nevertheless, his editor neither changed nor said anything to Krause, and his article was printed as it was. The next day, however, his editor was irritated to hear Krause's article being quoted on the daily radio newspaper program, and was worried that the radio audience would assume that Krause's commentary reflected the political line of the entire *SZ*. The editor then rebuked Krause by email (cf. lines 100-107).

> Next morning the chief editor listened to the radio and heard his own newspaper being quoted and exactly the passage where I wrote something about Schroeder and he said, he heard this three times in the morning and now he was annoyed about it, and, therefore, he felt that he had to write me an email because of this. But this is okay (lines 103-106).

At first Krause was unsure how to interpret this email. As he stated, "It was not a quarrel this email; I even have it somewhere. I simply grinned" (lines 127-128). After reading this email, Krause asked his two colleagues for help with its interpretation. As it is unusual for a German newspaper editor to write to a journalist, the meaning of this action remained unclear for the journalist in question. He needed support from his colleagues in order to be able to understand it. The latter reassured him and said that he should perceive the email in a positive light, and could even consider it to be a kind of "medal" (line 130), because the editor had paid attention to him and had written an email (cf. lines 130-134). It is interesting that the editor chose to communicate with Krause indirectly, via email, and did not contact him directly through a telephone call or a face-to-face meeting. It almost appears as if he was ashamed of his action and wanted to avoid direct confrontation with this journalist.

The German journalists spoke about consciously deciding to work for a newspaper due to its political orientation. Fichte (*FAZ*) described the choice to work for his newspaper as follows: This is "the best, the most serious newspaper, and I believe it comes closest to my political orientation" (lines 7-8). He reiterated his wish to work for the *FAZ*, "I did not become a journalist at the Frankfurter *Allgemeine Zeitung* because it did not work out at the *Frankfurter Rundschau.* It was my wish to work there" (lines 8-10).

Lehmann (*SZ*) valued the reputation of his newspaper to be "left-liberal rather than right-liberal" (line 19). He assumed that his "political socialization" was "surely

affected" by *SZ* (all quot. lines 20-23). Lehmann was proud that the *SZ* played an oppositional role in Bavaria, offering contrasting opinions to those of the traditionally dominant conservative party, the Christian Social Union (CSU). The journalist described the circumstance that a liberal newspaper could remain so popular in such a conservative federal state as a special phenomenon, which he and his colleagues later named "liberaritas bavarie" (line 34), meaning "Bavarian anarchy" (both quot. line 37) or "Bavarian spirit". This phenomenon could be based on the traditional understanding of Bavaria as a habitat for rural conservatives, but also for innovative, open-minded and creative people.

How far editors as significant others were involved in the process of professional socialization in the German newspapers remained unclear and further investigation in this field is thus required. The low degree of hierarchy in German newspapers is one reason for the less dominant role of editors in the professional socialization of German journalists. Furthermore, journalists' emotional ties to a single newspaper, connected with feelings of sympathy for the newspaper's political orientation, can be seen as representing special mechanisms that support or cause professional socialization in German newspapers. However, since my interview did not contain detailed information, I am unable to determine exactly how these two issues affect professional socialization. The contrary function of American editors as significant others in journalists' professional socialization will be the focus of the following analysis.

6.2.1 American Editors as Significant Others

Due to the strict division of labor between editors and journalists in the United States compared to the reduced hierarchical structure in German newspapers, the differences between the professional role and the tasks of editors in American newspapers was more distinct than in German newspapers. An analysis and interpretation of the interviews showed that editors as significant others played a more distinguished role in the professional socialization of American journalists than they did for German journalists. Moreover, it can be proposed that the significance of editors in the formation of journalists' professional identity in the United States was quite different to that in Germany.

The degree of openness displayed by American journalists when talking about their daily interactions with their editors is a point worth highlighting. While

German journalists did not always view editors as being significant others for the reporting process, the American journalists deemed their editors relevant for their professional action. Discussing interactions with editors turned out to be a controversial issue for the interviewed American journalists. It seemed to be a delicate topic for some of them. The anxiety and frustration displayed by some journalists when discussing their interactions with their editors showed that editors had a very powerful position in the American newspapers. It is, hence, likely that the latter may affect journalists' working routines and their reporting.

Rosenfield (*NYT*), for example, became very nervous when I asked her to describe the interactions with her editor during her daily working routine. She had heard that I had interviewed her colleagues on this subject prior to meeting her, and she asked me whether her colleagues were willing to speak about this subject openly, which I refused to answer. By contrast, other journalists used the interview as an opportunity to complain about the problems with their editors and to share their frustration with me. They also shared stories about their editors; they either showed dissatisfaction toward interactions with editors or they were very happy to have their support. In general, there were no neutral reactions to the questions about journalists' professional relation with their editors and to what degree editors affected journalists' work.

6.2.2 *Under Control: An Independent Dependency*

Professional socialization of journalists based on the interactions with editors followed repetitive procedures or professional routines. One may differentiate between three phases of the reporting process during which the journalists converse intensely with their editors: before news coverage, during news coverage and afterward. Initially, preceding news coverage, journalists talked to editors about their choice of topic, the questions to explore, and how to best approach the topic. Secondly, during the reporting phase journalists sought reassurance for their strategies from their editors or discussed new action plans if something unexpected happened. Finally, after the article was written, editors reviewed the structure and proofread the contents.

The first phase was characterized by a very active position of the interviewed journalists in interaction with their editors. In this phase journalists enjoyed professional freedom. To give some examples, Hoffman (*NYT*) would first develop an

idea for the reporting and then discuss it with his editor. He recalled the following conversational pattern as being one that regularly occurred in an initial conversation with his editor. Hoffman would go to his editor and say, “Here is what I want to do. [...] Here is a good idea I have. What do you think about it?” (lines 179-180). Following the conversation, Hoffman would discuss further action plans with his editor concerning the reporting, such as, “what's the best approach” (lines 180-181) to handle the story, and who might be the informational sources.

Thurman (*WP*) also pointed out that she took the initiative for her reporting herself. Especially the first phase of interaction was significant for her, since she aimed at showing that the planning for the reporting was based on her ideas. Thurman repeatedly underlined that “normally the ideas [...] come from [her]. [She is] not usually said/told, go [anywhere] and do [a] story” (lines 314-315). Thurman noted, “Normally, I discuss with them in advance in general terms, where I plan to go and [...], what questions I [plan] to explore, what topics I [plan] to look into” (lines 309-310).

In the second phase or during the reporting, the previous action plans can be changed, as the reality of the reporting situation can be very different from what was expected. “It often does change to some extent” (Thurman, *WP*, line 311). Due to years of reporting experience, Thurman knew that information gained before the reporting phase is often found wanting, or as she puts it, “our information is so imperfect” (line 312) that it is difficult to anticipate every situation that can occur during the reporting. If she encountered something unexpected and compelling, “if you get there something that strikes you” (line 313), she would contact her editor and discuss it with him. Journalists must be prepared to face or expect the unexpected and be aware of possible changes, to make a new professional action plan and to discuss it with an editor.

Especially when reporting from dangerous places, such as Iraq, required editors to look after their journalists. During her time in Iraq, Thurman (*WP*) appeared to have been controlled by her editor. She justified her editors’ action as being part of his professional role, which in her view consisted of “coordinating what [she] [was] doing” (line 317), as well as what other reporters were doing, “who are all doing the same” (line 318). In Iraq, she had to concentrate on one particular task – covering the military.

Thurman (*WP*) would have liked to present contrary points of view in her stories. For this, she would have preferred to interview civilians, and not just the military, in Iraq. This is what she tried to do at the beginning of the war in Iraq. However, later, she had to concentrate her reporting on the military. Her editors supervised her professional role as a military reporter and prevented her from diversion. She explained, "The problem is primarily because I am a military reporter, my editors want me to just do things, you know, with the military" (lines 154-155). Another reason for her editors' conduct could have been their concerns for her safety, as she underscored,

> My editors here [...] place a lot of emphasis on safety, and clearly I have a personal obligation to my family to make the best decision I can and prudent decision about what risks I take in order to gather information (Thurman, *WP*, lines 221-223).

Because of the precarious working conditions in Iraq, the collaboration between editors and journalists seemed to be indispensable. As Thurman (*WP*) explained, "Basically my articles were all written by pen and paper, and I dictated them to my editors over the telephone, over the satellite phone. That was how I was able to do that at that time" (lines 131-132). Editors brought audio texts into written form and edited them afterwards. The journalist's stock of knowledge about particular situations in Iraq was transformed into a written text via communication with an editor (editor as mediator). This shows that the editors' role as supervisor for a foreign correspondent included more tasks and responsibilities than those of a local reporter.

In the third phase, after the reporting process had been organized and the article had been written, the detailed work on its contents begun. During this phase editors seemed to have the most active part. The editors commented on whether the journalists had presented a balanced view on a subject. If they had not, editors advised them on the best way to re-approach their topic, suggested interview partners and decided what information should be added or removed after the text had been written. Hence, editors were responsible for advising journalists on how to shape and reshape their articles in terms of structure and style.

Furthermore, editors determined whether the text should be shortened and whether journalists needed to add information on a particular aspect of the story. Finally, the editors proofread the written texts by examining the narrative flow and composition of the news text in general. Hoffman (*NYT*), for example, recalled the

following editors' question-checklist that editors would work through and question him on while editing his text:

> I'll go out and I write it or I'll do some reporting and I'll come back and tell them 'here's what I think I've got' and they'll ask questions about, 'what did you think of this' or 'did you remember that' and then if we agree to go ahead/ there is a story, you write a story. They'll look it over, you know, review it to what they think. Is it thorough enough? Has it got all the sources? Is it organized in the right way? And that's all happening here in Washington and then it goes up to New York and there will be a whole group of other editors, who look at it for much of the same reason. So pretty close collaboration. (lines 181-187)

Journalists noted that feature stories were usually edited the most. By contrast, the editors only made small changes to news texts. As Schulz (*NYT*) points out, "On the news stories, they change little things" (line 239). According to Bloom (*NYT*), her editors changed her articles to different degrees, sometimes "only ten or fifty percent of it changed or not; just a little word or a little paragraph changed or something small" (Bloom, *NYT*, lines 407-408). Bloom did not always notice the principles behind the changes. "Sometimes, there are a few times, when there were a few changes and sometimes there were a lot of changes" (ibid., lines 389-392).

Other usual changes that editors made, according to Hoffmann (*NYT*), were the replacement of elements of his text and the paraphrasing of journalists' ideas, "some editors think that this down here should be the first element and not this. They move pieces around or phrase things differently" (line 192). Bloom (*NYT*) not only criticized changes in the text made by her editor but also her editor's request to "rewrite" some parts of it, "they will call me and say: re-write the top or put this thing at the bottom; you have it at the bottom, put it at the top; get more of this; get more of that (lines 389-392). Editors "provide oversight" as Tallman (*NYT*) explained:

> We present the story to our editors, who then provide oversight like 'you can make this better, we need more information here, you raised this questions, you need an answer to these questions, this is gratuitous, we don't have enough space for this, drop this, save this for another story' (lines 146-149).

Thurman (*WP*) described the editing process as a collaboration between her and her editor using a conceptual metaphor of sexuality, namely as a "back and forth" (line 325) arrangement, "we just have some back and forth during the editing process" (ibid.). Her editor "may have suggestions in terms of organization, in terms of specific minor questions, in terms of thrust, [...] some sort of focusing" (lines 315-

317). She realized that her editor always had a macro-perspective on the topic of coverage in mind and of how her article fit in with the rest of the newspapers coverage. "They look at it in terms of the balance" (line 319). Thurman once again retained her active role and worked with editors to find constructive solutions. She explained,

> If there is something that/if I feel that their suggestion, you know, creates a misunderstanding or is wrong [...] I would be very clear to say what, you know, what is or is not true. I'm always asking myself that question. If they have a misunderstanding, I don't want an inaccuracy inserted in an article (lines 321-324).

Thurman (*WP*) controlled the editing process not only to ensure the accuracy of her article but also to ensure that it would not be manipulated. Otherwise she "would object [to] it strenuously." She stated:

> I don't tolerate any kind of manipulation of what I'm saying, and if I ever feel and really, if I ever were to feel there was some sort of a bias or something or somebody was trying to change something, because of some opinion or agenda, I would fight it very hard. [...] That's how I operate, you know, and that's not what my job is. That's not what serves anybody (lines 402-406).

Goldsmith (*WP*) emphasized a professional distance to editors' suggestions and his independence of thought by arguing that he used to work for this newspaper for a long time:

> They [editors] can have whatever opinion they want to have and that's fine, and that has absolutely nothing to do with what I write and nobody has ever told me, not once and I've been here for nineteen years, nobody has ever said to me, 'You have to write a story with this spin or this opinion because that's what the editorial pages think.' This doesn't happen. (lines 101-104)

Hoffman has worked for the *NYT* for 20 years and has gotten used to the interactions with editors. He described it as "creative tension" (line 192) that takes place between him and his editor. Hoffman feels that the status of his article is caught between his article as his intellectual property and as a property of his newspaper. On the one hand, it should be his story (line 193); on the other hand, his article/text has to internalize the values of his newspaper. In professional socialization journalists learn to include their own creativity and "needs [of] the paper" (line 194). Hoffman explained,

> There is a creative tension that goes on between you and your editor. You try to make this as much your story as you can, but recognize that there are certain needs in the paper too that you want to address on any story (lines 192-195).

Professional socialization of journalists not only took place by means of direct interactions between journalists and editors, as described above, but it also continued as a mental conversation of journalists with editors. Tallman (*NYT*), for instance, would often engage in schizophrenic inner dialogues with his editor by imagining the editor's reactions and responses. "You can't write crap that's unsubstantiated, that's poorly reported, that's poorly written and that isn't answering some fundamental questions about the issue" (lines 165-167).

The anticipation of an editor's expectation was a significant point in the process of journalists' professional socialization. The journalists' socialization took place through adaptation to the editor's expectations. Such anticipation not only happened by means of journalists' soliloquies but also through self-reflection. Bloom (*NYT*), for example, was not annoyed by the editors' changes to her articles (line 410) but by her own shortcomings, since she had not been able to word her content correctly the first time round and blamed herself. "Often [she] would get irritated at myself" (line 410).

The three phases of interaction with editors supported and guided the process of journalists' socialization. During these phases, journalists began to anticipate the expectations of their editors as the watchdogs of the newspaper and learned professional action that was relevant for their profession and particularly for their newspaper as an institution. On the one hand, the journalists stressed that they worked independently from their editors; on the other hand, the interviews showed journalists' dependency upon them. Journalists had their own ideas on reporting but, nonetheless, sought reassurance from their editors, both directly and indirectly (per email or phone). Furthermore, journalists would have mental conversations with imaginary editors or inner dialogues with them. Moreover, journalists would anticipate the editors' reaction and their wishes regarding the articles.

As we have seen, the first and second phases of interactions with editors showed the dominance of the reporters. Editors merely seem to function as advisors or consultants. During the third phase editors take on a more active role and seem to have more responsibility. This is the phase in which the journalistic text is shaped into a final form that represents the values and quality of presentation that the newspaper wishes to convey. By means of the three phases the subjective meaning of journalists concerning the reporting becomes an objective meaning or objective reality of the newspaper.

6.2.3 Harmony and Conflict

During problem-solving in their professional routines journalists were challenged and had to confirm their professional identity. This can be interpreted as or compared with an initiation ritual. Journalists experienced professional growth during the process of reporting when overcoming difficulties. These difficulties included not only problems with searching for information and writing but also with communication and interaction with their significant others, such as editors. Journalists' positive (happy solution) and negative experiences (the state of crisis) while struggling with difficulties may contribute to their professional socialization and lead to professional growth.

Indeed, as stated in the interviews, journalists' professional socialization was accompanied by periods of harmonious and peaceful or problematic and conflictual interactions with editors. This can symbolize two contrasting interactions of journalists with editors. While the interviewed journalists sometimes experienced their interaction with editors as being helpful for their work, they also complained about their editors and depicted routinized interactions with them as disruptive. Due to these circumstances, one could differentiate between two types of editors: 1) editors as helpers and 2) editors as opponents. Journalists attributed "good" and "bad" professional competences to their editors in respect to the mentioned types.

The potential for an ideal working relationship between journalists and editors was based on mutual comprehension and collaboration. "The two viewpoints really complement each other" (Bloom, *NYT*, lines 397-398). Many interviewed journalists were very satisfied with the help of their editors. Tallman (*NYT*), for example, praised and valued his editors; he went as far as to say his newspaper had "excellent editors" (line 172). He drew a link between having "excellent editors" and the quality of the newspaper. "It's a great newspaper and we have excellent editors" (line 172). Nevertheless, there was a latent conflict between journalists and editors.

Journalists' reacted differently to the changes suggested by editors. Tallman (*NYT*) did not see the changes made to his text as negative. He justified his view on the subject by drawing a parallel to the US government: "It's not as if the governing authorities at the *New York Times* are like the government of the United States or trying to suppress the information" (lines 170-172). A strategy which enabled Schulz (*NYT*) to deal with potential conflicts professionally was to react calmly to editorial changes. Furthermore, it was often better to follow the suggestions of the editor and

avoid arguing with him or her in order to avoid sanctions, which he metaphorically described as being "a bigger pain in the ass" (line 247).

> Everyone is always professional and cordial because even when you are aggravated, it doesn't make any sense to sound aggravated, because then, you escalate things and it becomes a bigger pain in the ass than to actually get the story done properly. So, everyone maintains a certain level of just being calm (lines 245-248).

Goldsmith (*WP*), for example, developed a professional distance from his articles. He pointed out that his article text "didn't appear necessarily as [he] wrote it" (lines 136-137). His editor not only changed it, but also sometimes integrated information from reporters working on different placements into a single article text. Some of Goldsmith's texts were merged into a larger article or "broader overview piece" (line 144). Some of his texts were published, as single articles, while others were not used at all. According to Goldsmith, when he reported from Iraq, his editor changed his text somewhat but "not more than usual" (line 135). Goldsmith (*WP*) described his interactions with his editor as follows:

> During the fighting part of it [the war], the file that I sent, was incorporated into a broader story. So it wasn't, it didn't, appear necessarily, as I wrote it. Parts of what I gave them were used; parts of what I gave them wasn't used, because they were trying to assemble lots of information from lots of different sources. [...] My files went mostly, not all, but most of them went to feed this broader overview piece, that in effect was written by myself and one other writer (lines 135-145).

Thurman (*WP*) used the word "conflict" in the interview in order to define her "good relationships with the editors" (line 308), which to her described the absence of "a huge conflict" (line 309). Conflicts with editors belonged to journalists' everyday professional life. As Schulz (*NYT*) put it, "[t]here is often a conflict" (line 259). Schulz showed that he did not have a pessimistic attitude to such conflicts when he stated, "There are low level conflicts, which are certainly resolvable" (line 259). Moreover, he stressed that all the journalists at his newspaper should see such conflicts as part of their professional life and know how to deal with them in order not to be "frustrated" (line 261).

> At this point, when you get to the *New York Times*, you already understand, that they all exist, and that you know how to get through them. Otherwise, you'll be frustrated every day and no one wants to do that (lines 259-262).

Conflicts in the interactions between journalists and editors can be defined as nonconformities between their ideas of reporting. Editors' suggestions of improving

an article can lead to journalists' becoming irritated and reacting negatively toward the corrections. I presume that changes are potential conflicts, too. No changes in reporting would mean a perfect socialization of the journalists. A perfect socialization regarding the work of journalists would mean that the article content would reflect the editor's ideas of the printed version of the newspaper perfectly. According to Berger and Luckmann (1991), a perfect socialization is impossible. Dealing with conflict situations is essential for professional socialization.

In summary, I assume that editors' changes in journalists' articles are necessary for journalists' professional socialization. Also conflicts between journalists and editors are crucial, as conflicts help journalist to negotiate between an editor's idea of the printed newspaper and their own opinions about the text. During their professional socialization journalists develop their own style and ways of maintaining it. Crisis and conflicts with editors can be the driving force in journalists' professional socialization. Next, I will examine how journalists define situations in which conflicts occur and will identify reasons for potential conflicts.

6.2.4 Great Expectations: Interaction with Editors

According to my analysis and interpretation of the interviews, I suggest that the following three issues may give insight into the notion of conflicts between interviewed American journalists and their editors. Conflicts arose when 1) editors had less professional knowledge and experience than the journalists they consulted and advised; 2) journalists had a special emotional attachment to their story and felt that editors had made coarse and unfair changes, which in the journalists' eyes led to disadvantages for their story; and 3) editors showed mistrust toward the informational sources the journalists had used. In the following, I will discuss these issues more precisely.

6.2.5 Journalists' Interactions with Editors Regarding Knowledge and Experience

Journalists used conceptual metaphors to describe the supportive role of the editors in the reporting process. Bloom (*NYT*) used a religious metaphor in order to describe the significant role of her editor. According to her, her editor was like "someone's shining a spotlight in the forest" (line 400), which helped the confused and lost journalists to find the right path. A lost hero (a journalist) needs professional guidance in order to be rescued. Bloom mentioned that sometimes reporting leads to over-burdening. An editor is "someone fresh" (line 404) who maintains a

professional distance from the journalists' evaluation of a situation and may be able to present a new perspective on it. In this situation:

> It's like someone's shining a spotlight in a forest for you and saying, 'This is a path.' You can't really see it very well, but, you know, that's a good editor. They'll sort of shine a spotlight on the path or something and they say, you know, follow that. And you know, so sometimes I would write a story, after having a lot of notes and sources, you know, I would write it in a way I thought was clear and then someone fresh, you know, like the editor would read it and say, 'Actually can you do this, or can you, I think this quote is stronger, can you put that up here or put more context up high?' you know, things like that. (lines 400-406)

The precondition for a harmonious relationship between journalists and editors was the journalists' expectation that the professional stock of knowledge and experience of their editors should be higher than theirs. This extended knowledge based on experience, provided editors and lead journalists to value and respect them. Tallman (*NYT*), for example, valued the fact that his editors were "writers" (line 173) in an earlier stage of their career. By this he meant that they had many years of working experience as journalists and had a solid base of knowledge about the practical skills that are needed in the profession, especially in regard to writing. It was of great significance, particularly for the foreign news correspondents, that their editors had "knowledge of what's it's like to be out in the world" (lines 175-176). Tallman explained,

> On the foreign desk there are a few, including the foreign editor and the deputy, who were foreign correspondents at some point, so they have the experience and they have knowledge of what's it's like to be out in the world and sending you story, you know, stories back in (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 174-176).

An editors' professional knowledge on how "to be out in the world" can be interpreted as editors having expert knowledge and professional expertise on what it means to live and report from abroad. Such editors would be aware not only of the quality of reporting from abroad, for example from a war, but also of the dangers of war reporting. They would, therefore, be able to ensure the journalists' security and be able to understand how it feels to be far away from home and only send a story "back", as if the story were a phantom of the journalist – the only thing left.

From this point of view it is not surprising that relations between journalists and editors were perceived and expected by some of the journalists to be like those between a teacher and a pupil. Tallman (*NYT*) defined editors as "people who are looking over your shoulder," (lines 168-169) like at school. Such dependent relations

give an insight into the self-perception of the journalists and their accounts of conversations with their editors, which were very harsh at times. Tallman sometimes heard complaints from his editors; other times, his editor grumbled and called him childish. He was always conscious about his responsibility for the quality of the reporting and he anticipated the questions of his editor in his mind.

> It's gotta be at a certain quality. I can't write crap that's unsubstantiated, that's poorly reported, that's poorly written and that isn't answering some fundamental questions about the issue (...) 'You know, this could be better' or 'What do you mean by this?' or 'This is total junk, [Tallman's first name]. 'What the hell you thinking!' (Tallman, *NYT*, lines 166-170).

Newman (*WP*) felt disappointed by his current editor. The reason for this was his expectation of having an editor that would have more professional knowledge and experience than he did and from whom he could learn something. Newman felt that his editor's lack of professional competence promoted conflict between them. He thought that the editing process would be more fruitful for him and that he would have more respect for his editors if they had been more experienced than he. Newman complained about his editor in the interview, "He doesn't know anywhere near as much as I do" (line 302).

Newman (*WP*) accused his current editor of lacking professionalism, which, he believed, in turn, hindered his professional development. He acknowledged that the best way of improving his reporting would be if his editor would advise him, to produce better news coverage, to write better feature stories, to develop more interesting ideas and approach their topics more strategically. But this was not always the case. Newman experienced different kind of editors, both good and bad.

> And sometimes we have an editor that is a really great, very smart guy, who has a lot of experience and I will bounce ideas off of him or her and have a really good relationship. And I think that editor can help me come up with good stories and good ideas to approach a story, but sometimes, like now, the editor just isn't. We know so much more than the editor that we see him more as a problem than a help (lines 296-300).

Newman (*WP*) underscored that he saw it as part of his professional role to learn from his editor and to constantly further his training in journalistic skills by means of a professional exchange. He expected his editor to make changes to his articles. He got irritated that his editor knew less than he did. The editor became a superfluous, non-significant other, who could not help Newman "to explore a subject" (line 303). Newman perceived his editor as less competent than himself and

said that he was "more [of] a problem than a help" (line 300). The consequence was a decrease in interactions between his editor and him:

> Right now I talk to my editor as little as possible, frankly, because he is not really changing the copying much anyway, I mean the writing, and he doesn't know anywhere near as much as I do, so he can't really help me to explore a subject. [...] It's actually very, very irritating (lines 301-305).

The socialization of the interviewed journalists was based on their editors' professional knowledge and experience. The journalists desired to learn professional skills from their significant others, such as editors, and expected them to have professional knowledge and experience. The learning process occurred when editors made changes in journalists' articles and journalists dealt with these changes and, therefore, bettered themselves. For a successful professional socialization, the relationship between journalists and editors must be similar to that of teachers and pupils. Editors must possess knowledge and be able to advise; journalists must learn how to improve their skills and how to achieve professional integrity.

6.2.6 *Emotional Attachments: Fighting for the Story*

How far Thurman (*WP*) pursued the changes in her articles, suggested by her editors, depended on her emotional attachment toward her articles. "Some articles [she was] more concerned about than other[s]" (lines 326-327). She would "take extra care" (line 328) when writing the text of an article she felt strongly attached to and in these cases would fight with her editor to avoid her texts being changed. Her emotional attachment depended on the degree of invested work in a particular article. "In a sense I worked really hard on them" (line 327). Her vocabulary usage indicated that Thurman personified some of her articles and was worried about them, as she would be for one of her children. Thurman describes, "I don't want anything, you know, to happen [to it] and I wanna take extra care [about it] as long as I can" (lines 327-328). The following statement can also be seen as indicative of the attachment that Thurman feels toward her articles,

> I review what they've done; I don't just sit back and pass it after them and not be involved. I am involved even sometimes to try to make sure the headline, you know, which we don't write or have anything to do with, make sure it is the headline, the captions, even that kind of detail I look at to make sure that it's, it's accurate (lines 328-332).

Another journalist, Schulz (*NYT*), remembered a struggle for his version of an article, when he once wrote a story about a chicken restaurant in Sadr City. After editing,

Schulz noticed that editors had made some changes to the story, which he did not like. He had invested a lot of energy in this story and had developed an emotional attachment to it. Both the research and writing were extensive and time-consuming, as Schulz described:

> It took me two or three hours, rewriting and writing, just to get the right tone. But after that much time, I actually got it and I knew, this was going to be a good story (lines 234-236).

His editors did not like the way Schulz (*NYT*) had written the story and had made some changes to its structure. Schulz had to fight for the narrative flow that he initially had in his story. As he pointed out, "[s]ometimes you have to fight for the way that you think the story should be, as opposed to the way the editors want it" (lines 248-249). In his view some editors place a lot of emphasis on the "logical flow" of the text and do have an understanding of or "a good ear for the story telling." Schulz, since he reads a lot of literature and knows how a narrative should be composed, explained his struggling with editors as follows:

> They sort of switched some paragraphs in the middle. To me, it didn't make any sense. I mean it interrupted the narrative. Sometimes people don't have good ear for the story. They have a good sense of the logic, but not a good ear for the story telling. [...] They changed it and they sent it back to me to look at. And I'm like, I don't want it, I want to do it in this way (lines 250-255).

In conclusion, the mentioned examples show that journalists are not passive members of their employed institution who apathetically let them socialize them, but people who have an independent spirit, their own thoughts and ideas and are, therefore, willing to struggle with their editors for their version of an article. Emotionally the learning process also constitutes a part of the socialization process. In fact, learning is improved if the process of professional socialization is accompanied by journalists' feelings toward their work. Journalists' professionalism can involve both a calm and distant professional reaction to editors' changes and the wish to be fair to the story and fight for it.

6.2.7 Mistrust Toward Journalists' Informational Sources

Costner (*WP*) claimed that the interactions between reporters and editors have changed a great deal in recent years. When he started to work as a journalist, about 45 years ago, he had a lot more freedom to write news articles about topics he found personally compelling. Costner explained that when he was young, his editors valued the independence of the reporter and preferred not to intervene in their work.

As he stated, they "just believed in [an] independent newspaper and leaving reporters alone" (lines 193-194).

Nowadays, however, his editors try to change his articles "all the time" (Costner, *WP*, line 184). He mentioned that he was constantly getting advice on how to improve his article texts, from his editors. Costner (*WP*) often struggled with his editor to push his own version of the article text. He mentioned that because he and his editor had recently disagreed on a particular article text though, it had not yet been published and that they were "still arguing" (line 185) about it or "keep fighting over it" (line 186). In his words, "the editor of this particular story has his own ideas, which I think are wrong" (lines 185-186).

Costner (*WP*) turned out to be a rebellious spirit in the interviews. He stated that "in the 40 years [he had been] at the paper nobody's ever told [him] what to write" (line 190).He felt free to choose topics he wanted to cover. "I just sort of pick out the subjects I want" (line 103). One of his former editors disagreed on many topics and "she didn't like what I wrote." He observed the changes in her view: "As she became editor, she became more conservative" (line 197-198). Costner valued that despite this, they "were friends" (line 198).

> It doesn't matter. There is a phrase you just don't take your differences personally. I mean underneath it all you're still friends and you have a kind of respect for each other and you care about each other. And whether you disagree on politics and don't interfere with this other level of friendship (lines 201-203).

Sometimes journalists perceived changes and questions about details of a story as an indication of their editors' mistrust. Hence, they criticized their editors' conduct. Smith (*NYT*), for example, explained that even though the editors might use their "good wisdom and practice" (lines 25-26) to manage the newspaper and help to compose journalists' articles, the journalists were the ones on the ground or "on the front lines" (line 29). Thus, journalists have a better overview of sources of information and their reliability and are, therefore, able to select information in a more knowledgeable way. "We don't just throw into the paper everything that we've heard" (line 35). These judgments about the content of articles must be left to journalists themselves. "Ultimately, the judgment about the quality of the news story is our own" (line 30). Smith indicated that editors used formal criteria, such as the quality of sources to evaluate journalists' work. He critically commented on the

fact that only journalists, and not editors, can judge the quality of their news coverage.

> We know who our sources are. Ultimately the judgment about the quality of the news story is our own. [...] In the end, only the reporters can really make a judgment about when to go forth with the story. And the editors can then judge how good they think the sourcing is—how far we wanna go. Frequently, we suspend much more than we can print, because we don't just throw it into the paper everything that we've heard (lines 29-35).

Some conflict situations appeared to be unresolved, with the result that the article will not be published until the conflict has been resolved. Editors must value journalists' years of experience of working for a newspaper as a successful professional socialization. Some of the journalists felt acceptance for their way of reporting was lacking, even though they had worked for a newspaper for a long time. According to some of the interviewed journalists, editors as significant others must learn to believe in and trust in their reporters; otherwise, some conflict situations can escalate. Both parties have to learn from their relative significant other. Professional socialization is a mutual process.

In summary, the above-mentioned conflict situations between journalists and their editors arose due to the inability of editors to fulfill journalists' expectations. Journalists expected their editors to be more experienced, to make more changes during the editing, to have more sense for narration and finally, simply to trust them and their independent reporting. Editors can also learn something from their journalists, while the latter undergo the process of professional socialization. Interactions between the interviewed American journalists and their editors turned out to be crucial for the process of the journalists' professional socialization. On the one hand, editors as significant others, advised the interviewed journalists in their reporting process as a teacher would do. On the other hand, the American journalists expected to be guided and advised by their editors; otherwise internal conflicts between these two professional groups arose. Editors should have more professional knowledge and experience than journalists, who desire to learn how to act professionally and how to write articles that are considered to be appropriate for the newspaper by their editors.

In the following subsection, journalists' views on editors' professional responsibility in order to show the editors' power in the newspapers will be presented. Furthermore, some arguments will be offered by the journalists as to why

they would avoid becoming an editor as a career option. Discussing this topic will give an insight into journalists' identities, in contrast to that of their editors. Moreover it will help to understand professional relations between journalists and their editors and the nature of their conflict.

6.2.8 Hierarchical Structure

A clear internal hierarchy characterized the American newspapers I researched. Indeed, the interviewed journalists emphasized that editors enjoyed a very powerful position in the hierarchical organization of the newspapers. In order to maintain this, the American newspapers employed a wide range of editors of different ranks. As Tallman (*NYT*) noted, "[t]here are different tiers of editors at newspapers" (line 156) who represent "a sort of a hierarchy" (line 161). However, none of the interviewed journalists questioned this hierarchy. Quite the contrary, despite the hierarchy, Tallman noted that in his view the *NYT* is "a very democratic organization" (line 162) and he "did not feel repressed by [its hierarchy]" (line 164).

Furthermore, as far as the journalists were concerned, the editors enforced the rules of the newspapers and polished the written text to a certain quality. Editors' professional role as significant others was that of watchdogs in their newspapers. Editors were thought "to set a set of rules" (Smith, *NYT*, 27). Schulz (*NYT*) mentioned a book or a manual that served as a place to codify those rules.

> The *Times* is known as a top-down newspaper, meaning the editors tend to have more influence here than they do at other papers. They tell you what they want and they sort of impose their rules. There are rules upon rules here, which is a drag. If you ever looked at the *New York Times* style manual, I mean, it's ridiculous. It's a book like that thick. All of it are just the bullshit rules: you can't say this word; you have to use that word (Schulz, *NYT*, lines 239-244).

A potential conflict seems to lurk between these idealistic expectations of editors, on the one hand, and real working conditions of journalists, on the other hand. Smith wished that these rules would be discussed with journalists, which does not happen, who work "on the front lines" (line 29), since they would know the reality better than editors who make up these idealistic rules.

> [...] good wisdom and practice, a management practice, requires that they develop those rules along with discussions with the reporters, because we're the ones out on the front lines. We know who our sources are. Ultimately, the judgment about the quality of the news story is our own (lines 27-30).

On the one hand, editors maintained the newspaper's quality and reputation by making rules and interacting with journalists. On the other hand, editors enforced the values of their newspapers through "the deployment of personnel," headhunting and searching for good reporters. Editors selected journalists with good prerequisites, who would adapt well to the requirements of the organization. The recruitment of appropriate professional staff is essential in maintaining the newspaper's functionality. In the construction of the social reality of the newspapers, both journalists and editors depended upon each other. Costner (*WP*) pointed out that having good reporters was necessary and essential for a newspaper, because "editors don't write within the paper, so if they don't have good reporters in the first instance, no paper is gonna be very good" (lines 119-120).

Newspapers employ editors who adhere to their rules. In turn, editors employ journalists who are able to follow these rules. This top-down dependency goes hand-in-hand with the bottom-up process of journalists' professional socialization. The above-mentioned hierarchy can be seen as a precondition for the ongoing process of journalists' professional socialization in the newspapers. Due to the division of labor and hierarchy, editors have the power to influence journalists and to take the position of an influential significant other in journalists' professional socialization.

6.2.9 Mutual Dependency of the American Editors and Journalists

Several editors guided the professional socialization of the journalists. The number of editors per journalist and the periods of time they worked together varied. The journalists cooperated with one or more editors depending on how many newspaper sections they were assigned. For example, when Thurman (*WP*) worked for the section of the *WP* that covers national news, she had one editor, and when she went to Iraq, she shifted to the foreign news section and dealt with editors from there. As she put it, "I'm a national reporter, but when I go overseas, I write for the foreign section of the paper" (lines 307-308). Smith (*NYT*) also confirmed that in his journalistic everyday routines, he had to work with different editors. As he stated,

> I don't have a single editor; I've got a number of them. There are different sections of the paper, and each one has a different editing staff: the foreign desk which I write the most for, the national desk, the business desk. They all have different editing groups and there are editors here and in the Washington bureaus as well (lines 144-148).

While talking about editors in the interviews, the journalists drew a clear dividing line between the professional role of editors and their professional role. Most of the

American journalists used the third person plural – "they" – when they mentioned their editors. On the one hand, "they" signified the group of editors the journalists dealt with during their professional life. On the other hand, "they," or the editors or the others represented a professional group of people in the newspaper that differed from that of the journalists. The demarcation of "they" editors and "we" journalists reinforced the rift between these two professional groups. Indeed, journalists and editors can be seen as opposites.

> It's a two-way street. They listen, you know, like if we tell them, you know, like it's impossible for them to have as much of an idea about a story as we have, because we're there. But they also have a different perspective from New York, which is how to make it really sharp and relevant for a wider audience, you know. The two viewpoints really complement each other (Bloom, *NYT*, lines 394-398).

Ideally, due to the division of labor between journalists and editors, professional roles of both journalists and editors complemented and depended on each other, like two sides of the same coin. Bloom (*NYT*) pointed out the difference of both perspectives on the subject of reporting when he referred to a two-way street (line 394). In the above-mentioned citation, she exposed the complementary function of the editors' and journalists' perspective. Editors are professionals who not only represent their newspaper but also know the needs of readers and know how to edit journalists' information into copy that is understandable for "a wider audience" (line 397) or the public.

Journalists' tasks were clearly defined. They had to do the reporting, deliver informative material, witness an event first-hand and gain an understanding of the events that they reported. By contrast, the editors were less mobile and stayed in their offices in order to support and assess journalists from a distance. Tallman (*NYT*) pointed out the following fundamental difference between the tasks of editors and journalists: "We all have different roles. We as reporters and writers, we're the people on the ground, going out and doing the reporting and doing the writing" (lines 145-146).

Journalists distinguished their role from that of their editors; however, the career of editor was open to every journalist. Firstly, the significant others, such as editors, have socialized journalists. Secondly, in the position of editor, the journalists have socialized newcomers in journalism. In the following section, I will discuss some core aspects journalists attributed to the position of editors as significant others in

American newspapers. The next subsection shows how the interviewed journalists perceived this career opportunity.

6.2.10 From a Beautiful Swan to an Ugly Duckling – From a Professional Journalist to an Unprofessional Editor?

The interviews showed that American journalists had considered the career path of editor and knew exactly what kind of tasks and responsibilities to expect from this position. The journalists assured me, in the interviews that becoming an editor was not an option for them. Many journalists were eager to explain why they resisted any chance of climbing the hierarchy. Above all, the journalists were afraid of losing their professional identity. This fact may confuse if one considers that editors were former journalists in the American newspapers. Therefore, speaking metaphorically, this act of transformation is seen here not as progression (from an ugly duckling to a beautiful swan) but as the opposite – the regression of journalists' professional identities.

Analyzing the negation – what the journalists did not want to be – enables us to gain an understanding of how the journalists defined their own professional identity as an entity separated from that of their editors. The interviewed journalists named the following two key aspects as deterring factors. Firstly, editors do not usually do the reporting and, therefore, editors' professional routines and everyday life can be uneventful and boring. Secondly, editors have to do a lot of administrative work. Concerning professional identities one could, hence, draw the following conclusions: 1) editors stop writing/reporting while journalists do the writing/reporting; 2) editors make administrative decisions while journalists are free from administrative tasks. Next, these issues will be discussed in greater depth.

Firstly, one of the reasons for dismissing the career path of an editor was that journalists would have had to give up reporting, an idea which was alien to them. Indeed, reporting as a duality of two mutually dependent types of professional action, searching for information and writing a journalistic text, leads to a high degree of identification of journalists within their profession. Terminating writing would mean a loss of professional identity and would lead to professional death.

Costner (*WP*) criticized the paradigm of journalistic career development in the United States. He noted the paradoxical nature of it by stating, "The higher you get in the paper, the less you have to do with what's in it" (line 171). For this reason he

did not opt to become an editor. As Costner argued, “I want to keep writing. And if you become an editor you stop writing” (lines 180-181). During their professional routines journalists receive constant training, which enables them to improve their skills and become experienced reporters. The stock of professional knowledge that journalists gain in their career would be preserved but not cultivated by those journalists who take on the position of editor. Costner summarized the situation in his country:

> What's happened with the American journalism is people don't stay doing the same thing. It's my view of reporting as being the basis in the paper. It is not the universal view and you make more money if you become an editor and so reporters are transferred around to get a lot of experience and then theoretically become editors. (lines 142-145)

Costner (*WP*) criticized the state of American journalism by drawing the following conclusion: “As a result, the people who are doing the actual reporting are the least experienced on the subject. And that to me is a big mistake” (lines 142-146). In fact, professional journalists become unprofessional editors if they decide to follow this career path. Thus, one can observe a regression rather than a progression in the professional development of journalists.

According to Costner (*WP*), British editors differentiated themselves from the Americans, because they continued working as journalists and writing articles, which many American journalists would actually prefer. As he stated, “British newspapers are different. A lot of British editors write” (line 174). This fact seems to reflect a similar situation to that of German editors, who also write and report. This is why many of the US journalists felt that they were working in a dead-end job, because they did not have as many possibilities for promotion as they would have had in other jobs. The only progression that journalists can experience in their job is the transformation from a less experienced to an experienced reporter. Journalists’ professional identity would have been destroyed if they had taken editors positions. The former is incompatible with the abandonment of reporting (investigating and writing).

Secondly, editors’ working routines were boring compared to journalists’ working routines. Schulz (*NYT*), for example, described an editor’s work as a typical bureau job. This is why holding the position of editor would mean having a “boring” (line 386) everyday professional life for him. Schulz knew exactly what it would be like to work as an editor, since he used to be employed by “a large consulting firm”

(line 5) before he was hired as a journalist, and was, hence, familiar with the working routines of bureau jobs. He remembered the monotony of his everyday life, a life which lacked creative tension and in which Schulz and his colleagues were just functioning as machines day-in and day-out. The uniform dress code and the repetitive nature of the job was something that Schulz experienced as depressing,

> Everyone had to wear suits, you know. We did the same thing every day in our office and saw the same people, took the same route to the bathroom every day, and I just hated the routine of seeing the same people (lines 6-8).

At the very end of the interview Schulz (*NYT*) clearly stated why he could not consider the editor's job as a career opportunity.

> This is why a lot of reporters, even when they get old, like me, don't want to become editors because editors sit in the same cube every day, looking at the same, and talking to the same people, namely the reporters. And it's a routine that becomes boring. And reporters, many reporters, like me, got into the business to avoid doing that (lines 384-387).

If Schulz (*NYT*) had taken the position of editor, it would have meant a regression to a working routine which he encountered at the beginning of his career, and would, thus, have meant a step back down the career ladder. However, Schulz did not deny that there was a possibility of his becoming an editor. He probably wanted to stay realistic and did not want to completely exclude this option, as nobody can escape or deny death. Paradoxically, Schulz definitely showed his disinterest in becoming an editor; however, he wanted to keep the option open, as becomes apparent when one considers the following statement.

> I really have no interest in being an editor, unless it was an editor at some subject that I found fascinating, you know, but I haven't run across a subject that I find infinitely fascinating (lines 389-391).

Schulz (*NYT*) viewed the editor's job as an ultimate dead-end in his professional growth. He thought that taking this career path might result in a kind of apathy. For him holding the editor's position would mean turning into a mindless automaton. Since he is alive, he is striving for something; he is searching for more; he wants to see the world and is full of ambition. Journalism gives him an opportunity to fulfill his wishes. Journalist is the position with which he identifies and not that of editor.

Editors are the ones who have control over all and their eyes on everything. This includes making any sort of decisions, concerning both the content of the newspapers and its administrative activities. Tallman (*NYT*) highlighted that an

editor's assignment is to "sort out the big thinking" (line 157). Among other things, editors decide on the article's headline, its structure and content, its placement in the newspaper, i.e., whether it will be on page 2 or 10. As Costner (*WP*) critically noted, "Those are decisions the editors make, not mine" (line 103).

Indeed, in a broader sense, the editor's task is that of administrative activities or "making decisions" (Costner, *WP*, line 173) concerning issues, such as the organization and coordination of the reporting process. "You're just making decisions about what goes on the front page and who gets a vacation, who gets promoted" (lines 171-172). Costner pointed out that "[e]ditors of the American newspapers are essentially the administrative people" (lines 165-166). They make decisions concerning working issues of journalists, such as their working timetables or holidays, for instance. Costner made the observation that one of his good friends, who used to work as an editor, spent more time working on administrative activities than actually editing their article texts.

> He spent about an hour, maybe two hours for the newspaper and the rest of it was spent on people's private problems, hiring and firing...sort of administrative stuff and that's not fun (lines 167-169).

Compared to their usual working routines, editors' managerial tasks appeared rather exhausting and boring to journalists. Ironically, Costner (*WP*) noted, "Most reporters are terrible administrators" (line 169). They fail in management and administration, because they learn it on the job. If they accept an editorial position without having any prior experience in management and the organization of working processes, journalists will not be able to identify with the administrative tasks of an editor. In the following section, professional relationships, interactions, and collaborations between journalists and their editors will be discussed.

The interviewed journalists did not perceive holding an editor's position as career advancement but rather thought of it as a career decline. Due to the editor's responsibilities, which would lead to the abandonment of journalistic activities, such as searching for information and writing, journalists feared they might lose their professional identity. Since journalists showed a high degree of identification with their reporting, they feared that working as an editor would mean the end of using their experience and professional knowledge, which they had gained throughout their career. Administrative activities combined with office job routines would betray the professional identity of journalists.

6.3 Colleagues

Some of the interviewed American and German journalists had their colleagues in mind while writing and imagined how they would react to the content of their articles. The journalists encountered their colleagues directly in face-to-face interactions. They exchanged and adapted to new action patterns and used the technique of mutual mirroring in order to identify how best to act in their professional environment. Journalists not only memorized action patterns, but they repeatedly recalled these past action patterns and ascribed mutual responsibility for their usage with each other. For example, even when data and facts in journalistic texts were reviewed, some informational mistakes occurred. In these cases, the author of such articles was held responsible for them. Tallman (*NYT*) remembered that one of his colleagues was even suspended for writing down information that turned out not to be true (cf. line 58). However, if a journalist delivered an extraordinarily well-written or superbly researched article, his colleagues would reward this with professional esteem.

According to the interviews, colleagues had a twofold function as the significant others. They were both assistant and opponent. On the one hand, they introduced the journalistic newcomers to the professional lifeworld in their newspapers and showed them how to act in its institutional reality. On the other hand, the interviewed German journalists felt that it was impossible to avoid thinking about their colleagues' reactions to their articles. The interviewed journalists stated that they rarely asked their colleagues to assist them and to give them some feedback. The lack of support was ascribed to the tense working routines, lack of time and deadlines which journalists often faced. Support was, therefore, only asked for in certain context. These contexts included the following four cases. The first three occasions were single cases. In all these three cases colleagues, the significant others, fulfilled the function of the journalists’ helpers. In the special fourth case colleagues could be both helpers and opponents.

First of all, due to lacking experience of working for her new employer – the Washington Post, Thurman (*WP*) sometimes asked her colleagues to assist her with her style of writing, because she had previously worked for another newspaper. Thurman emphasized that she only did this until she had learnt and internalized the writing style of her new newspaper (line 78). Secondly, colleagues were referred to if they knew more about the subject of the reporting than the journalists in question

did. Smith (*NYT*), for instance, mentioned, that articles were usually proof-read by an editor, but "[i]f it is on a specialty subject, I might well give it to a colleague here who is more knowledgeable on that" (lines 139-140). Thirdly, journalists relied on significant others when they needed feedback on the content of their reporting because the complexity of the topic might have caused them to have missed something (*NYT*) remembered that sometimes his colleagues came to him and asked him to proof-read his articles by saying, "'will you read this and if you see anything you think is wrong or forgotten' or something like that" (lines 141-142).

Fourthly, colleagues were asked for help when reporting from war areas but also from abroad in general forced the journalists into closer than usual working relationships with their colleagues. In these cases the colleagues as the significant others could be both helpers and opponents. Many of the journalists helped their colleagues by sharing information with them. They did so because of stressful working conditions and different types of limitations in war (see chapter 5, "Newspapers as Objective Reality"). Sharing information helped the journalists to validate and to complete the information they had gathered. It helped them to gain a broader overview of their topics and to fill in the missing information.

Information sharing and teamwork with colleagues was both coincidental and deliberate. In the interviews, journalists not only reported collaborating with their local colleagues, but also with reporters stationed in other locations. Some journalists collaborated both with colleagues in Baghdad and with reporters based in Washington and New York. The reporters used their separate sources of information and combined them into one article. In particular the *NYT* articles on the war in Iraq were often the outcome of teamwork, and many articles named several journalists as authors and contributors.

If the subject of the article turned out to be a "big story", involving complex or inscrutable information, information exchanges and cooperation with colleagues became an indispensable aspects of the working processes. They needed to do "justice to the story" (Tallman, *NYT*, line 245). For example, Bloom (*NYT*) described the cooperative division of labor as follows: one journalist would go out "on the street" (line 41) and interview "local Iraqis" (ibid.) while the other journalist would talk to the military or the government. Later, they would combine their efforts to find different informational sources and make a "full story" (line 44) which provided a deeper insight into the event. Therefore, Bloom recognized teamwork and "piecing

together a picture" (line 36) as a necessary process for showing the entire picture of a war event. As Tallman (*NYT*) noted: "sometimes two people are working on parallel tracks and they realize 'whoa, we can combine our efforts here', and their stories become combined" (lines 246-247).

Above all, Thurman (*WP*) saw teamwork as a way of overcoming the physical limitations of journalists. She knew that she was "only one person" (line 283) who could only be in one place at a time, and by interviewing one person she could not gain more than a "snapshot in time" (line 282). In order to thank those colleagues who helped her, she would credit them for any information they had contributed to her article. Bloom (*NYT*) also described mentioning contributors' names in the byline as an expression of fairness. She would mention them even if they had only offered her "one sentence or one quote" (line 60).

By contrast, some colleagues abroad acted as opponents. According to Ilmert (*FAZ*), the gathering of information in Kuwait was characterized by the competition between single journalists. As he observed, British journalists competed with each other in "a very mean way" (lines 124-125). Ilmert understood competition to be a great obstacle to the professional action of journalists. He even expressed outrage about the British journalists' behavior. Ilmert noted that they often worked against each other and even prevented their own colleagues' from gaining information, because they all aimed at finding the most original and exclusive story (cf. line 126).

In comparison to British journalists, Ilmert (*FAZ*) noted that German journalists from different media organizations were more "cooperative" (cf. lines 123-125), it was a "very pleasant collaboration" (lines 123-124). Furthermore, his cooperation with his colleagues from the *FAZ* was "very pleasant" (line 134). They supported each other with information, which Ilmert designated as very praiseworthy. He remarked that the cooperation amongst the German journalists abroad did not harm their news coverage, since each of them handled and rewrote the information differently.

Krause (*SZ*) also maintained contact with some colleagues from the *FAZ* and discussed certain aspects of his news coverage with them. Additionally, he noted how helpful his colleagues from other international newspapers had been while he was gathering information. Taking into account the fact that he was not able to be physically omnipresent, he could call journalists from other newspapers that could

help him gain "the essence" (line 440) of what had been reported, for instance, during press conferences or political negotiations. Due to the lack of competition between the European newspapers, Krause found the working atmosphere abroad to be exemplary. At the same time, he underlined that this only occurred while he was working as a foreign correspondent, because he had heard about the competitive situation in Germany from his *SZ* colleagues.

> During the Iraq crisis, the relevant diplomats had a lot to do so it was difficult to get access to them, and it was sometimes the case, that we went to the same appointment with six or seven German journalists because we all wanted to talk to [him] – he only had a very short amount of time – 'why don't we all go together because we don't have any secrets from each other' – and it worked out well. (lines 456-460)

By contrast, the American journalists from different newspapers avoided sharing information with each other when covering the war in Iraq in 2003. Due to their competing interests, the *NYT* journalists had complex relationships with the reporters from the *WP*. Even though the *WP* journalists lived and worked in a different part of Baghdad, it was nearly impossible to avoid contact with them. According to Schulz (*NYT*), journalists from the *WP* and the *NYT* socialized in their spare time. As he explained, if "they would have a party or we would have a party, they would come over" (lines 264-265). They also met other Western journalists working in Iraq. However, he underlined that they would not share information about the topics they were investigating, because of the competition between them. This would be "crossing the line" (line 267). Only information exchanges concerning security or personal matters were allowed.

Newman (*WP*) distinguished between his personal and professional relationships with his *NYT* colleagues. He explained that even though he was friends with one of the *NYT* journalists, and their families often met after work, the friend was a competitor and he would not share information regarding work with him. According to Newman, competition represents a central issue in journalism. In his words, "people outside of journalism don't appreciate how much competition drives us to excel" (line 268-269). Due to this competitive spirit, Newman kept an eye on the competition by reading the *NYT* every day. However, he did not believe that the *NYT* journalists read his newspaper.

> I'm not necessarily thinking about my editors, I'm not necessarily thinking about my readers, what I think about is, I want the reporter of *The New York Times* to pick up the paper and say, 'damn, why didn't I have that' and they feel the same way. Journalism is driven by

> competition and if we lose that competition, it's really going to affect the whole industry (lines 271-275).

Thurman (*WP*) also remembered a situation in which it was not possible to avoid contact with her colleague from the *NYT*. Once, when she returned from one of her several trips to Iraq, she met one of the *NYT* Pentagon reporters, who was going on holiday with his family, at the airport by accident. In this situation, she spoke to him and told him about her time in Iraq. On another occasion during an official trip with some high-ranking politicians in Iraq, Thurman had to sit next to a *NYT* journalist in a helicopter. In these situations, it was inevitable that journalists would talk to each other as, they both had exactly the same sources of information. However, Thurman did not describe such conversations as sharing of information. She classed her attitude toward her *NYT* colleagues as being "cooperation [...] on a personal level" (line 362). On the professional level, she was doing "independent reporting" (line 364).

Colleagues, as the significant others, were both helpers and opponents for the interviewed journalists. By communicating with colleagues as significant others, journalists learned how to act in different professional situations and solve problems (by helping and/or competing). They exchanged professional action patterns, modifying, memorizing and storing them in their professional stock of knowledge. Although journalists' knowledge was based on their individual experiences, it contained a collection of professional experiences and action patterns shared with colleagues. By means of the intersubjective mirroring of professional acting, journalists typified their professional lifeworld, and in doing so, developed their own concepts and patterns of details and ideals, for example, on how to organize a working day or how to write an article of a certain genre. Through future experiences, journalists corrected or replaced these typifications. This may have happened when journalists changed their work place and switched to another newspaper, for example. When working for a new employer, journalists had to adapt to a new style of reporting, for instance. Especially when working abroad, journalists relied and depended on their colleagues but also competed with them.

6.4 Readers and Family

Readers as significant others played a more significant role for the interviewed American and German journalists than editors. While editors in Germany were less

significant than those in the United States, readers enjoyed significance for both types of journalists. The German and American journalists enjoyed talking about their readers and discussing their imaginary identity in the interviews. According to the art of communication, editors and readers as significant others can be observed as having contrasting roles. Editors interacted directly with journalists; readers and journalists mostly communicated indirectly. While editors represented watchdogs working from inside the news agency, readers had the same function on the outside. The extent to which readers can be significant others for journalists as well as journalists' family members will be discussed next.

6.4.1 Readers as Consumers of Information

The interview showed that readers had significance in journalists' work and their professional identity and could be observed as significant others for them, as certain arguments suggest. As social action is always oriented toward somebody or something, journalists' professional action must be goal-oriented too. Indeed, readers are the addressees of journalists' work. First of all, the relationship between journalists and readers is strongly determined by economic issues. The interviewed journalists were conscious of the fact that their material existence depended on their readers. Economic thinking in terms of supply and demand was echoed in the journalists' descriptions of their readers as the clients or consumers of information and the journalists' self-perception as professionals who provide service to the clients or "serve" the readers (Meyer, *SZ*, line 317). Readers purchase information, and in doing so guarantee the journalists' material and professional existence. Essentially, the relationship between readers and journalists is one of sellers and buyers. If journalists only wrote for their colleagues and editors, nobody would buy the newspaper and journalists would not have a job.

By contrast, one American journalist complained that contemporary journalism does not pay attention to its readers at all. Thus, Costner (*WP*) pointed out, "One of the problems with American journalism [was] that [it had] forgotten about the reader. And a lot of what [was] printed [was] for the ego of the reporter and the editor" (lines 250-252). He reproached American journalists for writing with the intention of winning journalistic awards, which he acknowledged as egoistical. According to Costner, the editors and journalists of his newspaper consider awards as the measure for quality in journalism and see them as symbols of journalistic "success" (line 258). For Costner this is the "wrong way to look at it" (line 259).

While his newspaper has won a number of awards, the number of sold, printed editions of the *WP* went down. He concluded that, "the profession of journalism has become too egoistical" (lines 259-260).

Another argument that he used to support his controversial statement that journalists and newspapers do not care about readers was the fact that the newspapers' size had increased drastically. On Mondays, for example, his newspaper, the *Washington Post*, usually contained at least 100 pages and at least 200 pages on Tuesdays. Therefore, readers were unable to find the time to read such a large newspaper without losing interest (cf. Costner, *WP*). Instead, readers would scan the whole newspaper quickly over a period of 15 to 20 minutes, mostly paying attention to parts of the articles they found catchy, such as the headlines or the first two paragraphs. Generally, only someone who is really interested in a particular topic will read a whole article about it.

> Today's stories they kept making longer and longer, which I was against, but they want to throw everything into it. [...] So we write this enormously long thing, that nobody in a right mind is gonna read except a half dozen people, who are directly involved, plus the reporters and the editor. And we've also gone to a phase in which the thing we care about the most: winning prizes. *The Post's* circulation is going down about a 100,000 in the last eight or nine years. But we won a lot of prizes, so we think the paper has success and that's a wrong way to look at it. The profession of journalism has become too egotistical in my point of view (lines 249-257).

Readers are not merely consumers of information but also the final evaluators of journalists' work. They have their reasons for buying a newspaper on a day-to-day basis. Readers expect a newspaper to have a certain journalistic quality. Goal-oriented professional action obliges journalists to maintain high quality standards of reporting. Above all, the quality of reporting depended on the journalists' verbal ability to express them in a clear and understandable way (cf. Thurman, *WP*, line 368). The new information should not be overly simplified; it should contain enough specialized language to be "sophisticated" (Thurman, *WP*, line 375) and relevant to experts (cf. Lehmann, *SZ*, line 250). Last but not least, articles have to be enjoyable enough to read. The journalists' professional and personal qualities should become apparent in their articles, hence, showing that they are "informed, and accurate and ambitious" (Goldsmith, *WP*, line 115).

Picturing their readers in terms of interest helped the journalists to write their articles in an appropriate style. Both American and German journalists were

especially concerned with expressing themselves understandably enough for a reader, who was spatially separated from them and whose lifeworld existed outside the newspaper building, to comprehend the content of their articles (cf. Lehmann, *SZ*, line 265). The interviewed journalists became worried about the quality of the text if they had been reporting on the same topic for a long time. They knew that it was essential for them to use short sentences, limit the use of jargon in their articles and avoid or at least explain abbreviations.

For example Lehmann (*SZ*), who had covered the United Nations for nearly seven years, so frequently incorporated the technical language and terminology of the UN into his articles that he had problems reproducing the information in a language that was understandable for his readers. Lehmann found it very challenging to shift from writing from an insider's perspective to an outsider's (readers') perspective. Thurman (*WP*) was also concerned about the "technical level" (line 377) of her writing, since she had become a military reporter. She wanted to use military terms and technical jargon correctly, so that a military audience could appreciate it. Simultaneously, Thurman tried not to overload her article's texts with "nitty gritty details" (line 382) that non-military members would not understand. She felt that she had a "special mission" (line 369) to "translate between the military world and [...] the normal understanding of civilians" (line 370).

Some of the journalists interviewed felt that pluralism of opinion was an essential part of good journalistic quality. They presumed that their readers were intelligent people who valued plurality of opinions in one newspaper. This "very strong internal pluralism" (Zimmermann, *SZ*, line 183) allows the readership to form its own opinion on events. "Pluralism is a dialectical process. One author presents one thesis, another author an anti-thesis and the reader should make considerations by himself" (ibid.). Others were rather uncomfortable with pluralism in their newspaper, and became irritated when their newspapers printed articles expressing opinions different from their own in the same section of the newspaper. They believed that reading differing opinions in the same newspaper could become confusing for the readership. While the first group of journalists believed in the readers' independence and trusted them to be able to form their own opinion of events, the second group infantilized them and preferred to explain what had happened.

The American and German journalists noted that it was their readership that demanded or wished their newspaper to have a clear political orientation. This idea was foreign to the journalists themselves due to their professional ethics. Indeed, the American and German journalists believed that their readers attributed a certain political orientation to their newspapers, which they expected to see reflected in the printed opinions and commentaries. The readers' attitudes emerged in their letters, in which they displayed their emotions; expressing irritation, anger or disappointment if they did not find the opinion they expected in the newspapers (cf. Newmann, *WP*; Baumann, *FAZ*).

The journalists' images of their readership can help them fine-tune their style and tone and thereby influence their professional action and socialization. The readers' reactions to the articles, in their emails and letters, showed the journalists that they took their newspapers and their articles seriously. Readers either praised or showed their disappointment in journalists, for example, complaining about how journalists wrote about a particular topic in a specific way. During the interviews, some of the journalists showed me some of these critical messages on their smartphones or computers (cf. Weisman, *WP*; Dietrich, *FAZ*). However, the journalists were often disappointed by their readers' apparent misinterpretations of their articles.

Journalists were unable to conduct a scientific study in order to find out who their readers were, or to interview them in order to get to know what they like or dislike about the newspapers they buy. Journalists were mostly acting in the dark and could only speculate or devise theories about who their readers were. In the following subsection, I will present journalists' assumptions about how they imagined their readers and to what extent this imagination affected their reporting.

6.4.2 Reader's Typology

The American and German journalists attributed traits to their readership depending on how they perceived their own newspapers and themselves. Dealing with images of readers made the interviewed journalists think about their own professional identity. At this point one could draw a parallel to the process of mirroring described by Berger and Luckmann (1991). What the journalists thought about their readers was reflected in their own self-perception. Imagining readers was self-referential for the journalists. For example, writing for an international newspaper would mean

reporting for an international audience, which in turn, would mean knowing that your name will potentially be known outside of your country, for example.

Accordingly, the interviewed journalists differentiated between different types of readers: local, national and international. These types were connected with journalists' ideas about their newspapers, as well as their own identity and their self-esteem. Furthermore, journalists differentiated between their readers by means of their level of acquaintance with them taking their intellect (e.g. experts), and their level of education into account as well as considering whether they knew them or not (e.g. family members, friends). Additionally, journalists discriminated between readers by means of frequency, considering whether they were sporadic, spontaneous, regular or faithful readers. Finally, the journalists distinguished between readers of weekly and daily newspapers.

The American and German journalists valued accessibility and the local character of their newspapers. The *WP*, for example, is "a paper that everybody is reading" (Newman, *WP*, line 31). Every morning on their commute to work by bus or subway, journalists noticed people reading their newspapers, which made them proud (Meyer, *SZ*). However, Thurman (*WP*) felt journalists should not place too much emphasis on the location of their newspaper. Thus, for example, if one of the American soldiers she interviewed in Iraq happened to be from New York or the Washington area, she could mention this information in the article, but should never solely rely on their home ground to search for interview candidates (cf. Thurman, *WP*, line 567).

The journalists identified with their newspapers beyond the local level, and considered them to be large national and international newspapers. While German journalists considered their newspapers to be both local and national, American journalists characterized their employers as being local, national and international newspapers (cf. e.g. Newman, *WP*; Smith, *NYT*). This understanding also affected journalist's image of their readers and the themes they covered. Covering local events would not be enough for such international newspapers, because "a mass-circulation paper" has to reach a much broader audience than merely a local readership (Goldsmith, *WP*, line 108). American journalists assumed that their newspapers were already read by hundreds of thousands of people in the United States and millions of people online worldwide (cf. Thurman, *WP*; Smith, *NYT*).

Journalists' perceptions of their newspaper and its readership demanded psychological strength from them and forced them to maintain a professional distance in order to avoid suffering from permanent stress. "Your stuff is getting read everywhere, not by everybody but certainly everywhere. It can put some pressure on you, but you adapt to it" (Smith, *NYT*, line 669). American and German journalists viewed the potential of becoming famous through their work in both positive and negative terms. For instance, if they were able to make a name for themselves, they could become known internationally. However, if they became known for bad journalism, they might become infamous outside of their home country (cf. Braun, *SZ*).

The fact that millions of readers read the *WP* and the *NYT*, and that hundreds of thousands read the *FAZ* and *SZ* implies that a broad spectrum of people read these newspapers, which makes it difficult for journalists to orient their writing toward one type of reader. Because of this, the interviewed American and German journalists mostly tried to think about an undifferentiated group of readers as a critical mass. Costner (*WP*) thought that writing for an undifferentiated group of readers was idealistic, and that in reality every journalist has an image of their reader in mind. He believed that it is impossible to write for everybody or "for the general public" (lines 241-242).

In fact, in the course of the interviews, the journalists differentiated between two contrasting types of readers by: 1) level of acquaintance and by 2) readers' intellect. Firstly, they differentiated between the readers they knew, such as their family members, friends, editors, colleagues and the readers they had never met, an "amorphous" and "faceless" (Smith, *NYT*, line 73) group of readers with different backgrounds. Secondly, the journalists assumed that some of their readers would be experts or professionals in the respective topics of their article, others would be laymen or ordinary people with general knowledge about the world (cf. Krause, *SZ*).

> We are a unique paper. We know that every morning pretty much every member of Congress, every member of the Supreme Court, the President of the United States, the generals in the Pentagon are all reading our paper and that's not true of every newspaper, obviously, in America. [...] But we're also just writing for everyday readers. We're not trying to limit ourselves to an exclusive audience (Goldsmith, *WP*, lines 112-117).

This meant that the journalists had to keep both of these types of readers in mind, which constituted a great challenge to their professional action. The journalists

expected all types of readers to be thirsty for knowledge. Metaphorically speaking, a reader should be like a "smart high school scholar" (Smith, *NYT*, line 694), who permanently seeks education, does not pretend to know everything, and is interested in learning something new and refreshing, extending their knowledge of different subjects.

Some of the journalists distinguished between sporadic, spontaneous and regular newspaper readers. Finally, daily newspaper readers were distinguished from weekly newspaper readers. Krause (*SZ*), for example, felt that he had a closer relationship to his readers when he was working for a daily newspaper (lines 342-350). This was the case since writing for a daily newspaper meant writing and thinking about his readers almost every day. In his regard, reading a daily newspaper does not require any previous knowledge of the reader, because it already offers an overview of and includes some deeper background information on current events. Therefore, daily newspapers are highly appropriate for sporadic readers.

6.4.3 The Role of Family

In some cases, the journalists' private and professional environments can become intertwined if journalists involve their family or friends in their work. Some journalists occasionally had their partners or even parents proofread the language and style of their articles, when they wrote about very complex issues (cf. Lehmann, *SZ*; Thurman, *WP*). It helped them to get an outsider's view on their articles. Goldsmith (*WP*) did not have this chance, since his wife was his editor (line 128). Indeed, these cases were exceptions rather than the rule, due to lack of time and deadlines. In the words of Goldsmith:

> My wife is a fellow journalist and in fact she is my editor right now at the paper, so she does read my articles before they go, but she's reading them from a professional point of view rather than a family point of view in that sense. But there is not enough time to send articles out to everyday people and say, 'Help, how does this read to you?' because we have a daily deadline. It's just too difficult (Goldsmith, *WP*, lines 128-132).

In some cases, this feedback helped journalists to make their articles more suitable for general readers, as they sometimes became so involved in their topics that they did not notice which terms needed better explanations. Journalists had to ask themselves what their readers did or did not already know about the subject, what background information was needed in the article and which words were suitable to

use in a certain context. Goldsmith (*WP*) usually tried to put himself in the position of an ordinary reader:

> I try to think about how would my friends, who aren't involved in politics, who aren't involved in government, what they would get out of this article. What would my sister or my parents and my family, you know, get out of this article? Would they want me to explain more or would they understand what I'm talking about, or do they need more background? (Goldsmith, *WP*, 123-126).

Thurman (*WP*) once asked her mother, who was an English teacher, to proofread the article's grammar "just for fun" (line 347), because the article was long and challenging. It happened when Thurman visited her mother, and it was rather a spontaneous action. When she used to work for another newspaper, she sometimes asked her husband, who worked for the same newspaper, to give her feedback. During this time, "[they] always read each other's articles" (line 344). Both cases were an exception. She highlighted that in her tense working routines "[she didn't] usually have [the] opportunity to ask anybody from [her] family to read anything."

Lehmann (*SZ*), for example, used to sometimes ask his wife, "who has nothing to do with journalism" (line 518), for help with proofreading his articles. He did so, since she was a "newspaper-reader, somebody who likes reading newspapers and who was not excessively interested in politics" (lines 518-519). In this way she could represent an average reader. Lehmann said his wife helped him to express events in a more understandable way. She made him aware of parts of texts that were unclear to her and suggested how he could write more concisely or correct contradictory information.

6.5 Summary

The subjective reality of newspapers comes into light by mean of interactions between journalists and their significant others. Indeed, the reality of a newspaper is finally constructed in the process of negotiation between them. The analysis of the interviewed showed that the American and German journalists differentiated between four groups of significant others: editors, colleagues, readers and family. However, the relationship and the amount of interaction between the journalists and their significant others depended on the country. Whereas American journalists had a very intense professional relation with their editors, German journalists did not mention much in this area. Hence, the professional action of the American journalists includes the aspect of communication with editors. The relationship with

editors was the crucial factor that differentiated the professional action of the American and German journalists.

German journalists enjoyed more freedom while writing and working on their articles than their American counterparts, and they did not mention any tension with their editors with the exception of one single case. It remains a question as to the kind of role editors played in the professional working routines and professional socialization of the researched German newspapers. By contrast, the American journalists considered interaction with their editors to be a constant issue during their working routines. Two types of interactions between editors and journalists could be extracted from the interviews: harmonious and conflictive. The latter was characterized by the journalists' frustrations with being misunderstood by their editors when discussing the development of new ideas and how to convert these ideas into news reportage. This frustration had to do with great expectations that journalists had toward their editors. They expected editors to be better, more knowledgeable and more experienced than they were.

The professional action of the American and German journalists had more similarities than differences within the context of readers as significant others. First of all, both sets of journalists acknowledged their profession as a service and considered serving their readers as their duty and as the essence of their professional action. Hence, readers belong to an important group of significant others. The journalists were conscious that their professional and material existence depended on them. Hence, the relationship between journalists and readers has an economic character and can be designated as that of sellers and buyers. Above all, the journalists believed their professional role was to explain events to their readership so that they could form their own political opinions. Last but not least, colleagues and opinions of journalists’ family members played a role in the final construction of reality in a journalistic article in Germany as well as in the United States.

7 Conclusion

Our newspapers are social products made by people. Of course they are, but having in mind this trivial fact, there is surprisingly little sociological research on journalists, their professional framework and relations. This lack of research is especially surprising concerning war coverage, where a rather small amount of journalists have a major influence on the public conception of war.

Attempting to start to fill this gap, the interviews conducted and analyzed for this study show how many people and social relations are indeed interwoven in journalists' professional action. Journalists rely on translators and informants, they argue with their editors, try to satisfy their readers' requirements and to earn respect from their colleagues. And above all these interactions, the guiding ideal of journalistic objectivity is always present and shaping the journalists' professional action.

Although journalism lacks certain characteristics of a profession as defined by the traditional sociology of professions, such as legal or at least formally exclusive forms of membership, the interviews show that journalistic action has indeed distinct features and standards of professionality that shape journalistic lifeworlds as well as the final journalistic products – namely, the articles. And as this study shows, one main characteristic feature of professional journalistic action is the necessary, continuous re-interpretation of those professional standards while and by means of implementing them in practice.

In the first chapter, the central questions of this study were developed: (1) What are the characteristic features of the professional action of the interviewed journalists? (2) How do the journalists act and why do they act in this way? (3) How do journalists construct the social reality of their newspapers by means of their professional action? and (4) How does the subjective reality of journalists become an objective reality of their newspapers?

Picking up the first of these four questions, professional action in general is presented in chapter two as a meaningful social action clearly directed towards achieving goals. In order to succeed, professional action relies on a set of established strategies that helps to solve professional problems. These characteristic features of professional action are also the main structural elements of the interviewed

journalists' professional lifeworld. Their predominant goal is to put articles on papers and screens, which have to fulfill the requirements of their readership, their organization and their professional ethos. In order to achieve this goal, journalists pursue a two-fold approach, which can indeed be identified as one core characteristic of the interviewed journalists' professional action: They try to resort to their established and well-proven action-drafts whenever and wherever possible. Making use of this set of professional patterns is meant to ensure an efficient working process while simultaneously conforming to their high professional standards. But when applying their action-drafts is not or only in part possible or does not seem suitable, journalists have to act spontaneously and improvise, exploring and assessing new *modi operandi* by trial and error. The necessity to vary their prefabricated action-drafts may not only originate in external conditions – e.g. a lack of necessary infrastructure in a war region or a dependency on third parties, but may also be driven by the journalists' intention to adopt new interpretations, to offer a different context or to bring a new perspective to a certain topic. Furthermore, new technical possibilities for research, for evaluating information and for collaboration are another factor for change.

When answering the second of the four central questions – How and why do journalists act the way they do? – one might just start with the "why". All of the interviewed journalists present a clear commitment to a shared professional ethos, which includes the struggle for objectivity as a guiding ideal, and a clear notion of responsibility towards their readers. This normative commitment, however, is of course in a permanent and inevitable conflict with the limits of time and available resources, commercial needs, the pressure of competition, the problems of getting and evaluating information et cetera, which constitute the prosaic part of the answer to the "why".

In the context of the 2003 Iraq War, for instance, two important aspects, which could not be controlled by the journalists or their newspapers, influenced the way American and German journalists chose to cover the war: First of all, the United States were actively involved in the warfare being the leading, dominant party of the so-called Coalition of the Willing, while the German government publicly opposed the actions taken by the US as well as their official justification. Regardless of their personal opinion or their newspaper's editorial tendency – if there was any –, this aspect had an impact on the quantity and the perspectives of the journalists'

coverage. When your country is actively involved in a war, you have to take into consideration, for instance, that many of your readers have friends and family members who might be in danger being in that war region you are covering. Thus, your articles might be a valuable source of information to them regarding their loved ones' safety and everyday conditions. This is one of the reasons – besides several others, not least economic ones – why the *NYT* and *WP* had significantly more journalists covering the war than the German newspapers did. Secondly, but linked to the first aspect, the number of places in the embedded program by the US military were limited and of course the largest amount of places were reserved for US media, while no German newspaper had one of their journalists embedded.

As a matter of course, these different preconditions led to different answers to the question of *how* journalists act and pursue their ideal of proper war coverage. Generally speaking, there were two different strategies to pursue the goal of objective reporting and deal with the central problem of gaining and evaluating reliable information during wartime. Obviously, having more journalists directly in the war region than the German media did, the American newspapers were able to cover more topics and events at the same time. Thus, their main – at least implicit – approach was to obtain objectivity through variety, whereas the German newspapers tended to resort to the strategy of objectivity by keeping a larger distance between them and the subject of coverage.

Either way, both had to struggle with the extraordinary circumstances of a war situation and its consequences for research and reporting. For the German journalists, it was extremely difficult to get any valuable first-hand information from the conflict area or any of the conflicting parties. This is why they collaborated and shared information across different German and also other European media ventures. The American journalists, in contrast, had to fiercely compete with other newspapers' staff not only in the United States, but even when working directly in the war region. Instead they intensely collaborated with colleagues and freelancers working for the same newspaper in order to deal with the substantial obstacles regarding their professional actions caused by the extraordinary situation within the war region. Disregarding their professional competition, the American journalists on the ground did interact with each other socially, cooked together and shared information relevant to their safety and well-being.

Female reporters covering the events on-site played a special role. According to the interviews, they had to take care even more about safety aspects than their male colleagues. This particularly regarded their outward appearance – sometimes having to wear traditional local clothes such as a hijab – and social manners, when shaking hands with male informants was considered an offense against traditional relations between genders, for instance. Simultaneously, they referred to positive experiences and the effects of being a female reporter, because more of the locals trusted them than their male colleagues. Therefore, they got several exclusive opportunities to get information and insights because of their gender.

Relating ideals that journalists have for proper war coverage to their actual realization at work leads to the third central question of How do journalists construct the social reality of their newspapers by means of their professional action?

When journalists deal professionally with events, social patterns or situations worthy of reporting, they interpret and define them as professional problems that can be solved by means of their internalized professional instruments, their action-drafts. This means, they filter information relevant to a story for their readers and the understanding of the context. They evaluate the quality of the sources, pick an adequate text genre, and provide a context to that event. Thus, in the end they are able to produce an article that fits in their newspaper and meets their professional standards. And by applying their established and internalized strategies and problem definitions to the matter of their reporting when producing articles, they contribute to the construction of their newspaper's social reality.

But journalists not only internalize and apply prefabricated action-drafts. By using these drafts in practice every day, from time to time journalists are forced to review them and maybe make some changes to them. This impulse might be caused by external limitations or extraordinary situations like a military conflict or by an intrinsic motivation to try something different. Either way, these changes then become a part of the social reality of their newspapers by application and by discussions with – using Schutz' terminology – the significant others within the journalists' professional lifeworld – their colleagues and editors. A debate between a journalist and her editor, whether a report about everyday business in a chicken restaurant in Bagdad during wartime is a valuable part of proper war coverage, might seem like a very small struggle. But its result nevertheless contributes to the

newspaper's social reality and has an impact on our perspective of wars, which is necessarily shaped by media coverage.

And it is indeed the journalists' interactions with these significant others within their professional lifeworld which have to be focused on when answering the last one of the four central questions – How does the subjective reality of journalists become an objective reality of their newspapers? These are the people who journalists communicate with in their professional context and partly depend on concerning their decisions how to select and evaluate information and find the right tone for the article-text. They function as a quality control, advising and deciding how to treat and edit the information in order to make it both a consumable and relevant product. A direct or indirect communication with this group of editors, colleagues and readers guides the journalist's professional action. Due to the significantly more influential role of the editor in the institutionalized structure of American newspapers, the direct form of communication and also of editorial control is more apparent within the American newspapers than in the German ones. Notwithstanding this difference, the indirect communication is effective on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

One may describe this indirect communication as a form of virtualized four-eyes review, intended to ensure the articles' relevance for an objective reality by anticipation and professional empathy. Based on former direct communication, feedback, colleagues' articles and the internalized aspects of professional journalistic action, journalists take into consideration their significant others' experienced and assumed preferences and requirements when producing articles. During their professional socialization they internalize the professional rules and norms shared and upheld by editors and colleagues. By incorporating their professional significant others' opinions and filters of informational relevance via directly or indirectly communicating with them, journalists aim to transform their subjective reality into an objective reality of their newspapers.

When dealing with these four central questions and analyzing the conducted interviews, the notion of objectivity strikes one as a leitmotif. On one hand, it serves as a guiding ideal for the journalists' professional action, but on the other hand journalists are quite aware of its inevitable unattainability in a social world. This paradox is a central problem of journalism, which different newspapers and journalists developed various interpretations of and strategies to deal with it. They

all share a strong commitment to this leitmotif, to pursuing and implementing it. This commitment also serves as a means to membership in the group of professional journalists.

Nevertheless, during the interviews the different journalists exposed varying opinions on how journalists ought to act. Sometimes, external requirements and limitations press them to rethink their ideal vision of proper war coverage. At other times, journalists challenge their interpretation of objectivity while working on a certain subject or during discussions with their editors, for example. For whatever reason journalists review their approach to objectivity, there is one common ground: It is a necessary, continuous re-interpretation of an abstract goal while and by means of pursuing it in practice.

Several further aspects, which were presented in this analysis but fell victim to its limits of time, space and objectives, appear to be compelling enough to warrant further research. Since most of us are fortunate enough not to experience war first-hand but essentially through journalistic products, a fairly limited amount of people have a major influence on the public conception of war. Therefore, a deeper, content-focused analysis of the correspondents' and editors' preconceptions, experiences and interpretations of war on one side and of their journalistic products on the other side may help to illustrate how public conceptions of war are constituted. Thereby, such an analysis may shed some further light on the micro-macro-link between journalists' subjective and our shared objective reality.

Within this frame of analysis, the role gender plays in war coverage might offer some interesting questions, for example. During the conducted interviews, the female journalists reported on gender-related advantages and drawbacks that provoked further questions not quite fitting in this current study. Are there significant differences between male and female journalists regarding their conceptions of war? How do female journalists interpret and reflect on their role, chances and limitations both in a war and in war coverage as two overwhelmingly male-dominated environments, where men traditionally are in control of the narrative? Do male and female journalists differ in their motivation and reasons to go into a war zone? And do these factors have an impact on the journalists' re-interpretation of objectivity in war coverage?

Getting back to the quotation that gave this study its title, the heuristic combination of the sociology of professions and the sociology of knowledge has proven fruitful to analyze how information is milled by journalists and what drives these mills. It also helps to show how ideal and abstract concepts like truth or its relative, objectivity, impact the material products of professional action by means of becoming modulatory effective within the professional patterns. At this point, one might recall the two directions Max Weber suggested for the sociology of journalism – international comparison and studying the working environment and individual socialization of journalists – and might add: As well as their common socialization.

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