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Professionalisms and Journalism History: Lessons from European Variations

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Introduction

Professionalism is a concept burdened with a dual task. It needs to provide both a specific description and a general justification for a given occupation. The description of specific skills establishes boundaries and distinguishes professionals from laymen and outsiders. The justification offers legitimation for privileges that come with membership. Professions are different; a lawyer's know-how is different from that of a doctor. Professionalism, as a belief that privileged expert autonomy ultimately serves general public interests, cuts across these differences. A journalist can claim to be committed to practices and routines of "objectivity" and a doctor to protecting human life by following latest evidence-based medical knowledge. They claim to be masters of the best practices of their fields, and assert that the general public should trust them do this without much interfering. While theoretically all professional boundaries are constructed and somewhat flexible, journalism is a particularly tricky case. It is far from self-evident what the core skills or specialist knowledge are that define journalism. But more importantly, its specific tasks are entangled with representations and constructions of the public itself. This has blessed journalism with an extra layer of reflexivity and a sense of challenge to its status (cf. Carey 1969; Zelizer 1993; Waisbord 2013).

As a concept, professionalism has a narrative structure. It situates occupations in a historical trajectory of modernity within which they realize their "true" nature, core values, and destined autonomy. Such a narrative always runs the risk of teleological explanation missing contingencies and variations. It can place too much attention to the independence of the profession and miss the larger context of social and institutional relations. A too dominant storyline can both obstruct us from seeing the transformations of values or practices, the archaeological layers of the professional culture, and the influences that enter the field from the outside. Narrow narratives of journalism can sometimes be useful in pointing out key issues at stake, such as the challenge of "fake news," "objectivity" and "free press." But they also limit our judgment on how to tackle the developments that threaten public interest. The stories of journalism history shape also the discursive landscape within which changing journalism has to be justified.

European journalism history offers a useful test terrain to flesh out some of these critical problems and potentials. It reminds us that with all its shared history, values, and traditions, European journalism shows considerable diversity in time and place. At the same time, contingencies are interlinked and embedded in broader historical developments of global capitalism. Appreciation of the diversity of local professionalisms is particularly important in current conditions of intensified globalization. It reminds us of the contingency of change, and it highlights the importance of the broader constellation of social forces that shape journalism. A nuanced history, then, should also help us identify the challenges that will test and shape the future capacities of journalism.

This chapter argues for further enrichment of the history of professional journalism in Europe. We can offer no comparative map of the empirical and ideological realities of Europe, nor do we suggest new comprehensive models of explanation. That would demand depths of local knowledge, experience, and cultural sensitivity beyond our reach. Our more modest aim is to develop an approach that would help capture the diversity of journalism history – in particular as it is shaped in relation to politics. We do this in three steps. First, we underline the dualism of practice and ideals as the core of professionalism. Second, we develop a critique of the role of dominant narratives in the history of journalism. Third, we offer examples of the variations of journalistic professionalism in Europe in three national contexts: France, Finland, and Italy. These interconnected points sketch a matrix for what a sociologically and historically sound, yet still purposefully comparative history of professionalism might entail.

Tension of Practices and Ideals

Professionalism refers both to material skills that true professionals master and to the social value of the restricted access to these skills. These two dimensions (practices and ideals) open different perspectives to journalism.

A History of Practice

A search for the distinctive skills of a journalist does not provide clear a point of departure. In Europe, the news develops from personal correspondence and information networks linked to political and commercial interests of

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elites. Gradually, this spills over from private circles to public, creating a nascent but unstable base for some independent writers and brokers of news. As news and commerce are intertwined from the outset, the forefront of European capitalism defines the cutting edge of journalism history in a given moment. In sixteenth-century Venice the *novellisti* and *poligrafi* could make a living without submitting to the patronage of particular persons (Burke 2000, p. 397, 2001, p. 23). In late seventeenth-century Amsterdam, the “oversupply” of unemployed Protestant clergymen (mostly from France) made some of them try their fortune as full-time “men-of-letters” (Burke 2000, pp. 162–165). Eighteenth-century London saw newspaper editors who “managed the whole business, building their reputation through collecting and redacting the news, and personally writing the master copy” (Pettegree 2014, p. 309). While some papers also hired “reporters,” the skills of such news gatherers were neither very distinct nor well-respected. Such first symptoms of professional newsmen were sporadic, and early European newspapers were mostly collections and composition of letters and bits of news (Pettegree 2014; Nerone 2015a, pp. 15–18) with little investment on editing. Journalism began as a rather indiscriminate distribution of the printed word – not unlike the internet. Parallel to the (often foreign) news, two other interrelated streams are noteworthy: the market-driven production of libels and scandals (Darnton 2009; Thompson 2000, pp. 41–50; Pettegree 2014, p. 191ff.), and the intense politicization of journalism during periods of political upheaval. But the appearance of political pamphlet writers, and their momentary independence from state and censorship can hardly be seen as signs of a journalistic occupational identity. It is not until the end of the eighteenth century, then, that newspapers began to become recognized actors in the construction of public opinion.

In addition to skills, the organizational settings of early European communication work offers clues to the history of professional practices. Early news-gathering was nested in the physical nodal points of information networks: in cloisters as part of the information network of the Catholic church (Pettegree 2014, pp. 21–26), in houses of commerce, such as often cited example of the Fugger-newsletters (Pettegree 2014, pp. 113–116) or the Dutch East India Company (Burke 2001, pp. 157–159), and in the diplomatic contexts of states and rulers. Such settings partly defined the repertoire of early journalism. Organizationally, the workshops of printers link journalism to the general history of guilds and European craftsmanship. The medieval workshop system – with their masters, journeymen, and apprentices – negotiated relations of authority related to specific skills. Internally, the workshops reproduced a culture of occupations, as particular skills functioned as a “source of the legitimacy of command or the dignity of obedience” (Sennett 2008, p. 54). A recognized craftsman had to learn his skills through a (long) period of imitation, rising (slowly) through the hierarchy of the craft and reaching autonomy (as a master) within the circle of one's peers, privileged and sanctioned by the crown. Externally, the guild system was also a way of controlling labor under the growing market demands for printed matter. At first, as a rule, printing was a royal *privilege*, literally defined as private law, or an exemption. Such license systems eventually broke down under the pressure of intertwined political and commercial demand for often un-licensed reading material as early printers were driven at least as much by profits as by political or religious affinities. The first newspapers inherited this external organizational tension, being linked both to politics (often with restrictions) and to the market (audience demand). Being directly linked to printing press, journalism also inherited some of the culture of craftsmanship. The nineteenth century industrialized press produced news contents organized in editorial offices, with their editors-in-chief taking the place of masters. Later, during the twentieth century, big newsrooms brought journalists together to workshops where key professional routines were forged and reproduced, such as recognizing “events” that have news value (political or market or both), effectiveness of gathering information (working on a particular beat), functional presentation techniques (the strategic rituals of objectivity), and so on. A long line of ethnographic work in newsrooms has illuminated the structures, tensions, changes, and continuities of these contexts (Tuchman 1978; Boczkowski 2004; Usher 2014).

A History of Ideals

In all specialized occupations, the exclusive “secrets of the trade” need a heavy dose of public trust as a counter weight. Etymologically, the term *profess* means vowing to people outside the occupation, while the *professional* uses the skills with utmost care and according to best his knowledge (Pietilä 2011). However, *professionalism* defined as discourse of legitimation, took shape properly only when the nineteenth-century dual revolution of capitalist industrialization and bourgeois democracy in Western Europe gave rise to a modern social imagination (Larsson 1977, p. 80). Classic sociology itself (from Tönnies to Durkheim to Weber) was an attempt to conceptualize this “great transformation” (Polanyi 1944) and its dual movement within. On the one hand, traditional social structures were broken by the market forces of capitalism. On the other hand, this provoked counter-movements and the search for new kinds of integrating social forces. Modern professionalism can be seen as a part of such “self-defensive” reactions. Two things come together in this simultaneously centripetal and centrifugal move toward professionalization: first, the identification of new kinds of occupations (such as journalism) that can help manage (bring together) increasingly complex societies, and, second, the struggle to build symbolic resources that support

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these professions as specific, autonomous, and legitimate agents (which, in turn, support their position in the labor market and in relation to the state).

Academic debate about modern professionalism has been lively (Larsson [1977](#); Abbott [1988](#); Freidson [2001](#)), but the main ideas of the concept are clear. Professional self-understanding distinguishes *knowledge* from *skills*, calling for an explicit (scientific) knowledge base that informs the practice (officially, professionals do not act on a gut feeling). The system of knowledge implies institutions of education, or at least some kind of explicit merit based entrance or accreditation to the field. This yields membership in a collective that enjoys professional autonomy and privileges. While this is often officially sanctioned by the state, the autonomy is also protected by science: this signals that professionals redeem their privileges accountability not in the eyes of the state but in front of the “public” at large. This is often articulated in ethical principles that justify the privileges of profession. This ideal form, the *ideology* of professionalism, identifies a “third logic” (Freidson [2001](#)) that differs both from the bureaucratized state power and brutal market forces.

Against this ideal logic of professionalism, even a quick comparison of European journalism history offers a somewhat patchy picture. If one looks for a collective effort of journalists to control the entry to the profession, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw a wave of emerging trade unions and professional associations: the United Kingdom and France in the 1880s are early examples, Sweden (1901), Greece (1914), and Finland (1921) represent a more common, later trend. European journalists began to organize as the industrialization of the press began to create new mass audiences. The scale of production demanded new workers, and often the field journalism was flooded with people from new social classes and backgrounds. At the same time, though, the developing representative political institutions ensured that political affiliations were another powerful structuring force of the press corps, often keeping journalism subsumed to the political system. The educational aspect of professionalism took root in the wake of professional associations. Specific courses for educating journalists were organized in the late nineteenth century, but professional schools (often linked to universities) were established after World War I, for instance Finland, Germany, France, Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, and sometimes only after World War II. Codes of professional ethics followed usually in pace after the emergence of unions and formal education. The first wave of ethical codes appeared after World War I (France [1918], Austria [1921]). It reflected the concern for both the commercialization and industrialization of the press (and the wider social profile of journalists), and the hard lessons learned from World War I propaganda. Another wave of ethical codes follows from the 1950s and 1960s, for instance the Netherlands (1954), Finland (1968), Sweden (1974), and Germany (1973), supported also by the post-World War II discussions on the social responsibility of journalism (e.g. the Hutchins Commission report, Leigh [1947](#)). The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) principles date back to [1954](#), articulating also a sense of pride: “Journalists *worthy of the name* ... shall recognize in professional matters the jurisdiction of colleagues only, to the exclusion of every kind of interference by governments or others” (IFJ Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists, 1954, article 9). First articulated in this ethical terrain on self-jurisdiction, the idea on offering legal protection to confidential sources emerged relatively late in many European countries. While Sweden (1949) seems to have been an early example, many European countries adopted an explicit legal source protection late (i.e. France [2010], Finland [2004]).

The Weight of a Dominant Narrative

As professionalism is publicly anchored in science, also writing journalism history has become burdened with legitimizing journalism in modern societies. Such narratives serve important purposes but also carry some risks.

An influential example for a dominant history is Michael Schudson's ([1978](#)) *Discovering the News*, upon which some journalism scholars have crafted a global interpretation of the invention and spread of modern journalism. In a shorthand version of this narrative, “true” journalism was first invented in the US penny papers of the 1830s. After having spread through the US press by end of the century, it was “progressively imported and adapted” in the United Kingdom and to continental Europe (Chalaby [1996](#), p. 304). There is, of course, some truth to this thesis. In particular the argument regarding the decisive break in media practices in the late nineteenth century is important. This is when a sense of journalism as a distinct set of practices that denoted a distinct group of people emerged, even if the words “journalism” and “journalists” existed well before (Nerone, [2015b](#)). It is also true that the international circulation of journalistic formats suggests many transnational connections and diffusion of practices (i.e. Höyer and Pöttker [2005](#); Broersma [2007](#)). Yet, bearing in mind that journalism history is part of the discourse of professionalism, it is important to keep some distance to a too hegemonic story. For instance, one should recognize that in the late nineteenth century a break in the field took place, both in the United States and in Europe (particularly in France), as a consequence of the industrialization and commercialization of the press. Also, the idea of a particular essence of journalism oversimplifies history on both sides of the Atlantic: the claim that standards of objectivity in reporting clearly characterized American journalism is too straightforward an interpretation. Schudson ([2001](#)) himself

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reporting clearly characterized American journalism is too straightforward an interpretation. Schudson (1994) himself has offered a much more subtle description of the rise of objectivity in American journalism (cf. Nerone 2012). This narrative further underestimates the degree of politicization of US newspapers in the beginning of the twentieth century (Kaplan 2002, 2013; Nerone 1987; Pasley 2001). Crucially, such interpretations divert attention from how professionalism began its rise in the era of intensively political journalism, as a public reaction to a such a “heteronomous” field (Bourdieu 2005). It also takes journalism in major cities as an accurate representation for the vast majority of the (US) press of the time (i.e. Tucher 2001, 2013). Chalaby's (1996) point on the “co-invention” of journalism by British newspapers has also been criticized (Hampton 2004) for too much emphasis on the “pauper press” in redefining general British journalistic standards.

The intellectual trap of such storytelling is the narrowing of the normative definition of journalism that defines “professional journalism as a discipline of verification ... exercised by professional journalists working in industrially organized newsrooms under the supervision of editors” (Nerone 2013, p. 17). This meant seeing “other forms, such as tabloid news or more assertive and partisan journalism as deviations from professionalism” (Nerone 2013). Historically, one needs to recognize the diverse political and commercial forces at play during a period when the definition of professional journalism was in the making (see Hampton 2004). More generally, this also tends to put the legitimacy of the profession on only one of its aspects. Following Kaplan's (1997) criticism of the “insulated” (yet dominant) US perspective on journalism studies, highlighting the diversity of European journalism history may help sustain a more complex memory of journalism, its practices, genres, and justifying values. It serves us well to bear in mind that in particular the latter part of the twentieth century was awash with journalism reform movements, from “new journalism,” and “peace journalism” to “civic or public journalism.” These movements developed in opposition to the hegemonic news ideology showcasing diverse potentiality within the professional culture (see Hanitzsch 2007).

It is also vital not to oversimplify the changing historical political and social conjuncture within which seemingly dominating values were articulated. Again, Schudson's (1978) original insight is a case in point. To him, objectivity became a core factor of professional ideology only when a more straightforward belief in a progressive realism fell into crisis. While nineteenth-century journalism in the US (and elsewhere) was characterized by the emergence of “realist” social reporting, it was often a form of journalism where facts seemed to speak with inherent moral and political value (i.e. in social reportage, muckraking, in realist novels). Against this background, the crafting of early twentieth-century objectivity as a separation between facts and values was, in fact, a *response* to external criticism of such morally loaded, naïve realism. Objectivity, protected the emerging profession by modifying its truth claims and, thus, helped to sustain the industrialized institutions of mass media. Equally important, objectivity in the latter context of the mid- and late twentieth century, in the context of high modern welfare societies, was again redefined as a more cooperative practice between experts and journalists. At the time of writing, the lesson to be learned is that truth and objectivity claims of journalism in the post-factual era of public discourse must be situated in a yet another, new conjuncture.

The Long Century of European Journalism: Variations of Time and Context

To enrich the role of journalism history demands letting go of the premise of an essential, singular *core* form of journalism and the subsequent narrative of journalism as its teleological realization. Of course, some European countries may have had rather similar phases of journalism history. Such similarities, however, point to the shared context of larger structural processes: the rise of industrial capitalism and political liberalism, the spread of literacy and urbanization, or the diffusion of technological progress. These processes created similar conditions to support journalism as a particular social activity, but as emerging press industries and the profession of journalism were differently bound to different social spaces and social formations, things played out differently. Yet, in opening a more nuanced history of journalism, a shared historical framework can be helpful.

Historical sociology offers various ways of identifying key periods and shifts, but the overall historical shifts of Western capitalism are not much in doubt. Karl Polanyi (1944) offers one starting point for explaining professionalism as a modern ideology. He describes nineteenth century as a “great transformation” (a wave of globalization) when global capitalism, industrial production and national competition started what Giovanni Arrighi (1994) calls the “long twentieth century.”¹ Urbanization, mobility of people, unprotected and market-ruled labor markets, the breaking of traditions and earlier forms of social cohesion, then, sparked “self-defensive” political reactions. Journalism, too, is an example of this simultaneous dual movement. On the one, hand market imperatives commercialized the public sphere in the nineteenth century and created journalists as a recognizable occupational group. On the other hand, this transformation gave rise to intellectual currents that aimed to control and manage the consequences of market imperatives. Various radicalisms and progressive initiatives of the nineteenth century were part of a broader collective reaction, often articulated in journalism too (from the Chartist press in the United Kingdom to progressive muckrakers in the United States).

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Comparative modeling of the role of media (and journalism) has been an important topic in the communication studies canon since the mid-twentieth century at least (i.e. Siebert et al. 1956; Nerone 1995; Hallin and Mancini 2004; Christians et al. 2009). Ideally, this chapter now offered a full, comparative matrix of professional journalism across Europe during the last 150 years, situating it in the deeper undercurrents of the history of capitalism while identifying how economic, technological, political, and socio-cultural factors were articulated in local conditions. However, we have to settle for looking at three different corners of Europe, France, Finland, and Italy, and three temporal snapshots on professionalism during the “long twentieth century” that begins in the late nineteenth century (Arrighi 1994). We look, first, at the emerging professional field (at the zenith of European global capitalism, ending with World War I), second, at the search for public interest journalism (during the building of European Cold War welfare states), and, third, the contradictory moment of “high modernity” (Hallin 1992) when journalism enjoyed a period of autonomy which was at the same time shadowed by a more troubling future.

The Emerging Profession

In Eric Hobsbawm's (1995) effective prose, late nineteenth-century Europe was “capitalist in its economy; liberal in its legal and constitutional structure; bourgeois in the image of its characteristic hegemonic class, glorying in the advance of science, knowledge and education, material and moral progress, and profoundly convinced of the centrality of Europe” (p. 6). This is the historical setting in which newspapers began to reach mass audiences and make claims for public attention and opinion, partly by political, partly by commercial appeal.

The example of France offers a rich entry point to the diversity of this era. A country where journalism was well developed, newspapers gained a national mass audience early on, for instance *Le Petit Journal* (1863–1944). In this conjuncture, commercial and political competitions over mass audiences were strongly intertwined. Until the 1880s, the right to chronicle politics was restricted to bourgeois broadsheets through taxes that made political dailies affordable only to the wealthy. Since organized political parties barely existed (until the early twentieth century), the main dividing issue was the proper organization of state power. Newspapers identified as Bonapartist (in favor of the Empire) or republican (with different subdivisions from the right to the left). The crucial role of public opinion as a factor in this loosely organized political field became evident in some key historical moments, notably the Dreyfus Affair (1894–1906) that dramatically divided politicians, intellectuals, and the press. Combining the political with the scandalous, the affair illustrated well the political-commercial dynamics of the period. Literature was covered and discussed in similar ways, offering ample space for debates both between literary schools, and moral scandals and trials surrounding books, for instance Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal*, and Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. Literature was a key topic of journalism and politics and it spoke about key social questions. At the same time, the success of the mass press had divided the field of journalism internally early on. The popular, and the elite poles of the field offered two different entry points to the professional space, which made the field of French journalism very combatant and lively. Many public debates would literally end in duels; some newspapers even had armories where journalists could learn fencing and shooting. The public sphere stretched from newspapers to courts, and people active in them often ended up in jail. In Paris, for instance, the prison of Sainte-Pelagie even had a special quarter for journalists. It was from such an extremely conflicted field – where actors with cultural, political, and economic capital collided – that journalism as a profession first emerged in France. Following the very liberal press bill of 1881 (*Loi sur la liberté de la presse du 29 juillet 1881*) journalists' unions were established in the 1880s, and first courses of journalism were offered in 1900. Working in journalism began to appear more as a full-time position and a career, not merely a hobby or a route to (literary or political) fame. In this process the much debated term “reporter” entered French language, carried proudly by younger, less literate journalists – and scorned by the older, literary cadre of pressmen. As this struggle about what journalism was all about was fought in the field shaped by the old guard, French journalism remained strongly attached to a more “literary” dimension (Clark 1987), alongside factual reporting.

In Italy, the so-called Liberal Italy period (1861–1922) saw an increasing number of newspapers and growing circulations. Some of the most important and still circulating newspapers date back to this period, such as *La Stampa* in Turin (1867), *Il Mattino* in Naples (1892), and *Il Corriere della Sera* in Milan (1876). They renounced all government dependency and offered its collaborators decent payment early on (Licata 1976, pp. 11–17). This growth of the press, however, was modest compared to France, due to both illiteracy and low-income levels. Consequently, “journalists” were more clearly defined through their political alliances even when working full time. They also often came from other “classic” professional elites (lawyers, notaries, doctors, and scholars) (Castronovo 1976, pp. 10–13). Thus, the slower development of the mass press weakened the emergence of the professional field in late nineteenth-century Italy. This, however, should not blind us to the interesting history of journalism in an earlier period. During the process of Italian unification (starting with the Congress of Vienna in 1815), the press, unlike in France, was deeply involved in state building. This led to somewhat different claims about the relationship between the public and the press. An illustrative figure is Giuseppe Mazzini, a pan-European political activist, who founded and funded 26 papers during his career, all aimed at supporting Italian unification, such as *L'Apostolato Popolare*, *Il Donolo d'Italia*

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papers during his career, all aimed at supporting Italian unification, such as *L'Apostolato Popolare*, *Il Popolo d'Italia*, and *La Giovane Italia*. Such a press was also pedagogical in its orientation (*L'Educatore*, *Pensiero e Azione*) (Ravenna 1967). Indeed, Mazzini himself was acutely aware of the specific nature of journalism, and he even imposed some ethical principles and rules on his collaborators, such as bylines. Early on, in the *Jeune Suisse* (1836), writing about the "mission of periodical press" ("Sulla missione della stampa periodica") he defined the specific power of journalism: "The press is powerful ... it is the only power of our modern times ... because it talks to everyone, to multitudes and individuals; to each social class; and because it discusses each issue" (Ravenna 1967, p. 2).

In Finland, similar to Italy, the history of the late nineteenth-century journalism was deeply entangled with the project of nation-building. Finland was then developing as a special, autonomous area within the Russian empire and Finnish newspapers spread and multiplied rapidly during the last decades of the century (Salokangas 1997). Politically energizing issues dealt with official language politics (Swedish vs. Finnish), the relationship to Russia (principled legal liberalism vs. political pragmatism) and class questions. Although sporadic debates about press ethics and the quality of journalism appeared already after the mid-nineteenth century, professional tendencies were not dominant. Already in 1906, the strong party-affiliation of newspapers was cemented by the early adoption of universal political franchise. Party-loyalism largely dictated journalism in the early decades that led to national independence after a short but bloody civil war in 1918. This tragic political history might appear as a delaying factor to professionalism, but it is important to recognize that the intense political struggle was a major factor in the development of the field by providing an influx of writers from new social backgrounds (Munck 2015). Equally importantly, as political mobilization and newspapering progressed hand in hand, both also introduced a deep cultural sense of daily readership as a civic duty. This was a crucial base for later phases of professionalism.

The Search for Public Interest Journalism

The economic competition between European powers plunged the continent into World War I and the consequent period of economic and political unrest. On the one hand, electoral liberal democracy made progress. On the other hand, it proved too slow for its own virtues: national reactions against economic and political instability brought about a wave of fascism and other collective, state-directed, or corporatist movements. In this conjuncture, the new medium of the day, broadcasting, was organized under the guardianship of states, contrasting with developments in the United States. After the mass mobilizations of World War II, political impetus of social planning grew stronger in Western democracies. It geared politics toward a more equal distribution of wealth, driven by experts and rationalized politics. The post-war era of mass production and consumption demanded big industrial investments, which, in turn, called for a capacity to calculate profits and interests into the far future. This ushered in the alleviation of social differences and of political promises for a better future. As populations became targets of positive policy and control measures, societies became the objects of development.

With the bureaucracies of the welfare state, journalism also entered a more symbiotic relationship with other modern expert organizations. A mutual affinity of professionalisms played its role in that a developing journalistic professionalism depended on other variants of professionalism in economics, social policy, education, and so on. By reporting on the systems and practices of social negotiation, journalism became a recognized part of the welfare social system and carved out an increasingly independent and de-politicized role for itself. If "objectivity" in the early twentieth century was coined as a defense to journalism in the context of volatile politics, in the era of welfare expertise this reliance on acts and knowledge resulted in a more symbiotic relationship with the "primary definers" (Hall et al. 1978) of the dominant social system. Objective, neutral reporting and the build-up of vast modern systems of expertise and administration were mutually reinforcing. Underneath the seemingly competitive relationship between commercial and public service forms of journalism, this ethos of expert-driven planning of social progress provided the base for the social ascendancy of the profession. Journalism was considered a business, but a particular one.

The Nordic countries offer a good example for this welfare modernism of journalism. In Finland, the post-World War II development of the field was characterized by the simultaneous emergence of practical provincial monopolies for omnibus newspapering, and a strong development of public service broadcasting. The 1950s and 1960s newspapers distributed the voice of the established social institutions describing the progressive building of society and solving its emerging problems. The news informed the citizenry about what these key, often professional, social actors said and thought. As it emerged from the damages of the war and struggles with the late urbanization process (throughout the 1960s), Finland was a follower rather than frontrunner in such corporatist, cooperative, reformist professionalism where the idea of political consensus and agreement on shared interests play key roles. Other Nordic countries, in particular Sweden, led the way (for Sweden, see Ekecrantz 2005; for Denmark, see Hjarvard 2013). In accordance with the era's ethos, professional associations also began to take the role of labor unions whose memberships and

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loyalties cut across political affiliations of media outlets. At the same time, the importance of university education and enhanced academic research on journalism and mass media grew (Koljonen [2013](#)).

In Italy, the process of professionalization of journalism was dramatically interrupted by the Fascist regime (1922–1943). Although the nation became a republic in 1946 and press freedom was re-established, the Fascist period had long-lasting consequences in that governments tried to control the press by different (and much criticized) initiatives. In this atmosphere, for instance, Radio Televisione Italiana, a public institution, ended up being controlled by the government. Such tendencies during the 1950s provoked Enzo Forcella, a respected political journalist, to write a famous critical pamphlet in 1959. In *Millecinquecento lettori*, he stressed how journalism operated only for politicians, the media, and the ruling classes (the number 1,500 referring to this small elite). This politically oriented elite press slowed down the development of a more autonomous professional field. Indicating the weak state of professionalism, in 1963, a highly criticized national system, called the Order of Journalists, was established. It was a highly selective association that acted as an accreditation system based on a low level of professionalism (weak education patterns, absence of shared identity). During this time, and officially even today, the order regulated access to the profession by deciding who is being recognized as a journalist. The key criteria for this was evidence of 18 months of paid work in newsrooms and a final examination.

In France, political journalism was deeply institutional during the 1950s and early 1960s. The central political arena of coverage was the parliament, while the executive branch and political parties were hardly covered. After World War II, French state policy in relation to the media took two directions. The first was the aim to regulate the sector more effectively due to repeated scandals that had hit the press during the interwar period. Regulation was to prevent excessive commercialization, with the state protecting the field and recognizing the need for a public interest driven journalism. The second trend was the rise of a public-sector monopoly over radio (and later television), both seen as purveyors of education and culture. Rather than providing immediate support for an improved professional status of journalists, this intervention of the state weighed heavily on the debate about professionalism and the question of who was a journalist. The case of television was an example in point. Until the 1980s, French television was a state monopoly and the professional status of its employees was somewhat uncertain. They were most often called “speakers” or “anchormen” rather than journalists, and