Prefix journalisms

Selected concepts and their cosmopolitan potentials and pitfalls

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Introduction

Concepts of journalism(s) have always been subject to change worldwide. Although global moments of journalism occur more and more due to technological change, digitalization, and globalization, journalism in different countries and world regions still remains very sensitive to cultures and languages (Hahn, 2008). In international comparative and collaborative research on journalistic cultures (Hanitzsch et al., 2019), different contextual understandings of concepts of journalisms must be taken into serious and permanent consideration. This theoretical and methodological awareness is the *conditio sine qua non* for the endeavor of a cosmopolitan approach to journalism studies that might help to avoid inter- and transcultural pitfalls and to overcome othering through constructed boundaries.

Journalism studies tend to think in typologies, where one can easily define what, for example, peace journalism, tabloid journalism, Ubuntu journalism, advocacy journalism, or independent journalism characterizes and which one is the most desirable of those journalisms. This packing into boxes and their assessment is mostly done from a Western perspective (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2018), where distinguished experience in diverse journalistic contexts from around the world does not necessarily exist. "In so doing, journalism scholarship privileges a vision of journalism that is narrower than reality, and it fails to account for distinctive approaches in non-democratic and non-Western contexts, as well as for forms of journalism beyond political news," according to Hanitzsch and Vos (2018, p. 159). Here, we want to critically raise the question concerning who defines which journalisms for whom and who is judging which journalism is more valuable than the other?

We summarize different concepts of journalisms as "prefix journalisms". In the literature, terms like "pioneer journalism" or "X journalism" can also be found to describe

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various new and old reporting practices with certain specificities and novelties (Hepp & Loosen, 2021; Loosen et al., 2022). Prefix journalisms do not necessarily refer to the topics reported on, such as news, political, economic, financial, cultural, sports, or science journalism, etc. Neither are they necessarily inscribed into the debate about quality (aka "expensive") journalism vs. tabloid journalism, nor do they speculate about the future of traditional journalism. Rather, we suggest investigating prefix journalisms according to whether their concepts are normative, method-driven, technology-driven, outlet-driven or art-driven, as we grouped them in Table 1.

Table 1: Typology of prefix journalisms (source: authors' compilation)

Normative	**Method-driven**	**Technology-driven**	**Outlet-driven**	**Arts-driven**
- Development journalism - Peace journalism - Conflict-sensitive journalism - Constructive journalism - Advocacy journalism - Exile journalism - Ubuntu journalism - Civic/public journalism - Slow journalism - Patriotic journalism	- Investigative journalism - (Investigative) (collaborative) cross-border journalism - Data(-driven) journalism - Precision journalism	- Robotic journalism - Computational journalism - Algorithmic (automated) journalism - Immersive journalism - AI journalism - Drone journalism	- Online journalism - Mobile journalism - Video journalism - Citizen journalism - Corporate journalism	- New journalism/ literature journalism - Gonzo journalism

This collection of prefix journalisms, of course, does not exclude the overlapping or combination of concepts; some concepts maybe even be seen as general concepts including subordinated concepts. Some of these concepts are fluid.

Many normative concepts are discussed controversially due to their permeability for political instrumentalization. In contrast, there is more of a global consensus on many method-driven concepts. Some of the technology-driven concepts are even questioned whether or not they are still journalism or something else completely. Whereas digital media outlet-driven concepts seem to be widely accepted as journalistic concepts today, arts-driven concepts are oftentimes criticized as not being journalism at all. While research in this important area of prefix journalisms is still lacking, some relevant research in the area of "pioneer journalism as those forms of journalism that aim to re-

define the field through experimental practices and imaginaries of journalism's possible future" (Hepp et al., 2021, p. 551) has been already undertaken.

In our review of three prefix journalisms, we shed light on their cultural bonds, normative entanglements, and transnational practices. There exist many roles and practices of journalism around the world, each having their contextual justification. Hence, we show the cosmopolitan potential arising from a review of different journalisms and a critical analysis of academic typologies. The concepts we are looking at are particularly interesting because they not only characterize a certain method or relate to certain outlets but also are particularly important for a cosmopolitan understanding of journalisms (research).

In this chapter, we take a closer look at three distinctive prefix journalisms that are relevant and timely for cosmopolitan journalism research. Therefore, we discuss the functions and normative and structural foundations of advocacy journalism, Ubuntu journalism, and cross-border journalism as three different prefix journalisms. The review of the three prefix journalisms highlights the varying functions of different journalisms within changing settings and the takeaways for a more cosmopolitan journalism research from those examples. We take different view angles to examine the normative assumptions of such prefix journalisms, their cultural bonds, situational and structural practices, and upcoming ambiguities. Since both advocacy journalism and Ubuntu journalism base their practices on a normative foundation, we take a more conceptual and normative perspective in our analysis in order to show whether and how such journalisms reveal their social functions and journalistic roles. We investigate these two prefix journalisms from two distinct viewpoints: advocacy journalism coming from a Western-centric perspective and Ubuntu journalism being based on the African Ubuntu philosophy. Specifically, this means that we first contrast advocacy journalism with the normativity of the Western influenced paradigms of objectivity and neutrality and explore how different perspectives on these paradigms may impact how we evaluate their functions in societies. For example, our perception of advocacy changes when it comes to exile journalism. Second, we investigate the concept of Ubuntu journalism. Here we discuss the community-centered perspective of Ubuntu, which forms an African normative approach to reporting. Third, our analysis of cross-border journalism takes a slightly different perspective on this specific form of investigative journalism. As we have categorized transnational cross-border journalism as a method-driven prefix journalism (see Table 1), the investigation takes its practices and methods as a starting point to underpin cosmopolitan aspects in research and reporting.

Overall, our aim is to zoom into these prefix journalisms to highlight cosmopolitan perspectives and potentials, rather than to paint a complete picture of these journalistic practices and their academic rootedness. Another aim in this chapter is to show how the perceptions of functions deviate when journalism is viewed from different viewpoints. Therefore, we adopt a normative conceptual perspective. The aim is to show how different normative assumptions of such prefix journalisms, their cultural bonds, and situational and structural practices lead to ambiguities in the evaluation of functions. Those ambiguous spaces hold the potential to shift our understanding of prefix journalisms considerably within a cosmopolitan perspective. Furthermore, a practice-orientated per-

spective also enables us to show ways in which journalisms can be better studied in order to recognize potentials in different situational and contextual settings.

This review of prefix journalisms must be seen against the background that all authors involved in this chapter are trained and do research at European academic institutions. This means our access to non-Western perspectives is admittedly limited. For us, research traditions outside this perspective are only accessible through articles published in English that take critical perspectives toward those concepts. This is one reason why the sources upon which this chapter is based are not as diverse and global as we would wish. Another reason is that most of the accessible knowledge production in journalism research is circulated within Western academic publications and citations.

This chapter opens perspectives to the ambiguity of (Western) theories and concepts that were mostly developed in the West or with reference to Western contexts. All the authors have acquired knowledge in research and practice that is not centered on the Global North, for example, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Eastern Europe. Such research and practical experiences are often in contradiction to the modalities of Western-orientated academic knowledge production.

Advocacy journalism: The crux of objectivity and neutral reporting

The valuation of advocacy journalism seems to be ambiguous due to its perspectives and functions. In the following, we will mainly shed light on the Western perception of advocacy journalism and how it might deviate in its positionality. In media contexts in which a so-called free and independent reporting is the norm (e.g., in Germany, Europe, and the USA), advocacy journalism is considered problematic due to its non-objective and non-neutral reporting. It is therefore seen as an irregularity in terms of the concept of independent journalism, which is often seen as universal ideal. In contrast, non-objective advocacy journalism is supported and funded by governments from such contexts (e.g., Germany and the USA) through international media assistance programs designed to support, for example, exile journalists from countries such as Myanmar, Belarus, Russia, Afghanistan, or Ukraine, as non-objective advocacy journalism pursues foreign policy interests. "Journalists forced into exile have become primary targets for support by press freedom groups because they are the personification of a threatened virtue," according to Skjerdal (2010, p. 50). As a result, prefix journalism, such as advocacy journalism, may vary with its perspective of political ends and media contexts.

Therefore, we will briefly discuss if these two styles of journalism have a different base for assessment and how research can tackle such ambiguities. Although no consensus about the functions of journalism exists, neither in Western academia nor in journalism itself, most agree that the media should provide access to information for its society. In which style this information is disseminated is intensely discussed and it is without question context dependent.

When we talk about the ideal of neutral, objective, and so-called independent news reporting, most think of Western media reporting. This is based on "a normalization of Western ideals and practices of journalism as the 'professional' standard against which journalism in the non-Western world was gauged" (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2018, p. 150), al-

though the reality in newsrooms in many "Western" media systems differs essentially. Still, in most journalism textbooks and often cited academic theories, this news style is presented as a universal ideal without questioning the Eurocentric contextual bond. This leads to the convention to define and assess all other journalistic styles in relation to a so-called independent/information journalism marked by objectivity and neutrality and leads to the unreflective assessment of other journalism styles, such as advocacy. "Western journalism scholarship has reproduced this hierarchy, privileging a journalistic world that is narrower than that which resides in practice," noted Hanitzsch and Vos (2018, p. 150) Thus, the buzzwords "journalistic objectivity" and "neutrality" are the crux of the matter. Generally, a Eurocentric understanding of independent/information journalism is formed by the idea that neutral and objective information is essential to form a pluralistic democratic society in which the journalist is an "independent public-spirited verifier of factual information as the superego of the news industry" (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2018, p. 150). As liberal societies all over the world become more and more under pressure from undemocratic forces, the perception of advocacy styles of journalism starts to change slightly. For example, journalism for the common good gets more attention as a support for democratic structures (Kramp & Weichert, 2023).

There might exist different understandings not only of journalistic styles around the world but also of how information serves different forms of societies and political practices. Examples from Nepal and Bhutan support the idea that journalists in different world regions follow the "Western" standard of objectivity and neutrality (this could be because of Eurocentric journalism textbooks or Western financed journalism training). At the same time, journalists in those contexts explain that they have to find "their own way" (see Illg, 2018, 2019; see also Keßler et al. in this book). This refers to specific social, cultural, and political circumstances within those countries and reflects different experiences with forms of democratic practices as the studies of Illg (2018, 2019) have shown. Both states—Nepal as well as Bhutan—have only short experiences with democracy and follow quite different pathways. They try to find their own way because neighboring democratic countries are not seen as a positive example to follow.

Even though different political frameworks exist around the world, no modern society is free of power imbalances and oppressions; hence, media has to find a way how to handle such factors. The credo of the independent journalist would be to report these in a neutral and objective manner. However, as journalists always have to focus on some specific aspects of a story, framing is unavoidable. With a constructivist perspective on media and journalism, there is no doubt about the impossibility of neutrality and objectivity. Plurality of realities is what radical constructivists state is the case. Neutrality and objectivity are not their relevant criteria, but functionality is the primary criterion. Even if one does not refer to a constructivist perspective, it is obvious and unavoidable that journalists always have to shorten and compress and establish a focus (Merten et al., 1994).

Weischenberg (2004, p. 80) took a critical stance toward a neutral and objective presentation of news that showcases injustices. Presenting injustices in a neutral way may legitimize or virtually absolve/excuse oppression, Weischenberg (2004) argued. He concluded that "such objectivity is inauthentic and violates humanity and truth, because it is quiet where one ought to be angry and abstains from accusation where it is contained

in the facts themselves. The tolerance expressed in such impartiality serves to minimize or even absolve the prevailing intolerance and oppression. But if objectivity has anything to do with truth, and if truth is more than a matter of logic and science, then this kind of objectivity is false and this kind of tolerance is inhuman" (Weischenberg, 2004, p. 80, original quote in German). His plea basically screams for an advocacy style of journalism to fulfill the function of the media to detect grievances in society. This function of the media to critique most researchers and practitioners would be considered important for pluralistic, liberal democratic societies. One could—or perhaps should—ask whether objective and neutral reporting is always the best way to fulfill such social functions.

In Nepal and Bhutan, nearly all journalists who have been asked in qualitative interviews about their societal role, see their main function as "giving a voice to the voiceless" and helping to improve people's lives (Illg, 2019). This includes the function of a watchdog as media are considered to be the fourth estate in a democratic country. So far, it fits to an Anglo-Saxon understanding of journalism and is probably influenced by it. But "giving a voice to the voiceless" seems to have its limits when journalists avoid reporting social grievances like child abuse in order not to harm the Gross National Happiness (GNH) ranking of Bhutan. Here, it seems to deviate from a Western norm. The GNH is an important issue in Bhutan, and it also influences journalism. From a Bhutanian perspective, this could indeed be considered advocacy journalism, while from a "Western" perspective, one could call it censorship.

But is there something that the "Western" perspective and research could learn from this? The negativity of news factors is seen as problem in "Western" societies as well. Guided by the assumptions of Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model (2002) and Bennett's Indexing Theory (2016), we could argue that a so-called independent journalism in democratic societies exists to support the powers that be. McNair (2009) stated the following within a Marxian critique that:

> . . . "freedom of the press," and the "bourgeois" notion of freedom in general, is essentially an ideological hoax, a form of false consciousness which merely legitimizes the status quo and distracts the masses from serious scrutiny of a system which exploits and oppresses them. The media are structurally locked into pro-systemic bias, and will rarely give "objective" coverage to anything which seriously threatens the social order of capitalism. The aspirations of objectivity, and of independence from the state, are masks for the production by the media of dominant ideology, or bourgeois hegemony, in the sphere of political coverage as elsewhere. (p. 240)

Prinzing (2018) emphasized how journalistic styles, such as advocacy journalism, public journalism, and constructive journalism realize integration functions for societies. She argued that those styles of journalism can help to integrate society in times when globalization and digitization create problems which lead to the disintegration and polarization of societies.

From a Western, idealistic, and normative point of view, journalists are no activists and cannot fulfill both roles at the same time. Most so-called independent journalists do not want to be put in the same box with advocacy journalists or do not want to be considered biased. As a privileged journalist working in a stable and secure environment, it

might be easy to take the liberty of being "impartial." But what is the role of journalists in crisis situations and wars where partisanship and civic engagement is required? Journalists usually become active participants in the conflict they are reporting on (Ruigrok, 2010). Impartiality becomes a luxury good. But, even in times of crisis, organizations with a Western, idealistic understanding of journalistic norms, like Free Press Unlimited (FPU), claim: "While most journalists in exile will have suffered from the actions of the government of the home country from which they are in exile, it is important to maintain a clear line between journalism and activism" (Uiterkamp, 2022, p. 13).

During times of crisis, we observe exoduses of people, including journalists, fleeing their home countries. Often, exile journalism is the only way to keep up with journalistic practices which would be punished under authoritarian rules. Those journalists in exile are often seen as activists, and therefore, they often do not find jobs as journalists in their new home countries. Then, they either leave their profession or work for exiled media houses (Mugabo, 2023).

An example of an enormous exile news media industry is the exiled media houses of Myanmar. The Democratic Voice of Burma is one example how exile media works in a way that is both professional and partial at the same time. Although the Western norm of independent journalism would like to distinguish itself from such forms of news reporting, Western governments put a lot of effort and money into the support of such media houses. We have learned from examples like Afghanistan that most media houses only existed because of foreign money (Page & Siddiqi, 2012). Recently, many journalists have been supported after fleeing from Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, not to mention other exiled journalists fleeing injustice around the world. Their transnational efforts in conflict mediation involve documenting arrests and human rights violations as well as sharing evidence of oppression and election irregularities with international media (Arafat, 2021). Exile media, such as the exile media industry of Myanmar, promote "this inside-out and outside-in channeling of voices for democracy" (Oo, 2006, p. 238). In her study of Syrian exile journalism, Arafat (2021) defined "diaspora advocacy journalism" as follows:

> The purposive involvement of exiled subjects in transnational news gathering and production where new forms of collaboration/networking with people, civil society actors, and human rights defenders from the homeland and host country are introduced to promote underrepresented voices and mobilize a democratic political reformation and or social change. (p. 2191)

Within this definition and her analysis that "Syrian opposition diaspora journalists do not see a contradiction between being advocates and independent professional journalists at the same time and do not believe they risk the quality of their media work. They rather believe the two roles go hand in hand to promote democracy" (Arafat, 2021, p. 2191). Thus, exile media do often report on the injustices of the oppressors in their home countries (Balasundaram, 2019). They mostly do that in an advocacy style of news presentation. A Nepali journalist emphasized this, based on his manifold international experience in general as well as war journalist in Asia, saying that you cannot report in a neutral and objective way about your home country (Illg, 2018, 2019).

As people who have been socialized in a certain, perhaps conflict ridden, context, journalists can become activists. This is driven by the will to go beyond writing news and the experience that there is often more needed to point out grievances: namely action. We notice that journalism research separates journalistic writing very strongly from the journalistic physicality—the body and its actions itself. We see that journalistic work can often be impacted by physical events and actions, such as being part of social movements or being detained for reporting. Journalists and journalism (research) could therefore, for a more cosmopolitan perspective, also investigate the actions of journalists.

We can see that there are good reasons to not follow the ideal of an objective journalism, and because journalism has to perform criticism, it should not always be fair in the sense of being equal. As journalism is seen as the "fourth estate," partial (sometimes biased) reporting is just and reasonable in some cases. Journalists who take their social responsibility seriously, but in their work, criticize the powerful and expose scandals, abuse of power, and corruption will find it difficult to provide balanced reporting that treats all parties fairly. So, the assessment of whether advocacy journalism is good or bad depends on whether or not it supports one's own interest. The key takeaway from our discussion of the normative foundations and evaluation of advocacy journalism is that we should examine and treat this prefix journalism as a normative concept in its own right. Advocacy journalism should not be treated as an abnormal practice of information journalism and should not be evaluated only against the background of objectivity and neutrality. In a similar fashion, Ubuntu journalism represents an independent normative journalistic concept which facilitates active interpretation and participation and is geared toward society or rather understood as part of the community.

Ubuntu journalism: A community focused approach to journalism

Unlike the Western normative entanglements of advocacy journalism, Ubuntu journalism is rooted in the ancient (South) African philosophy of Ubuntu. Here, we first have to clarify what Ubuntu means. Essentially it means that "I am because we are" (Mutwarasibo & Iken, 2019) and builds the foundation of a community focused approach "to rediscover and re-establish idealised values of traditional African culture(s) and traditional African communities" (Fourie, 2008, p. 53). The collectivistic nature of African culture is reflected in the value system of Ubuntu, which emphasizes humanity. Ubuntu means that an individual's existence impacts those around them, focusing on the collective rather than the individual (Poovan et al., 2006, p. 23). Therefore, the Ubuntu philosophy represents a contrast to the concept of individualism as it emphasizes "togetherness, where an individual does not survive alone but with others" (Khan & Ntakana, 2023, p. 218).

The Ubuntu normative framework may prioritize journalistic practices that focus on voicing the community's concerns, ideas, and opinions. The media's main role would be to stimulate citizen and community participation, seeking consensus through broad consultation. The media would emphasize collective well-being over individual rights with the aim of social transformations, acting as a catalyst for moral agency (Fourie, 2008, p. 64). Metz (2011) noted that Ubuntu offers an orientation on how to resolve disputes about justice and morality. This is based on the assumption that people derive their

dignity from their ability to form a community by identifying and showing solidarity with others. At the media level, this means that news outlets must be empathetic and that they have to minimize the potential level of suffering of the people being reported on (Rodny-Gumede, 2015). In comparison to other journalistic media concepts, which are generally shaped by Western traditions, the concept of Ubuntu journalism emphasizes that journalists should take on a decidedly participatory role. In particular, this means that they see themselves first and foremost as part of the community and less as neutral observers.

Furthermore, the political-democratic dimension of the implications of this must be taken into account. In the course of newly emerging democracies, which are based on the legacy of long-lasting slavery, colonialism, and apartheid, this is to be aligned according to a new principle that differs from Western normative understandings of journalism. The media should help democracies stand on a stable foundation. The idea is that the media should offer people a platform to express different opinions; they should convey knowledge about political participation processes and simply inform citizens about their rights and obligations. In this light, there are authors who advocate for the "Africanization" of the news media. This refers to a type of public service ethos that is based on the ideas and values of the Ubuntu philosophy (Rodny-Gumede, 2015).

Rediscovering the value system based on Ubuntu is a fundamental part of the renegotiation of cultural identities in post-apartheid South Africa (Rao & Wasserman, 2007). While Ubuntu journalism "may encourage action towards civic transformation and community renewal," it is not without challenges (Fourie, 2008, p. 64). Economic pressures, political biases, and societal prejudices can hinder the practice of compassionate journalism. Yet, countless journalists and media organizations around the world are embracing the Ubuntu philosophy, highlighting the triumph of empathy over apathy and unity over division. In times when media houses are dying and cost-intensive investigative journalism is under economic and social pressure, journalism for the common good is on everyone's lips as the third pillar for ensuring social and political stability. Commercial media reporting and public service media no longer seem to be able to fulfill this task sufficiently (Kramp & Weichert, 2023). As we move forward in this ever-changing world, Ubuntu journalism stands as a testament to the enduring power of compassion. It underscores the notion of collective interdependence, even within the complexities of news cycles. By incorporating the principles of Ubuntu, journalism has the potential to contribute to a future where understanding prevails over ignorance, empathy mitigates prejudice, and the narratives produced reflect a shared human experience. Understood as journalism for the common good, it might also ensure democracy on a local level.

In the end, the question remains as to whether Ubuntu journalism is an originally new concept or whether there are strong similarities and overlaps with existing ideas, such as public journalism or civic journalism, from which Ubuntu journalism does not appear to be essentially different. Nevertheless, it should be noted that many authors who subscribe to the normative concept refer to historical and social framework conditions. These are to be understood as elementary.

Proponents of the Ubuntu approach have argued that reporters should break away from the Western paradigm of "truth-seeking" associated with the principles of independence and objectivity. In contrast, their duties should be oriented toward the needs

of communities and societies (Christians, 2015). When Ubuntu journalism is explained in practical detail, it seems that Ubuntu and civic journalism are very similar. This can be seen, among other things, in the assumption that journalists should focus less on statements by prominent people or other high-profile events. Rather, the aim should be an integrative actor in a community, communicating the reality of life and the concerns of the community to the outside world (Fourie, 2007). It seems, and here there are also similarities to the concept of civic journalism, that an Ubuntu-inspired approach to journalism shows weaknesses when it comes to more than idealized scenarios. Beyond the idealized scenarios mentioned above, the approach offers no indications as to how journalism can be changed or improved in concrete terms (Benequista, 2016). The values anchored in the philosophy of Ubuntu, such as homogeneity and communitarianism, tend to paint a strongly romanticized picture of Africa. It also seems unclear whether and when the individual journalist should break away from the majority opinion and truly act independently. On an abstract level, this means that values such as freedom of opinion or journalistic autonomy would be jeopardized (Fourie, 2008). Nevertheless, an Ubuntu style of news reporting that is geared toward community can fulfill media functions for democracies that we often think of when we are talking about the norms and functions of so-called independent information journalism.

Overall, the concept of Ubuntu offers an alternative perspective for assessing the competing values of community orientation and individualism in news reporting and the impact these may have on societies in a more cosmopolitan manner.

(Investigative) (collaborative) cross-border journalism: A transnational way of doing journalism

Along with our zoom into the method-driven concept of cross-border journalism, we would like to highlight a more practice-oriented perspective on cosmopolitan potentials in journalistic practice and research. For journalism per se, the past few years have been characterized above all by numerous transformations. Against the ever-present backdrop of digitization, these have been primarily phenomena such as declining revenue models and diminishing returns in the sales business of publishing houses as well as changing media usage behavior (Lobigs, 2016, pp. 70–71). One particular aspect of journalism has become increasingly important in light of this development: (investigative) collaborative cross-border journalism. This development seemed to be taking shape even before the publicity milestone of the Panama Papers (Konow-Lund et al., 2019). This transnational and cross-cultural approach make investigative cross-border journalism particularly interesting for journalism research with a cosmopolitan perspective. The Migrant Files, Paradise Papers, FINCEN Files, and Football Leaks—all these journalistic titles, as well as the Panama Papers—were the result of international research cooperation. Journalists from all over the world have contributed their extensive research to realize a joint and enormously extensive journalistic output. The image of the journalist in intensive investigations, often portrayed as a "lone wolf," has become a thing of the past, at least since the Panama Papers were published. They were published simultaneously around the world on April 3, 2016. This journalistic achievement was

aggregated from an incredibly large amount of raw data, which would have far exceeded the output of a single investigative newsroom. In the case of the Panama Papers, 11.5 million individual documents were analyzed and appropriately processed together with around 400 journalists and around 100 media partners across 80 countries over a period of one year (Obermayer et al., 2016).

Journalistic collaborations have become extremely popular, especially in investigative journalism. Carson and Farhall (2018) described this as a "shift in investigative reporting practice from the 'old model' . . . to a collaborative model of multiple newsrooms (and countries) sharing information to expose wrongdoing" (p. 1901). It is not surprising that in a global networked world, data volumes are growing, and corruption and crime do not stop at national borders, making it necessary for investigative journalism to form teams and work together to hold the powerful accountable.

Accordingly, it is obvious that the "big" problems are no longer unique topics of a community or a nation. For example, climate change and digitalization with all its implementation on information flow, working processes, etc. are problems that have effects all over the world and can only be handled in cooperation. As a logical consequence, it makes sense that journalists also cooperate across national boundaries (Berglez, 2013).

Investigative journalism has always had deep sociopolitical significance and underscores its importance as the fourth estate in a democracy. Walton (2010) even credits full-time investigative journalists with the title of "elite special forces" (para. 19) of the fourth estate. Such metaphors for the traditional investigative journalist sometimes better outline their work and approach. It is precisely investigative journalism that is currently experiencing a fundamental structural transition. The portrayal of investigative journalists as "muckrakers" or "junkyard dogs" underlines this structural transition (Donsbach, 1995).

Seymour Hersh, one of the most important investigative journalists in the USA, is considered a classic "lone wolf" in his profession. Revelations such as the torture scandal in the Iraqi prison Abu Ghraib and war crimes in the Vietnam War can be traced back to him (Hersh, 2018). If we look at other and older investigative publications such those related to the Watergate affair (Seibert, 2017) or the *Boston Globe's* Spotlight revelations (Fürst, 2016), they represent the achievements of individual investigative journalists or small investigative and local teams. A publication like the Panama Papers would not have been feasible in this setting. The high complexity of the topics and the increasing quantity of data can hardly be evaluated or summarized by individual journalists or editorial teams. Another characteristic of earlier individual investigative efforts was the highly competitive way of working among journalists (Alfter, 2019; Graves & Konieczna, 2015).

But what makes investigative journalism collaborative and transnational now? Strictly speaking, journalism can always be described as collaborative insofar as more than one person is involved. The literature likes to point out that journalistic collaborations between reporters and newsrooms have always existed. An example of this is the founding of the Associated Press (AP), an alliance of New York newspapers, to get news about the Mexican War to the North faster and to minimize costs by sharing labor (AP, n.d.; Lewis, 2017; Stonbely, 2017). In terms of collaborative journalism, "it is now being practiced on a scale that constitutes a revolution in journalism," according to Stonbely (2017, p. 59). For Stonbely (2017), collaborative journalism is defined as "a cooperative

arrangement (formal or informal) between two or more news and information organizations, which aims to supplement each organization's resources and maximize the impact of the content produced" (p. 14), and it can be stated that investigative journalism benefits from collaborations (p. 17).

According to Alfter (2019), the murder of journalist Don Bolles in 1976 in Phoenix, Arizona, described by her as an "iconic event" (p. 5), is considered a major milestone in the history of cross-border journalism. At the time, Don Bolles was a founding member of the young association Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) (Monge Duarte, 2018). The murder of their colleague Bolles thus became the impetus for the Arizona Project (IRE, 2006). Forty journalists from 28 different media outlets across the USA traveled to Phoenix to look into the murder of Don Bolles and complete his research on corruption in Arizona (Duarte, 2018). The further development of the collaborative approach was significantly driven by digitalization. However, not only has computing power increased, but the amount of data journalists have to deal with has also continuously increased. While the WikiLeaks/Cablegate scandal in 2010 involved only 1.7 gigabytes of data, this figure increased 1,500-fold six years later with the Panama Papers, with more than 2.6 terabytes (or 11.5 million individual documents) of data (Obermayer et al., 2016). The Panama Papers have shown what is possible. In addition to establishing and further developing data journalism techniques, the Panama Papers have established a culture of collaboration and sharing (Baack, 2016).

Today, we already know that journalistic collaborations can exist in many different forms and vary in the duration, complexity, and diversity of teams (Alfter, 2017; Heft et al., 2019; Stonbely, 2017). Basically, the phenomenon of collaborative cross-border journalism best describes the changed understanding of roles in investigative journalism. In her standard work, Alfter (2019) described collaborative cross-border journalism via the presence of the following characteristics: "[1] journalists from different countries, [2] decide on an idea of mutual interest, [3] gather and share material," and "[4] publish to their own audiences" (p. 18).

This fundamental shift in the way journalists work simultaneously provides the basis for professional networks or organizations that have made it their mission to provide resources and know-how to connect journalists worldwide and enable them to work collaboratively at a professional level. Examples on a global level are the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) and the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP). However, such networks are also forming in smaller contexts as it is becoming increasingly worthwhile to collaborate, especially against the backdrop of the worsening economic situation in journalism (Stonbely, 2017). Since the 2016 Panama Papers in 2016 at the latest, collaborative and cross-border journalism has become an integral part of investigative journalism (Leihs, 2019). It can be noted that "[t]he era of the lone wolf is over. . . . A borderless world needs watchdogs who can transcend borders" (Coronel, 2016, paras. 20–23).

However, despite this cosmopolitan potential of a global phenomenon, the literature shows a strong Western focus in comparative journalism research (Hanusch & Vos, 2020). Clear evidence regarding cross-border practices in countries outside North America and Europe is significantly underrepresented (Estella, 2023, p. 68). This leads to the question of the extent to which large and financially strong established networks are

dominant, vis-à-vis organizations in non-Western regions, and possibly impose a Western-style reporting model. Alfter (2019) spoke less about the transfer of a specific journalistic practice but rather raised the question of a homogenization of journalistic practices.

We argue that the application of collaborative practices is more about the creation of a uniform framework than the transfer of a Western practice. The uniform framework conditions are the lowest common denominator, which builds the basis for a set of shared rules and norms that should not curtail cultural and social practices in different contexts (Lück & Schultz, 2019, p. 111). The people involved in such projects write for their own national audience, which may counteract the assumption of a generally imposed Western journalistic practice. However, the fact that working conditions can deteriorate must be viewed critically. This was shown in a study by Heft and Baack (2022), which looked at cross-border projects in Europe. Therefore, it is crucial that journalism research deals specifically with networks outside the Europe and the North American contexts and asks those involved in other world regions about their perceptions and to see whether (working) conditions are impacted negatively or even improve. In addition, structural differences in relation to large and small networks must be considered in the further course of events, which also means analyzing the content of the journalistic output of a particular project abroad (see also Alfter, 2019; Alfter & Cândea, 2019; Heft & Baack, 2022).

From a practical perspective, while the ICIJ's pioneering role in coordinating the Panama Papers may give the impression of Western dominance, the quality and impact of such efforts are shaped by the diverse partners and journalistic influences involved.

Some reflections and concluding remarks

With our zoom into the prefix journalisms advocacy journalism, Ubuntu journalism, and cross-border journalism, we have looked into norms and practices and their contextual and situational foundations. On the one hand, we see that different normative understandings of journalism exist and that manifold practices can have different impacts on societies and understandings of roles and functions. On the other hand, we have shown within a more practical/method-driven perspective how digitalization, transnationalization, and collaborative work bring more cosmopolitan practices of investigative journalism in the form of cross-border practice to the front.

From our investigation into the normative concepts of advocacy journalism and Ubuntu journalism, we learned that studies of journalism usually emphasize the Eurocentric paradigms of neutrality and objectivism as the ideal for which every media should strive. Other journalistic practices are often assessed as less desirable and seen as an abnormity of the Western role model.

These two different forms of journalism, which we discussed here as normative prefix journalisms, follow autonomous normative perspectives with their own advantages and disadvantages; they are not just modifications of one universal normative Western understanding and its paradigms (see also Thomass in this book).

In contrast to the praise of paradigms of objectivity and neutrality, we have argued that neutral objective reporting can promote inequality and injustice in societies instead of denouncing them, as it does not question prevailing power structures but instead

equalizes them. How we evaluate the practices, functions, and roles of different prefix journalisms is impacted by contextual norms and the definition of media functions in the respective societies. Additionally, the conclusion about the paradigms of "journalism's independence from the state and the political elite, and its capacity to be objective, . . . tend to be premised on one's views about the nature of capitalism itself, its viability as a system, and the scope for serious alternatives" (McNair, 2009, p. 242). This emphasizes the concept that cosmopolitan journalism research is looking not only into media functions in relation to politics but also into media-society and media-economy relations. Altogether, one could get the impression that classifying different styles of journalism as advocacy, exile, Ubuntu, or civic journalism is more important for those outside than those inside the respective society. Actually, we should question the promotion of neutral reporting and its legitimacy in times when a neo-colonialist perspective asserts that such leading values must be found in the various contexts of operations rather than in universal norms. Overall, we question whether something like objective and neutral can exist in news content created by journalists, in other words subjects. We argue that everything is information journalism, but nothing is neutral or objective about what is created by a subjective mind. This does not mean that distinctive prefix journalisms, such as investigative or information journalism, do not follow specific rules and norms in their daily practice.

Within a practice-oriented analysis of cross-border journalism, we have shown that another paradigm seems to vanish: the paradigm of the competition-loving "lone wolf" has been partly overcome and has given way to a culture of information sharing and collaboration across borders. Certainly, external factors, such as the worsening economic situation for the media, have accelerated this transformation. However, it seems undisputed that the multinational influence on journalistic investigations can specifically increase journalistic impact on societies around the globe, for example, the resignation of ministers in Iceland, Pakistan, and Spain after the publication of the Panama Papers. (Investigative) (collaborative) cross-border journalism thrives on the diversity and different journalistic approaches of its participants and therefore exemplifies a cosmopolitan understanding of transnational and cross-cultural journalistic collaboration, holding the powerful accountable even across borders. In a globalized world, crime, social grievances, and (political) misuse of power do not stop at national borders; hence, networks such as ICIJ are a valuable response to such a development (Berglez, 2013).

Still, a cosmopolitan perspective should critically assess how such collaborations may perpetuate global power imbalances. We see that research on this issue does not adequately cover all world regions. Therefore, cosmopolitan journalism research should look more closely into interactions within cross-border journalism networks and their impacts on journalism cultures, functions, and practices. Network analyses would be a fitting inductive approach to tackling such questions in all world regions. Overall, we need to establish a research culture in journalism studies that promotes local or Indigenous perspectives from different world regions to form a non-Western critique of journalism and journalism research.

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