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GLOBAL NEWS DISTRIBUTION AS NETWORK OF TRANSNATIONAL RELATIONS

INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDIES ON THE CIRCULATION PROCESS OF NEWS
IN MASS COMMUNICATION BETWEEN NEWS AGENCIES, MASS MEDIA
OUTLETS AND INTEREST GROUPS AS THEIR FRAMEWORK

Abstract: For the answer to the question 'How to spread the news?' the news agencies as institutionalized distributor would have to be mentioned. But asking how they operate and if they operate all in the same way within the introduction of the internet under the condition of the globalization of mass media and the awareness of differentiated functions of several types of news agencies we will argue in this article that their functions and influence in recent years has changed. Our case study of the examination of agencies shows that news agencies as both producing and delivering organizations in the mass media operate with high self-reference to the mass media themselves. We'll argue for this position with two claims of accessing the situation. The first is that we support the view taken by classical analysis of the sender and receiver(s) of a message in a communication model. We enrich this position by demonstrating that the news agencies operate only up to a specific point independently in a linear form (chain). In a second way of the distribution the news circulate (circulation). Related to this effect is Nolle-Neumann's concept of the 'spiral of silence' as a retroactive tendency of this phenomenon. In our second claim we argue that special interest groups are connected segments of the mass media. Through studying specific cases, we learn how the news agencies as processes are linked for discourse processing in a formal framework to other organizations and interest groups in mass media. We conclude that the news agencies serve as frames for news. As a frame they decide regarding form, contents, structure, and availability of news in a pre-selection process.

1. Definitions and Research of News Agencies as Contributor to Mass Communication

A tendency of interference between journalism, PR, and marketing leads to the position of asking this question regarding their functions. Since news agencies are neither in terms of their function nor regarding their aims and organizational structure homogenous, it is necessary to re-examine them as business corporations and as mass media organizations. This is a study arguing by showing this swift by practical case studies for the construction, function, and types of contemporary internationally acting news agencies and an a theoretical model of news agencies embedded in the mass media culture. This article investigates into the structure and organization of news agencies. Exemplified by specific types of news agencies we will demonstrate the function of news agencies among the contemporary mass media. A news agency (wire service or news service) is an organization of journalists established to supply news reports to organizations in the news trade such as newspapers, magazines, and radio and television broadcasters. News agencies generally prepare hard news stories and feature articles that can be used by other news organizations. The *Questionnaire on Newspaper Statistics* was published by the *UNESCO Institute of Statistics*. The objective of the *Questionnaire on Newspaper Statistics* was to monitor recent trends in selected areas of the newspaper industry across its member states. The survey was intended to be carried out periodically and the data collected from the questionnaire will be published in international reports and UNESCO publications. According to the UNESCO (2013) a news agency has the following definition: "A news agency collects information and news for the media and distributes it electronically. For example, it can supply news in the form of texts, graphics, videos and pictures to media organizations and websites around the world. A news agency can be a national agency for news occurring within a country, or a foreign news agency for international news."

While mass media research emphasizes the mass media outlets and their specific types and genres, less research has been made into the field of the distributing organizations of news agencies. Nevertheless, news agencies play an important role in the distribution of news. Several accounts have been put forward by researchers interested in specific forms of news agencies, but none of them are satisfactory as a general theory of the structure of news agencies and their part in the mass media. They offer a few rules for their functions, but many of them study specific times and special events in mass media. Less research has been made regarding the new forms of journalism joint with the internet. Sample cases dominate the research about news agencies. Following Peterson and McLendon

(1999: 224) “the mass media's role in shaping public policy remains the focus of intensive research among political science and communication scholars. Yet virtually nothing is known about media coverage of state higher education policy making. Using mass communication theory, this study analyzes press coverage of an appropriations conflict between two nationally prominent universities. Its purpose was to determine whether newspapers give preferential treatment to their local universities, ultimately producing bias in their coverage of higher education.” Hughes and Lawson (2004: 99) stated that in Mexico “the relationship between media ownership and partisan bias has been an important source of controversy in emerging democracies. Systematic tests of the effects of ownership, however, remain relatively rare. Using data from content analysis of ninety-three television news programs, as well as more detailed examination of six provincial television stations, we assess the extent of bias exhibited by different types of broadcasters during Mexico's 2000 presidential campaign.” The authors (2004: 110) came to the conclusion that “changes in ownership patterns are unlikely to eradicate partisan bias, and we discuss other institutional remedies aimed at insulating both private and state-run media from political manipulation.” Other studies are interested in the efficiency of international mass media in the process of democratisation. For example Oates and Roselle (2000: 30) gave evidence of a missed opportunity to consolidate the growth of an independent media in Russia and the failure of voters to obtain disinterested information from primary television outlets in a fragile democracy. Vatikiotis (2013) wrote: “Beyond mass communication various theoretical approaches on the media of communication, and their diverse applications, have evaluated their emancipatory role in terms of either promoting participatory communication, or advancing the democratization of communication, or even encompassing modes of subversive action.” Globalization is here a phenomenon conjunct with the work of internationally operating news agencies that enables the spread and flow of news like Kunczik (2001) and Maletzke (1978) showed. Public bodies are classified as *quangos*. Non-governmental organizations have they own media outlets. Deacon and Monk examined mainstream news reporting for *quangos* (quasi-autonomous nongovernmental organizations). Deacon and Monk (2000: 45) found “little endorsement in general media discourses about the quango state but is often implicitly reflected in journalists' treatment of specific organizations and their work”. To conclude: We have to examine both the types of news agencies, their intern organization, their forms and formats of news presentation, and their relation to interest groups and intermediating role between the source of the news and the deliverer of the news in the mass media.

2. Global Cases of the Network of News Agencies: The Network of Reuters Business – A Classical News Agency in a Business Organisation and its Customers

Reuters is a classical example for a mass media conglomerate that is part of a broader business organization. Following the self-description of the company Reuters operates through business divisions, geographic sales, and service channels and has shared resources to build, deploy, and support the products and services for their customers. These divisions are closely aligned with the user communities they serve. The media division including Reuters traditional wholesale agency business serves for the needs of the world's newspapers, television and cable networks, radio stations, websites, and consumers. The division is also working on establishing a new avenue of growth for Reuters through products designed specifically for consumers on the 'Reuters.com family' of websites (www.reuters.com, www.reuters.co.uk, www.reuters.co.jp, www.reuters.com.cn, www.reuters.fr, www.reuters.de, www.reuters.ru, www.reuters.it, www.reuters.co.za, www.reuters.co.in). In other words: Reuters defines the user communities as the receivers of their services of a traditional wholesale agency business that includes news agency services. Reuters is basically a provider of international financial reports. Reuters Group plc is a financial market data provider and a news service that provides reports from around the world to newspapers and broadcasters. News reporting accounts for less than 10% of the company's income. In May 1999 Reuters entered a joint venture with long-time rival, Dow Jones & Company, to form a business news and information provider called Factiva. In December 2006 Reuters sold its 50% share in Factiva to Dow Jones becoming the sole owner.

According to the *Reuters Trust Principles* (2013) Reuters is dedicated to preserving its independence, integrity and freedom from bias in the gathering and dissemination of news and information. The *Reuters Trust Principles* are that Reuters shall at no time pass into the hands of any one interest, group or faction, that the integrity, independence and freedom from bias of *Reuters* shall at all times be fully preserved, that Reuters shall supply unbiased and reliable news services to newspapers, news agencies, broadcasters and other media subscribers and to businesses, governments, institutions, individuals and others with whom Reuters has or may have contracts, that *Reuters* shall pay due regard to the many interests which it serves in addition to those of the media, and that no effort shall be spared to expand, develop and adapt the news and other services and products of Reuters so as to maintain its leading position in the international news and information business according to Reuters (2013). The principles are besides independence, integrity, freedom, in terms of the news diversity and growing expansion.

The customers of Reuters are besides mass media outlets also organizations such as business corporations and state governments. For example the U.S. government used the services of Reuters publishing interviews with U.S. politicians. This product was conducted with a U.S. Politician and was pursued by the U.S. government. In Secretary Condoleezza Rice's interview with *Reuters News Agency* (Washington, DC March 11, 2005) published by the U.S. Government online (2013) the whole interview is structured by questions and answers. Asked for the democracy process in Lebanon and the assistance of the U.S. there Rice declared here that democratization is the independence of Lebanon from Syria and the U.S. willingness to assist in this process.

QUESTION: Can I ask you a general question on democracy?

SECRETARY RICE: Yeah, one last question on democracy, then we've got to go.

QUESTION: When we referred to Lebanon, just going back to that issue, what is the U.S. doing in terms of assistance for, you know, rooting democracy in Lebanon? Because, as you say, things are moving quickly. What are you doing quickly?

SECRETARY RICE: Well, we've concentrated thus far on trying to get rid of the artificial barrier to Lebanon being able to deal with its own future, which is the Syrian presence there. I am quite certain that when the Lebanese get ready to go through the electoral process and if there's more that they need after that, that the international community, including the United States, will be prepared to help them.

The phenomenon of amateur journalism has especially on the internet many different formats. Among them are the blog, the open source journalism, and specific format and topics of journalism such as citizen journalism. The established media use to integrate the amateur journalism with specific formats in their program. So for example specific blogs for amateurs are reserved. But also the news agencies react on the form of news produced by non-professionals. Recently Reuters enforced amateur journalism financially. The news *Reuters Backs Open Source Journalism* (2013) was posted September 21, 2006 by Alfred Hermida in the section 'citizen journalism':

An experiment in citizen reporting has received a major boost from Reuters. The news agency has given US \$100,000 to NewAssignment.net. The project is the brainchild of Jay Rosen who teaches journalism at New York University. It aims to bring together amateur and professional journalists to produce investigative reports. Announcing the grant on his blog, PressThink, Rosen said the money from Reuters would underwrite the costs of hiring the project's first editor, who will start in early 2007. A news release quoted Reuters Media president Chris Ahearn as saying: "We believe that the Internet is the perfect vehicle for galvanizing the public to become more involved in reporting. Reuters is hopeful that NewAssignment.Net will foster the kind of hard-hitting journalism that the public is hungry for, and will be more inclined to trust."

3. The Network of Associated Press (AP) – A News Agency as Pool and Distributor From Newspaper to Newspaper and to News Portals

Associated Press (AP) is an example for the distribution of news agency contents to news portals with the benefit of increasing presence to the public audience as a standard source of news. On the other hand the portal keep their services with these informations from news agencies attractive. The news agency *Associated Press* sells according to its website (2013) the products AP News, AP Photos, AP Video, AP Audio, and AP Books. The *Associated Press* employs journalists with the standards fairness, balance, and accuracy within a network of more than 3,700 employees around the world. AP has 243 bureaus in 97 countries. 1,700 U.S. daily, weekly, non-English and college newspapers and 5,000 radio and television outlets taking AP services. AP's news report cover international, national, state, sports, business, and entertainment news. AP Exchange is an online tool that offers newspaper editors and reporters access to AP's vast pool of content. *Associated Press* has the special sections 'Sending a Press Release', 'Beats', 'Editors and Writers', and 'New York Daybook'. The *Associated Press*'s multi-topic structure has lent itself well to web portals such as Yahoo and msn.com, which all have news pages with constant need to be updated. Yahoo's 'Top News' page gives the AP top visibility and is this way an advertisement of the services of AP and has impact to AP's public image. It increases credibility and the aura of omnipresence. The *Associated Press* is as an American news agency the world's largest organization. The AP is a cooperative owned by its contributing newspapers, radio and television stations in the United States, who both contribute stories to it and use material written by its staffers. Many newspapers and broadcasters outside the United States are AP subscribers. As of 2005, AP's news is used by 1,700 newspapers, in addition to 5,000 television and radio outlets. The *Associated Press* is governed by an elected board of directors from different U.S. newspapers. The AP is an example for a circle of mass media information, since here the contribution newspapers build the contents of the news agency and also take information from the news agency to be distributed in another member newspaper.

Meta-News-Portals are *Google News*, *Indymedia*, and *Wikinews*. The portal *Yahoo News* covers different sections with news from different news agencies. On the 18th of October 2007 the following agencies covered the sections:

Global News Distribution

World	Business	Science
U.S. News	Reuters	AP
Politics	AFP	Reuters
AP Reuters AFP	BusinessWeek	AFP
Time.com NPR My	FT.com	SPACE.com
Sources	NPR	LiveScience.com
AP	USATODAY.com	NPR
Reuters	FOX News	
AFP		
Time.com		
NPR		
Technology	Health	Entertainment
AP	AP	AP
Reuters	Reuters	Reuters
USATODAY.com	HealthDay	AFP
PC World	AFP	E! Online
PC Magazine	NPR	Fashion Wire
AFP	ACS News Today	Daily
		NPR

Travel	Sports	Odd News
AP	AP	Reuters
TSA	Reuters	AP
AP Features	The Sporting News	Reuters UK
	AFP	AFP

Opinion

USATODAY.com

CSMonitor.com

RealClearPolitics

HuffingtonPost.com

Coverage of Sections of *Yahoo News* by News Agencies

Besides *Yahoo News* has specific news in several sections. On the contrary, Google News employs no special service on their first page dedicated to the latest news. Google News is a service that relies directly on several hundred news media sources presented in several national and international sections based upon logarithmic selection. Google has the features News archive search, Advanced news search, and Blog search. It covers the sections in *Google News*

Yahoo! Finance	Top Stories
Yahoo! Sports	World
Yahoo! Health	U.S.
Yahoo! Entertainment	Business
Yahoo! TV	Sci/Tech
Yahoo! Movies	Sports
	Entertainment
	Health

News Alerts

Specific News Sections of
YAHOO!

News Sections of *Google
News*

News Sections of the News Portal *Yahoo* and *Google News*

International versions of *Google News* are available in Argentina, Australia, België, Belgique, Brasil, Canada English, Canada Français, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Deutschland, España, Estados Unidos, France, India, Ireland, Italia, México, Nederland, New Zealand, Norge, Österreich, Perú, Portugal, Schweiz, South Africa, Suisse, Sverige, U.K., U.S., Venezuela, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Israel, Greece, Arabic countries, Russia, and India. The selection and placement of stories on this page were determined automatically by a computer program.

4. AHN as a Global News Agency Network - The Integration of the Consumer in the News Production Process

AHN is a global news agency and content service with offices and regional bureaus in South Florida, New York, Washington, D.C., Las Vegas, Denver and Europe and Asia providing breaking news and content 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The company is a leading provider of news, weather, and other content for web sites, wireless, digital signage, interactive applications, broadcast and print use. The company's content services are used worldwide by web sites, newspapers, digital signage networks, TV/Radio stations, magazines, portals, websites, charities, governmental entities, educational institutions and other organizations. The core competency is according to its website (2013) "to generate, aggregate and syndicate dynamic news content and information to customers in an easy to use format. AHN continues to refine and develop products and outlets that will provide publishers, webmasters and advertisers access to the best in news and content services on the internet". AHN delivers news and contents in several formats. For portals and websites it offers integrated news, weather, horoscopes and other content. For Digital signage networks it offers news and content delivered by automated feed. For print and newspapers it offers breaking full text news stories in your choice of easy to use and fully customizable formats. Besides professional organisations such as advertisement and news agencies also amateurs and other groups can send their information. *News Submission Terms and Conditions* for contributions to AHN are according to its website (2013): "Children under age 18 must have a parent or legal guardian's written permission to submit their material [...]. Employees of

AHN (and their immediate families and household members) and its parent, subsidiaries, divisions, and affiliated entities are not eligible to submit news, text, images, videos, photos audio. AHN has the right to edit and/or alter any submission made. AHN reserves the right not to use the material you submit at all and/or as little of the material as it chooses.”

5. Networks of International Organizations – News Agencies Organized in National Federations and Presented by Lobbies

The *Bulgarian News Agency* (BTA) is an example for the network of a national news agency with other news agencies via a common federation and major commercial news agencies. Besides the American continent many European and Asian news agencies are organized in federations. On the contrary, in America the agencies stand in commercial competition on the market and are joint with other businesses in a company. For the Arab counties one example is the *Federation of Arab News Agencies* (FANA). Other federations are *Association of Balkan News Agencies* (ABNA), *Alliance of Mediterranean News Agencies* (AMAN), *European Alliance of News Agencies* (EANA), and *Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies*. The *European Alliance of News Agencies* EANA has 30 member agencies:

AA	Turkey	EFE	Spain
AFP	France	HINA	Croatia
ANA	Greece	ITAR-TASS	Russia
ATA	Albania	LUSA	Portugal
ANP	The Netherlands	MTI	Hungary
ANSA	Italy	NTB	Norway
APA	Austria	PA	The UK
ATS/SDA	Switzerland	PAP	Poland
BNS	Estonia	RITZAU	Denmark
BTA	Bulgaria	ROMPRES	Romania
BELGA	Belgium	STA	Slovenia
CNA	Cyprus	STT/FNB	Finland
CTK	Czech Republic	TANJUG	Serbia
DPA	Germany	TASR	Slovakia

TT Sweden

UKRINFORM Ukraine

European Alliance of News Agencies EANA

We will now examine one of the national news agencies in order to select its specific contents. The *Bulgarian News Agency* (BTA) is Bulgaria's national state news agency and deals with Bulgaria related contents both commercially and free of charge for its customers. It was according to its website (2013) established by a decree issued by Prince Ferdinand I in 1898. The BTA is now a major source of information to the print and electronic media, the state bodies and NGOs in Bulgaria. BTA's operation is regulated by a Statute adopted by the 36th National Assembly on 29 June 1994. The Agency is "an autonomous national news organization", whose director general is elected by the parliament. In other words: This national news agency is a governmental body related to the parliament, but the Agency's Statute guarantees its independent editorial policy and protects it from any economic and political influence. The *Bulgarian News Agency* (BTA) has the following sections according to its website (2013):

News	Weather Today
(Free News Stories)	Currency Exchange Rates
Original Texts	Bulgarian Institutions
Bulgaria	President
The Balkans	Parliament
Today's Special	Government
Press Review	Constitutional Court
Original Texts Services (OTS)	Archive
E-Clipping	

Sections of the *Bulgarian News Agency* (BTA)

BTA's operation is financed from the sale of its information services and products, through advertisements, and through action allocations from the national budget. BTA is a member of the European Alliance of News Agencies, whose statute stipulates that only one news agency per country is admitted. According to the information on its website (2013) BTA is also a founder member of the *Association of Balkan News Agencies*. BTA exchanges information with: Global News Agencies, National News Agencies, Anadolu Ajansı (Ankara), MIA (Skopje), EFE (Madrid) ATA

(Tirana), KYODO (Tokyo) HINA (Zagreb), ANA (Athens), APA (Vienna), MPA (Thessaloniki) Xinhua (Beijing), Mediafax (Bucharest) Yonhap (Seoul), Rompres (Bucharest), KUNA (Kuwait City), TANJUG (Belgrade) IRNA (Tehran).

BTA's economic news and analysis service is also available in U.S. agencies such as Factiva, Dow Jones, and Reuters Company and the Internet Securities Inc. services. BTA receives and transmits to its subscribers the picture services of the European Pressphoto Agency (EPA) and Associated Press (AP).

6. News Agencies as Institutions for Covering Special Interest Groups

Local examples in England for the merge of news agencies and PR are *Newsflash Press Agency*, press and picture agency specializing in news, features, pictures and corporate work and *North News and Pictures* specialized in news, pictures and PR photography. Certain news agencies not only cover news of special interest groups, but also declare themselves as a part of a specific interest. Strictly applied, they act as PR agencies for a specific interest. *Inter Press Service* (IPS) is an example of a news service joint with political, educational, and economical interest of one area under the aspect of globalisation. *Inter Press Service* (IPS) declares itself according to its website (2013) as an “independent voice from the South and for development, delving into globalization for the stories underneath”. IPS’s motto is on its website (2013): “Another communication is possible”. The core business of the IPS news agency is reporting and analysis about events and global processes affecting the economic, social and political development of peoples and nations, especially in the South. IPS carries out communication projects and programmes that are both relevant to this core business and support the overall mission of IPS. Most activities are in the fields of training, information exchange and the creation of information networks, and are developed and implemented in a multimedia framework. Extra private, governmental and inter-governmental funding is raised to support project and programme implementation. Training is an important dimension of many IPS projects and programmes. Current priority themes for the development of projects and programmes include: Gender, Globalization, Other Worlds and Other Movements, Human Rights and Governance, Interconnectivity and the Information Society, Migrations and the Impacts of Globalization, Peace, Conflict and the Unipolar world, Dialogue among Civilizations, Sustainable Development.

Besides the news coverage projects and programmes of *Inter Press Service* (IPS) are carried out at the international, regional, and sub-regional levels involving other partners from media and civil society. According to its *Editorial Policy* IPS treats all news events as part of a process rather than as isolated phenomena. Its *Editorial Policy* says according to its website

(2013) it aims to promote a minority, 'people excluded or marginalized by the process of globalization':

"Reporting events without seeking to understand cause and effect means that readers will not have enough information to fully understand the world around them. The service does not aim to provide up-to-the minute coverage of events, as is the style of traditional news agencies. IPS does provide timely, in-depth coverage of relevant events. IPS tries to reach people excluded or marginalized by the process of globalization, notably in countries in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America. The question of exclusion is highlighted, explained and investigated in IPS stories."

The IPS network of journalists, with its headquarters in Rome, is according to its website (2013) anchored by five editorial desks in Montevideo (Latin America), London-Berlin (Europe and the Mediterranean), Bangkok (Asia and the Pacific), Montreal (North America and the Caribbean) and Johannesburg (Africa). IPS has a network of more than 300 journalists around the world. Critical reporting, local reports, and entertainment are special fields of journalism that are covered by specialized news agencies. The contents of *United Press International* (UPI) is different in its presentation than in standard news agencies dedicated to hard news. According to its self-description of its website (2013), the agency *United Press International* (UPI) is a leading provider of critical information to media outlets, businesses, governments and researchers worldwide. Their stories and photos cover a variety of topics including international and U.S. news, politics, sports, entertainment, health, science and technology. 'Infotainment' is an important form of recent news services. For this special sujet *Quirky News*, a British agency, sells according to its website (2013) to users content about all things 'odd, weird and strange' to newspapers, magazines, and TV companies. *Afrol News African News Agency* is the only independent news agency dedicated exclusively to Africa. According to its website (2013), *Afrol News African News Agency* deals with specific news from Africa selected into sections regions and topics.

Topics	Countries
Agriculture - Nutrition	Central Africa
Culture - Arts	East Africa
Economy - Development	Horn of Africa
Environment - Nature	Indian Ocean
Gay - Lesbian	North Africa

Gender - Women	Southern Africa
Health	West Africa
Human rights	Africa / World ¹
Labour	
Media	
Politics	
Science - Education	
Society	
Technology	
Travel - Leisure	

News Sections of Afrol News African News Agency

Not only the news of specific interest groups or lobbies are delivered to the news agencies in order to transmit and publish the news; also organisations use the presentation of publicnews agencies for the presentation of their members. This is a similar methode like the practice of distribution of contents of news agencies on newsite portals. Vice versa also news agencies can be used as tool for the presentation of a special interest group. Also organizations can form and promote news agencies according to their needs to the public and for their intern use. An example: Member countries of the OPEC have news agencies to promote published on the OPEC website (2013):

Algeria	http://www.aps.dz
Angola	http://www.angolapress-angop.ao
Indonesia	http://www.antara.co.id
Iran	http://www.irna.ir
Iraq	n/a
Kuwait	http://www.kuna.net.kw
Libya	http://www.Jamahiriyaneews.com
Nigeria	http://www.nanigeria.org
Qatar	http://www.qnaol.com

Saudi Arabia	http://www.spa.gov.sa
United Arab Emirates	http://www.wam.org.ae
Venezuela	http://www.abn.info.ve ²

Presentation of News Agencies on the Website of the OPEC

7. Networks of Alternative Media, Open Source News, and Meta-News-Portals: Alternative Media - News Networks and Open Source Networks

In the following cases mass media organizations operate without a news agency (Wikinews) based upon news exclusively written for Wikinews or are both place of a news agency and news presentation (*Mathaba News Network*). Being out of the circle of the mass media and not contributing to the mass media news circulation we can describe them as alternative media, even though their formal presentation is identical with the one of the mainstream media. Alternative media are defined most broadly as those media practices falling outside the mainstreams of corporate communication. *Mathaba News Network* is a news agency and an online news network. According to its website (2013), articles are contributed by authors, correspondents and analysts as well as by members, 'mathabas' and by agreement. Politically it is opposed to globalism and contemporary world order. *Mathaba News* is recognized by major web publications in the news industry. Mathaba is dedicated to bringing news and information to the public free-of-charge, and to assist in effecting better understanding and positive development. Its shared principles are that through *Mathaba News Network* contributors and resources the agency hopes to encourage quality and thought provoking works. *Mathaba News Network* aims not only to publish news but to provide context and to encourage the finding of solutions to the global challenges facing humanity. The contributions are engaged contributions for a world of peace, freedom, and social justice. *Mathaba News Network* encourages the search for alternative solutions to realize human rights and freedom, and evolve those ideas into concrete living works that benefit our world. Following *Mathaba News Network* media is currently mainly of the two types "old mass media, which broadcasts from the elite to the masses for consumption and new individual media, millions of competing blogs providing background noise that largely cancels itself out". *Mathaba News Network* intends to provide a third method: Masses Media, which is a combination of the old and new, and has already moved beyond web 2.0 toward web 3 media in method and in mission. From *Mathaba News Network's* perspective "most media have forgotten: guarding the public interest and contextualising information with the public interest in mind". The method is amateur journalism by "an individual who has something to say or report, first gathers around him or her at least two others who agree. This already

means that there is a public interest potential. They form themselves thus into a (spontaneous) "Mathaba" (meeting platform, circle, center) and work collectively to submit the news and information that should reach the appropriate audience by way of publication." The members of the mathabas also study the human rights and freedoms mentioned above in the links under Mission, Goal and Vision, in order to have a solid foundation on which to base their arguments and to form appropriate strong bonds locally, while having the moral strength of all those around the world who are working for the same. Mathaba has a number of experienced editors who work to try to maintain a high standard of publication. As of 18th of October 2007 *Mathaba News* had 4,100 blog reactions. *Mathaba News* allows according to its website (2013) users to submit contents as *Direct Input* or *Commercial, PR, Publicity*.

<i>Home</i>	<i>Crime and Law</i>
<i>World</i>	<i>Culture and Entertainment</i>
<i>Revo</i>	<i>Disasters and Accidents</i>
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Economy and Business</i>
<i>Culture/Edu</i>	<i>Education</i>
<i>Life/Health</i>	<i>Environment</i>
<i>Entertainment</i>	<i>Health</i>
<i>Sci/Tech</i>	<i>Obituaries</i>
<i>Business</i>	<i>Politics and Conflicts</i>
<i>Highlights</i>	<i>Science and Technology</i>
<i>Our Authors</i>	<i>Sports</i>
<i>Submit News</i>	<i>Wackynews</i>
	<i>Weather</i>

Sections of *Mathaba News*

Sections of Wikinews

Alternative Media: Open Source News Agency and News Portal

In *Print Top Ten Ideas of '04: Open Source Journalism, Or "My Readers Know More Than I Do."* was stated by Jay Rosen (2006): "The audience always knew more, but it didn't have a network for pulling its scattered self together. An atomized public needed the journalist to know for it. That's how we got a professionalized press. [...] Open Source journalism builds on that insight. When you talk about the Web era in journalism think:

audience atomization overcome. Then you will be on the right track.” *Wikinews* is a free news source outlet based upon the principle of open source journalism. Following Wikipedia “open source is a set of principles and practices that promote access to the design and production of goods and knowledge. The term is most commonly applied to the source code of software that is available to the general public with relaxed or non-existent intellectual property restrictions. This allows users to create software content through incremental individual effort or through collaboration.” For *Wikinews* “the open source model of operation can be extended to open source culture in decision making, which allows concurrent input of different agendas, approaches and priorities, in contrast with more centralized models of development such as those typically used in commercial companies. Open source culture is one where collective decisions or fixations are shared during development and made generally available in the public domain, as done in *Wikipedia*. This collective approach moderates ethical concerns over a “conflict of roles” or conflict of interest. Participants in such a culture are able to modify the collective outcomes and share them with the community. Some consider open source as one of various possible design approaches, while others consider it a critical strategic element of their operations.” Geographically it has the sections Africa, Asia, Central America, Europe, Middle East, North America, Oceania, South America, and World. Articles can be written by readers. The Wikimedia project describes itself as follows: “We are a group of volunteers whose mission is to present reliable, unbiased, relevant and entertaining News. All content is released under a free license. By making our content perpetually available for free redistribution and use, we hope to contribute to a global digital commons. Wikinews stories are written from a neutral point of view to ensure fair and unbiased reporting. Wikinews needs you! We want to create a diverse community of citizens from around the globe who collaborate to report on a wide variety of current events. To contribute to Wikinews reporting, read an Introduction to Wikinews and visit the Newsroom.” Wikinews is besides English in the languages Arabic, Bulgarian, Bosnian, Catalan, Dutch, German, French, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish, Thai, Ukrainian, and Chinese available. Wikinews does not separate into national and international news with its sections is an outlet extremely focussing on local news, while on the contrary it has a global audience and different world languages. The ‘agenda-setting theory’ says the news media pre-organize the contents the consumers think about by placing the contents of news. Here of course the news agencies as the first selective institution for mass media contents are important. Especially for news from distant places the agencies distribute news. In the alternative media here the pre-organization is low and the technical conditions of the organization are the framework for contributions.

8. Conclusions - Recent Swifts in the Landscape of News Agencies

Recent research considers news agencies as an element in the 'flow of news'. Volkmer (2013) in *International Communication Theory in Transition: Parameters of the New Global Public Sphere* wrote that "the terms 'international,' 'transnational' and 'global' communication not only stand for different definitions of an expanding communication space but also reflect the history of worldwide communication as well as its diversity. Global communication gives us an eyewitness view of events in remotest locations, we participate in political discourses of global, regional or even local relevance." Adapted to the classical communication model of Shannon the news agencies have an intermediate function between the source of the news sending the news and the receiver, a broad audience of the specific news outlet that consumes this information. In this position is can -theoretically- select, adapt, change the flow and contents of the whole of the news it transfers. Connectivity, distribution, and flow of information are features associated with networks integrating news agencies. In mass communication besides the technical features such as links and nodes and the fast exchange of the information the construction of the producers and senders of information is important. Traditionally in media studies the term framing refers to a process of selective influence over the individual's perception of the meanings attributed to words or phrases. Framing defines the packaging of an element of rhetoric in such a way as to encourage certain interpretations. The mass media or specific political or social movements or organizations may establish media frames. Another effect associated with framing is the pre-structured medial form and type of the delivery of news before it arrives at the concrete outlet for the consumer. Here the news agencies have an important function, since they operate globally and with a coverage beyond the local coverage of news, a section covered by local journalists. The news agencies as provider for information for the final outlets of news include the framing of the selection of news and the contents of news. The news agencies as part of an international information flow is a communication entity that is able to modify the news in terms of the selection and presentation. In recent years the structure of the media world in terms of their organization has changed so much, that we find an intermingling of classical forms of news providers such as news agencies with other types of media providers and also organizations that -under strict definition- would be considered part of the public relations business. An extreme influence for the availability of news has the internet. It increases in general an immediate availability from news all over the world and to various kinds of news outlets. If we ask for the globality of news agencies, we can answer this in the following way as criteria for a global network:

Conglomerate

The isolated news agency that works independent is in most cases not given. Most news agencies are parts of business conglomerates, either as a section of a business conglomerate with other branches (Reuters), or within a media conglomerate, a state, or as a section of an interest group. In the last case they are close to PR agencies. In recent years the structure of the media world in terms of their organization has changed so much, that we find an intermingling of classical forms of news providers such as news agencies with other types of media providers and also organizations that -under strict definition-would be considered part of the public relations business.

Globalization

Ivacic (1985; 2013) argued that “current efforts to build a new international economic order inevitably stimulated initiatives for change in the structure of information, which for decades had been based on a one-way flow of news from the developed to the developing countries under the influence of a small number of news agency giants in the developed world”. An extreme influence for the availability of news has the internet. It increases in general an immediate availability from news all over the world and to various kinds of news outlets. If we ask for the globality of news agencies, we can answer this in the following way as criteria for a global network:

- Globalization as feature of the sources and coverage of the news
- Globalization as feature of the distribution of the news
- Globalization as feature of the inter-connectivity of the agency with other networks

Interactivity and Intermediality

Interactivity and Intermediality are phenomena that have recently brought forms of news outlets such as blogs, the potential contribution of the reader and other persons and groups that possess a specific knowledge. Here also the interference between professional and non-professional journalism is obvious, since all these forms are available for both groups. News agencies are bound to other organizations or corporations. In other words: They do not work independently as part of an organization. News agencies can be as a whole organization or partly:

Commercial Newswire Services

Business Corporations that sell news (e.g. Reuters and All Headline News (AHN)).

Mas Media Cooperatives

composed of newspapers that share their articles with each other (e.g. AP)

Government controlled 'Governmental News Agencies'

Government-funded News Agencies

Internet-based Alternative News Agencies (e.g. Scooplive and Scoopt)

Special Interest Group News Agencies (with classical PR functions)

Special Interest News Agencies / Lobby News Agency PR

News Agencies as part of Organizations PR

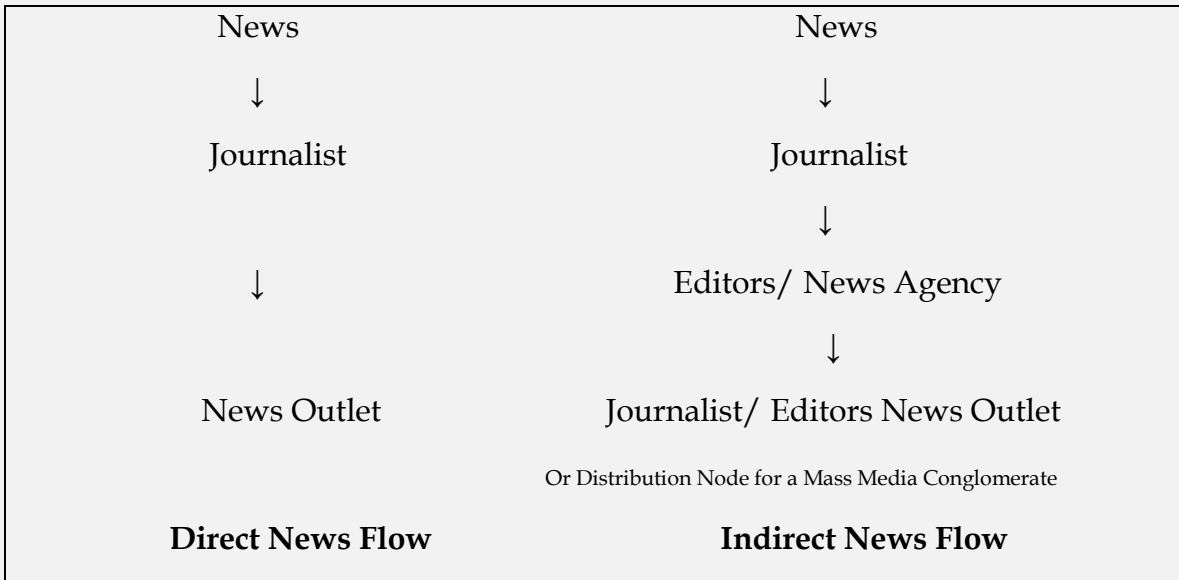
National News Agencies (DPA)

Mass Media Conglomerate News Agencies (Reuters)

News Agencies as Depending Organizations

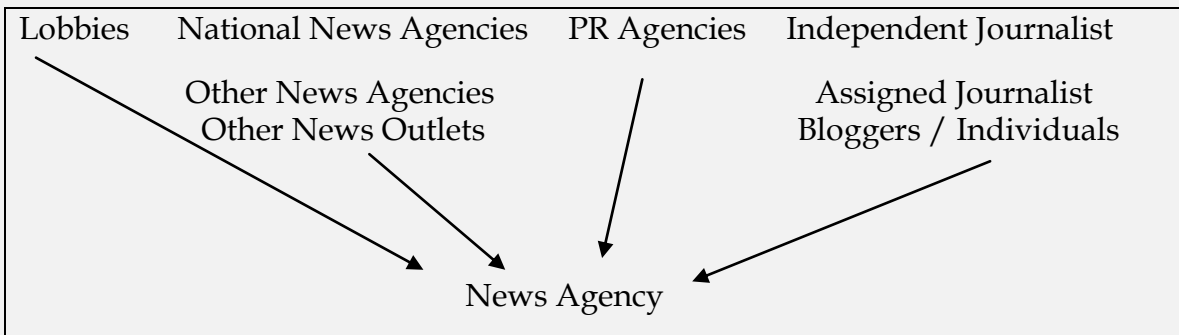
When examining the contemporary news landscape and mass media as an area of communications, we must critically be aware that news run within certain circles of media organizations. Figuratively spoken the single news is not news as long as it is not channeled and forwarded within the mass media. The effect of the lack of the information of several groups was termed as 'Spiral of silence'. Rantanen (2010: 605) argued that news agencies played a key role in globalization, using the early submarine cable networks, as early as the latter half of the 19th century; that manipulation of time and space on a global scale was an essential component in the construction of news as a category and in its commodification. Ivacic (1985; 2013) stated that "news exchange, the basis of relations among news agencies, is more important today than ever before". In recent years, news exchange has become "accepted practice for most news agencies in the non-aligned world. January 1977 marked the second anniversary of the creation of the system known as the "Pool"-a multichannel flow of news reports and information " between agencies of non-aligned countries. Framing is in a wide definition the placement of news of one specific topic and a specific interest group. Here news agencies have important positions regarding the pre-selection of news to be distributed to the mass media. Lind and Salo (2002: 211-228) have shown that the framing of feminists and feminism in news and public affairs programs in U.S. electronic media is one example of controlled and planned news distribution. The network is the specific set of connections an agency has in order to distribute news. Framework is the surrounding of a news agency that constitutes its conditions of news delivery; Wilkerson (2001: 141-153) theoretized the concept 'frame'. That means that the news flow come from specific directions to the news agency and

leaves the news agency a gain in specific directions. Furthermore, the information distributed by the news agencies have specific formats and are framed by the background of their interest group. We can see from our examples that the news agencies serve as frames for news. Framing means here both selection and design. As a frame news agencies decide regarding form, contents, structure, and availability of news in a pre-selection process. They will decide regarding the source of the news (local/national/international). News flow is the movement of the news from the source to the final media outlet. In several steps the news undergoes changes and editorial decisions until it reaches the outlet.³ The 'news flow' can be direct or indirect.



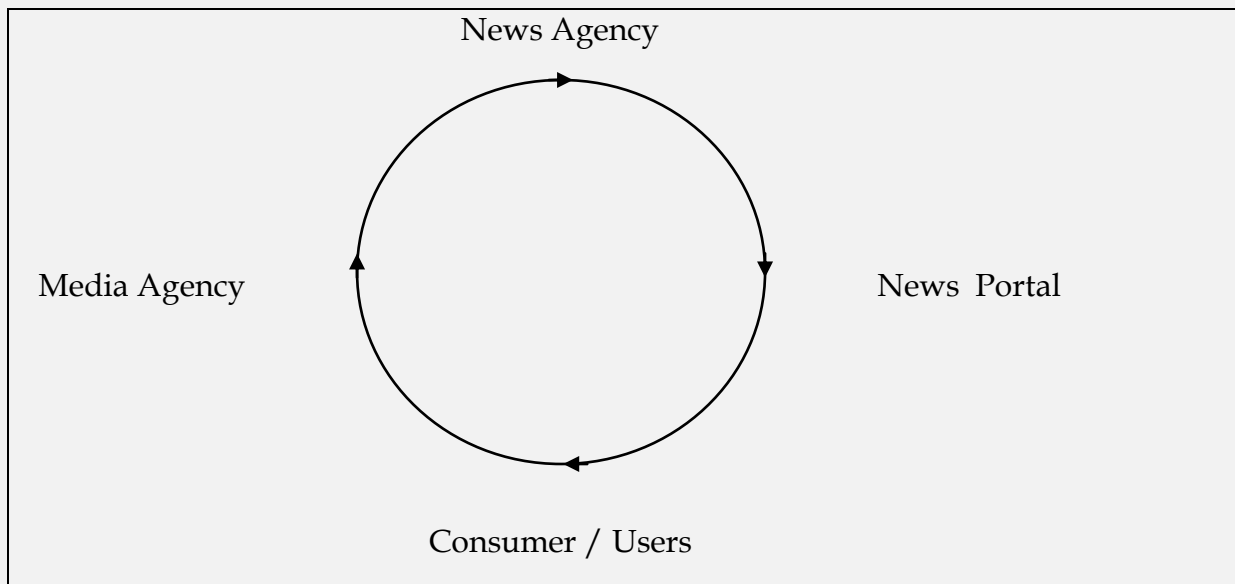
News Flow From The News to the News Outlet. Linear Chain Distribution

New types of news agencies mix up the classical function of a news agency with a very selected spectrum of news serving a selected audience and a selected interest group. Another type of news agency serves just a specific group of mass media with news of a specific interest (e.g. 'humor').



Information News Flow to News Agencies. Linear Chain Distribution

One result of the organization of news agencies as a distributor of news can be that only selected groups can transmit their news and that only organizations within the distribution circle can participate, while others become subject to the 'spiral of silence'-phenomenon. Bowen and Blackmon (2003: 1393-1417) mentioned that Noelle-Neumann's spiral of silence "emphasizes the horizontal pressures that the threat of isolation and corresponding fear of isolation exert to keep people from being open and honest about their opinions". In *Spirals of Silence: The Dynamic Effects of Diversity on Organizational Voice* Noelle-Neumann's theory was applied in management and professional communication's contexts. An example is described in Kerckhove's work on McLuhan and the 'Toronto School of Communication' (1989: 73-79).



Information News Flow in Mass Media. Circulating Distribution

In an information news flow in mass media in a circulating distribution the news circulates from one news outlet to the other. The difference between the linear chain distribution and the circulating distribution is that in the second case the news is reduplicated and placed in other formats, while in the second case a production process is done. Global network news agencies comprise all globally working agencies including specific functions such as *Mathaba News Agency*, national *Agence France-Presse* and *ANTARA News*, an Indonesian News Portal, or *AP Digital - Global News Network*. A special interest group news agency is *KNA - Catholic News Agency* covering news of the Catholic church with its main offices in Bonn, Germany. We can differentiate between the following types of news agencies.

News agencies as depending organizations:

- State owned

- Company owned
- Owned by Organizations

News agencies as relatively independent news organizations:

- Single News Organizations
- 'New Media' and Internet news Agencies
- News Agencies in Mass Media Conglomerates

National news agencies are responsible for the distribution of local, regional and international news services to local and international media organisations. An example of an interest group forcing the national news agencies to change their format of news is the position of Stone. Stone wrote that *The Times*, the *Independent* in the UK and other European news outlets have gone tabloid. Stone (2013) concludes: "All of this has a profound effect and requires change by national news agencies on the text products they provide to their main customers. For news production of national news agencies the top five to be re-examined are following Stone the style of writing, length of story, information aimed at the young, international news sources, and new revenue streams. National news agencies according to Stone "need urgently to take a new look at what they do, how they do it, and study whether their end product is really the product their market needs." News agencies comprise for mass communication the basic areas of message production and message processing. Discourse and interaction depends on their specific structure of an audience. News agencies help developing relationships between consumers (readers) and producers (outlets) when supporting them. News Agencies can also share the interests of small groups and special interest groups. The form of media outlets depends in terms of contents and language of a specific society and culture.

Notes:

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<[Http://www.afrol.com](http://www.afrol.com)>

² Main Website. *OPEC. Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries*. Retrieved September 22, 2013.
<[Http://www.opec.org/home/links/Na_links.htm](http://www.opec.org/home/links/Na_links.htm)>

³ Le Duc, Don R. "East-West News Flow "Imbalance": Qualifying the Quantifications". In: *Journal of Communication* 31.4 (1981): 135-141.

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