MEDIATING PARLIAMENT

FORM CHANGES IN BRITISH AND DUTCH JOURNALISM, 1850–1940

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In both Great Britain and the Netherlands journalism established itself as an autonomous field between 1850 and 1940. By presenting itself as a neutral and independent guardian of public interest it extricated itself from the political field. Journalism developed from a partisan institution which reported from the point of view of a political party or social movement into an independent profession.[1] The balance between the two thus shifted, however, press and politics remained closely related. The trustee model which today dominates journalism emphasizes the ideological position of journalism as the watchdog for the citizens of democratic societies. Its ideology states that journalists have to be able to limit the power of politicians, inform the public about politics and ensure a rational and deliberate debate about the state of democracy.[2]

Scholars have observed that in most democracies the media is moving towards becoming a central player in the political system. Politics and political institutions 'increasingly are dependent on and shaped by mass media' in a 'media-driven democratic system'.[3] To gain time on air they have to adapt to news formats, criteria for news selection and production routines.[4] This is of even more importance now as the traditional party-based structure of the political field loses ground to a structure of ad hoc loyalties and floating voters. A politician first and foremost has to be a communicator.

According to communication scholars Gianpietro Mazzoleni and Winfried Schulz mediated politics is 'politics that has lost its autonomy, has become dependent in its central functions on mass media, and is continuously shaped by interactions with mass media'.[5] Critics fear this media influence

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[1] See Bourdieu, 'The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field' (2005), pp. 29–47.

[2] Schudson, 'What public journalism knows about journalism but doesn't know about "public"' (1999), pp. 118–133; pp. 119–121.

[3] Mazzoleni and Schulz, '"Mediatization" of Politics: A Challenge for Democracy?' (1999), pp. 247–261; pp. 247–248.

[4] Schulz, 'Reconstructing Mediatization as an Analytical Concept' (2004), pp. 87–101; pp. 89–90.

[5] Mazzoleni and Schulz, '"Mediatization" of Politics', p. 250.

on the political system and on public debate. They believe a transition is taking place from the trustee model to the market model of journalism which stresses the commercial importance of giving news consumers what they want. Critics suppose that objective information and rational debate in the public sphere, that is, the realm of social life in which citizens are informed about politics and in which they can discuss public issues and judge political decisions, will lose ground to entertainment and profit margins.[6]

Although politics has been mediated since Antiquity, the analytical concept of the mediatization of politics is mainly used in political science as a tool to analyse contemporary relationships between media and politics. Schulz calls it the product of the television era.[7] This focus on the last decades is understandable if it is taken into account that mediatization as an analytical tool presupposes autonomy of journalism in relation to the political field. In the partisan model of journalism which was common in Europe until after the Second World War, political aims and opinions determined the selection of news. Journalists voiced the ideas of a political party or movement and they reported from within the framework of the political community. Only when journalism had some latitude could it develop a logic of its own and apply its aims, rules and logic to politics.

The transformation of journalism into an autonomous field took almost a century. Between 1850 and 1940 journalism developed a discourse of its own, gaining authority and autonomy. Practices, routines and conventions which facilitated quick and reliable production were standardized. Instead of merely transmitting public speeches and texts – for example, printing chronologically mimetic accounts of speeches or verbatim records of parliamentary proceedings – journalists started to frame this information in professional discourse. Reporters no longer simply recycled public information, but asserted opinions of their own. They interpreted the social and political meaning of sayings, texts and actions. The editor evolved from a collector who merely presented what had been discovered into an interpreter who restructured and rewrote bits and pieces of information into larger coherent stories.[8] Through socialization in the newsroom, journalists shared a set of rules which structured their stories.

In this contribution I will trace early processes of mediatization by analysing transformations in the form of British and Dutch parliamentary reporting. Although journalism and politics in both countries were still closely

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[6] Bennett and Entman (eds.), *Mediated Politics* (2001), pp. 1–29; Underwood, 'Reporting and the Push for Market-Oriented Journalism', pp. 99–116.
[7] Schulz, 'Reconstructing Mediatization', p. 93.
[8] See Matheson, 'The birth of news discourse' (2000), pp. 557–573; Schudson, 'The politics of narrative form' (1995), pp. 53–71; Chalaby, *The Invention of Journalism* (1998).

connected, journalism was developing a logic of its own in the period under discussion. This article will examine three genres which were 'invented' between 1850 and 1940: the summary, sketches and portraits, and the interview. They were introduced to represent parliamentary life adequately, to win readers and also to maintain and strengthen the social position of journalism in relation to politicians. I consider that journalistic texts are not merely descriptions of what took place, but should be understood as strategic interpretations of events which offer the interpreter the possibility of asserting moral authority. By making choices about the form of news, journalism affects how reality is experienced. The invention of the genres which are discussed in this article will be examined as successive steps in a process of increasing mediatization, that is, of an increasing dependency of politics on journalism and mass media.

A comparison between Great Britain and the Netherlands can shed light on the conditions which influenced the pace of this process. In addition, it shows how forms and styles are intensively transferred from one country to another and adapted to national contexts. Until the Second World War, Dutch journalism was highly reflective and partisan. It wanted to educate and instruct as well as persuade readers of the value of certain political or sociocultural positions. The organizing principle of this kind of journalism was 'the mediating subjectivity of the journalist', as media sociologist Jean Chalaby has put it. Political stands and party affiliations determined what journalists thought and wrote in the columns of their dailies.[9] Reporting news was considered of less importance than judging the social world from political and sociocultural standpoints.

While the reflective style was organized around opinions, the news style derived its performative power from its factuality. In Europe, Great Britain took the lead in the adaptation of this style, which emerged in the United States after the 1830s. Anglo-American journalism concentrated on facts and information, introducing the inverted pyramid and the news interview. Objectivity became a central norm. While newspapers attempted to reach a mass market they were encouraged to take a non-partisan though not necessarily neutral stand in the race to increase their readership. Anglo-American journalism had two faces: it embodied both the 'journalism of action' employed by the yellow press and the detached and impartial style of the quality papers. However, both styles stressed their ability to judge politics autonomously.[10]

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[9] Chalaby, 'Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention' (1996), p. 312.
[10] Campbell, *The Year that Defined American Journalism* (2006); Williams, 'Anglo-American Journalism' (2007), p. 25.

Forms of reporting

While the content of news changes every day, form and style assure the ritual function of journalism.[11] Textual conventions and professional routines underlie the process of gathering, selecting and presenting news. Both are essential to make people believe events actually happened as reported in the newspaper. The American sociologist Michael Schudson has argued that the power of journalism mainly lies in its ability to provide the forms in which things are declared true. He argues that we have to 'recognize the substantive message and substantial authority of narrative form' to understand media and he speaks in this respect of the politics of narrative form.[12]

In mediatization theory, form – or format – is the central category of analysis.[13] Form conventions determine to a large extent how news stories are told and which stories are told. News does not neutrally reflect social reality or empirical facts at all. It is a social construction. As the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas states: 'communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired and transformed'.[14] Events and facts do not have intrinsic importance but become important because they are selected by journalists who adhere to a culturally and ideologically determined set of selection criteria. After this first selection filter, social reality is transformed once again to fit into media formats which give it shape. Firstly, actual events and orchestrated media events such as press conferences or interviews have to fit the forms of reporting. Secondly, the form chosen determines how news is framed, with the same facts able to be used to construct various stories.

As an analytical concept, form refers to conventions at the level of texts, illustrations and typographical elements. Communication scholars Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone state that 'form includes the things that are traditionally labelled layout and design and typography; but it also includes habits of illustration, genres of reportage, and schemes of departmentalization'. They conclude: '*form* is everything a newspaper does to present the look of the news'. It provides a newspaper with a 'visible structure'.[15] The introduction and development of news forms is constrained by technological and economic conditions as well as sociocultural factors. Innovations in printing and typesetting made visual elements such as photographs

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[11] This section is based on Broersma, 'Form, Style and Journalistic Strategies', pp. ix–xxix.
[12] Schudson, 'The politics of narrative form', pp. 54, 71; cf. Carey, 'The Problem of Journalism History' (1974), pp. 3–5, 27.
[13] Schulz, 'Reconstructing Mediatization', p. 92.
[14] Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action* (1990), p. 23.
[15] Barnhurst and Nerone, *The Form of News: A History* (2001), p. 3.

and headlines that span more than one column possible. The increased speed of news due to the invention of the telegraph and faster printing processes called for other techniques to frame the news. At the same time, competition forced newspapers to appeal to the readers' demands and this stimulated them to think about the principles of journalism as a profession.

Form can be analysed at three levels, covering conventions of structure, design and genre. The structure and length of news items reveals ideological choices. The space an item takes represents the importance editors attach to it. The way a story is structured – whether linear or non-linear, chronological or according to the conventions of the inverted pyramid, polemical or factual – and the use of rhetorical devices stresses the interpretation of social reality which is voiced in a newspaper. Newspaper design is the most captivating expression of form. Design determines the face of a newspaper; its arrangement of articles, its departmentalization, its typography, its use of graphic elements such as photographs, drawings and charts, and the number and the size of articles and headlines all express how a newspaper wants to be seen.

In this contribution, however, I will focus on genres: textual forms or patterns, which organize a story and articulate a journalistic style. Picking a genre implies a choice about the way in which a subject is represented in the newspaper. Interviews, news stories, portraits or reports each have their own conventions which affect what is included in or excluded from a story. Journalists write their stories according to these genre conventions and are aware that readers are also familiar with them. In other words, genres represent an unspoken agreement between the journalist and the reader about what to expect. They structure the reception of news by the public and make it possible to interpret a text as its author intended. Genres help people to make sense of texts.[16]

Parliamentary reporting in Great Britain and the Netherlands

In Great Britain and the Netherlands, parliamentary reporting was a core business for nineteenth-century newspapers. Readers were tremendously interested in what was said in Westminster in London and at its Dutch counterpart Het Binnenhof in The Hague. Until the 1870s, the British dailies devoted many unbroken columns to lengthy reports of debates. The copy was sent straight from Westminster to the composing rooms and was given first claim on a newspaper's space.[17] *The Times* exceeded all its competitors and

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[16] Lacey, *Narrative and Genre* (2000), pp. 134–136.
[17] Donaldson Jordan, 'The reports of parliamentary debates, 1803–1908' (1931), pp. 437–449; pp. 443, 446.

would produce two to four pages of copy a day, equivalent to 24,000 to 48,000 words. Charles Ross, the head of the paper's parliamentary corps, admitted in 1878 that he himself considered the reports too long: 'Matter from various parts of the country is sent up and paid for, then there comes a debate of 12 columns (I have seen 16, I think, this session, or 18); and that matter from the country is all put on one side; it is all lost'.[18] The reports of other newspapers were not as substantial as *The Times* but they also covered parliament extensively.

The London newspapers had substantially more reporters than their Dutch equivalents. In 1834 the total number of parliamentary reporters was between forty and fifty. At the end of the century two hundred and sixty journalists had access to the Press Gallery. Most newspapers had five to eight reporters, although *The Times* had a corps of fourteen men who took notes in shorthand. Reporters worked in shifts of fifteen minutes, which were shortened to five minutes as the debates advanced. They took notes, at first in longhand, but increasingly in shorthand, and condensed them afterwards into verbatim reproductions of the speeches. These were immediately relayed to the compositors.[19]

For a long time in the Netherlands, the Belinfante and Vaz Dias press agency held a monopoly on political reporting. Six reporters from this family business filled the Press Gallery. The writer and journalist Simon Carmiggelt later recalled: 'They were of small stature and their appearance was quite old-fashioned. That is why they reminded me of those socially questionable days in which a workman could buy a tankard of gin for some pennies'.[20] These men supplied most Dutch newspapers with parliamentary news and reports. After 1861 some national newspapers started to send their own reporters. At the turn of the century all the leading newspapers had staff in The Hague.[21]

The leading Dutch national newspapers, for example, the *Algemeen Handelsblad*, also devoted most of their editorial columns to parliamentary reporting. Before the introduction of the telegraph they used relay couriers to bring the reports from The Hague to Amsterdam as quickly as possible. Provincial newspapers, such as the *Leeuwarder Courant*, also inserted extensive reports of parliamentary proceedings. Dutch editors matched their British counterparts in complaints about the length of the reports, as they

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[18] Sparrow, *Obscure Scribblers* (2003), pp. 52–53; Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (1985), p. 246.

[19] Aspinall, 'The reporting and publishing of the House of Commons' debates, 1771–1834' (1956), pp. 227–257; p. 251; MacDonagh, *The Book of Parliament* (1897), pp. 314, 317–318.

[20] *Het Haagsche Hopje, waarin opgenomen Het Haagsche Snobje* (1953).

[21] Blok, *Veertig jaar op de tribune* (1901), pp. 43–44.

left no space for other news or advertisements. The records of the Belinfante press agency contains many letters from newspaper publishers asking for shorter reports.[22] The publisher of the *Dordrechtsche Courant*, for example, begged desperately that the reports be shorter: 'Because of their length they are absolutely unsuitable for a newspaper of our size'. After the First World War, parliamentary coverage lessened but was still voluminous.[23]

In both countries, there were many complaints by journalists about their working conditions in parliament. In the first quarter of the century, the English reporters had to take their places in the Strangers' Gallery where, to be sure of a seat, they had to tip or bribe the doorkeepers. Their Dutch colleagues were lucky as they had reserved seats. However, they were 'roasted and grilled' as a result of the chimney running up the wall behind their backs. A special Press Gallery was built in Westminster in 1834 and in The Hague in 1859, however, in both countries the limited space in the Gallery and the bad acoustics remained a problem. Reporters were seated at some distance from the floor and above the heads of the speakers. It was sometimes necessary to guess what an MP had said, which resulted in curious, amusing or sometimes embarrassing mistakes.[24]

Reports and the summary

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, the report was the only genre newspapers used to cover parliamentary life. The comprehensive reports gave newspapers 'an aura of neutrality'.[25] Of course the debates had to be summarized for reasons of space and relevance. However, as historian Michael MacDonagh remarked: 'even when condensing the remarks of a backbench man the reporter endeavours to retain in his summary not only the opinion or argument, but, as far as possible, what is distinctive and characteristic in the phraseology'.[26] The report connected journalism to the progress in empirical sciences, the genre reflecting reality in an almost scien-

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[22] Belinfante, *Herinneringen* (1886), p. 25; Schouwenaar, *Tussen Beurs en Binnenhof* (1999), pp. 58, 69; Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang* (2002), pp. 172–174.

[23] The Hague City Archives, Belinfante Press Agency (1999), Correspondence, Blussé and Co. to J. Belinfante, 25 July 1849.

[24] MacDonagh, *The Book of Parliament*, p. 313; Broersma, 'Politiek als familiekapitaal' (2002), pp. 119–129; p. 125; MacDonagh, *The Reporters' Gallery* (1913), pp. 21–26.

[25] Jordan, 'The reports of parliamentary debates', p. 445; Smith, 'The long road to objectivity and back again' (1978), pp. 153–171; p. 162.

[26] MacDonagh, *The Reporters' Gallery*, pp. 34–35.

tific way. Reporters merely reproduced public speech. They did not yet fit it into a journalistic discourse.

Until the 1840s, there were few complaints about the content of the parliamentary reports in the British newspapers. The reporters were considered competent and impartial, and speeches were recorded accurately and 'very fully'. However, reports eventually grew 'to such massive proportions that few persons had leisure or inclination to go through them'.[27] In addition to this coverage Horace Twiss, a journalist for the *Morning Chronicle* and a former member of the House of Commons, introduced the summary in the early 1840s. The new genre was designed to make the reports of parliamentary proceedings more readable. Twiss attended the Gallery but did not take notes in shorthand, as the other reporters did. Instead, he just listened and tried to 'seize the substance of the speeches'. When the debates were finished, he rushed home and wrote a short and readable summary, which next morning was placed on the front page of the *Chronicle*. It became a huge success. Soon, the other papers followed Twiss's lead.[28]

Twiss invented a new genre and, more importantly, established the basis for a significant change in parliamentary journalism. He distanced himself from Victorian public discourse as embodied in verbatim reporting and tried to analyse what had happened. The summary writer judged the speeches of individual MPs against the background of party political views and political strategies. 'The idea was born that beneath the straight reliable account of what was happening in the formal affairs of Parliament, there lay a half-secret, half-conscious world consisting of what was "really" going on "behind the scenes"', historian Anthony Smith concluded.[29]

The summary made newspapers more attractive to readers, and the writer of the summary held a respectable position in the Gallery. When he was a young reporter, Henry W. Lucy had to replace the summary writer of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who had suddenly been taken ill: 'To go down to the House of Commons and take an ordinary "turn" of reporting for the first time is, I suppose, a trying thing', he remembered. 'To be bundled off at an hour's notice to fill the place of one of the most eminent Parliamentary writers of the day, and to supply a leading article on a subject of the surroundings of which one was absolutely ignorant, might seem appalling'. Of course, to Lucy 'it all came very naturally'.[30]

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[27] Aspinall, 'The reporting and publishing of the House of Commons' debates, 1771–1834', p. 250.

[28] Andrews, *The History of British Journalism*, Vol. II (1859), pp. 209–210.

[29] Smith, 'The long road to objectivity and back again', p. 166.

[30] Lucy, *Peeps at Parliament* (1904), p. 6; Lucy, *Sixty Years in the Wilderness* (1909), pp. 83–84.

In the early 1860s Dutch parliamentary reporter Izaak Lion introduced the summary, or more precisely: the analytical report (*overzicht*), into the Netherlands.[31] Lion strongly criticized the verbatim reports made by the Belinfante and Vaz Dias press agency. He considered them to be skeletons without flesh and nerves, without joints and limbs. 'Liveliness, disputes, intrigue, impression, incidents, parliamentary assaults: all is lost', Lion wrote. He strongly recommended adopting the kind of summaries that were being published in Britain.[32]

Lion was well informed about British journalism. Around 1848, he served as the Dutch correspondent for *The Times* and in the 1850s, while on the run from his creditors, he lived in London for almost a year. During his exile, Lion studied the British newspapers extensively and considered ways of reforming Dutch journalism. The introduction of the summary was his most important contribution to this reform, and was based on his desire to make parliamentary reporting more vivid. At the same time, he also tried to overcome the inability of the report to represent new forms of politics.[33]

The summary made it possible to represent the changes in Dutch politics of the 1850s and 1860s. The rise of contestation between liberals and conservatives in parliament and the gradual formation of a party system, made a more analytical approach to reporting necessary to give readers an insight into the backgrounds of debates. Lion stated: 'At a moment where (...) differences of political opinions and development declare themselves, and political views are grounded, newspapers (...) keep on using a way of reporting, which cannot represent the vividness and the essence of speeches'.[34]

However, political journalism ran in Lion's blood. He was a leading figure in the conservative movement as it tried to establish itself as a political party. The summary enabled Lion to voice his opinions and to construct an imagined community of conservatives. He called the summary a '*Daguerre*-evaluation of the daily debate's character and outcomes' and suggested that the summary writer had to judge the speeches on political principles and the earlier sayings of an MP. He wanted to reveal the reasons behind debates and explain the consequences of the outcomes. He also thought it essential to give his own opinion about the political statements made in a debate. In this way, Lion believed, the masses would become in-

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[31] Lion, *Mijn staatkundig leven* (1865), pp. 145–146, 254–255; compare the article by René Vos in this volume.
[32] Philalethes, *De dagbladen in Nederland* (1858), p. 32.
[33] Lion, *Mijn staatkundig leven*, p. 55; Van Raak, *In naam van het volmaakte* (2001), p. 162.
[34] Philalethes, *De dagbladen in Nederland*, p. 34.

terested in politics, as in England – and in conservative politics as well.[35] Until his death, Lion himself wrote the summaries for the conservative *Dagblad van Zuid-Holland en 's-Gravenhage*, of which he became the editor in 1861. In no time his articles became well known and very influential, with all Dutch newspapers following his example.[36]

The summary was widely used until the 1970s. The genre made it possible for voters to gain clear insight into politics, which became more important in the era of party formation, and later on with the extension of suffrage. Benjamin Blok, Lion's successor as a summary writer, found that the summary was 'a powerful driving force for political education of the masses'.[37] For journalism in both Great Britain and the Netherlands the invention of the summary marked the transformation of journalism into a professional discourse.

Sketches and portraits

In both Great Britain and the Netherlands the summary was an addition to parliamentary reporting. Newspapers still devoted a lot of space to reports, and the Victorian mode of verbatim reporting ('collecting' speech) remained unaffected. However, in the 1870s, the report as a genre became less important. 'Twenty or thirty years ago', MacDonagh wrote in 1897, 'speeches delivered in the House of Commons, even by unimportant members, were reported at some length, and Ministers and ex-Ministers were always given absolutely verbatim by the London and leading provincial daily papers. Now there are only about one hundred of the six hundred and seventy members of the House in whose speeches the public takes any interest'.[38] The parliamentary sketch now became the most popular genre.

In both Great Britain and the Netherlands the introduction of the sketch can be strongly connected with commercialization and the rise of the mass press. The abolition of stamp duty on newspapers and other legal impediments, the spread of literacy, and technological innovations in newsprint production, printing and distribution, created profitable conditions, while the growth of a mass democracy, urbanization and the rise of consumer society increased the demand for news. Editors seized on the needs of the

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[35] Lion, *Mijn staatkundig leven*, pp. 145–146; Philalethes, *De dagbladen in Nederland*, p. 46.
[36] Cramer, *Parlement en pers in verhouding tot de overheid* (1958), pp. 78–80; Van der Kooij, *'Edison van de Kamerjoernalistiek'* (1999).
[37] Blok, *Veertig jaar op de tribune*, p. 8; Hans, *Het Nederlandsche parlement* (1911), p. 131.
[38] MacDonagh, *The Book of Parliament*, p. 315.

'democratic market society' that had emerged. The mass press needed entertaining, readable and 'real' human interest stories to attract readers.[39]

The New Journalism of the 1870s and 1880s was meant to give newspapers greater popular appeal. As a leading journalist concluded, the 'new' readers wanted to be amused, not instructed. Parliamentary and political reporting lost ground to crime, sport, gossip and entertainment. Readers wanted news about conflicts, incidents and tragedy. In other words, they demanded stories with a human interest. There was a shift to dramatic reporting, using literary techniques, interviews and a popular tone and style.[40] Personalizing became a key element in New Journalism. According to T.P. O'Connor, the editor of the halfpenny *Star* and a Gladstonian MP: 'there was a day, when any allusion to the personal appearance, the habits, the clothes, or the home and social life of any person would have been resented as impertinence and almost as an indecency…'.[41] Those days were gone by the 1890s, even in parliamentary reporting.

Editors assumed newspaper readers were no longer very interested in the substance of speeches. The report was increasingly replaced by political commentary and 'vivid, impressionist, descriptive' sketches. If readers 'turn at all to the report, it is only to ascertain more fully what has been said by the leading statesmen, or perhaps to peruse a more detailed account of a "scene", or a heated wrangle across the floor of the House', MacDonagh noted.[42] Historian Lucy Brown has concluded that 'parliamentary reporting was giving way to news about politicians'. The readers were less interested in what was said, and instead wanted to know the manner in which the speeches were delivered. For this reason, newspapers such as the *Daily Express* no longer ran traditional parliamentary reports in the 1920s, but included what had been said in a light sketch. Other papers soon followed.[43]

The sketch evolved from the summary. Its invention in the 1870s is often attributed to Henry W. Lucy, the most famous parliamentary reporter of his generation. Lucy, who worked in the Press Gallery for more than thirty years, coloured his summaries with observations and humorous remarks. During debates, most reporters sat in front of the Gallery. They listened

[39] Schudson, *Discovering the News* (1976); Lee, 'The structure, ownership and control of the press, 1855–1914', pp. 117–129, cf. pp. 118–120; Feuchtwanger, 'Introduction', in White (ed.), *The Inner Life of the House of Commons* (1897; repr. Richmond, 1973); Wiener, 'How New was the New Journalism', in id. (ed.), *Papers for the Millions* (1988), pp. 47–71.

[40] Wiener, 'How New was the New Journalism', pp. 48, 54–55.

[41] Brake, 'The Old Journalism and the New' (1988), pp. 1–24; p. 8.

[42] MacDonagh, *The Book of Parliament*, p. 315.

[43] Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers*, pp. 246–247; Sparrow, *Obscure Scribblers*, p. 68.

carefully, took notes in shorthand and worked up their notes. Sketch writers, however, walked around, talked with colleagues, sat down on the back bench and occasionally wrote down an interesting or amusing remark. They were highly praised for their lucid and amusing comments on the habits of MPs.

> They describe the environment in which the Debates take shape and colour. We see the confident smile of the orator, or the nervous twitching of his mouth, as he rises to the Table to make the important speech which the crowded House has assembled to hear. His manner of speaking is analysed. The expressions of his face, the intonations of his voice, the gestures of his hands, his animation and feeling, the varying effects of the speech upon the audience as it progresses – when and why it was cheered or laughed at or ironically greeted – are also described. We are brought into touch with human nature and human feeling in Parliament, with the sincerity, the pathos, the whimsicality of the proceedings, their laughter and sadness, their passion and pretence, by observers acutely sensible to impressions and skilful in their interpretative delineation.[44]

The new genre was an articulation of a new professional self-confidence. Journalists showed they were able to analyse and judge the performance of politicians and fulfil the public's needs as well. In the era of the sketch politicians were not so much judged on their arguments and their political speeches, but on their personality, manners and appearances. They had to adapt to what they called 'this sensational reporting'. British Cabinet minister David Lloyd George complained in 1911 that people could only rely on the sketch to gain an impression of parliamentary politics. He believed that as a result the capability of parliament would be underestimated. The predicted result was that readers who were not informed about the different parties' opposing political ideas would become spectators of a theatrical event full of conflicts between beloved or hated personalities.[45]

Commercialization and popularization did not gain as much ground in the Netherlands as in Great Britain. Although it became important to address a wider audience, Dutch newspapers first and foremost wanted to educate and instruct their readers. After stamp duty was abolished in 1869 new papers were founded, as had happened in Great Britain fifteen years earlier. Some of the new national dailies were commercial enterprises, while some city newspapers also followed the market-driven model. However, most newly founded dailies were published by political movements or parties.

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[44] MacDonagh, *The Reporters' Gallery*, p. 44.
[45] Ibid., pp. 45, 49.

The Dutch press still mainly fitted the advocacy model, primarily attempting to achieve social and political goals.

In the Netherlands the parliamentary portrait was initially more popular than the sketch. Portraits were introduced in May 1869, just after the abolition of stamp duty. Under the pseudonym Sagittarius, the reporters George Belinfante and J.C. van Lier published the booklet 'Parliamentary portraits'.[46] In vivid and satirical essays, they commented on the style and the performance of the outgoing MPs. Their portraits reflected the partisan politics and the political goals of the two writers and were amusing and light-hearted. However, the two writers also passed severe judgements on some of the politicians they portrayed, although they reserved their criticism for the conservative MPs and favoured their liberal colleagues. The conservative leader J. Heemskerk Az., for example, was characterized as a capable politician, but he was considered to be a very vindictive man and above all a failure as a statesman. Liberal MP, F.W.C. Blom, by contrast, was said to have a poor voice and dry diction, but the writers stressed that he was a 'competent, intelligent and educated man, who was as kind and humane as he was honest'.[47]

After the First World War many elements of the Anglo-American news style, such as headlines, investigative reporting and the interview were adopted in the Netherlands.[48] The parliamentary sketch was now definitely a feature of the repertoire of parliamentary reporting. Many newspapers started to publish a sketch once a week. Both journalists and the artists who made the drawings which often accompanied the sketches, tried to mix observations and judgements. A critic wrote that these illustrations 'picture a character that is being watched carefully by the draughtsman. The portrayed person comes close in such a way that the reader seems to know him'.[49] The dailies still took politics seriously, but they now also had an eye for the amusing side of parliamentary life.

In relation to sketches, there were great differences between Great Britain and the Netherlands. Firstly, for a long time in the Netherlands, sketches were published in books rather than newspapers. Secondly, until the twentieth century, the genre appeared solely during election time, with the aim of the sketch writers being to inform voters of their representatives' abilities.

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[46] Sagittarius, *Parlementaire portretten* (1869); cf. Wijfjes, 'Modernization of Style and Form of Dutch Journalism 1870–1914', pp. 61–80; pp. 76–78.

[47] Sagittarius, *Parlementaire portretten*, p. 9.

[48] Broersma, 'Botsende stijlen' (1999), pp. 40–68; Broersma, 'Visual Strategies. Dutch Newspaper Design between Text and Image, 1900–2000', pp. 177–198.

[49] Cited in Wijfjes, 'Modernization of Style and Form', p. 77; cf. Mr. Antonio, *Nieuwe schetsen uit de Tweede Kamer onder het ministerie Kuypers 1901/1905* (1905); Elout, *De heeren in Den Haag* (1917).

Sagittarius suggested that politicians 'should be trustworthy, to inspire confidence'.[50] Most of his followers also wanted to inform and educate their readers. This appeal to public opinion justified sketch writers observations about the personal characteristics of MPs. While in Great Britain the sketches were a means of amusing readers as well as creating a professional distance between themselves and politicians, in the Netherlands the genre was primarily intended to play a partisan or informative role.

Interviewing

Interviewing was one of the discursive practices assisted by the establishment of journalism as a separate field, independent of politics.[51] Media scholar Donald Matheson argues that in the early decades of interviewing 'politicians and journalists alike had difficulty turning the personal statement made to a journalist into a text official enough to appear in a newspaper'.[52] Journalism needed new conventions and routines to interpret conversations. Eventually the profession became more self-conscious, moving away from reproducing official statements in official language, towards vivid and personal representations of reality. Interviewing turned out to be an effective tool in acquiring a more autonomous position with respect to politicians and other public figures.

As a joint enterprise as well as a power struggle, this practice introduced a sense of equality between interviewer and interviewee. One-way communication – the reporting of a speech without the possibility of interference by a journalist – was replaced by a dialogue which provided the opportunity for journalists to intervene, change the subject or even take the lead in the conversation. The interview gave journalists more control over public discourse.[53] The 'new' journalist became active as a reporter who tried to obtain confidential information and wanted to reveal the 'real person' behind the public figure. They considered that to see through someone's public facade and understand their deepest thoughts, ambitions and objectives, it was necessary to know them in private. Therefore, the investigative reporter could not be content with recording what happened in the public sphere, it was imperative to intrude into private lives. One of the first Dutch interviewers, the reporter W. van Itallie-van Embden, for example,

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[50] Sagittarius, *Parlementaire portretten*, p. 4; cf. Lavater Jr., *Politieke photografien van de aftredende leden der Tweede Kamer* (Sneek, 1879), pp. 1–2; cf. Castoretpollux, *In de Tweede Kamer. Portretten* (Sneek, 1881), pp. i–ii.

[51] Cf. Broersma, 'The discursive strategy of a subversive genre' (2008), pp. 143–158.

[52] Matheson, 'The birth of news discourse', p. 563.

[53] Chalaby, *The Invention of Journalism*, p. 128.

stated that she was determined to depict the character of her interviewee, because this conditioned their behaviour in public.[54]

The interview was an invention of American journalism. It became common practice in the 1870s, satisfying the curiosity of readers who wanted to know about the views and statements of public persons and catch a glimpse of their personal lives as well. In both Great Britain and the Netherlands, interviewing at first horrified both politicians and journalists. 'The business of "interviewing" great men is getting to be one of the most harassing duties of American journalism', the *Liverpool Mercury* wrote in 1869. 'The game has been hunted so hard that it is not very shy.'[55] In an 1877 speech, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that British politicians were not used to giving interviews: 'Here we do our interviewing in the shape of after dinner speeches'.[56] Journalists and the elite in most European countries distrusted Americanization, which was seen to be an alarming consequence of modernization. It was also linked to commercialization and sensationalism, both of which were to be rejected.[57]

Nevertheless, for parliamentary reporting, interviewing was a new addition to the journalistic toolbox, accompanying the transformation from verbatim recording to producing news. In Westminster, Lucy began the new practice of lobbying in the 1870s. A limited number of reporters were accredited with the right to enter the lobby of the House of Commons, the centre of parliamentary life, to converse with MPs informally. 'In the old days journalists in Parliament had very little personal contact with Members in the Lobby', Lucy wrote in his memoirs. 'I happened to know a number of the members, and I contributed political paragraphs to the *Daily News*. Of course everybody was much shocked at this journalistic innovation, but it was a decided success. I found plenty of information coming to hand, and as time went on I paid more and more attention to the Lobby.'[58]

Lobbying was practised to obtain information, but a fixed rule of the game was not to quote informants directly even if they did not object to this. As an old hand wrote: 'the last thing that a newspaperman of those days desired to obtrude was his personal acquaintance with politicians whose speeches he reported and criticized'.[59] The introduction of the political in-

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[54] Ponce de Leon, *Self-exposure* (2002), pp. 29–30; Van Itallie-van Embden, *Sprekende portretten* [1924], p. III.

[55] *Liverpool Mercury* (15 November 1869).

[56] *The Times* (25 June 1877).

[57] Broersma, 'Botsende Stijlen'; Requate, 'Protesting against "America" as the Icon of Modernity' (2004), pp. 205–224; p. 205.

[58] MacDonagh, *The Reporters' Gallery*, p. 59.

[59] Schalck, 'Fleet Street in the 1880s: the New Journalism', in: Wiener (ed.), *Papers for the Millions*, pp. 73–87; p. 80.

terview as a recognizable genre in the columns was left to reporters such as W.T. Stead, who were not employed by the parliamentary section of a newspaper but hired as an exclusive 'interviewer'. After the 1890s, interviewing took off like wildfire. Politicians had to adapt to this new genre to attract attention, despite their initial distrust or misunderstanding of the practice. William Gladstone, for example, protested when he read his words reported in the newspaper – he thought that the conversation would not be attributed to him.[60]

Lobbying did not exist in Dutch parliament, with politics maintaining its distance from parliamentary journalism. However, apart from this fact, the introduction of interviewing into the Netherlands more or less followed the same pattern as it did in Great Britain. Interviews entered Dutch newspapers in the early 1880s, but their dissemination was slow while they remained associated with the despised sensationalism. The personality interview was introduced in the 1900s and became more common after 1918, but it was still unusual in the 1920s and considered a special feature. In 1928, *Het Vaderland*, for example, published interviews of leading politicians by the prominent journalist Doe Hans on the front page – the most important section of the paper. In an interview with Prime Minister D.J. de Geer the journalist was still very deferential, reporting: 'I would have liked to know the minister's opinion about this subject, but I did not want to pursue a question. As an interviewer, I could hardly debate this with His Excellency'.[61]

In spite of the fact that journalists often still acted subserviently towards politicians due to class differences and their partisan standpoints, the use of the interview reflected a new sense of professional self-awareness. Journalists not only asked questions, they also interpreted conversations. As representatives of the Fourth Estate, journalists increasingly felt they were entitled to do so. For example, in an interview with the Dutch Defence Minister, Hans announced: 'now I will start my main attack', before asking a question on a controversial issue. He also called the minister's arguments into question by explicitly telling his readers that the minister's clarification of his policy was ambiguous.[62]

The interview encouraged journalists' self-confidence and autonomy. Journalists had two forms of control here – during the interview they determined which subjects were discussed by asking the questions, and afterwards they selected the statements that would be cited in the story. The journalist had the power to represent the interviewee, and both parties con-

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[60] Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers*, p. 166.
[61] *Het Vaderland* (12 October 1928).
[62] Ibid. (5 September 1930).

cerned knew this throughout their conversation. Critics therefore accused interviewers of making news instead of gathering it. Quotations could be 'real' indeed, that is, the interviewer could elicit striking remarks from the interviewee. However, should these indiscretions be published? To do so was regarded as 'dishonourable journalism'.[63]

Resistance to the interview as a genre was related to the changing power relationship between journalism and the elites, although this line of critique slowly disappeared. Interviewing was a useful practice for an emerging profession which aspired to an autonomous position in society. Furthermore, publishers and editors understood that the interview was a journalistic form which was attractive to the masses. Politicians for their part realized they had an interest in voicing their views in public. Although until the Second World War politicians still distrusted interviews as they were 'subject to editing, misunderstanding, or distortion', they increasingly agreed to talk to journalists in private.[64] Public figures realized that it was of growing importance to be visible in the public sphere.

Especially after the introduction of universal suffrage and – in the Netherlands – proportional representation in 1917–1919, politicians became increasingly more interested in reaching the masses through the media. The Dutch prime minister Hendrik Colijn, for example, understood that as the leader of a minority party he had to organize support in the neutral and liberal press. He supplied journalists with information and was willing to answer questions on political events as well as his private life.[65] It became of greater importance to be known by the public as a person. Some level of cooperation with the press was therefore necessary. Politicians understood that in mass society and mass democracy, a friendly relationship with the newspapers was beneficial.

Concluding remarks

Between 1850 and 1940 journalism became an autonomous field with a discourse, or a logic, of its own. The first steps in the process of mediatization are traceable in the transformation of parliamentary reporting in these years. Politicians had to adapt to the professional practices, routines and conventions which journalism had established. The genres of the summary, the sketch and the portrait, as well as the interview were part of this developing discursive strategy. These new forms of reporting made it possible to interpret the social and political meaning of sayings, texts and actions. By doing

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[63] Quoted in: Broersma, 'The discursive strategy of a subversive genre', p. 157.
[64] Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers*, p. 166.
[65] Langeveld, 'De verzuiling doorbroken' (2002), pp. 37–49.

so journalists tried to gain authority in relation to the general public as well as autonomy with respect to the political field.

At first, parliamentary journalists simply reproduced public speech. They recorded what was said in both Houses in verbatim reports of debates, without adding their own perspective. With the introduction of the summary, reporters started to interpret what happened in parliament, and to make judgements about politicians. The sketch added satire to the repertoire of journalism, while the interview brought about direct contact between reporters and politicians. Journalists started to ask questions and by doing so they made 'new' information public. In addition, they interpreted the information they obtained within a professional framework. Politicians had to respond to the way in which the 'media reality' was taking shape.

The pace of this process of journalism extricating itself from politics and politics increasingly being mediated, differed in Great Britain and the Netherlands. Political scientists Daniël Hallin and Paolo Mancini have distinguished a North Atlantic or liberal model of the press in which they include Great Britain.[66] This model is characterized by the early development of a mass-circulation press, the early professionalization of journalism and its neutral and commercial character. It is market oriented, with the state removing legal impediments comparatively early in the nineteenth century. The Netherlands is included in the North European or democratic-corporatist model. It traditionally had a strong party-based press, which was opinionated and non-commercial. In addition, there was strict state intervention in the press. Close connections between newspapers and political parties or social movements and the level of governmental press control curbed the speed of commercialization and the rise of a mass-circulation press.

Great Britain took the lead by introducing new genres into parliamentary reporting, and this was because the British press was more market oriented and newspapers were not that closely affiliated to political parties as in the Netherlands. Journalists in Britain acquired autonomy much earlier than the Dutch, who remained partisan until after the Second World War. In Great Britain the forms of reporting discussed here were used strategically to achieve a more autonomous position in relation to politics, to develop a professional discourse and also to fulfil the needs of the mass consumers. This transformation of journalism occurred much later in the Netherlands; however, in both countries, politicians had to adapt to these new journalistic forms if they were to be mentioned in the newspaper columns. In mass democracy, with parliamentary politics becoming more and more mediatized, this became increasingly important.

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[66] Hallin and Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems* (2004).