Newsroom dissonance: how new digital technologies are changing professional roles in contemporary newsrooms

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I. Chapter 1: The oldest man on television

Dubbed by some economists as the first neoliberal experimental laboratory in the world (Escobar, 2003; Portes, 2006; D. Harvey, 2007; Cabalin, 2014), Chile has experienced accelerated economic development and technological growth in the past 25 years. The nation's progress has been such that, according to Larner, 'it was Chile that gave the neoliberal paradigm international credibility' (2003, p. 510). Although often overlooked due to its remote location, this 4,300-kilometre long and, on average, 175-kilometre wide country has the highest rate of competition in Latin America. Furthermore, according to a 2018 report by the World Economic Forum, Chile is the 33rd most competitive economy in the world.[3] Since 2010, it has also been the only South American member of the OECD, a group of countries with relatively high-income economies and high human development index (HDI) scores. However, this growth and development are causes for celebration only if we omit the economic inequalities and redistribution issues that the country has been experiencing since the 1990s (Beyer et al., 1999; Thévenot, 2017).

Specifically, economic policies established during the dictatorial period – together with the establishment of private monopolies during the 1970s and 1980s – have transformed the news and media industry so quickly (Mellado & Lagos, 2014; Godoy, 2016) that it has been rendered unrecognisable even for the workers who have spent a lifetime making the business successful. As Crofts Wiley states, 'During the early 1990s, Chilean television was transformed radically by processes of deregulation, privatization, transnational investment, technological change, and ideological liberalization. Chilean media were integrated into global structures of ownership [and] infrastructure expanded dramatically' (2006, p. 400).

In this chapter, I demonstrate that the story of media development in Chile is, if only one word should be utilised, tragic. The enlargement, spread, and success of this industry is tightly linked with imperial revolutions, Earth-shifting earthquakes, cold-blooded dictatorships, and today, with the supremacy of duopolies that overtook the physical infrastructure made of cables and antennas almost 30 years ago. I claim that the economic deregulation experienced in the country during and after the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet (1973–1990) has led to a competitive market that has forced media and news companies to heavily invest in technological innovations to capture a highly-connected, multiplatform-consuming audience

[3] According to the World Economic Forum, competitiveness is defined as the set of institutions, policies and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country.

while concurrently prioritising the need for capital over normative roles of journalists (Siebert et al., 1956), thus increasing professional dissonance in news organisations. How has this economic growth translated into new material infrastructures for the Chilean media? Furthermore, how has the political past shaped today's industry with which contemporary journalists coexist? How is the current infrastructure shaping the narratives about the past? Finally, how can this unique and particular combination of political history and economic growth inform the way new temporalities, forms, and infrastructures transform the news-making process? This story explains how this industry has come to a new digital era.

1.1. The production control room

Summer had not yet officially arrived in Santiago, but that afternoon in mid-November 2017 was especially warm and dry, as only summers in Chile can be. The steady, relaxing sound of a fan was drowned out by the mellifluous tones of a generic bossa nova song emanating from the speakers in the corridor, filling every corner of the empty production control room. As I sat in one of the many free chairs at the video switcher desk, I could not avoid feeling like a child entering the cockpit of a plane for the first time. I was immediately impressed. Everywhere I looked, I saw multicoloured buttons, shining knobs, levers, joysticks, animated countdown clocks, and keyboards without any distinguishable labels to indicate why they were there or what they did. An endless number of screens and monitors threatened to overtop every desk and every wall in the room around me. As part of my fieldwork agreement with Canal 13, I was permitted to move freely around the station and the newsroom, and yet I had not been in this room before. *Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain,* I thought.

I looked up, and a line of red numbers against a black screen told me that the next news bulletin was less than an hour away. I had been working in this newsroom long enough to know what that meant. In a matter of minutes, through the glass doors behind me, a group of almost 10 people would rush into the room and, with strong team coordination, assume their positions behind the switchboard without waiting for instructions. Everybody from the director to the producers, the camera control unit, and the live ticker writer would sit and, as pilots with their planes, air the programme. Furthermore, I knew that running against those same red numbers, 50 metres away and one level below, unfinished news clips were travelling between reporters, editors, and producers' desks, waiting for someone to greenlight them. Some of the journalists were returning from late news conferences and had only minutes to load final clips into the system and send them to the same switcher by which I sat. Meanwhile, floor coordinators and

cameramen would be waiting in the studio for the director's instructions while the lights hanging from metal beams in the celling warmed. Like actors rehearsing for a play, the anchors would be reading and re-reading their scripts in the makeup room before the words were loaded in the teleprompters. Far from the building, a journalist, a producer, and a cameraman would be standing by to report live from the field. That cameraman would be wearing a backpack with an antenna that would beam the signal to space and then down to the sleeping screens in front of me, while journalists would check and re-check the notes and the quotes that they had written on small paper pads. All of this would be happening minutes before going on the air. For now, however, the rhythmic Portuguese words of the bossa nova singer coming from the corridor was the only noise that filled the room.

Figure 1. Production control room at Canal 13. Photo: Tomás Dodds during fieldwork.

Guillermo Flórez was a television editor who had been guiding me throughout the newsroom. Instead of performing a sit-down interview, I decided to walk with this 30-something filmmaking graduate, and the switch room was our first stop. He laughed lightly at my amazement and shrugged as if to say he had seen better ones. For a while, he related facts, noted points of interest around the room, and explained what some of those buttons and levers actually did; then he turned to the door, and we left the control room. We walked through the dark, narrow tile corridors, discussing the eight years he had been working at Canal 13 and the technological changes he had witnessed at the station.

The dominant transformation was, he claimed, when HD television was introduced. In 2009, Canal 13 was the first station in the country to transmit in HDTV. In simple terms, this meant that some programmes could be broadcast in 1080p (1920x1080 pixels; 16:9 aspect ratio). 'Everything was *heavier*, so we needed to change it all. Improve and change cameras, update

the edition software, the servers, and the storage systems', he stated.[4] We stopped in front of a glass wall on the second floor of the building. 'So now, Press [meaning Teletrece, the press department of Canal 13] has its own mini data centre', he added while pointing to the other side of the glass. A row of deep-black boxes stared back at us from a locked and poorly lit room. Tiny intermittent blue and green dots indicated that the machines were awake and functioning. Other than that, at least for me, these state-of-the-art digital storage systems may as well have been modern-looking refrigerators. Far away were the days of shelving films or tapes. Now, hundreds of invisible terabytes recorded every broadcast and every story transmitted.

'The problem was', Guillermo continued as we now walked downstairs toward the television studios, 'that in 2009, most people still had square TVs [non-digital or analogue televisions]. So how could we make the people with HD televisions watch in HD and people with square televisions watch the old signal?' This was a valid question, since according to official records, until January 2019, only 17% of all transmitting antennas in the country had migrated from analogue to digital television (Subtel, 2019). The technology was available before the country had the infrastructure to support it.

Initially, Canal 13 decided to transmit over two signals (different channels on users' televisions): one for HD and one for analogue, and the viewer chose which channel better fit their television sets. However, analogue televisions have an aspect ratio of 4:3, and people with these sets still watched the HD channel, which meant that bits of information were cut from their screens. This prompted journalists, editors, and especially cameramen to begin filming while leaving more 'air' on the sides of the screen, therefore concentrating all the information in the centre of the shot. Therefore, if someone watched the HD signal on an analogue television, then the most important information would still be displayed. For this filmmaking graduate, the idea that the platform ruled the style of what to present and how to present it was the ultimate transformation in recent media history.

'But since less than a year ago, we have decided to broadcast through the same signal, and we just do something we call *squeeze*. We just … literally squeeze the images in regular televisions. Anchors love it because they look so much thinner', he said with a laugh.

I continued taking notes of all the technical data that Guillermo was saying as we moved through the building, and I started to think about how little I really knew about the history of television as a platform. My research objective was to explore how journalists and media

[4] All the interviews in this thesis have been translated from Spanish to English by the author.

workers were appropriating digital technologies into their routines, but to do so, I first needed to know how and why Chilean television and newspapers had become this way.

1.2. Meeting Pepe

Rumour around the newsroom at Canal 13 was that Pepe had the title of being the oldest producer still working in Chilean television. I first heard that rumour when I commented that I wanted to interview someone with a little more experience than my coeval and younger colleagues. As soon as I finished the sentence, all fingers around me pointed, rather lazily, to the middle of the newsroom. I looked around and my eyes found a loud, grey-haired, pink-shirted man who was telling jokes to a small crowd by the producer's desk. 'Oh, you have to interview Pepe', my content editor stated without taking his eyes off the screen. 'He has been here forever'. *Forever* was exactly what I was seeking.

I knew I had met Pepe before. The website editor, who was in charge of overseeing my stay, had introduced me to almost everyone in the room during my first day in the press department. He provided me with a brief tour around the room, and every time we stopped by someone's desk, he said, 'This is Tomás. He will be working with us as a journalist for a while, but he is actually doing research about …' and then he turned to me so I could finish with a non-specific, non-binding '… new technologies in the newsroom'. This little sketch of us was often received with confused smiles and inquisitive looks. If I was lucky, then I received more questions about my motives to be there as I shook people's hands. On some occasions, however, people did not mind revealing that they were not crazy about having someone studying them all the time. Their faces or eyes would often harden over what they seemed to consider to be a paltry addition to the team.

Journalists are often not fans of academics who study media and journalism. The language utilised by social scientists, such as 'making the news' or 'social construction of reality', often becomes offensive to media workers (Gieber, 1964; Schudson, 1989). The socially negative connotation may suggest that journalists are interfering in a biased way with the construction of the news. The idea that journalists meddle with the construction of reality – a concept which is up for discussion (see Reese et al., 2001) – directly attacks what some believe are the most important values and ethical standards in journalism, such as professionalism, objectivism, detachment, and non-involvement with the news (Hanitzsch et al., 2011). To prevent or minimise the alienation of those I wanted to study, Schultz argues that the optimal 'title verb describing journalistic practice within the analytical framework of reflexive sociology would

be *positioning* the news' (2007, p. 202), which differs from classical newsroom studies that employ words that may evoke a negative response from journalists.

Why are journalists sensitive about these issues? Some authors argue that this defensiveness indicates that journalists are not reflexive about their own work (Haas, 2006). As Lule argues, 'it is still a truism that the press engages in critical evaluation of every institution in society except itself' (1992, p. 92). Consequently, as Thomsen notes, journalists commonly 'appear guarded towards researchers from outside their profession' (2018, p. 59). However, I was not completely 'outside their profession'; my own position as a former journalist was an advantageous tool in this situation. With this idea in mind, I walked across the newsroom floor toward the producer's desk, hoping Pepe was not a journalist who disliked social scientists, as I quickly re-introduced myself as a former journalist.

'My name is José "Pepe" Martínez',[5] he started. We sat for a coffee at a plastic cafeteria table in one of the building's courtyard patios. As it turned out, he seemed more than happy to provide a fellow journalist with an interview. 'I have spent 54 years of my life working on television – 54 out of my 69 years of age. I was very, very young when I started', he said with a satisfied smile and a sense of pride. He spoke with a degree of urgency, as if he feared that his memory would fail him before he finished his story.

Within the first five minutes of our conversation, while our drinks were still piping hot, Pepe had already talked sufficiently to make me secretly thankful for the recording application opened on my phone, which was placed strategically on the table between us. With surprising speed, he described his childhood and teenage years as well as the singers and actors he had met throughout his working years.

At times, it was difficult to keep him on track. He mentioned more than once, or rather name-dropped, as it is now common to say, his close friendship with host and international entertainer Mario 'Don Francisco' Kreutzberger. I can only assume this was aimed to impress me and immediately clarify that I was not talking to just another neophytic, inexperienced producer. After stating Kreutzberger's name, he paused theatrically for a second and looked at me to see my reaction. It seemed rude not to appear to be impressed, so I nodded my head, smiled, and went along with it.

He said he was writing a book about his years working on television and the noteworthy stories he had seen, lived, or heard about. Some stories would remain secret, he said, such as when he

[5] My interview with José 'Pepe' Martínez was recorded in November, 2017.

flew with Don Francisco to Buenos Aires and 'misbehaved', he finished in a whisper as his eyes moved worryingly toward the recording phone between our coffees.

I encouraged him to continue with his stories about Kreutzberger, César Antonio Santis, Carla Cristi, and other old-time celebrities, because I was sitting in front of 54 years of television history, and I needed to know how Chilean media had become the technological industry that it is today. *What better way to learn,* I thought as I watched Pepe sip his coffee, *than by asking someone who was actually there when it happened.*

1.3. The earthquake and then the World Cup

Without telling his parents, Pepe left school when he was 15 years old so he could work on television. He had fallen hopelessly in love early on with the black-and-white images he saw and the sounds he heard coming from an old, wooden-framed television set. He knew immediately that he wanted to work in television for the rest of his life. So great was his craze that he secretly enrolled in a night-school class to earn his high school diploma. Attending class in the late afternoons was a small price to pay if that meant that, during the days, he could work as an assistant producer at Canal 13. Being a 15-year-old assistant producer included tasks such as booking the stars and celebrities who appeared on the few programmes already on air (including Don Francisco's, he quickly emphasised) and fetching foreign movies on video tapes that some embassies imported and distributed between the stations around Santiago. If Pepe ever doubted the path he had chosen, then it was quickly forgotten when Chile hosted the 1962 International Federation of Association Football World Cup, and Canal 13 was offered the licence to broadcast the games.

One must travel back in time to understand the magnitude of this event. Although this was only the seventh version of the World Cup, Chile had been lobbying to host the games for almost 10 years. Then, in 1954, Chile was elected as the new host country for the 1962 games, beating other candidates such as Argentina and then-West Germany.

However, on 22 May 1960, the southern city of Valdivia was hit with the most powerful earthquake ever recorded in history. The quake achieved a devastating 9.5 on the Richter scale; tsunamis with waves up to 25 metres high threatened to erase coastal towns; the ground tore apart, carelessly gulping both animals and humans; and the Bavarian-like buildings (present due to the waves of German immigration toward the end of 1850) made of pine wood and river stones collapsed like a house of cards after a strong gust of wind. By nightfall, the water and electric infrastructure were completely destroyed.

It seemed that the dream of hosting the World Cup was over, as half of the country had been levelled. However, the International Federation of Association Football as well as several other NGOs and football organisations around the globe began to donating money to save and improve the infrastructure of the stadiums and cities affected by the earthquake. Ultimately, the World Cup symbolised not only the games but also the triumph over tragedy. Broadcasting the games was also the first real test for Chilean television as a platform. It hastened the technological and professional development of television journalism in the country, and the number of receptors and antennas in Santiago proliferated (Urzua, 1986). To the audience's astonishment and honest disbelief, some games were transmitted live. Everyone wanted to see a football match in these machines that had been invented only 35 years earlier. Advertising from that period (see Figure 2) highlights the benefits of watching a match in real time without leaving the comfort of one's sofa. The high demand for television consumption forced the industry to upgrade the infrastructure around the city, and antennas began springing up like mushrooms all over San Cristóbal hill, the second highest peak in the city.

Figure 2. 'Watch the World Cup in your house; no lines, no cold, no rain'. Source: Archivo Nacional de Chile.

Furthermore, it was the first time that television producers experienced the taste of overpriced advertising on screen. The revenues obtained during the World Cup forever changed the way television was made in the country. Two things were clear by the time that Chile played the former Yugoslavia in the third-place playoffs. First, Pepe was convinced that he had made the correct decision. He would remain working in television for at least the next six decades.

Second, the audience was captivated. Once the World Cup was almost over, they stayed at home with their brand-new television sets, craving more content and audiovisual material.

Pepe was not the only one in his teens back then; Canal 13 itself had been inaugurated in August 1959 as the result of an experiment by scientists and engineers of the Catholic University of Chile (UC). During almost the entire decade from 1950 to 1960, television remained guarded by a handful of universities in the country, being developed and tested merely for academic purposes (Urzua, 1986). On 20 August 1959, UC launched a public signal on Channel 2. Two days later, the Catholic University of Valparaiso started transmitting on Channel 8, and a year after that, the University of Chile began testing their own signal. These details are building blocks in the technological history of Chilean media. The fact that the majority of Chilean stations are linked to, or rather *were* linked to, the main universities in the country is key in the development of the industry.

Initially, Pepe remembered working in an old building on Lira Street, which is one of the oldest, more traditional roads in downtown Santiago. The walls and floors were made of cheap wood and chipboard. He recalled that there were only two studios then: A and B. However, they preferred not to utilise Studio B in the morning because the deep smell of frying oil seeped from the diner downstairs.

A 2018 video celebrating Canal 13's 60 years on air paints a different picture than Pepe's memories.[6] The black-and-white images recorded during the inauguration of the station feature engineers in white lab coats[7] operating an electrical switch while the apostolic nuncio, Opilio Rossi, throws holy water toward the television cameras, which seem to be made of cardboard. In retrospect, it seems like lousy planning to throw any kind of liquid, even the blessed kind, at those poorly constructed cameras. A distinct, high-pitched nasal male voice, which was a consequence of the lack of bass tones in yesteryear's microphones, announced with fanfare the inauguration of the 'most powerful television station in the country!' This station included a 3,000-watt video transmitter with a range of 40 kilometres and an audio transmitter with a power of 2,000 watts.

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[6] "Aniversario Canal 13, 1959 y años 60'". Rec Online, Canal 13. Retrieved from: https://youtu.be/Foa_c1Ao4kw

[7] It is interesting to notice how both in the advertisement shown in Image 2 and in the commemoration video, television operators are characterized wearing white lab coats. This reflects on the idea that until not too long ago, these technologies were being used exclusively inside actual laboratories in the universities.

At the time, the government had ruled that television stations were expected to broadcast at least three hours per day and four days per week for the first 18 months. After this period, the stations were required to increase their airtime to 29 hours in five days per week for the 1,500 receptors across the country.

Because the stations belonged to the universities, the government's original idea was to broadcast cultural and educational contents exclusively. However, none of the three universities had sufficient strength economically to support the costs of maintaining the broadcast on their own. Consequently, by the time the World Cup ended, and in light of the revenues obtained from advertising, UC's Canal 13 had already decided to adopt an American-based commercial strategy: set the programming line-up based on ratings and advertising revenue. The other two universities followed suit to remain competitive. Thus began commercial television in Chile, which included soap operas, game programmes, and in 1963, the first television press department in the country: Teletrece.

In contrast with the state-of-the-art technology that the commemoration video's narrator describes, Pepe remembered a different experience during his first years working at Canal 13. 'We used to do shows with a lot of sacrifice. Everything required creative thinking', he said as he described the crafts and techniques that they innovated. He recalled that the lighting system for the programmes was based on 100-watt incandescent bulbs.[8] Surrounded by aluminium paper veneers, the lights hit the anchors like a beam of concentrated light and heat, making them sweat profusely. Sometimes, the producers placed wicker baskets over the same bulbs, and by carefully and manually turning them, they projected moving figures onto the walls behind the anchors' desk. When the wicker baskets were not available, the producers simply utilised papercutting. 'Papers, scissors, a light bulb here, and a cable there, and we will illuminate all the background in a second', he claimed with a hint of pride in his voice.

Pepe believed that all the efforts were worth it based on the audience's response, although it was difficult to know with certainty. Unlike today, to measure ratings, Canal 13 sent UC's undergraduate students door-to-door around different neighbourhoods in Santiago to administer a questionnaire. The students reported which channels were the most watched in any particular household and which programmes on that station. 'Now, it is true that back then there were only 300,000 televisions in Santiago. We did not reach the entire country. That came later', Pepe admitted. But later came quickly. By 1980, Canal 13 was leaving Lira Street behind

[8] As a reference, typical studios during the last decade commonly used 1,000-watt tungsten-halogen lights, if not something that saves more energy.

and moving to their brand-new building on Inés Matte Urrejola Avenue. Five hectares of infrastructure replaced the wooden floors and the smell of fried oil. This street also offered the advantage of being directly under San Cristóbal hill, where the majority of antennas had been placed. 'An architect from the Catholic University, called Eduardo San Martín, was sent [for] three months to Europe. He went to observe Rai News in Italy, some public stations in Spain, then NBC in the United States, and finally Argentina. The blueprints were then sent to the BBC in London, and they approved them without observations', Pepe told me between sips of coffee. By 1983, the station had already built five new studios at the Inés Matte Urrejola location: two, at 930 and 600 square metres, were for programmes with live audiences; one at 400 square metres was for shooting soap operas; one at 180 square metres was for news broadcasting; and a minor studio was 77 square metres.

Figure 3. Canal 13's current building on Inés Matte Urrejola 848 in Santiago. San Cristóbal hill and the antennas can be seen in the background. Photo: Tomás Dodds during fieldwork.

In UC's library,[9] I found the speech delivered by UC's rector the night the new building was inaugurated. In a typewritten letter of 14 yellowish pages, the rector described the merits and contributions that both the station and the university were providing for the country. Furthermore, the speech highlighted the station's accelerated economic growth rate, especially between 1974 and 1975. The executive director at the time, Eleodoro Rodríguez Matte, was credited in the speech with a responsible administration that led to the accumulation of capital that enabled the purchase and construction of the new building.

[9] The complete speech can be access in Spanish here:
https://repositorio.uc.cl/bitstream/handle/11534/3161/127.pdf

However, something else had occurred in Chile during those years – something that partially explains Canal 13's need to invest in new technology and infrastructure. In September 1973, a coup d'état ended the country's historical republican tradition and the socialist presidency of Salvador Allende. The dictatorship of Pinochet, sponsored both economically and politically by U.S. President Richard Nixon's administration and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), would continue for 17 years, throwing Chile into economic and political disarray.

This part of Chile's history was not something Pepe liked to discuss. In fact, I do not have a single usable quote from him on the record regarding the political situation during the period between 1973 and 1990. The smile that appeared on his face when talking about Don Francisco and wicker baskets quickly changed into a grimace when he felt that my line of questions was heading toward this grim period of instability, torture, and murder.

However, this restraint was nothing new to me. During the years that I worked as a journalist, I learned not to ask an excessive number of questions about these topics when older journalists were in the room. Even the winner of the Chilean National Prize for Journalism, María Olivia Mönckeberg (2011), admits that journalists who work today in Chilean media know that there are forbidden names, topics, and words. I explore the silence, self-censorship, and other consequences of the dictatorship for Chilean journalism later in this chapter, but I cannot avoid initially mentioning it because the development of the media industry in this Latin American country is tightly intertwined with the political events that unfolded as a consequence of the beginning and end of what is now known as the 'Chilean road to socialism'. In the following sections, I briefly describe the political and economic context that led to Allende's victory, the role that media played in his defeat, and the political and economic consequences for the industry after Pinochet's dictatorship.

1.4. The media before Allende

On 16 October 1998, eight years after the Chilean return to democracy, Pinochet was arrested in London after being indicted by Spanish magistrate Baltasar Garzón for human rights violations. Kenneth Roth, Human Rights Watch's executive director, wrote to then-U.S. President Bill Clinton: 'Pinochet is wanted for crimes against American citizens, and even crimes on American soil'.[10] Roth urged the Clinton administration to contribute material

[10] Roth is referring to the assassination of Orlando Letelier in Washington D.C. in 1976. See "How a Dictator Got Away with a Brazen Murder in D.C. in 1976": https://www.history.com/news/pinochet-terror-attack-dc.

documents and other evidence against Pinochet. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright convened a meeting with senior staff to determine the U.S. government's response. Providing only specific documents could be seen as an attempt to cover or frame the U.S. involvement in the dictatorship. Instead, the Clinton administration undertook a major declassification process that extended for decades (Kornbluh, 2003), and some of these documents would be utilised in the years to come to illuminate the role of the Chilean media during the 1970s for and against Allende's government.

In 1970, Santiago was a city of almost 3 million people. The first route for the first underground train in the country was being built, and the first television public service broadcaster, Televisión Nacional de Chile, was being inaugurated. Around the same time, the most important Chilean newspapers in circulation could be classified in two categories: first, those that belonged to private, family-owned economic groups, such as *La Tercera* (from the Picó family) as well as *El Mercurio*, *La Segunda*, and *Las Últimas Noticias* (all from the Edwards family). The second category included those media organisations that belonged to political parties, such as *La Prensa* (Christian Democratic party), *El Siglo* (Communist party), *Noticias de Última Hora* (Socialist party), and *El Clarín* (also from the Socialist party starting in 1972). From these lists, all of those in the first category remain in circulation today. From the second list, only *El Clarín* still exists, although it is exclusively in a digital version and is now owned by the Fundación Presidente Allende. It is not even a shadow of what it once was.

Bernedo and Porath (2003) posit that these newspapers were not responsible for the breakdown of democracy in 1973, but they contributed significantly to the polarisation of society. They argue that at least during the 1960s, the Chilean press generally maintained a canon of respect for the national institutions and democratic proceedings. However, as the political arena became increasingly polarised, the newspapers abandoned their role as 'serious media outlets' and became, rather, a 'combative press'. For example, *El Clarín* repeatedly attacked Jorge Alessandri during the 1970 election for being single, suggesting that he was a closeted homosexual. They openly referred to and wrote about him as Mrs Alessandri. Concurrently, *El Mercurio* identified itself in opposition to Allende and warned its readers about a government 'under the guidelines of Moscow'. Ralph McGehee, who worked as a CIA analyst for one-quarter of a century, wrote an article for *The Nation* in which he explained the following:

Disturbed at the Chilean military's unwillingness to take action against Allende, the CIA forged a document purporting to reveal a leftist plot to murder Chilean military leaders. The discovery of the 'plot' was headlined in the media and Allende was deposed and murdered. There is a

similarity between events that precipitated the overthrow of Allende and what happened in Indonesia in 1965. (1981)

Thus, the newspapers, now fighting from trenches on both right and left, began a process of blaming the opposition for every event committed by the armed radical groups of each side. For example, a right-wing magazine, *PEC*, published a false story in June 1971 with the following headline: 'It has been confirmed: Schneider was killed by a follower of Allende'.
This situation escalated until 19 September 1972, when *El Mercurio* openly called the Chilean Armed Forces to 'uphold its duty', an elegant euphemism for a military coup. We now know, because of Clinton's decision to declassify these documents, that 'throughout the 1960s, the CIA poured funds into Chile's largest – and staunchly right-wing – newspaper, *El Mercurio*, putting reporters and editors on the payroll, writing articles and columns for placement and providing additional funds for operating expenses' (Kornbluh, 2004, pp. 91–92). Nixon and Kissinger's plan to intervene after their failed 'white coup' was now being realised.
However, in contrast to Bernedo and Porath (2003), Chilean National Prize for Journalism winner Juan Pablo Cárdenas (2005) argues that the press was in fact one of the decisive actors in the institutional rupture of Chile in 1973. According to Cárdenas, television, newspapers, and radios created the social climate that led to the coup because they allowed political parties and various factual groups to manipulate them. The press had once encouraged the idea of independence and contributed to the country breaking ties with the Iberian Empire, Cárdenas argues, but was now spreading hatred and intolerance and turning each political colour against one another.
Placing the blame entirely on Nixon or *El Mercurio* would be insufficient to explain the context of polarisation at the beginning of the 1970s. The printed press filled its pages with conspiracy theories and anti-systemic narratives for years before the Hawker Hunter jets bombed La Moneda Palace, the presidential residence, on 11 September 1973. I argue that this polarised climate in the media industry responded not only to the political context of the 1960s and 1970s but also to the way in which the printed press had functioned in Chile since its early days.
Not until the end of the 19th century did Chile experience the emergence of what we call the modern liberal press. Ossandón and Santa Cruz (2001) argue that the liberal movement came to power in the 1870s and abolished the draconian printing laws that were utilised to punish and imprison dissident voices in Chile, after which the printing press began to have a decisive role in the centre of public civic life. However, during the liberal project (1849–1966), the press and journalists were already highly doctrinal. Santa Cruz (1988) posits that newspapers had

been understood as a trench from which journalists functioned as ideologists of the liberal model of the nation-state. However, as the market evolved, journalistic narratives seemed to evolve as well. Opinion and propaganda were relegated to the editorial pages, and journalists turned to a more informative type of news, as they now competed under market rules. News needed to be universal and progressive, featuring a hint of cosmopolitan internationalism. Chile wanted to be a modern country such as France, England, or Germany, and the newspapers' narratives needed to demonstrate this desire. This belief remained true until the beginning of the Cold War and the U.S. international concern about the spread of communist ideas throughout the South American continent.

1.5. The beginning of the 'Chilean road to socialism'

Perhaps if the Cold War had not been reaching its apogee or if Allende had won the popular vote in one of his three previous campaigns for president, then circumstances in Chile would have been different. However, they were not. After running unsuccessfully in 1952, 1958, and 1964, Allende, a physician and member of the Socialist Party of Chile, was elected president of the country in 1970. A self-described Marxist and head of the Popular Unity political coalition, Allende sought to implement structural reforms and sharp transformations in Chile's social and economic systems (Goldberg, 1975).

His victory occurred in a time of economic growth. During the 1960s, the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) and the Inter-American Development Bank emphatically and repeatedly expressed the belief that both Chile and Latin America in general needed to change their economic systems. According to Alexis Guardia, to pursue this 'path of development', the countries in the region needed to break the classical constraints of economic growth, including 'the foreign trade stranglehold, the backwardness of agriculture, the inflexibility of the tax system', (1979), and so on. These reasons as well as sponsorship by the United States were behind the creation of the Alliance of Progress in 1961, which was U.S. President John F. Kennedy's master plan to promote economic development and democratic governments throughout the region (DeWitt, 2009; S. Edwards, 2009). In Kennedy's words, the alliance was to be a 'vast cooperative effort unparalleled in magnitude and nobility of purpose, to satisfy the basic needs of the American people for homes, work and land, health and school'. In reality, it was an effort to heal U.S.-Latin American relationships by supporting the region's economic growth (Weis, 2001). For many, however, the alliance died with Kennedy in Dealey Plaza on 22 November 1963, because U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson's

administration had different plans. Johnson did not share Kennedy's interest in Latin America and typically favoured stability over change (Colman, 2010). However, by the time that Kennedy died, ideas about necessary changes and radical social transformations had already been planted like seeds into the minds of Chilean political and social elites.

In July 1967, those seeds sprouted, and President Eduardo Frei Montalva promulgated the law that instigated the agrarian reform, which enhanced agricultural production and modified the regime of land tenure in Chile (Valdés & Foster, 2015). This law promised, as Frei's slogan stated, to 'turn the *campesino* into his own *patrón*'. As Heidi Tinsman argues, on the day of Frei's victory, 'a delegation submitted a petition, signed with thumbprints and signatures, calling for accelerated land expropriations and the inclusion of *campesinos* in decision-making processes' (2002, p. 82). Although considered a radical move by some, this process was necessary to achieve the ECLA and Inter-American Development Bank's recommendations. It was the Chilean response to international calls for development; however, most importantly, the agrarian reform signalled a shift in the industrial, social, and economic development of the country.

During the 1960s, Chile was by far the South American country that received the most financial aid from the US. Furthermore, compared to the rest of the region, Chile had a relatively significant urban middle class, a pluralistic political system, and an anticipation of improving its working class after two decades of high inflation and moderate growth (Caldwell & Montes, 2015). Positive economic indicators notwithstanding, both Kennedy and Johnson's administrations were concerned with Allende's imminent victory. With the memory of Allende's narrow defeat in 1958, the CIA pursued a more direct approach and sent nearly US$2.5 million to Frei Montalva, the Christian Democrat incumbent running against Allende (Kirkendall, 2007).

Allende campaigned under an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist slogan and was finally elected in 1970 in a run-off by Congress, as neither he, Jorge Alessandri, nor Radomiro Tomic, the other candidates, had obtained a majority of the votes. Yet, Allende's ideological and personal relationship with Fidel Castro's Cuban regime raised more than one red flag in Washington, and Nixon's administration proposed a 'white coup' before the Chilean Congress could confirm Allende (Qureshi, 2008). Consequently, the CIA financed and allied with *Patria y Libertad* (Fatherland and Liberty),[11] a right-wing paramilitary group. The terrorists were

[11] "CIA provided tear gas, submachine-guns and ammunition to the second group". Read the complete report that the CIA send to the U.S. Congress here: https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/general-reports-1/chile/#5.

instructed to kidnap General René Schneider, the head of the Chilean army, who opposed the idea of conducting a military coup against Allende (McSherry, 2002). However, General Schneider was killed during the abduction, which mobilised people to rally around Allende, and he was finally confirmed by Congress. Both Nixon and Kissinger (who, until recently, remained an active political agent; see Dorfman, 2017) sought a new plan to end Chile's socialist dream; targeting the media was a significant part of that plan.

1.6. The media after Pinochet

On the eve of the 2018 Chilean presidential election, journalists at *La Tercera* held their own mock election. As many offices and companies often do in Chile, a sealed box was passed around the floor, and those willing to participate voted for their favourite candidate. I had seen the same exercise during my fieldwork only weeks before in Teletrece, where I was working during the first round of the presidential elections. After an empty coffee can travelled the newsroom of Canal 13, Beatriz Sánchez, a left-wing journalist-turned-politician, was elected by a large majority as the favourite over the right-wing candidate and now-president Sebastián Piñera. That evening at *La Tercera*, however, the democratic spirit came to a halt. Learning of the mock election, the newspaper director informed everybody that such activities were not to occur. A hush fell over the crowd as I saw smiles disappearing from journalists' faces. Nobody replied, and the party rapidly dissipated. However, a newspaper reporter surreptitiously hid the box between her feet under her desk. The votes were later counted in secret and the left-wing candidate was the winner with a clear majority.

'You have to know where you are working', a Canal 13 reporter had told me weeks earlier. 'What does that mean exactly?' I replied. 'That you can't publish everything you want. You know it from the moment … It isn't necessary for someone to tell you. I know I can't write a story about Luksic and his donations', she answered. In Chile, it is well-known that Andrónico Luksic, owner of Canal 13, and Álvaro Saieh, owner of *La Tercera*, have close political and economic ties to the right and to other former Pinochet associates (Cademartori, 2011). However, her *knowing* was what caught my attention. Nobody had told her directly not to cover certain topics, and yet '[you know that] it just wouldn't see the light', she said. Both her story and the badly ended mock election at *La Tercera* seemed to indicate a tacit agreement in which certain topics were not covered. However, I wondered how tacit this agreement really was and where it originated.

These stories, I argue, are the echoes of a dictatorial regime that continue to reverberate across diverse newsrooms and media platforms. Immediately after the military coup occurred, several written and radio media organisations were shuttered and prevented from reopening. Television, a more popular platform, was strictly controlled. 'Journalists disappeared or were executed, while others were forced to leave the country or renounce their professions in the political arena' (Ramirez, 1995, p. 24); however, there seems to be an agreement in the literature about the ability of Chilean journalists to overcome these obstacles and ultimately prevail over tragedy. Santa Cruz argues that during the 1980s, journalists and their unions – across platforms and regions throughout the country – most staunchly resisted the action of the regime, although 'perhaps it [was] the professional sector that most directly received repressive harassment in their daily work' (Santa Cruz, 1988, pp. 149–150).

However, Ramírez (1995) contends that the media in Chile, as with many other areas and industries in the country, have experienced an incomplete transition since the restoration of democracy in 1990, because Chile in the 1990s was marked by the adoption of a consensus policy (Garretón, 1991) that focussed on maintaining a positive relationship between the outgoing dictatorship and the incoming government (Navarrete Yáñez, 2015). This association was especially important, as General Pinochet remained present in the political arena, and many of his former ministers and supporters occupied seats in the Senate or in municipalities across the country. In 1990 and again in 1993, the military branches conducted 'training exercises' that were aimed to intimidate those who were asking for investigations against Pinochet and his cronies for human rights violations (Silva, 2002).

Although two reports were eventually published detailing murders and torture during the dictatorship (the Valech and Rettig Reports), the consecutive left-wing governments of Patricio Aylwin (1990–1994), Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (1994–2000), Ricardo Lagos (2000–2006), and Michelle Bachelet (2006–2010), known collectively as the Concertación, focussed mainly on economic growth and then truth (Huneeus, 2014). The left-wing administrations wanted to distance themselves from the dictatorship as quickly as possible to establish an institutional, peaceful governmental system in the country. However, this meant that some topics remained unspoken, and they linger, unresolved, to this day in Chilean memory. In this context, as Ricardo Morris (2017) explains, 'in many transitional societies, self-censorship is employed as a coping mechanism and often as a survival strategy (both literally and figuratively)'. My interview with the journalist who would not cover Luksic's donations seemed to reinforce this point.

Once the dictatorship ceased in 1990, the majority of the left-wing media were closed through different pressure mechanisms to promote a peaceful transition (see Saavedra Utman, 2014). Hence, all newspapers associated with political parties disappeared. This also meant, however, that the only newspapers remaining were those owned by private economic groups, one of whom – the Edwards family – was openly supportive of Pinochet.

Consequently, Chilean print media became the duopoly that it is today. The Edwards family controls one-quarter of the national readership. In 1988, Álvaro Saieh became the largest shareholder of the Pico-Cañas family's conglomerate Copesa, which owns *La Tercera* and other newspapers; by 2011, the company controlled 44% of the national newspaper weekly readership (Godoy, 2016).

A similar story can be told regarding television. The three television stations that were owned by the universities were subsequently purchased by private entities. Canal 13 was owned by the UC and the Catholic Church until 2017, when billionaire Luksic, who already owned 67% of the shares, bought the remaining 33%. The Catholic University of Valparaiso currently holds only 10% of UCV Television, which is now called TV+. In 1993, the University of Chile offered their channel in commodatum (a fixed-term loan that is to be returned) for 25 years; today, it is controlled by WarnerMedia Entertainment, which also operates the 24/7 news channel CNN Chile.

The conglomerates that own the media not only impact companies' abilities to invest in new technology to maintain their competitive edge but also establish and frame the agenda behind the news stories produced (Germano & Meier, 2013; Schlosberg, 2016). This is relevant because, as demonstrated in Chapter 4, the temporal narratives of the media frames shape the way we remember the past, understand the present, and see the future.

On 24 November 2017, I interviewed a political reporter who wrote for Teletrece's website. We found a table in the same courtyard where I interviewed Pepe only days before. If the oldest man on television and his generation were unwilling to discuss the dictatorship, then maybe I would have more success with younger journalists. 'I do believe it is a very hard topic, to be honest', she said genuinely. 'I remember it felt like great progress when they let us say or write "coup" instead of "military regime". We all know what happened, and yet some media was still denying it. It is impressive and very unfair because they put that responsibility on all of us'. The responsibility of which she spoke was not only symbolic. She recounted that during the presidential campaign of 2013, people Googled her name and searched for her Twitter account to insult her for not utilising certain words, one of those being 'coup'. She found no

way to avoid this. ‘Everything you wrote had to have your name in the byline’. ‘Even if someone later changed what you wrote online?’ I asked, imagining her answer: ‘Yes’.

1.7. Newer bulbs, older silences

On 13 December 2017, I wrote a seven-paragraph article for the *La Tercera* website announcing that Heraldo Muñoz, then Minister of Foreign Affairs under President Bachelet, was launching a website with digital archives containing previously unseen documents about human rights violations during the dictatorship.[12] The site, which was intended to launch in commemoration of Human Rights Day, contained new documents about events in Dawson Island’s detention camp in the Strait of Magellan, where opposition leaders were held and tortured after Pinochet’s coup.

There was nothing particularly important about that story *yet*; the documents had not been released, and there was no way of knowing what kind of information the archives would actually contain. In any other case, we would have probably waited until we saw the documents before we wrote a story. To clarify, this pause would not have been for a lack of interest in what happened on Dawson Island, but because we already had many stories from the prisoners who survived the camps. However, Muñoz had described the files as ‘shocking’, and that alone generated anticipation. As usual when writing for *La Tercera*’s website, I needed to write quickly and precisely, including one paragraph of context, quotes from Muñoz, and a generic photo of the chancellery. The headline I wrote was, ‘Minister Muñoz launches website with files related to violations during the dictatorship’. I had included subject, verb, and predicate and written what I believed to be an appropriate headline for a short article.

‘You can’t!’ gasped the journalist who was working as a content editor that afternoon. Every time I published an article, I informed her so that she could pin the story somewhere on the home page. Depending on the relevance of the story (and each journalist’s lobbying power), the articles would be placed higher or lower on the home screen. When she saw my headline, however, she looked horrified: ‘You can’t use the word *dictatorship* in the title’.

For months at this point, I had been writing stories with the sole purpose of testing the boundaries of censorship. I had covered stories about the dictatorship, equal marriage, and abortion, although the Catholic Church still held shares in Canal 13. I had been hitting the

[12] The article is still online and can be accessed following this link:
https://www.latercera.com/noticia/ministro-munoz-lanza-sitio-web-archivos-historicos-cancilleria-relacionados-violaciones-los-dd-hh/

Ministry of Health with a series of stories about negligence in the administration of HIV drugs in public hospitals to the extent that they had called television producers to protest. Yet, every time, as long as I had the sources and the story correct, I felt the full support of the editors.[13] Now, however, for the first time, I had found a direct 'you can't'. I knew the problem was not the topic since this story had been assigned to me and I had written about human rights before. Rather, it was the notoriety of the word and the place it occupied in the article. Colleagues started to gather around her screen, and a discussion flourished about the subject. 'We most certainly cannot', said one. 'But I heard that actually *now* we can', intervened the reporter for the international desk. Eventually, the web editor, who was sitting across the newsroom (a detail which becomes important in Chapter 3), came over. 'Of course, you can', he said, slightly bemused when we asked him to decide the issue. 'Why wouldn't you?'

Hence, it was published as I had written it. But as the reader can see today, the title of the article has been changed to 'Minister Muñoz launches website with files related to human rights violations'. Nobody ever admitted to making the change, and after trying for a while to determine who had made the edit, I simply abandoned the task as well. The transience of the platform I was utilising (see more in Chapter 4) meant that my article could be censored repeatedly without leaving any trace of the perpetrator.

The consequences of Pinochet's dictatorship extend beyond the silence and self-censorship of Chilean journalists. Rather, the repercussions have configured the entire media infrastructure in the country. First, the privatisation of the media industry has concentrated the ownership of news outlets into two main economic conglomerates: the Edwards family's El Mercurio S.A. and Saieh's Copesa. According to a recent report by the National Council of Television (CNTV),[14] these two economic groups account for more than 80% of the readership and 83% of the advertising investment in Chile. Furthermore, they own the majority of the regional printing presses (local tabloids outside Santiago). The report concluded that 'the main groups of the Chilean press [Copesa and El Mercurio] are part of diversified matrix business groups, where the media plays a political and economic role. These groups have managed to extend

[13] I do wonder if my positionality as an external researcher who was going to be publishing articles about my time in those newsrooms might have affected the way some editors conducted themselves regarding the stories I was covering. However, it would be hard to know if this was the case at all.

[14] See the complete report in http://www.observacom.org/sitio/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Informe- Concentracio%CC%81n-de-Medios-en-la-Industria-Televisiva-Chilena-CNTV-2015.pdf

their dominance to the digital media market' (CNTV, 2015). If we add the tabloid *Metro* (owned by Sweden's Metro International Group), then the resulting CR4 index, which is an international business model (based on the free distribution of the newspaper) utilised to measure concentration by examining the first four main operators in each sector, increases to 98% of the market. This means that only three groups control almost the entire market of newspapers in Chile. For comparison, the CR4 levels for newspapers was only 69% in Canada in 2012 (Winseck, 2019).

According to the same CNTV report, the CR4 index for Chilean radio indicates that these main groups control 78% of the audience and 84% of the advertising investment. The story is similar in television, where the CR4 index is 91%, with Canal 13 leading the multimedia and multisector concentration indexes. That means that only four media operators control what almost 17 million people watch every day in Chile. Furthermore, private operators in Chilean broadcast television were not authorised until 1990. Before that year, and as we have seen in this chapter, 'television was a not-for-profit duopoly of state and university broadcasting' (Godoy, 2016, pp. 651–652). The stations from UC and the Catholic Universities of Valparaiso and Chile had decades of advantage over other operators, but today they are controlled by private conglomerates. Pepe had been working for 30 years at Canal 13 before private operators were even allowed to start transmitting in Chile.

Second, these new technologies have done little to allow journalists to discuss the issues with which Chileans' collective memory continues to struggle. If anything – and as I witnessed in my interviews and my experience during fieldwork – these technologies have made it easier to control and modify the work of Chilean journalists who challenge the possible narratives they are allowed to utilise to discuss the past. Sapiezynska (2013) reports that 65% of Chilean journalists claim that they feel restricted by internal agents, such as superiors or media owners. The numbers are worse 'in terms of restrictions imposed by the market and advertising, a dimension where 67% of Chilean journalists perceive high levels of restrictions, surpassing almost 3 times the result for democratic countries in general' (2013, pp. 23-24). Thus, while the levels of restrictions perceived by journalists in democratic countries is, on average, as much as 24%, in Chile, the number of journalists who report feeling restricted is 54%.

Accordingly, Mellado and Lagos report that the salaries of Chilean journalists are considered low in relation to other media professionals and compared to other professions in the country (2013, p. 521). Furthermore, the reported pay satisfaction is also low among media workers. This is an interesting result if one considers that salary is one of the two variables to which journalists assign more importance when evaluating overall satisfaction in their jobs (Mellado

and Lagos, 2013). According to Mellado and Lagos, neither gender, age, nor level of education has a significant effect on the salary received by journalists. For Mellado and Lagos, this means that 'the current logic of the Chilean media does not seem to be conditioned by the personal characteristics of journalists, but rather by organisational or macro regional structural logic' (2013, p. 536). In other words, journalists see no incentives in this particular market to conduct postgraduate studies or plan a long-term career in one media outlet.

In other studies of journalistic practice in Chile, Salinas and Stange (2015) identify what they call an active bureaucracy inside Chilean newspapers. They describe the main trends in Chilean journalists' professional practices between 1975 and 2005 at four newspapers with national circulation, concluding that the news-making process in Chile is a mechanised and automated task that today responds strongly to the logic of the media market. According to the authors, 'even those elements whose nature is intellectual and non-mechanical, such as deciding what is news and what is not, or evaluating the importance of one subject over another, become part of a routine that has a criterion already stipulated, and it is sustained […] in the experience of the journalists or their common sense' (2015, p. 129, translation). Salinas and Stange contend that Chilean journalists have surrendered to a state of total submission to the rules of production. Perhaps this explains the tacit knowledge that some journalists expressed during our interviews about articles which would never see the light of day. Salinas and Stange conclude that 'if we understand, therefore, that information gathering is routine and that the evaluation of news is naturalized, the most appropriate image for understanding news production [in Chile] would be that of an active bureaucracy' (2015, p. 129, translated) in which journalists rarely think critically about their work, thus naturalising journalistic labour as an automatic performance rather than analytical work.

1.8. Nobody has televisions anymore

'What is television but an electronic bug that arrives to your house around 9 p.m. every night, when you are having dinner with your family, and cuts out every possible interpersonal communication. Once someone [turns] it on, everyone will be watching TV. That is why this bug is so important, because it does not ask permission. It just comes in and takes over your home', Pepe said while we were discussing the importance of doing what he called 'good television'. Our coffee cups had been empty for a while. Twice we had been interrupted by people who came to greet Pepe when they saw him on the patio. Once my editor texted me

because I was needed in the newsroom and he wanted to know how long this interview would last.

In almost 50 minutes, we had flown over decades of television history. More importantly, at least for this thesis, Pepe offered me important clues to understand how the political history and economic growth of this industry have informed the way that new temporalities, forms, and infrastructures are impacting the process of news making.

Time, he said as an example, is a 'treasure of immeasurable value in television'. There is, he recognised, a constant intergenerational conflict regarding how long it should take to make the news. 'The old guard', he said, referring to older journalists, were from an age in which they were taught and trained that a news story should be four minutes long. Many of the members of this old guard in television originally began their careers in radio, and so they were accustomed to describing, explaining, and contextualising stories for radio listeners. Newer generations, however, produce stories of one-and-a-half minutes because editors tell them that this length retains people's attention.

'Television is changing […], precisely because of how we use these new platforms', Pepe said, now somewhat dispirited. 'We currently have gigantic economic losses. Sponsors are taking slices of the cake that yesterday only TV stations used to eat, and they are giving it to Netflix and other platforms', he finished.

Pepe was not wrong. According to the Chilean Advertising Association (*Inversion ACHAP 2018*, 2018), without considering the investment in the online sector, in 2018 the industry reported a decrease of 6.1% in advertising investment. This reduction is partially explained by the investment decrease in open television of 8.1%. The scenario is worse for other sectors. Newspapers reported a drop of 16.7% in investments, while magazines and cable television dropped 27.8% and 9.0%, respectively. Only the radio and film industries reported an increase, with 3.1% each. According to the same report, although open television (as in non-cable, non-satellite, non-streaming) received the largest investment, with 43.1% of the 'cake', the investment still decreased over 8% compared to 2017. The online sector, however, had an estimated real growth of 15.5% between 2017 and 2018, which represents 19.7% of the total investment.

'Remember when people had three televisions in their houses? Now I don't even turn on my own when I get home, because I already have read the news on my phone. It is not a bright future, the one we are looking at', Pepe concluded. I felt slightly guilty ending my interview with Pepe on this dark note, but as we stood and shook hands, he added, 'Younger journalists

are doing fine. They have a unique strength, and they know how to use new platforms. They'll be fine'.

What is happening in Chile is also happening around the world. Sridhar and Sriram report that in the United States, 'for every $1 increase in online advertising between 2005 and 2011, newspapers lost $22 in print advertising' (2015, p. 283). In an industry in which advertising represents nearly 80% of revenue, preventing cannibalisation should be a predominant concern. However, the consequences of the loss of revenue extend beyond market concerns. According to Angelucci and Cagé (2019), the reduction in newspaper advertising revenues has, consequently, lowered the incentives to produce journalistic-intensive content. As I walked back to the newsroom, I thought that Pepe may well have lived to see the beginning and the end of that wooden-framed television set he dearly loved.

1.9. Now we know why

Chile's economic and political history makes it an ideal place to explore the dynamics between technology and news making. The media landscape in this South American country has experienced ongoing and profound changes in recent decades. Unlike other countries in the region, Chile (and Cuba) resisted the intervention of external economic models, at least until the 1980s,[15] when Pinochet's dictatorship (1973–1989) overthrew Allende's government and implemented a free market capitalist system (Protzel, 2005). According to Naomi Klein (2007), Milton Friedman, a U.S. economist and free market advocate, acted as adviser to the dictator and recommended transforming Chile into a capitalist experiment: 'Not only were Chileans in a state of shock following Pinochet's violent coup, but the country was also traumatized by severe hyperinflation. Friedman advised Pinochet to impose a rapid-fire transformation of the economy – tax cuts, free trade, privatized services, cuts to social spending and deregulation […]. It was the most extreme capitalist makeover ever attempted anywhere' (2007, p. 21). This type of economic system translated into the privatisation and deregulation of many public industries, including the telecommunications sector, which included selling company shares to private investors (Tarzijan Martabit & Gomez-Ibanez, 2012). Since the opening of the market to international investors, large economic conglomerates have appropriated the analogue broadband in Chile and have quickly become monopolies or duopolies. Consequently, Chile

[15] The privatization of industrial sectors reached its peak in the late 1970s and the beginning of 1980s (Borzutzky, 2005).

now has the 'highest percentage of foreign media ownership internationally, at 62.4%' (Noam, 2016, p. 669).

However, it was not the country's change in its economic model alone that transformed Chilean journalistic structures during the 1970s and 1980s. By 1973, 36.6% of the written press was 'prone to the political parties that supported Salvador Allende's government' (Herrera Campos, 2006, p. 19). The same day that the military coup bombed La Moneda Palace, Pinochet issued two major edicts that sought to control the press. First, Edict 11 'focused on restricting the leftist press and clarified what the State of Siege meant for the press. It stipulated that only two papers, *El Mercurio* and *La Tercera*, would be allowed to publish the following day, but promised to slowly authorise other publications. It also established the Office of Press Censorship and required the previously discussed papers to submit their editions prior to publication for censorship and approval' (Eidahl, 2011, pp. 23–24). Second, Edict 12 warned journalists of the consequences if they did not comply with the new regime: any company or person who published information without previous approval would be considered to have forced the military to intervene and would be subject to criminal liability. Two days later, on 15 September, the new administration announced Decree Law 5, which stated that any propagandistic attack against the 'Supreme Government' would be tried by a wartime military tribunal (Baltra Montaner, 1988). According to Herrera (2006), within the first years of the regime, 312,000 newspaper copies were removed from the market. Left-wing newspapers, such as *El Clarín*, *El Siglo*, *Puro Chile*, *La Nación*, and *Las Noticias de la Última Hora* disappeared overnight. Some later reappeared, but all were required to submit their stories for approval before publishing.

The office that oversaw the media was the National Social Communication Directorate (DINACOS). DINACOS was charged with spreading the official version of the facts. Herrera states that after the creation of DINACOS at the end of 1973, 'among journalists a harmful practice was imposed, whose effects are still perceived in the national press today: self-censorship' (2006, p. 20). Publishing anything different from DINACOS' version meant the complete shutdown of the media outlet and more likely than not exposed the author of the piece to torture and death.

The day after the military coup, 14 September, only two newspapers were allowed to print. Those newspapers belonged to the two conglomerates that supported the coup and promoted the dictator's policies: El Mercurio S.A. and Copesa. Originally, Copesa was owned by the Picó-Cañas family, a wealthy and influential family in the Chilean political landscape. In 2000,

the conglomerate was acquired by Álvaro Saieh, who in 2013, was named the sixth richest businessman in Chile and the 458th richest person in the world by *Forbes* magazine.

El Mercurio S.A. today belongs to the Edwards group, a Chilean aristocratic family who are influential both financially and politically. Under Pinochet, however, both newspapers were still required to submit their prints the day before publishing for approval. As presented in this chapter, *El Mercurio* was an important ally of the dictator. During the first years of Allende's government, *El Mercurio* was a strong supporter of right-wing parties and frequently criticised Allende and his government. According to Durán and Rockman (1986), during the parliamentary campaign of 1973, *El Mercurio* published 355 stories on how Allende's political movement, the Unidad Popular (UP), was destroying democracy in Chile. In retaliation, Allende cancelled all government advertisements in *El Mercurio*. Usually, government advertising comprises a considerable percentage of a media outlet's income. However, *El Mercurio* did not seem to be affected by these measures. Many years later, the U.S. Senate declassified documents proving that the U.S. CIA had granted US$1.5 million dollars to *El Mercurio* between 1971 and 1973 under Operation Mockingbird, which was an attempt to influence Latin American newspapers during the 1970s.

Since the return to democracy in Chile (1990), the media has been an important part of democratic consolidation, which involves 'undermining popular support for the regime of General Augusto Pinochet, preserving political-cultural traditions and partisan identities, and, more recently, establishing a basic consensus in support of a pluralist democracy and a free market economy' (Tironi & Sunkel, 2000, p. 165).

1.10. A different kind of newsroom

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that Chile offers a unique opportunity to observe vast technological transformations that have occurred over the past four decades mainly due to market-driven companies that have acquired the majority of the media outlets in the country. The ideologies that inspired the privatisation of many industrial sectors in Chile during the Pinochet regime impacted not only the technological infrastructures surrounding news and media organisations (which grew exponentially) but also the configuration of journalistic routines, the bureaucracies within newsrooms, the diversity of political perspectives and voices in agenda-setting, and the fierce competition between media players to capture an ever-more connected audience.

Why is this part of Chilean history relevant to study how news makers are appropriating digital technologies? How are these innovations transforming the infrastructure, temporality, and form of news making in Chile? The answers are in the successful implementation of technological changes, which is contingent upon the lasting effects of the historical context and concurrently conditions the way journalists perceive their roles and comprehend the way they produce the news, as my story about my online news article demonstrates.

Today the media sector in Chile is small in comparison to other countries in the region, such as Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina; however, 'it is particularly dynamic, predominantly market-driven, and mostly open to foreign investors' (Godoy, 2016, p. 641). For Godoy, the fact that the digital infrastructure in Chile is owned 'by a few powerful, large telecom companies' (p. 643) explains the rush of technological investment that media companies have experienced in recent decades to control the market and increase profits. From an economic perspective, companies see technological and media convergence as an opportunity to lower the cost of production (Killebrew, 2005). Making the same professionals produce consumer goods (news) on different platforms and for different audiences means that the company's profits grow and production costs decrease, although this increases journalists' feelings of dissonance (Likes, 2010). As Klinenberg states, 'The penetration of the market principles and marketing projects into the editorial division of news organizations is one of the most dramatic changes in the journalistic field, and there is no question that the mythical walls separating the editorial and advertising are mostly down' (2005, p. 60), and Chile is no exception. As Witschge and Nygren claim, 'Journalism is more connected than ever to finance and the old wall between the newsroom and the advertising and finance departments is no longer the great wall of China, but more the Berlin wall, crumbling and seen as a museum piece' (2009, p. 48). In this context, the financial and editorial chases for 'eyeballs' and target groups have been proven to diminish the autonomy of journalists, directly producing the submission and conversion of the profession's core values to market-oriented goals (Sarrimo, 2017), further increasing professional dissonance in journalism.

As Godoy (2016) argues for the Chilean case, the 'lack of public funding and absolute reliance on advertising after General Pinochet liberalized the economy in 1975 generated a "trout and parrot mixture" of a system in which elitist, public-service principles of European origin coexisted with often conflicting mass appeal and market rules' (p. 652). Chilean media have therefore experienced a new ecosystem of technological innovations that has translated into new media forms (mainly in social networks and digital websites). This has also forced them to create new infrastructures and new temporalities that constantly influence each other every

time a media outlet adapts to new technologies. How journalists have fit these technologies into their existing journalistic practice is a central question throughout this research.

The economic groups that control both *La Tercera* and Canal 13 need to invest in technological innovation to remain competitive in a market where competition is fierce. These digital innovations have laid the groundwork for a different kind of newsroom that is not found anywhere else in the region. Indeed, according to recent studies, 76% of Chileans believe social networks allow them to be perpetually informed (Reuters Institute Digital News Report, 2017),[16] compared to 67% in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2017).[17] Additionally, only Chile, Costa Rica, and Uruguay had reached over 60% in household Internet penetration within the region by 2016 (ECLAC);[18] thus, it is understandable that the media in Chile are relying on new digital platforms that users can employ when consuming news.

In this context, for example, WhatsApp has become the chat application du jour. According to *Global Digital Report of 2018* (Kemp, 2018), WhatsApp reaches 1.3 billion users globally, making it the most utilised chat application along with Facebook Messenger. According to the same report, Chile is an interesting case, since the number of active mobile social network users in the country is 13 million out of 18 million people. This represents a 72% penetration of mobile social media users in the country, which is statistically larger than the rates in the UK (57%), US (61%), and China (65%). However, the specific patterns of usage are invisible to an outsider. This increase in active mobile usage correlates with the explosion of WhatsApp as one of the top social media applications for news consumption in Chile. According to *Reuters Institute Digital Report 2018* (Newman et al., 2018), 36% of surveyed people in Chile said they were utilising WhatsApp for news consumption, compared to 4% in the US and 5% in the UK. It therefore becomes imperative to enter the newsroom to observe how the ubiquitous global influence of platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp are being adapted by journalists and how these social networks are creating new forms of interdependencies through innovations inside media organisations.

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[16] See the complete report at https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Digital%20News%20Report%202017%20web_0.pdf

[17] See the complete report at http://www.journalism.org/2017/09/07/news-use-across-social-media-platforms-2017/

[18] See the complete report at https://www.cepal.org/en/pressreleases/eclac-internet-use-and-access-increases-sharply-latin-america-and-caribbean