PERFORMING LEGITIMACY

STUDIES IN HIGH CULTURE AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

HÅKON LARSEN

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Preface

Legitimating public or non-profit organizations in complex modern societies is a contingent social process involving many actors from different social spheres. As the public needs to be constantly reminded of why they should help preserve such organizations, organizational actors are engaging in social performances as part of their neverending legitimation work. This book advances a cultural approach to studying organizational legitimacy, emanating from within cultural sociology. The approach is applied to a number of case studies of major arts and media organizations. More specifically, I have analyzed the legitimation work done in the public service broadcasters in Scandinavia, the Norwegian National Opera and Ballet, the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. The book is an investigation of the cultural work involved in the social process of achieving and maintaining legitimacy as a not-for-profit arts or media organization in the twenty-first century.

In the first chapter of the book, I discuss theories from cultural sociology in order to develop a conceptual framework to be applied in the case studies to follow. Chaps. 2 and 3 are dedicated to Norwegian and American arts organizations, while Chaps. 4 and 5 contain case studies of media organizations in Scandinavia. All of these chapters include comparative conclusions. Finally, Chap. 6 is a discussion of the dynamics in contemporary legitimation work in arts and media organizations.

Oslo, Norway — Håkon Larsen

Acknowledgment

The book attained its current form during a stay at the Center for Cultural Sociology (CCS) at Yale University in the academic year 2014–2015. I am grateful to the center for providing a highly stimulating atmosphere in which to work on this project. Many thanks to Jeff Alexander for inviting me to Yale, for our conversations throughout the year, and for providing valuable feedback on drafts of the manuscript. Phil Smith also provided valuable feedback on a draft of the manuscript, which is greatly appreciated. Furthermore, I am grateful to the grad students and visitors at CCS for their comments on a chapter draft at the workshop in cultural sociology.

Although the book was written during my time at Yale, I have been working with the subject matter for several years. A lot of this time has been spent at the Department of Sociology and Human Geography at the University of Oslo, where I have been a postdoctoral fellow since 2012, and prior to that a PhD research fellow (2006–2010). I am grateful to the department for granting me the opportunity and freedom to work on this project, in Norway and abroad, and to the colleagues with whom I have discussed my work over the years. The stay at Yale was supported financially by the department. In addition, I received a grant from the Fulbright Foundation.

Papers that would eventually become chapters of this book have been presented at numerous conferences and workshops. I am grateful to all those who have provided feedback on drafts and presentations, and others who have inspired me through conversations on topics raised in the book.

Although rewritten for this book, Chaps. 3, 4 and 5 are based on previously published papers. Parts of Chap. 3 have appeared in the article "Legitimation Work in State Cultural Organizations: The Case of Norway," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 20(4) (2014), 456–470. Parts of Chap. 4 has appeared in the book chapter "The Crisis of Public Service Broadcasting Reconsidered: Commercialization and Digitalization in Scandinavia". In *The Crisis of Journalism Reconsidered: Democratic Culture, Professional Codes, Digital Future*, eds. Jeffrey C. Alexander, Elizabeth Breeze and Mária Luengo, (2016) 43–58. Parts of Chap. 5 have appeared in the article "Legitimation Strategies of Public Service Broadcasters: The Divergent Rhetoric in Norway and Sweden," *Media, Culture & Society* 32(2) (2010), 267–283. Thanks to Taylor & Francis, Cambridge University Press and Sage Publications, respectively, for permission to reproduce parts of these articles. Last but not least, I am grateful to Palgrave Macmillan, and especially Mireille Yanow and Milana Vernikova, for their support.

Contents

CHAPTER 1

A Cultural Approach to Studies of Arts and Media Organizations

To be able to get a grip on how actors engage in legitimating particular organizations, we need to treat legitimation as a contingent social process, and study the cultural work and social performances involved in legitimation. The dominant sociological position of neo-institutionalism (Powell and DiMaggio 1991) has theorized in an important way how institutions are "macrolevel abstractions, … independent of any particular entity to which allegiance might be owned" (DiMaggio and Powell 1991, 15). But the theories are weak when it comes to agency (Jepperson 1991; Hall and Taylor 1996; Schmidt 2008).

In order to understand the process of achieving and maintaining organizational legitimacy, we need to study what kind of actions organizations engage in[1];we must study which actors engage in legitimation work, what it looks like in different contexts, what characterizes a successful performance of legitimacy, and what constitutes a failure. In short, we need to study cultural actions.

There are three crucial aspects to be considered in an action-oriented cultural approach to organizational legitimacy. The first aspect is that legitimacy is a social process (Johnson et al. 2006). As has been pointed out by Michèle Lamont (2012, 203) in a review article on the sociology of valuation and evaluation, social scientists have "[i]n recent years … shown growing interest in the study of basic social processes."[2] Legitimacy is one such process that needs to be studied in more detail.

Secondly, we need to understand that legitimacy is an endless, ongoing, contingent accomplishment (Garfinkel 1967; Boltanski and Thévenot

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2006; Boltanski 2011) of the work of various social actors[3]. We therefore need to study legitimacy as cultural work. The concept of legitimation work, as it is used in this book, is able to capture how publicly funded organizations are being legitimated in a dialogue among the organizations, the funders, the art worlds, and the broader audience.

Thirdly, we need to take seriously the performative aspects of this cultural work. Even though performance is an important part of the neo-institutional theories (Powell and DiMaggio 1991), the actual content of the performances nevertheless remains un-theorized. In order to open up this black box we need to turn to the theories of social performance, as developed within cultural sociology. Due to the limitations of the old theories of rituals, that neo-institutionalists tend to rely on, the performative turn in cultural sociology (Alexander et al. 2006) has advanced a multifaceted framework for studying social performances in complex modern societies.

In conducting the cultural analysis of organizational legitimacy presented in this book, I have been concerned with contemporary cultural sociology in its American and French versions, and in particular the work of Jeffrey Alexander, Michèle Lamont, Laurent Thévenot, and Luc Boltanski.[4] To be able to understand the complex process of achieving and maintaining legitimacy, we must practice a pluralist approach to theories in our empirical analysis (Larsen 2013, 2015; Daloz 2013, 2015; Timmermans and Tavory 2012; Reed 2011), for as Isaac Reed (2011, 162) has rightfully pointed out, "it is impossible to theorize, once and for all, the nature of the social as such. One must use theory to interpret meanings instead."

Performing Legitimacy in Arts and Media Organizations

As not-for-profit organizations are in need of funding from external non-commercial sources, they have to make themselves visible among potential donors. If we were to study such organizations with a neo-institutional approach, we would treat the organizations as semi-rational actors trying to perform legitimacy in the most effective way in order to gain financial support from donors.[5] Although we would find that the organizations may act in ways that do not produce the optimal result for them, we would nevertheless have to utilize the premise that they seek to mirror their environments in order to secure social approval. As Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell wrote in their highly influential 1983 article: "a theory of institutional

isomorphism may help explain the observations that organizations are becoming more homogenous … while at the same time enabling us to understand the irrationality … that are so commonplace in organizational life" (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 157). Although neo-institutionalism acknowledges that organizational actions can be non-strategic, it nevertheless explains this by reference to the unreflective, taken-for-granted, and routinized incorporation of scripts and schemas from the organizations environments (DiMaggio and Powell 1991, 14–15).

In addition to securing their funding, arts and media organizations are also dependent on artistic credibility. And most important of all, they are in need of being perceived as relevant and inclusive by a wider community of citizens. And this is not only out of strategic interests to achieve legitimacy. The management and employees of arts and media organizations do of course think strategically about their legitimation work, but they do also have a genuine passion for what they do, which is totally missing from the neo-institutional perspective[6]. Many organizational actors have a genuine belief in the value of the work of the organization. This causes their performances to transcend purely instrumental reasons. In fact, a successful performance of legitimacy depends on a combination of instrumental and non-instrumental motivations, as the best way to fuse the elements of social performance (Alexander 2004)[7] is for actors to truly believe in the values and ideas making up the foundation for the organization when seeking to (strategically) achieve legitimacy on its behalf. In order for non-profit arts and media organizations to achieve legitimacy, they must be perceived in their performances as authentic in their dedication to serving the democracy, the arts, and the society of which they are a part.

Emphasizing myths and rituals (Meyer and Rowan 1977) was an important move for taking organizational sociology in a cultural direction.[8] And the increased interest in the analysis of legitimacy over the last 20 years (Greenwood et al. 2008) has made this important field of sociology more attuned to culture. But it has yet to undergo proper cultural turn[9]. In order to advance a truly cultural approach we need to study organizations with tools developed in cultural sociology, where one has a premise that "societies are not governed by power alone and are not fueled only by the pursuit of self-interest" (Alexander 2006, 3).

In order to analyze how arts and media organizations engage in legitimation work we need to understand how they make use of the cultural resources available in the particular contexts where the work takes place, and also how these contexts constrain what is perceived as successful

ways of performing legitimacy, both by the actors performing and their audiences. As Michael Schudson has pointed out, "[t]he study of culture is the study of what meanings are available for use in a given society from the wider range of possible meanings; the study of culture is equally the study of what meanings people choose and use from available meanings" (Schudson 1989, 159)[10]. Similarly, Michèle Lamont and Ann Swidler (2014, 5) "are rooting for a … conception of causal processes that makes room for considering how social and cultural structures and resources enable and constrain human actions."[11] To be able to capture both of these dimensions, we need theory that helps us determine the influence of culture on how actors engage with the world, and also how actors use the culture available to them in specific contexts. In the following sections, I will present the main theoretical schools and analytical tools employed in the empirical studies that are to follow in the subsequent chapters.

Pragmatic Sociology as Cultural Sociology

With their pragmatic sociology of critique, Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot (1999) have developed a theory of justification. When engaging in public deliberation and trying to reach an agreement on how to define a situation, legitimate one's own arguments and critiquing those of others, Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) argue that we relate to one of six common worlds: the Inspired World, the Domestic World, the World of Fame, the Civic World, the Market World, or the Industrial World.[12] Each world corresponds to an order of worth, with its own grammar, and structure, in addition to tools that actors can use when engaging in legitimation work. The orders represent something bigger than the actual situation; they each represent a common good.

The orders are systems of logics structuring what is considered worthy within a repertoire of evaluation. Boltanksi and Thévenot (2006, 67–71) compare their notion of orders of worth to the notion of "topics" (topoi) within rhetoric, as a study of "commonplace arguments." What unites the six is that they as regimes have created economies of worth, which render them legitimate. "An economy of worth is achieved when a conflict closes with the advantage of the winner being also a contribution to the common good" (Guggenheim and Potthast 2012, 162).

These orders were developed through going back and forth between empirical studies of focus group interviews and "how to-manuals that propose ways of acting justly and that describe the instruments best suited to

such action" (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006, 66), and close readings of political philosophy. New orders of worth can be developed through new studies, and the orders already theorized are not eternal. Boltanski and Thévenot (1999, 369) write:

> We suppose that these six worlds are sufficient to describe justification performed in the majority of ordinary situations. But this number is not, of course, a magical one. These worlds are historical constructions and some of them are less and less able to ground people's justifications whereas other ones are emerging.[13]

This framework is helpful in describing empirical findings and relating them to a broader context, but at the same time it can lead the researcher to find exactly what he needs in order to confirm the theory (Larsen 2013, 2014a; Jagd 2011).[14] Although Boltanski has pointed out that the sociology of critical capacities are intended to be an analytical tool more than a social theory (Basaure 2011, Boltanski 2011), it is often treated as the latter by his followers.[15]

It is common that followers of important theoretical names in sociology relate to the work of their masters in a more dogmatic way than they were originally intended (Daloz 2013, 2015; Abbott 2004). In order to avoid such dogmatism, I have treated the perspective of Boltanski and Thévenot as one of several analytical tools suitable for empirical studies of legitimation through public performances and deliberations. I have been inspired by the works of Boltanski and Thévenot, but have not based any of the case studies solely on their work, employing instead a pluralist approach to theory as a strategy intended to reach maximal interpretation (Reed 2011)[16]. That being said, I have found some of the common worlds to be prevalent in the empirical material. But merely interpreting the actors' legitimation work in light of common worlds and orders of worth is not sufficient in seeking to understand the complex situation of legitimating arts and media organizations in contemporary societies.

Of the common worlds, the Civic World is most often present in the cases studied in the following chapters. Public or non-profit organizations often emphasize collective over private interests, seeking civil solidarity. Other worlds have also been made relevant by different actors in discussions related to particular organizations. But as the examples will show, when actors representing the organizations try to relate their work to other worlds than the Civic World (especially the World of Fame and the Market World)

they are often met with critique by various audience groups, as many audience members think of the organizations as civil organizations. Consequently, they demand that the organizations approach them as citizen audiences and not consumer audiences.

Comparative Cultural Sociology

Since several of the studies in this book contain national comparisons, we need conceptual tools to help us analyze how national contexts influence the performances of legitimacy, and how these contexts are structured, historically and socially. In order to capture this comparative dimension we must turn to a contribution emanating from both French and American repertoire theories,[17] namely the collaborative work of Lamont and Thévenot (2000b).

Lamont (1992, 1995) has been working with the term national cultural repertoire for a long time, and in the collaborative work with Thévenot "of evaluation" was added to the notion of cultural repertoire so as to connect it to the pragmatic sociology of critique (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006). In this collaborative work the actor-oriented repertoire approach (Swidler 1986) is coupled to the more structural approach of the pragmatic sociology, making it a viable middle position.[18] As legitimacy, evaluation is a process. According to Lamont (2012, 205):

> What makes (e)valuation a social and cultural process is that establishing value generally requires (*a*) intersubjective agreement/disagreement on a matrix or a set of referents against which the entity (a good, a reputation, an artistic achievement, etc.) is compared, (*b*) negotiation about proper criteria and about who is a legitimate judge …, and (*c*) establishing value in a relational (or indexical) process involving distinguishing and comparing entities.

Like the orders of worth, repertoires of evaluation are regarded as "elementary grammars that can be available across situations and that pre-exists individuals, although they are transformed and made salient by individuals" (Lamont and Thévenot 2000a, 5–6). Lamont and Thévenot (2000a, 8–9) define national cultural repertories of evaluation as

> relatively stable schemas of evaluation that are used in varying proportion across national contexts. Each nation makes more readily available to its members specific sets of tools through historical and institutional channels

> …, which means that members of different national communities are not equally likely to draw on the same cultural tools to construct and assess the world that surrounds them.

Through history a set of possible ways to interpret and make sense of the world manifests itself in a cultural repertoire, Lamont and Thévenot argue. The notion of such a repertoire can, for example, be applied to studies of how ideas are adapted to national contexts when imported, or how ideas are adapted to social change within national contexts. The cases discussed in this book relate to such topics in discussing how the idea of public service broadcasting (PSB) has been adapted to various changes in the media environment (Chaps. 4 and 5) and how arts organizations are adapting to changes in cultural consumption patterns (Chaps. 2 and 3).

I am convinced that we must treat the notion of a national cultural repertoire as if it for the most part influences actors on an unconscious level, but that it is also possible to relate to it in a strategic way. National culture will influence how the actors meet the world on a prereflexive level, but actors are capable of making conscious choices in relation to (aspects of) the cultural repertoire of their nation.[19] Actors can be strategic in their rhetorical practice, but will on an unconscious level approach the world on the basis of their national habitus (Elias 1996).[20] Where the notion of a national habitus captures the embodied manner one is in the world as members of a national culture, and subsequently its effect on cognition, the notion of a national cultural repertoire captures the strategic potential in being conscious about one's membership in this particular culture. Employing the term repertoire in this analysis is as much about how the historically constituted repertoires enable communication as about how it limits the actors' perspective of the world. Even though it will for the most part work on an unconscious level, by approaching national culture as a repertoire we can understand how orders of worth will be made prevalent by actors engaging in legitimation work within different national contexts.[21] The notions of national habitus, orders of worth, and cultural repertories are all important when studying legitimation work within national contexts. But in order to be able to conduct a truly cultural analysis of legitimation, and capture all of its performative dimensions, we also need to engage with performance theory as it has been developed within cultural sociology.

Performance Theory as Cultural Sociology

Strong cultural theories have in the twenty-first century gone through a performative turn (Alexander 2011a; Mast 2013; Alexander et al. 2006), of which Jeffrey Alexander's (2004) theory of cultural pragmatics is the most significant contribution.[22] He writes: "The theory of cultural pragmatics interweaves meaning and action in a non-reductive way, pointing toward culture structures while recognizing that only through the actions of concrete social actors is meaning's influence realized" (Alexander 2011a, 24). With the shift in focus from language to speech (Saussure 1986) in his later theoretical and empirical work (2010, 2011a, b, Alexander and Jaworski 2014), Alexander has reached a middle position between the structure- and actor-oriented positions to culture.[23] This connects it with the previously discussed positions of pragmatic sociology (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006; Boltanski and Chiapello 2005)[24], and comparative cultural sociology (Lamont and Thévenot 2000a).

Similar to my emphasis on how a national repertoire of evaluation will influence actors both on an un-reflexive cognitively level and a reflexive strategic level, scholars employing cultural pragmatics have demonstrated that "the meanings of power, authority, legitimacy, and democracy are relational and processural. While their meanings are rooted in cultural structures, they are also dynamically negotiated through performative struggles" (Mast 2012, 637).

According to Alexander (2011a, 103), in order for a performance to be successful there has to be a fusion of background representations, scripts, actors, means of symbolic production, *mise-en-scène*, social and interpretive power, and audiences, as this makes the actor come off as authentic, with the result that the action is not perceived as a performance—"[m]eaning must seem to come from the actor if it is to seem authentic, not from scripts, props, power, or audience" (Alexander 2011a, 85). When performing legitimacy, actors project meanings and enact the patterned representations encoded in scripts. We can distinguish between the "deep background of collective representations" and the foreground scripts, the "immediate referent for action" (Alexander 2004, 530). Actors particularize and dramatize the background culture structures that constitute the cognitive, moral, and emotional universe inhabited by both actors and audiences. The performances are directed to an audience that is meant to decode the symbols in the script and respond to the effectiveness of the performance. But the decoding process is unpredictable because it hinges on factors that are

independent of how well the actor executed the performance. Furthermore, "[t]he relation between authenticity and modes of presentation are … historically and culturally specific" (Alexander 2011a, 12).

In Alexander's terminology, cultural repertories will make up part of the background collective representations influencing actors engaging in social performances of legitimacy. Even though he thinks of means of symbolic production as material things (Alexander 2011a, 84), it makes sense to also think of language as a means for symbolic production of legitimation rhetoric. National repertoires will then both constrain and enable actors' successful performances of legitimacy, as they relate to the repertoires as both collective representations, as meaning structures, and as means for symbolic production, as linguistic resources to be employed in strategic communication.

The material means of symbolic production is the medium of communication employed in the performances. When arts and media organizations perform legitimacy, they make use of newspapers, radio, TV social media, websites, organizational documents, and fundraising events. When I am talking about broadcasters performing legitimacy, I am not referring to the programming schedule or the content of actual TV or radio programs, but about how the idea on which the organizations are funded is being performed in the public by various actors, coming from within or outside of the organization. Similarly, when discussing performing arts organizations, I am referring to the social performances of the ideas that opera houses and symphony orchestras are based upon, and not the actual performances taking place on the stages inside the venues.

In the cases discussed in this book, the most important actors in the performances of legitimacy are the managers of the organizations, the directors of communication, and the leaders of the artistic/production departments within the organizations. In addition to the actual organizations, actors from other social spheres take part in the legitimation work related to the organizations. In Scandinavia, where many organizations in the culture sector[25] receive a significant amount of their funding from the state or a municipality, actors from the political sphere play an important part. The major players are the minister of culture and his/her political advisors, in addition to other members of the government and the parliament. The artistic sphere is also involved in the legitimation work. Here, the major players are the leaders of the artists' organizations, editors of art and culture magazines, and influential individual artists engaging in public debate. In addition, researchers and intellectuals are important

actors. Scandinavian governments regularly use researchers as experts. Researchers also give talks at public seminars discussing cultural policy and the culture sector, and voice their opinion in public debates. Actors from the artistic and scientific spheres possess hermeneutic power that can be exercised in critique of the legitimacy of specific arts and media organizations. These groups also have relatively easy access to the material means of symbolic production. The result is that they get to display social power, and through that play an important part in the ongoing legitimation work of the organizations, soliciting co-operation from the organizations in their display of authoritative power.

Similarly to contemporary American politics being "the product of a constant interaction between teams of performers and audiences" (Mast 2012, 640), the contemporary legitimation of arts and media organizations depend on several performers and audiences engaging in legitimation work. Nevertheless, the three most important audience groups for these organizations are the content producers, the funders, and the community. They belong to different social spheres and can provide different forms of support, which the organizations need in order to have success in their legitimation work (see Table 1.1). Although being perceived as legitimate in the artistic sphere is crucial to the survival of arts organizations, being perceived as legitimate among the funders is even more important, especially when related to such high-cost art forms as opera and symphonic music. There is nevertheless a correlation between the two granters of legitimacy: The funders are more likely to support arts organizations that are considered important by the specific art world[26], as this provides for the funders an opportunity to align themselves with an organization that is deemed important by granters of artistic legitimacy. The funders can thus take advantage of the symbolic benefits that this alignment might provide. This aspect is especially relevant in a country like the USA, where most arts organizations get their main funding from private donations.[27]

As will become evident throughout the book, there are slight variations in how legitimacy has been performed in different geographical and

Table 1.1 Audience for public performances of legitimacy

	Content producers	*Funders*	*Community*
Type of support	Artistic	Economic	Social
Societal sphere	Art	Market/State	Civil society
Type of legitimacy	Artistic credibility	Financial stability	Widespread approval

historical contexts, and the different audience groups respond in different ways. But the similarities nevertheless outweigh the differences, which is a demonstration of the regularities in the democratic and civilizing mission of these organizations. Despite changes in technology, consumption patterns, and cultural policy, arts and media organizations strive to fulfill a mission as civil organizations serving the society of which they are a part. As organizations with a democratic civilizing mission, they not only depend upon public support for survival benefits, but also actively seek to involve as many of the citizens as possible out of a belief that the work of the organization can enrich the lives of individuals and through that also society as a whole. Nevertheless, the fulfillment of this mission must be achieved without making too much of a compromise in the artistic quality of the content being presented to the public. In order to have success in performing legitimacy as a civil organization it is also of utmost importance that a significant amount of the performance takes place in a public sphere, as it connects the organizations with a broader audience than the sphere-specific audience in the worlds of art or journalism. It is to the sociological theories of such a sphere that I will now turn.

A Civil Public Sphere

In its most basic definition, a public sphere "refers to … the practice of open discussion about matters of common public concern" (Jacobs 2000, 2). The most significant theoretization of such a sphere is produced by Jürgen Habermas, who in his doctoral dissertation from 1962 described how the public sphere in Germany, Great Britain, and France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries went through a transformation from being a sphere where the rulers were displaying their power, to becoming a bourgeois public sphere inhabited by property-owning and literate men who discussed central social and cultural issues where the arguments were to transcend the individuals' social status (Habermas 1989, Chap. 2)[28]. For Habermas, this particular public sphere where private people come together as a public (Habermas 1989, 27) represents an ideal liberal public sphere.[29] But Habermas' theory ended on a negative note: He believed it to be deeply problematic that the new mass media transformed the public to be consumers of culture, rather than critically discussing citizens, a transformation process that he labeled a re-feudalization of the public sphere, echoing the dystopian view on modernity held by his Frankfurt teachers (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002 [1947]). According to Habermas, this leads to the

dissolving of the bourgeois public sphere. Due to the electronic mass media, citizens were no longer capable of performing arguments in public.

Habermas later changed his perception of the role of mass media for democracy: 30 years after the publication of his dissertation, he launched a theoretical model for liberal democracies (Habermas 1996). According to this model, any political decision must be supported by a majority of the population in order to be considered legitimate. A public sphere that strives to live up to the ideals of the bourgeois public sphere plays a key role in this model, as a majority will be attained through public deliberations. Habermas is no longer a pessimist. He now considers the mass media to play a key role in the communicative structure of the public sphere, where different groups from civil society can communicate their interests to a broader public. Depending on the kind of support they manage to achieve, these interests can be channeled to the political system and potentially end up in political decisions, and at best changes in law.[30]

As will become evident from the discussions in Chaps. 4 and 5, Habermas' notion of a public sphere and its role for deliberative democracy has had considerable impact on the legitimation of public service broadcasters. Both media scholars and actual media organizations have relied on a Habermasian notion of the role of media organizations for society in legitimating broadcasting in the public's service (Garnham 1992, 2003; Scannell 1989; Moe 2008; Dahlgren 1995; Larsen 2008, 2014b). Considering that these are media organizations with editorial freedom and a mission to serve the public, democracy, and national culture through informing, educating, and entertaining the audience, this makes perfect sense. The media professionals have of course relied on the Habermasian notion in a more implicit way,[31] but the ideas and values that Habermas promotes have many followers.[32] Even though Habermas is credited within sociology for promoting such a perspective, his ideas are also part of the collective representations (Townsley 2012; Alexander 2006; Durkheim 2001 [1912]) of Western liberal democracies, put to use in democratic discourse.[33] Scholars (Born 2005; Jakubowicz 2006) have also argued that in order to study PSB one needs to engage in both normative theories and empirical research.[34]

Another theory where "the normative and empirical sciences meet" (Alexander 2006, 3) is Alexander's theory of the civil sphere. Alexander (2006, 44) adheres to Habermas' definition of the public sphere as "the sphere of private people coming together as a public" (Habermas 1989, 27),[35] but criticizes Habermas for assuming that the idealizing principles of deliberation

and rational discussion "actually grow out of speaking, deliberating, or being active in the public sphere" (Alexander 2006, 16). Rather, for Alexander,

> [s]peaking is enacted through language games. Deliberation is a second-order decision, which does not challenge but elaborates presuppositions. Publicness is a social and cultural condition, not an ethical principle; it points to symbolic action, to performance, to projections of authenticity. (Alexander 2006, 16)

Where the public sphere for Habermas is an arena for rational discussions, it is for Alexander an arena for social performances, since "the ideal of rational dialogue and dispassionate deliberation is only one of several performative modes available to cultural actors in the public sphere" (Townsley 2012, 302).

Habermas' (1987) theory is based on an idea that there exists a specific form of rationality in the lifeworld that sets it apart from the instrumental rationality of the systems of market and state. Through communicative rationality, Habermas (1984) argues that we meet each other as equals and let the power of the best argument decide the winners of every discussion. For Alexander, on the other hand, solidarity rather than rationality is the guiding principle of the public sphere.[36] For Alexander (2006, 4), such a civil public sphere "relies on solidarity, on feelings for others whom we do not know but whom we respect out of principle."[37] The civil sphere is "a world of values and institutions that generates the capacity for social criticism and democratic integration at the same time" (Alexander 2006, 4). The civil sphere is universal in that it includes every citizen of a society (Alexander 2010). Actors engaging in discussions in the civil sphere are, through narratives, trying to align their own views with the civil/democratic side and (occasionally) pollute those of their adversaries as belonging to the uncivil/undemocratic side of the binary code of the civil sphere (Alexander and Smith 1993; Alexander 2006, 2010, 2011b). Alexander's theory is able to capture both strategic and non-strategic motivations for social action. The public is for Alexander a linguistic concept rather than a normative ideal seeking empirical realization, as it is for Habermas.

The *Civil Sphere* is similar to Boltanski and Thévenot's *On Justification* in that both books emphasize how culture structures help shape social life. In a book chapter comparing the two books, Irène Eulriet writes that both Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) and Alexander (2006)

> [c]laim that what they have identified, under a different vocabulary, possesses internal force and shapes the social life of communities … What they intend to show is how such 'culture structures' inform individual or group relations within the polity and give them their particular texture and shade. In this movement, both works insist on the role of deliberation and justification in the construction and development of … the 'public culture' of liberal democracies. (Eulriet 2014, 414)[38]

Furthermore, Lamont and Thévenot have pointed out that their notion of national cultural repertoires of evaluation is somewhat similar to both Alexander's and Habermas' theories. They write:

> This analysis of modes of evaluations draws on a pragmatist approach to the public space and can be compared with other approaches to public debates focusing on … the underlying patterns of civil society and democratic civility (Alexander and Smith 1993; Alexander 1992), or public communicative action (Habermas 1984). (Lamont and Thévenot 2000a, 7)

Citizens have a strong notion of the public, and Habermas' theory is very appealing. A fruitful way to approach his theory of the public sphere and deliberative democracy is to treat it as the most sophisticated conceptualization of an important part of the collective representations of our liberal democratic societies. By relating to Habermas' work in such a way, the normative criteria for a well-functioning public sphere get to walk and talk in our empirical analysis of organizational performances of legitimacy.

Analyzing Organizational Legitimacy with a Cultural Approach

Legitimation is as much about performances as it is about evaluation. Where Alexander's (2004) theory helps us understand the complexities of social performances in late modern societies, the notion of orders of worth (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006) and repertoires of evaluation (Lamont and Thévenot 2000a) help us give context and contour to the culture structures influencing the performers and their audiences. Pragmatic sociology and repertoire theory are helpful in understanding why actors use the language they do in their performances within different contexts, and the strong cultural theories of social performances are important when analyzing the many elements in performing legitimacy as modern organizations. When we combine these theories we get a very useful approach to studying legitimation work in arts and media organizations.

Achieving legitimacy is a contingent social process where fusion may or may not happen (Alexander et al. 2006), and actors may or may not reach an agreement on which higher principle is legitimate when evaluating organizational activity (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006; Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). The cultural approach to studies of organizational performances of legitimacy applied in this book takes into consideration both strategic and non-strategic actions, and internal and external motivations for actions, in seeking to understand the dynamics of organizational legitimation work.

In the following chapters the cultural approach to organizational legitimacy is applied in four case studies. The first is a study of the Metropolitan Opera and the Norwegian National Opera and Ballet (NNOB) (Chap. 2). The second is a study of the NNOB and the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra (Chap. 3).[39] The third is a study of the Scandinavian public service broadcasters Danmarks Radio (DR), Norsk rikskringkasting (NRK), and Sveriges Television (SVT) (Chap. 4). And the fourth is an analysis of NRK and SVT (Chap. 5). In the last chapter of the book (Chap. 6), I draw on aspects from all of the studies, in a discussion of the dynamics of contemporary legitimation work in publicly funded organizations, and its implications for sociological theory.

Opera houses and concert halls are much more than houses for the performance of opera, ballet, or symphonic music.[40] The actual buildings, the orchestras, and the opera and ballet ensembles are all powerful symbols that can signify being a modern nation state rich in cultural traditions,[41] or a city or region for cultural excellence,[42] to name a few.[43] Being able to fuse one's own name to that of a successful arts organization is perceived as desirable by a whole spectrum of actors, which of course the organizations benefit from. This leads the management and marketing departments of opera houses and symphony orchestras to constantly perform legitimacy in public as part of their ongoing legitimation work. But these arts organizations seek to communicate with a larger audience than the ones who attend the performances taking place at the venues, or support the organizations financially; they strive to reach the community of which they are a part, and in doing so they align themselves with a democratic civilizing mission.

Similarly, as a civil institution, PSB is designed to operate independent of the commercial market and at an arm's length distance from the government. The various broadcasters are governed through the national cultural policy: They have editorial freedom, but are obliged to fulfill such cultural policy goals as having daily newscasts, a pedagogical offering for

children, and an offering for linguistic minorities. When PSB organizations perform legitimation rhetoric as part of their legitimation work, they engage in two activities. First, they aim to prove that they are living up to the political trust invested in them in order to legitimate future existence toward authorities' appropriating funding. Second, they communicate with a broader audience in ensuring that they have the trust and support of the citizens they serve.

Individuals engaging in legitimation work on behalf of a civil organization must be able to convey an authentic engagement with the ideas and values the organization embodies as part of being assigned this particular role by the communities they serve. In order to achieve performative success, the actors must be perceived by the audience as fused with the text they are performing, the mission of the organization. As non-commercial organizations dedicated to serving the arts, the public sphere, democracy, and national culture, the organizations studied in this book are in essence civil organizations motivated by civil solidarity just as much as the values of the professional worlds of classical music, opera, ballet, TV drama, journalism or the cultural policy of their respective countries.

Being successful in one's public performances as civil organizations is especially important in Scandinavia as it is the citizens who finance these organizations, either indirectly through their taxes (as is the case with the arts organizations) or directly through a fee paid to the organization (as is the case with the public broadcasters). The organizations are legitimating a public good regulated by public authorities with the intention of providing a cultural offering that will benefit the public. As civil organizations they are contributing to their democratic societies by engaging in the civil sphere (Alexander 2006), and through relating their work to the Civic World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006) in their public performances and legitimation work.

Notes

1. Although there have been some initial steps to correct this lack of agency through coupling discursive institutionalism as developed in political science to sociological institutionalism (Schmidt 2008; Alasuutari 2015), it has yet to make an impact on studies of legitimacy in sociology. However, discursive institutionalism is gaining influence on sociology more generally (Engelstad and Hagelund 2015; Engelstad et al. 2016).

2. For Lamont (2012, 203), "[p]rocesses are different from mechanisms in that they do not concern the causal relationship between two discrete phenomena (A causes B) but are part of a sequence that contributes to a causal path."
3. Lynne G. Zucker (1991) has made an important contribution emphasizing the need to study institutionalization as a process rather than focusing on its effects, as the founders of the neo-institutional approach tend to do in their macro-analysis of isomorphic pressures (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Scott and Meyer 1991). Inspired by ethnomethodology (Garfinkel 1967), she argues for the importance of studying the performance of acts under different degrees of institutionalization.
4. For a discussion of similarities between American cultural sociology and French pragmatic sociology, see (Lamont and Thévenot 2000b; Lamont 2010, 2012; Silber 2003; Lichterman 2007; Cefaï 2009; Larsen 2013; Eulriet 2014).
5. The editors of the *Sage Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism* write in their introduction that, according to this sociological perspective, "organizations are influenced by their *institutional* and *network* contexts … organizations become *isomorphic* with their institutional context in order to secure social approval (*legitimacy*), which provides survival benefits" (Greenwood et al. 2008, 6).
6. The sociologist Morris Zelditch Jr. (2001, 49) has pointed out that: "institutionalism assumes that actors do not and do not need to internalize norms, values and beliefs, they merely do (in public) whatever others expect them to."
7. These elements will be presented later on in this chapter.
8. One of the main tenets in John Meyer and Brian Rowan's 1977 article, which started the whole neo-institutional movement, is that "organizations which incorporate institutionalized myths are more legitimate, successful, and likely to survive" (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 361). A part of this incorporation is to perform in accordance with the myths, since "[a]ctivity has … ritual significance: it maintains appearances and validates an organization" (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 355).
9. For discussions of the cultural turn in sociology, see: Friedland and Mohr 2004; Back et al. 2012; Spillman 2002; Alexander et al. 2012a; Jacobs and Hanrahan 2005.
10. He elaborates: "To understand the efficiency of culture, it is essential to recognize simultaneously that (1) human beings make their own history and (2) they do not make it according to circumstances of their own choosing" (Schudson 1989, 156).

11. See also Sewell (1992), Tavory and Swidler (2009), Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), and Alexander and Mast (Alexander 2011a, Chp. 1) for a discussion of how culture can be conceptualized as both enabling and limiting action.
12. They write: "We have been able to observe the operation of six higher common principles to which, in France today, people resort most often in order to finalize an agreement or pursue a contention" (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006, 71).
13. Boltanski and Thévenot have both developed the set of orders through new empirical works after the publication of *On Justification* (Lafaye and Thévenot 1993; Thévenot et al. 2000; Boltanski and Chiapello 2005; Basaure 2011). Boltanski has also pointed out that the Domestic World is less salient than what appears to be the case in *On Justification* (which was published in French in 1991). He says that they were not able to observe, during the creation of the book, that the Domestic World has diminished in influence since the 1968 protests (Basaure 2011). Similar arguments of an existing plurality of spheres of justice have been advanced in USA by the philosopher Michael Walzer (1984), whom Boltanski (2011, 30) himself gives credit for his contribution to understanding the role of critique. In fact, Boltanski and Thévent (1999, 364–365) state that "Our work aims to build a research strategy in the sociological field—as Michael Walzer has done in philosophy of justice – that might enable us to escape having to choose between a formal universalism and the kind of unlimited pluralism which has often been the response of empirical disciplines like history or sociology or transcendental stances." For another influential approach to organizational analysis relying on concepts of institutional logics, see Roger Friedland and Robert R. Alford (1991), and also Lamont (2012).
14. After reviewing over 30 studies of organizations deploying a Boltanski and Thévenot inspired framework, Søren Jagd (2011) concludes that most of the studies found one or more of the six original orders of worth to be present.
15. Boltanski (2011) writes: "with nearly twenty years hindsight, it must be admitted that these pluralist positions were not expressed with sufficient force (and were perhaps insufficiently clarified at a conceptual level) to prevent the framework presented in On Justification giving rise to re-appropriations which tend to employ it as if it made it possible to effect a closure on reality and hence render it in some sense calculable."
16. According to Reed (2011, 23): "In maximal interpretation, theory and fact are articulated in such a way that the referential functions of evidence and the relational functions of theory are subsumed under a deeper understanding. No longer is evidence used merely to shore up a factual 'exam-

ple' of a theoretical expression. Rather, the signs of evidence become themselves intertwined with the signs of theory, such that both come to express a deeper social force, a longstanding democratic imperative, or an underlying discursive formation. They become part of a maximal interpretation." See also Swedberg (2014) and Timmermans and Tavory (2012) on theorizing in social research.

17. The most influential repertoire theory in American cultural sociology was developed by Ann Swidler. In her now classic article from 1986, she advocated a position where one could treat "culture as a 'tool kit' of symbols, stories, rituals, and world-views, which people may use in varying configurations to solve different kinds of problems" (Swidler 1986, 273). In this sociological tradition culture is approached as a resource that enables action, instead of it being a provider of goals for action, as theorized by Talcott Parsons (1951), or it being a motivator for action, as it was for Max Weber (1946). I consider the work of Boltanski and Thévenot a form of repertoire theory, although more structurally oriented than the tool-kit approach (see Silber 2003, for a comparison of French and American repertoire theory).
18. Swidler's approach is an important contribution in the development of a theory of cultural action, but the tool-kit theory remains too naïve when it deals with the influence of cultural and social structures on action (Lamont 1992, 2004; Larsen 2014a; Vaisey 2009; Mast 2012) in that it does not pay sufficient attention to the fact that culture also can exert a powerful influence on actors, in addition to providing "cultural components that are used to construct strategies of action" (Swidler 1986, 273). But in her later work she has moved toward a middle position, emphasizing how semiotic codes can constrain the practice of situated actors. In a co-authored article with Iddo Tavory, she writes that: "viewing interaction as a key arena where semiotically charged objects and actions have powerful effects … we show that culture constrains and shapes action not simply because all actors, institutions, and actions instantiate cultural codes. Rather, within situational contexts, individuals find actions to be semiotically charged a priori; these a priori meanings shapes all future actions" (Tavory and Swidler 2009, 185).
19. When actors relate to the national cultural repertoire on an unconscious level it makes sense to think of the repertoire as activated in automatic cognition (DiMaggio 1997). And when the actors are strategic in their relation to the repertoire, we can think of it as a cultural tool-kit (Swidler 1986), activated in deliberative cognition (DiMaggio 1997).
20. Eric Dunning and Stephen Mennell write in the preface to *The Germans* (Elias 1996): "By 'habitus'–a word he used long before its popularization by Pierre Bourdieu–Elias basically means 'second nature' or 'embodied

social learning'. … [I]t is used in large part to overcome the problems of the old notion of 'national character' as something fixed and static. Thus Elias contends that 'the fortunes of a nation over the centuries become sedimented into the habitus of its individual members', and it follows from this that habitus changes over time precisely because the fortunes and experiences of a nation (or of its constituent groupings) continue to change and accumulate" (Dunning and Mennell 1996, ix).

21. This has also been pointed out by Boltanski, with reference to the work of Lamont and Thévenot. He writes: "The normative supports that critiques and justifications are based on are associated with systems rooted in social reality, which are considered to be the product of the political history of a society. As a result, we observe variations between the contours of different polities and above all between their arrangements in different nation-states" (Boltanski 2011, 31).
22. By strong cultural theory I am referring to the work associated with the strong program in cultural sociology, as initiated by Alexander and Smith (1993, 2001) and developed by a number of scholars (Alexander et al. 2012b). The notion of a strong program in cultural sociology is further inspired by the strong program in science studies, as developed by David Bloor (1976), Bruno Latour (1979), and others, where one approached scientific ideas as cultural and linguistic constructions just as much as they are the result of other and more objective procedures and actions (Alexander and Smith 2001). Tony Bennett writes, comparing the two: "Just as the 'strong program' in science studies was pitched against the sociology of science, taking issue with its construction of science as being determined by underlying social structures to insist, instead, on the active role of scientific practices as independent forces in their own right, then so the 'strong program' in cultural sociology rebuts the determinist premises of earlier approaches in the sociology of culture to focus on the respects in which culture shapes social life rather than being shaped by it" (Bennett 2007, 624).
23. Even though it is with his studies of social performances that Alexander has reached a full empirical realization of such a middle position, he has been working theoretically toward developing it for a long time, emphasizing the need for a multidimensional social theory (Alexander 1987a, b). As he writes in *Twenty Lectures*: "'Reality', I believe, is multidimensional: there are norms and interests, individual negotiation and individual force" (Alexander 1987b, 178).
24. Boltanski and Chiapello (2005, 30) writes about pragmatic sociology that it "breaks with a narrowly determinist conception of the social, whether based on the omnipotence of structures or, in a culturalist perspective, the domination of internalized norms. From the viewpoint of action, it puts

the emphasis on the various degrees of uncertainty haunting situations in social life."

25. With the term culture sector I am referring to the sector over which the Ministry of Culture has administration.
26. Howard Becker (1982) is credited as the inventor of the term "art world" in sociology. For Becker (1982, 34), "Art worlds consist of all the people whose activities are necessary to the production of the characteristic works which that world, and perhaps others as well, define as art." Becker (1982, 35) defines art as "joint productions of all the people who cooperate via an art world's characteristic conventions to bring works like that into existence." Following from this, artists are "some subgroup of the world's participants who, by common agreement, possess a special gift, therefore make a unique and indispensable contribution to the work, and thereby make it art" (Becker 1982, 35). Although I am not necessarily relying on his theory when using the term art world, it is preferable over the competing sociological concept of artistic fields, as developed by Pierre Bourdieu (1993, 1996). The notion of a field entails relating to actors as positing themselves vis-à-vis others in a field to try to gain competitive advantages in defining and accumulating the field-specific capital over which the actors compete. My empirical analysis shows that actor's actually co-operate in defining and promoting the legitimacy of artistic values and organizations, and that they have a fundamental respect for each other, engaging in co-operative legitimation work (see Chap. 6) and face-saving behaviors (Goffman 2005 [1967]). Becker's notion of world is thus a better fit to my analysis, and employing the term in this way is also in line with Becker's own stance, since he is advocating that his approach is "open to multiple possibilities, discovered in the course of immersion in social life," as contrasted to Bourdieu's which is "focused on demonstrating, on the basis of a priori considerations, the truth of an already established abstract philosophical position" (Becker and Pessin 2006, 286).
27. In countries where the state plays an active role in the funding of arts organizations, which is the case in the Scandinavian countries, political power also can be used to grant legitimacy to organizations by providing financial and material support for their work.
28. The book was not translated into English until 1989, but a Norwegian translation was published in 1971, as the first foreign translation of the book.
29. Even though the normative ideal for a bourgeois public sphere lacks full empirical realization (Calhoun 1992; Jacobs 1996, 2000; Townsley 2012; Fraser 1992; Schudson 1992, 1994; Benson 2009; Alexander 2006), Habermas (1992) has defended his position by arguing that such a sphere is in principle open and totally inclusive. After launching his theory of the

public sphere, he has continued to develop normative theories of rational deliberation in democratic societies (Habermas 1996, 2006).

30. In his latest writings he has also commented on the role of social media (Habermas 2006, 2009). Habermas believes that the Internet has its greatest political potential in totalitarian regimes, and that most online discussions tend to take the form of enclosed discussions—echo chambers—for people who are already interested in the specific topic under discussion. He thus believes that the Internet does not unite large groups of people in common public discussions on important issues facing society. But Habermas sees a potential when mass and social media act in concert. He writes: "Within established national public spheres, the online debates of web users only promote political communication, when news groups crystallize around the focal points of the quality press, for example, national newspapers and political magazines" (Habermas 2006, 423).
31. Relating to important scholarly texts as influencing actors in an implicit way shows a resemblance to how Boltanski and Thévenot (1999, 366) treated the key texts in political philosophy when developing their theory of justification.
32. Another democratic theory that has influenced theoretical debates on democratic approaches to the media and the public sphere, in addition to the actual debates on the future of particular media organizations (Karpinnen et al. 2008; Larsen 2008, 2010, 2014b; Jacka 2003; Moe 2008; Chap. 5 this book), is that of radical democracy, as developed by Chantal Mouffe (Mouffe 1993, 2005; Laclau and Mouffe 1985). Mouffe positions herself in explicit opposition to Habermas' theory of deliberative democracy. According to Mouffe's model, conflict and emotional involvement serve democracy better than an unattainable ideal of consensus and communicative rationality (Habermas 1984).
33. In a study of the newspaper debates on the future of PSB in Scandinavia during the 2000s, I found a democratic discourse corresponding to a Habermasian ideal of deliberative democracy to be prevalent in the discussion. Characteristic of this discourse is a belief in the public service broadcasters' importance in securing the autonomy of the citizens by providing for them important information so that they can act as independent and critical citizens (Larsen 2008). A competing discourse was one where PSB was to function as a market corrective, promoting different content and values than that which was offered by commercial broadcasters (Larsen 2008). These discourses are also prevalent in the organizations' legitimation work, as will be discussed in Chap. 5.
34. Georgina Born (2005, 119) says that "[f]rom a policy perspective, we need to take political philosophies seriously–to realize that they offer tangible bases on which to construct institutional arrangements; but also to acknowl-

edge that our existing institutions embody political philosophies that themselves deserve scrutiny and updating." And Karol Jakubowicz (2006, 94–95) says: "Let us not be misled about the nature of the PSB debate. It is not a debate on a form of broadcasting, but about the values and principles governing society and social life. It is, in reality, primarily an ideological and axiological discussion about the kind of society we want to live in."

35. Alexander (2006, 44) writes: "Civil society is a form of social and cultural organization rooted simultaneously in a radical individualism and a thoroughgoing collectivism, a combination best captured in Habermas' notion of 'the sphere of private people coming together as a public.'"
36. Eleanor Townsley writes of Alexander's approach: "social solidarity is a major, if not the primary goal of communication in the public sphere, since solidarity is the condition on which all other cultural or political projects are premised" (Townsley 2012, 299).
37. In addition to the public and the civil sphere, scholars have also introduced such terms as cultural (McGuigen 2005) and aesthetic (Jacobs 2012; Jones 2007) public spheres in efforts to develop the notion of a public sphere to apply to a broader spectrum of media genres and settings than what was included in Habermas' theory.
38. She writes further that Boltanski and Thévenot "explain 'that they do not underestimate the importance in social life of domination, force, interests and even of deceit, delusion and self-deception' (Boltanski and Thévenot 1999, 364); yet, they underline that a conception of social life that would reduce its symbolic dimension to a mere veil of power relations 'would no longer be able to give an account of the experience of the social actors themselves' (ibid.). As such, Alexander's and Boltanski and Thévenot's approaches coalesce in their ambition to isolate culture from other conceivable social dimensions and specify the way in which it can be conceptualized, studied, and described" (Eulriet 2014, 414).
39. The Norwegian name of these organizations are Den norske opera og ballett and Oslo filharmoniske orkester.
40. According to Lisa McCormick the buildings are themselves social performances: "Through the arrangements of physical materials into forms, architects display meanings to a varied audience … who interpret these meanings by invoking various symbolic frameworks" (McCormick 2006, 130).
41. "Practically all nation-states want to express that they belong to the civilized world by establishing the classical European art institutions of opera, ballet and classical music" (Alasuutari 2015, 167).
42. As depicted in discussions over the Ballet Florida: "A 'city' that is alive can be measured by its cultural life, its museums, ballet, opera and orchestras. It is a place that invites visitors to partake in its riches, not only in its physical attributes such as sun and sea" (McDonnell and Tepper 2014, 29).
43. See also Ruth Bereson (2002).

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CHAPTER 2

Performing Legitimacy as Civil Opera Houses

Most of the sociological literature on opera has emphasized its elite dimensions: Scholars have studied the creation of opera as art or high culture, the tensions between the popular and elite dimensions of opera, and the civilizing of the audiences attending opera performances (DiMaggio 1992; Levine 1988; Storey 2006; Johnson 1995; McConachie 1988; Santoro 2010). Some scholars have also studied opera in contemporary societies, emphasizing the fandom of opera audiences (Benzecry 2011), and the use of opera music outside the opera houses (Storey 2003). But few scholars have taken an interest in studying how contemporary opera houses communicate with a wider audience than the ones attending performances on a regular basis.[1] This is remarkable, considering that we live in a time where neither opera nor other forms of high culture have an authoritative status vis-à-vis society (Peterson 1992; Peterson and Simkus 1992; Peterson and Kern 1996; Chan and Goldthorpe 2005, 2007a, b), and opera is the most expensive of all art forms, in terms of their budget vis-à-vis other arts organizations (Bereson 2002). Not only do opera houses have an orchestra and opera soloists. Many opera houses do also have a ballet company, they have at least one choir (usually also a children's choir), and they employ a large number of people in various positions related to the work done in preparing the stage for production, such as people working with sound, light, make up, hair, stage and costume design. In addition to these artistic positions, an opera house also employs a lot of people in sales and administrative positions to keep the house running on a daily basis, and of course, the opera houses also have a team of managers and directors.

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In order to be considered legitimate arts organizations, opera houses have to communicate with a broad audience, and in order for sociology to understand the role of these organizations in the twenty-first century we need to study their engagement with civil society. In this chapter, I will compare the contemporary legitimation work in one American and one Norwegian opera house. Due to differences in funding regimes for arts organizations, these countries are particularly good cases for comparative analysis: Where the state funds arts organizations indirectly via tax expenditures in the USA, major arts organizations get their funding directly from the state in Norway (Hillman-Chartrand and McCaughey 1989; Mangset 2013). One would then assume that the target of the legitimation work of opera houses in the two countries would be different in that private organizations are in need of being perceived as a legitimate cause of funding by wealthy individuals, organizations, and foundations, and state-funded organizations are in need of being perceived as legitimate by, in principle, all the tax payers. But as I pointed out in Chap. 1, all arts organizations are dependent on being perceived as legitimate by three audiences: the funders, the content producers, and the community of which they are a part. Even though the main actor in the legitimation work is the actual organization, outside actors also partake in the process, as legitimation work is a negotiation between actors coming from different social spheres. While most of the communication between the organization and the funders, and the organization and the content producers (the artistic community) is direct and takes place in non-public arenas, most of the communication between the organization and actors from civil society is non-direct and takes place in public arenas.

It is the process of achieving widespread approval through communicating in the civil sphere (Alexander 2006) that I will investigate in this chapter. More specifically, I analyze how the Metropolitan Opera (the Met), and the Norwegian National Opera and Ballet (NNOB) perform legitimacy in the civil sphere as part of their legitimation work. I will analyze what characterizes the opera houses performances of legitimacy, and how they balance between the exclusive and the inclusive in seeking to satisfy the various audiences for its social performances. Since arts organizations are in need of constant legitimation work in order to uphold legitimacy among its various publics (Alexander and Bowler 2014; Larsen 2014), there is much at stake in their public performances as civil organizations.

The Met recently reduced wages and cut 22 administrative positions due to loss in income.[2] The NNOB has also faced a lot of extra expenses related to pensions, and has, as a consequence, downsized its

administrative staff with 31 positions (NNOB 2012). This makes the need of filling the seats even more acute, and both houses are trying to reach a broad audience and making the traditional art forms of opera, ballet, and classical music accessible to the masses without rejecting the ideals originating in the art world.

Where 80 % of the funding for the Norwegian organization comes from the state (NNOB 2013), approximately the same percentage of the American organization's income comes from a combination of contributions from individuals, organizations, and foundations, in addition to Box Office sales.[3] Since my aim is to study the organizations' performances in the civil sphere, I am analyzing how the organizations communicate directly with civil society, and indirectly with the art world and the private and public funders of the organizations. An important arena where these performances take place is the arts, culture, and opinion sections of newspapers, which make up part of what has been labeled in cultural sociology as an aesthetic public sphere (Jacobs 2012; Jones 2007). According to Paul Jones (2007, 88), such a sphere includes "all forms of aesthetic-cultural production—and their critical discussion." It is thus a public space where the artistic work of arts organizations is discussed. It is an arena where the values of art worlds, cultural policy, and arts organizations are displayed in discussions between actors from different social spheres.

For this chapter, I have analyzed the coverage of the Met in the New York Times, and the coverage of the NNOB in Aftenposten.[4] In order to contextualize the analysis, I also draw on coverage of the organizations in other media outlets, in addition to supplementary data sources, such as an interview with the CEO of the NNOB, experiences from attending ordinary performances, dress rehearsals, and protests directed at the houses, and analysis of the organizations website and organizational documents.

Social Performances and Sociological Studies of Opera

As discussed in Chap. 1, the literature on organizational institutionalism (Powell and DiMaggio 1991) tends to treat organizations as somewhat strategic in their striving to secure legitimacy, and that this is done through performing in a way that corresponds to the wider community of which they are a part.[5] The theory of cultural pragmatics, on the other hand, addresses both strategic and unconscious dimensions of performances. For Alexander (2004, 529)

> [c]ultural performance is the social processes by which actors, individually or in concert, display for others the meaning of their social situation. The performance may or may not be one to which they themselves subjectively adhere; it is the meaning that they, as social actors, consciously or unconsciously wish to have others believe. In order for the display to be effective, actors must offer a plausible performance, one that leaves those to whom their actions and gestures are directed to accept their motives and explanations as a reasonable account.

From this perspective, the aim of a social performance is to create "[t]he emotional connection of audience with actor and text and thereby to create the conditions for projecting cultural meaning from performance to audience" (Alexander 2004, 547). Related to the case at hand, a successful performance of legitimacy will no longer be perceived as a performance, but as an authentic act in dedication to art or (civil) society. Arts organizations are influenced by their cultural and social surroundings in performing legitimacy, but their performances are not only an enactment of the demands from their surroundings, since a considerable amount of their motivations comes from a genuine passion for what they do and a belief that their work is important for society.[6] A purely strategic approach to studying legitimacy will therefore not suffice.

The sociological literature on organizations of classical music and opera has also approached the creation of such organizations as strategic acts from social elites to uphold their positions in society. This work is inspired by Paul DiMaggio's (1982a, b) study of the Boston Brahmins, "the most well defined status group of any of the upper classes" (DiMaggio 1982b, 34) in Boston between 1850 and 1900. DiMaggio makes the point that the Brahmins managed to create a new organizational basis for high culture and reclassify symphony music as art through a sacralization of symphonic music. According to DiMaggio: "Not until two distinct organizational forms—the private or semiprivate, non-profit cultural institution and the commercial popular-culture industry—took shape did the high/popular-culture dichotomy emerge in its modern form" (DiMaggio 1982b, 33). Through the high/popular separation and the sacralization process classical music became an exclusive elite activity. To create such institutionalized high culture, "Boston's upper class had to accomplish three concurrent, but analytically distinct, projects: entrepreneurship, classification and framing" (DiMaggio 1982b, 35).[7] Through the private non-profit organizational model, the high culture organizations could be legitimated and sacralized at the same time; the organizations could claim

to serve the community even though the community only included the elite and the upper middle classes (DiMaggio 1982b, 38). In DiMaggio's account of high culture organizations, there is no room for a civilizing mission motivated by a passion for the arts and a belief in their transformative powers in society.

Based on a discussion of various case studies of high culture institutionalization, Claudio Benzecry has (2014) launched a typology to explain national and regional differences in the institutionalization of high culture. He writes:

> I focus particularly on two preconditions thematized but not fully developed by most of the literature: whether cultural entrepreneurship happens with opposition from a competing constituency or not; the strength of said opposition; and whether entrepreneurship happens through state intervention or not (Benzecry 2014, 189).

Even though the Met is the oldest surviving opera organization in the USA, founded in 1883 by "men of new wealth who had been unable to obtain boxes at the old Academy Opera" (DiMaggio 1992, 33), it did not establish its current organizational form until 1933 under the name the Metropolitan Association. According to DiMaggio,

> [o]nly when grand opera became a losing proposition did the Metropolitan adopt the form of the symphony orchestra … Its future in jeopardy, it converted itself to a not-for-profit educational membership group, the Metropolitan Association … Depicting itself as an institution in service to art, the community, and the nation (DiMaggio 1992, 36).

According to Benzecry (2014, 189–190), the late establishment of opera as art in New York City occurred because the elite was more fragmented than the elite in Boston.

In countries where the state has intervened and there has been little said opposition, opera has been approached with a civilizing mission,[8] while state intervention and competing populations lead to mass parties legitimating high culture (Benzecry 2014).[9] The study presented in this chapter sheds light on yet another empirical case where the state has played a key role in the creation of a national opera organization. The NNOB was establishes in 1958, after the state budget had included a regular post dedicated to operatic purposes since 1953 (Dahl and Helseth 2006, 213).[10] The NNOB was established as a national touring opera,[11] with its base in the

largest theater in Norway at the time, *Folketeatret* (the People's Theater), an Oslo theater for the working class constructed on the initiative of the Norwegian Labor Party (Dahl and Helseth 2006, 164).

The 1950s was a time when Norwegian cultural policy emphasized the democratization of culture, and national arts organizations were established as part of this process (Mangset 2012; Larsen 2012). Culture was considered a welfare benefit that the people should have equal access to (Dahl and Helseth 2006, 204–216). The Met did also start out with national ambitions as an opera company, with regular performances in Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago, but business disagreements between opera companies put an end to this activity after a few years (DiMaggio 1992, 35–36).

The history of the NNOB sets it apart from the history of opera in other European countries, where

> opera followed a clear trajectory, from the genre being owned by a few patrons but consumed in the same way by everybody, to a distinction game that involved the cultivation of specific tastes (the development of high culture) that corresponds precisely to positions in the social structure (Benzecry 2011, 30–31).

Also the history of opera in New York City has been portrayed in this way (Ahlquist 1997; DiMaggio 1992; Levine 1988). One reason that the history of the NNOB differs from the usual story of opera in society, is the fact that the company was established much later than the opera houses discussed by Benzecry, DiMaggio, and others. This is again related to Norway gaining its independence as a sovereign nation state as late as 1905.[12] Being established as an inclusive arts organization with a mission of serving the whole nation also sets it apart from the American organizations described in terms of the high cultural model.

Inclusive Legitimation Work

The financial crisis has led to cutbacks in several opera houses around the world, some even closing down. In Norway, things have been different. Not only has the financial crisis had little impact on the Norwegian economy, but the Government holding office between 2005 and 2013 also emphasized cultural policy as an important policy area. The center-left coalition Government consisting of Arbeiderpartiet (the Norwegian Labor Party),

Sosialistisk venstreparti (the Socialist Left Party), and Senterpartiet (the Center Party) had a strategic goal of allocating 1 % of the national budget to the Ministry of Culture by the year 2014 (which is now achieved). Prior to the 2005 general elections, this was actually the first issue that the coalition fronted as part of its political platform. In addition to demonstrating how important cultural policy is for these parties, this decision also illustrates the high degree of consensus in Norwegian cultural policy. With the exception of the populist right party, Fremskrittspartiet (The Progress Party), all the Norwegian parties[13] agree that the state should play a key role in maintaining and promoting a well-functioning culture sector. Even though the Progress Party has been in Government since 2013, it is its coalition partner, Høyre (the Conservative Party), that holds the office of Minister of Culture, and the current Government has kept increasing public spending on NNOB.[14]

In the process of upholding this goodwill in the Government, it is important that the NNOB be perceived as an inclusive organization, as it is very hard for politicians (especially on the left) to legitimate spending such an amount of money[15] on an organization for the elite in a country where egalitarianism and modesty are highly valued (Gullestad 1991; Lien et al. 2001; Daloz 2007). The NNOB has been quite successful in communicating to the general public that it is an inclusive arena. But the ambition of being inclusive does not originate solely in the organization itself. As already pointed out, the NNOB was founded on the idea of it being a touring opera company for the whole country. And the new opera house that was opened in 2008 was intended to be a multipurpose house ever since the discussions on building the house took off in the 1990s (Røyseng 2000). Being multipurpose means that it runs concerts and events representing other genres than the traditional genres of opera, ballet, or classical music. There has been much prestige in making the actual building, as well as the performances of the four ensembles (opera, ballet, orchestra, and chorus) available for a broad nationwide audience, which is done through live digital transmission to movie theaters and taking the productions on tour throughout the country. On the NNOBs website it is stated that "[a]n especially important dimension was for the Opera to demonstrate from day one that it is one of the most important cultural meeting places for broad segments of the audience."[16] The number of people attending the performances has more than doubled since the NNOB moved into the new house (NNOB 2012). In that way, the house has been a success, which is made important in the organizations' legitimation work.

Inclusivity is something that the center-left Government has emphasized as one of its main cultural policy objectives during its time in office (St.meld. nr. 10 [2011–2012]). Being state-funded, the NNOB has strong incentives to strive toward democratization and inclusiveness, when these are core values for the Government providing funding.[17] But as we have seen, these have been values attained by the organization since its inception. And besides, there is little room for elitist activities in Norwegian society. Even though Norwegian followers of Bourdieu keep producing studies inspired by Bourdieu's (1984) *Distinction*-thesis (Rosenlund 2009; Jarness 2013; Gripsrud, Hovden, and Moe 2011; Hovden and Knapskog 2014a, b), less dogmatic (Daloz 2013) researchers find little support for cultural consumption as a powerful marker of status in Norway (Daloz 2007; Skarpenes 2007; Haarr and Krogstad 2011; Birkelund and Lemel 2013; Skarpenes and Sakslind 2010; Halvorsen 2014). Similar conclusions have also been drawn in an American context (Halle 1993; Lamont 1992; Erickson 1996; Beisel 1993), all of which are questioning the transferability of Bourdieu's theory. Cultural capital is not easily converted to social power in either Norway or the USA.[18]

Being located in New York City, one would think that it was not necessary for the Met to communicate with a large audience outside of the elites, as the elite might provide a big enough audience in itself. But as the city has so much on offer in terms of leisure activities, and digital media brings an unlimited amount of entertainment directly to the citizens' living rooms, the Met is in need of attracting audiences from a broader group in order to fill the seats. And of course, for both opera houses it is necessary to recruit audiences at a young age, to familiarize them with the art form of opera—thus establishing a demystified relationship to this particular form of (art) music. Peter Gelb, general manager at the Met, says to the New York Times:

> We have been, I think, successful in getting younger, newer audiences to come to the Met. But there's no question that our older audience is aging, and not attending as frequently as they once did. And that is a reality that we have to live with, and we're trying to meet that challenge by keeping our artistic standards as high as possible, and introducing new productions, and having the greatest singers in the world on our stage.[19]

As part of the process of reaching new audiences, the Met offers *HD Live in Schools* to school districts throughout the USA. Participating schools receive free movie tickets to the performance, in addition to educational material for the teachers to use in class prior to attending the performance.

In Norway, a government initiated policy from 2001 called *Den kulturelle skolesekken* (The Cultural Rucksack)[20] is "intended to ensure that students in primary and secondary schools have an opportunity to experience professional, artistic and cultural productions during school hours several times a year" (Christophersen et al. 2015, 9). According to the Norwegian cultural policy scholar Egil Bjørnsen (2009, 2012), it was motivated by a belief in the civilizing and transforming powers of the professional arts for the citizens, which again fits Benzecry's (2014) model where state intervention and no competing elites leads to approaching art with a civilizing mission.

The NNOB has also been involved in promoting opera as an art form in primary education: In 2014, representatives of the organization participated in the training of fifth graders in four different schools in Oslo, helping them to put on their own performances of "hits" from the opera repertoire. "Our goal with the project was to get pupils to sing opera hits in the school yard, and that we have achieved. There is all this talk about opera being high culture. All we wanted to do was to lower the threshold," said one of the employees from NNOB involved in the project.[21] In the same article in *Aftenposten*, a music teacher at one of the schools said:

> The Cultural Rucksack is good, but the pupils remain passive. Here we have managed to evoke an interest for music among many pupils because they participate themselves. Simultaneously, they have learned that it takes a lot of training, and they have learned to understand what is meant by such titles as stage director, choreographer, and director.

This school opera project is part of the NNOB's inclusive legitimation work. In fact, the organization has been so eager in its inclusivity that the institutionalized performance of legitimacy led it, in an act of hubris, to formulate the strategic goal of reflecting the demography of modern Norway in its opera house (NNOB 2010). In the annual report for 2012, the board of directors wrote:

> With a strategic goal of reflecting the demography of modern Norway, we give room for performances and actions in other manifestations than our core artistic genres. This has lowered the threshold for a broader audience, and given the NNOB a reputation as an open, diversified, and inclusive institution (NNOB 2012, 8).

For any sociologist (of culture) this is of course unrealistic.[22] But formulating such a goal is important for the NNOB in performing

(Alexander 2004) legitimacy, as it helps in fusing the actor (the organization) with the message (a multipurpose house for the whole population); through such an all-encompassing inclusivity, the public is able to perceive the NNOB as authentic in its ambition to reach a broad audience.

Being inclusive also refers to changing the social script for attending performances. The New York Times writes that the Live in HD series (introduced by Gelb in 2006), and the system of seat-back English translations (introduced by Gelbs predecessor, Joseph Volpe, in 1995), were important innovations to help "demystify opera and entice newcomers."[23] The most important feature of such inclusive legitimation work is to help the audiences feel that entering the opera house is a real alternative when they want to engage in leisure activities. This does not mean that the actual organizations have to emphasize demystification or inclusivity internally, or to make it a central issue in its communication with the art world. On the contrary, maintaining the focus on the artistic quality in their internal work and the direct communication with the art world, and keeping up the inclusive legitimation work in the communication with the broader public and the politicians is probably the best way to go about it. But being successful in such balancing work, and double-talk (Brunsson 2002) is a demanding task for arts organizations.

Balancing the Exclusive and the Inclusive

In 2014, the Met received criticism from the art world in that it cancelled the simulcast of John Adams' opera The Death of Klinghoffer as part of its Live in HD series. Adams' opera depicts the incident that took place on the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro in October 1985, when four Palestinians captured the ship and murdered the wheelchair-bound Jewish American Leon Klinghoffer and tossed his body overboard. Due to its content, and the fact that it premiered only six years after the incident, the opera has been controversial and has received both social criticism and artistic acclaim. Some of its harshest critics have been the daughters of Klinghoffer, who found the opera to be anti-Semitic after attending its premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1991.

Adams said about the cancelation of the simulcast of his opera that it was "a deeply regrettable decision and goes far beyond issues of 'artistic freedom,' and ends in promoting the same kind of intolerance that the opera's detractors claim to be preventing."[24] Responding to this criticism, Peter Gelb said that "The Met is resolute on going forward with it, and

the fact that we offered this compromise outside the United States doesn't mean that we're prepared to compromise on artistic integrity inside the opera house."[25] He said that "[t]his is a great work of art that should be seen and heard at the Met, where it belongs."[26]

What these quotes illustrate is that the cancelation of the simulcast and continuation of the staging of the opera was a compromise in that the Met was trying to satisfy both the financial contributors and the art world. Nevertheless, the satisfaction of the contributors was not the most important aspect of the publicly performed legitimation work, as both the CEO and the composer were relating to the Inspired World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006), in defending the opera as a great work of art and it deserving being staged on those grounds alone. The critics on the other hand were expecting the Met to ground all of its artistic work in the Civic World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006), not upsetting audience members in expressing its artistic freedom. Even though going forward with the production led to heavy protests from Jewish groups on the opening night, some threatening to cut their funding and to never attend another performance,[27] these protests helped the Met to show that opera is still a relevant art form. "Monday night's premiere of 'The Death of Klinghoffer' was not one of the easiest nights in the history of The Metropolitan Opera, but it was one of the most important," wrote the *New York Post*.[28] Attending the premiere myself, I was struck by the extraordinariness of the event: How often does one attend a performance with a couple of hundred protesters outside the venue, some 40 police officers guarding the building, and protesters inside the venue shouting slogans and booing, before being escorted out of the venue by security personnel? Reporting from the premiere, the *New York Post* stated: "It's often said that opera is a dying art form, but you wouldn't know it from the emotions flaring outside Lincoln Center last night."[29]

To remain a relevant and legitimate arts organization, it is crucial that opera houses do not compromise artistically, regardless of how much the organizations are changing and adapting to trends in society. As a result, neither the Met nor the NNOB cut artistic positions as part of their recent downsizing of the organizations.[30] But in 2011, the NNOB received criticism from several opera professionals for not prioritizing newly written Norwegian operas in its repertoire.[31] This caused damage to its legitimacy, as it was not in line with the NNOB's mission as a national arts organization that should "take part in the country's development of the creation and production of opera and ballet" (NNOB 2012, 5). This de-fusion

(Alexander 2004) made the organization's performance of its mission come off as inauthentic, since the audience (the art world) did not accept the organization's message.

The performances taking place on the stages of the opera houses are sacred in the contemporary discourse on opera. In keeping the performances on stage pure from the potential pollution of the inclusive legitimation work of the managers, opera is maintained as an art form simultaneously as opera houses as organizations engage in civil society; hence the term civil opera houses. A successful legitimation of an opera house will then depend on how well the organization signals to society at large that the house is an open and inclusive arena and at the same time convince the art world that the organization is staying true to the artistic ideals of the world of art music. This can be done through distinguishing between internal and external legitimation work. An important part of the external work toward society is the inclusive legitimation work. This has been very important in Norway.

At the NNOB, the CEO and the very top of the organization take care of the inclusive work, while the heads of the artistic departments counter this work by emphasizing artistic quality all the way. At the Met, the general manager is in charge of both the administrative and the artistic aspects of the opera house. This makes his task challenging in that he must come off as authentic while wearing two hats at the same time. He does not hesitate to state: "I make the artistic decisions. I'm not afraid of making them. I make them every day."[32] But simultaneously he tells the story of managers of opera houses who in the old days actually "casted for operas." Gelb then points out that he would never cast an opera without the director's agreement,[33] thus performing his artistic leadership in co-operation with the persons in charge of the actual productions. In a long piece in the Newyorker on Gelb's tenure as the manager of the Met, Sir Richard Eyre, a director of several productions at the Met, is quoted in saying that "[a]ll the energy has to go to the event onstage. Peter [Gelb] understands that and is hands-on in the production. He's the only director in my experience who attends every technical rehearsal and dress rehearsal."[34]

Gelb was switching between his two hats when dealing with the *Klinghoffer* controversy. When proclaiming that "[t]his is a great work of art that should be seen and heard at the Met, where it belongs,"[35] he was wearing his artistic hat. When wearing his manager's hat and making sure that the donors will not withdraw funding to the opera house,[36] "[m]r. Gelb said that he had not been pressured by any of the Met's donors, but

that he believed that some of the donors themselves were under pressure from people who object to the opera."[37] The managers of opera houses must master this balance in order to be successful in their public performances of legitimacy, as it will help them maintain good relations with the funders while not provoking a fury among the artists.

In addition to canceling the broadcasted transmissions of the opera, the Met also included a statement from the daughters of the murdered Leon Klinghoffer in the program leaflet, in order to compromise with the funders. Observing the protests in front of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts on the opening night of the opera on October 20, 2014, I was assured that there was a real threat of some funders withdrawing their support. Several of the speakers (current and former politicians, religious leaders, leaders of organizations, and artists)[38] emphasized that they are opera fans and protectors of the Met, but that they will now reconsider their support of the organization (both financial and social). Some even encouraged the audience to boycott the Met altogether and never again set their foot inside the opera house.

In Norway, such balancing work in trying to please various publics occurred in discussions over how detailed the Ministry of Culture can be when specifying what they expect from the arts organizations receiving funding. Organizations receiving funding get a letter from the government stating what they expect in return. In the allocation letters to the performing arts organizations in 2011 and 2012, the Ministry of Culture stated that the Government expected the organizations to start planning a special performance celebrating the 200 year anniversary for the Norwegian constitution in 2014. This led the CEO of the NNOB and several managers of theaters to protest in the aesthetic public sphere, as they perceived it as a breach of the arm's length principle, which is a sacred principle in the cultural policy discourse. For state-funded arts organizations to have artistic credibility, it is of utmost importance that the money from the state does not come with demands on what content the organizations should produce. Simultaneously, the trustworthiness of the government's cultural policy is dependent on its service of the arts and society, and not the state. Both are achievable if the government operates on an arm's length distance from the organizations.

The CEO of the NNOB played an active role in this protest, appearing several times in various mass media outlets. When I interviewed him, he told me that they had planned such a performance on their own initiative before the controversy with the Ministry of Culture. This signals a

commitment to serving one's own nation as an integral part of being a national arts organization, while at the same time, it signals a refusal to take directions from the Government. That the interests of the organization and the Government coincided was portrayed as a coincidence. By stating that the NNOB wanted to put on a performance celebrating the 200-year anniversary, the organization was able to express a commitment to both society and art.

In 2014, the NNOB staged two new pieces: a ballet of Henrik Ibsen's *Gengangere* (Ghosts), and an opera of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*. The artistic directors at the NNOB stated that "[a] critical attitude to the heritage we carry with us is a way to honor the tradition. To preserve the tradition, we must challenge it."[39] By relating to major works in the Norwegian literary canon as part of its 2014 schedule it showed a commitment to society, and by relating to the works in innovative ways it also showed a commitment to the art world (although the artistic acclaim for the productions was modest). And most importantly, through staging these pieces the NNOB was able to satisfy the Government's wishes. The NNOB maintained its artistic freedom, granting the Government the opportunity to uphold its arm's length distance to the organization.

This was, nevertheless, not satisfactory in order for the Government to be perceived as authentic in its dedication to serving the arts. It also had to engage in legitimacy repair: In the allocation letter from the Government to the performing arts organizations for 2013, it was only specified that organizations that plan to put on special performances in 2014 were encouraged to report this to the Ministry when applying for funding for 2014.[40] Even though it was the same Government that provided funding in 2011, 2012, and 2013, there was a new Minister of Culture, Hadia Tajik, providing the money for 2013, and signing the allocation letter. Through this minor adjustment of the content of these letters, the Government was able to uphold its policy simultaneously as the new Minister of Culture was able to show vigor, and re-establish good relations with the organization and the art world. Tajik was able to get goodwill from the performing arts organizations with making only minor adjustments, and the performing arts organizations got their will without the Government having to abandon their policy all together. Through witnessing this co-operative legitimation work being performed in the aesthetic public sphere, the art world might also be relieved, as there once again is an arm's length distance between the state and the arts organizations. Since both the CEO and the Minister were perceived as autonomous in making their decisions, they

had performative success (Alexander 2004) in their legitimation work; they moved from performing critique and repair, to being authentic actors in service of art and society.

The Civil Mission of Opera Houses

Despite the differences in the main funding sources, both the NNOB and the Met are civil organizations. As part of the organizations' legitimation work, the values of the non-civil spheres of state and market are translated to the values of the civil sphere (Alexander 2006); the opera houses' relation to politics and economy gets purified if the organizations are successful in communicating to the public that their mission is to serve society and its citizens as best they can, and simultaneously communicating to the art world that artistic value is king. The general manager of the Met argues:

> The problem that we face is a social and cultural problem, and the question is not whether I think I'm doing a good job or not in trying to keep the opera alive. It's whether I'm doing a good job or not in the face of a cultural and social rejection of opera as an art form. And what I'm doing is fighting an uphill battle to try and maintain an audience in a very difficult time.[41]

Gelb has taken upon himself to keep on the fight to get people to attend opera performances because it's the only way to keep this important art form alive in a time of endless opportunities for cultural consumption. But the struggle to fill the house will not lead them to make artistic compromises. Gelb is quoted in the New York Times on saying that the Met will "continue to try to reach a bigger audience without trying to 'dumb down' opera or begin producing musicals.[42] 'I believe very strongly that we must maintain the highest artistic standards,' he said."[43]

The sole fact that the Met is the oldest opera house in the country is made important in the organization's performance of legitimacy. As North America's oldest opera company and one of the world's leading opera houses, the Met argues that it cannot give up on having opera performances with the world's greatest singers and directors.[44] In its use of history, the organizational actors engaging in legitimation work draw attention to both artistic excellence and social responsibility: The Met emphasizes its dedication to help young talents getting ahead with their career through the National Council Auditions[45] and the Lindeman

Young Artist Development Program,[46] and it emphasizes the Auditions' historical importance as an arena for black singers to get contracts with the Met.[47] In addition to housing the foremost of the world's opera singers, the Met is also at the forefront in applying digital technology to reach the masses with its artistic content: Live in HD transmits live performances from the Met to nearly 2000 movie theaters in 64 countries (MET 2013, 4), and the Met was also the first opera house to introduce supertitles on individual display screens on the seat backs.[48] In addition to pushing "the company's earned revenues to record levels" (MET 2011, 2), the Live in HD series is also important in reaching a broader audience than the ones attending performances in the opera house, thus helping the organization in fulfilling its civil mission. Depending on whether it is communicating primarily with the funders or a wider audience, the Met is relating to the Market World or the Civic World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006) in legitimating its use of digital transmissions.

Such innovative use of digital technology has made its way to Norway, as the opera house has seat-back supertitles, and the NNOB has started with live transmissions as part of its mission of being an opera house for the whole country. This can be interpreted as a result of isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983), in that the NNOB is mirroring a global leader in the organizational field of opera. But considering that the NNOB has strived toward being an inclusive organization for the whole Norwegian population since day one, it might as well be interpreted as a strategic act in seeking to reach such a goal with any means available.

The organizational documents are for the Met an arena for performing legitimacy as a world leading opera house—"[t]he 2009–10 season proved to be an extraordinary showcase for the artistry of the world's greatest singers, conductors, directors, and designers" (MET 2011, 2). For the NNOB, the organizational documents are a place to perform legitimacy as an inclusive arts organization dedicated to serving society—"as the only institution of its kind in Norway, it shall be an opera house for the whole country" (NNOB 2010, 6). These differences can be contextualized with reference to the differences in the funding of the organizations: Since the main audience of the Met's annual reports is current and potential funders, it is emphasizing its artistic successes, as being fused with an organization with an outstanding artistic reputation is perceived as beneficial by the donors. Similarly, the NNOB is emphasizing its inclusivity and ability to reach a nationwide audience, as the main audience are the politicians, who rarely fund artistic organizations that are perceived as exclusive and elitist.

Furthermore, such a culture of egalitarianism (Gullestad 1991; Daloz 2007; Ljunggren 2015) is an important part of the Norwegian national repertoire of evaluation (Lamont and Thévenot 2000).

For NNOB, it is important to demystify the opera house as an arena for leisure activities. Instead of communicating to society how well it performs artistically (which of course is easier for the Met, being one of the world's leading opera houses) it is more important to communicate that this is a place for everyone, regardless of their experiences with the art forms of opera, ballet, or classical music. As a state-funded organization it is dedicated to not only help maintain and promote Norwegian (art) music but also try to reach as many as possible with its content.

Despite their differences in scope, both houses are powerful symbols for their communities (Bereson 2002). The new opera house in Oslo has become important both for Norway and Oslo in promoting themselves as tourist destinations to the world. Having a modern opera house signals that one is a modern nation who finds culture (narrowly defined) to be important. Even though New York City is full of world-famous symbols, the Met is also important for the city in its promotion to the world as its cultural capital. This became evident in the intense reactions evoked by the staging of Adams' opera. The protesters felt betrayed by an organization they trusted to be one of the foremost bearers of the civil values of American society.

Conclusion

By approaching opera houses as civil arts organizations, the study presented in this chapter has shown that opera houses communicate with a wider community than individuals attending performances on a regular basis. Opera houses face high demands from several social spheres, and they engage in the civil sphere of their respective societies when performing legitimacy.

In Norway, much of the contemporary legitimation work takes the form of demystifying opera. This is a paradox. Considering that the NNOB has a historically defined mission of being an opera company for the whole nation, and through that serving the citizens of an egalitarian country where there is little social power to gain from distinctions, it would seem as the NNOB would not need to demystify its art forms in order to perform legitimacy to the public. However, the notion of opera, ballet, and classical music as elite culture has been very powerful (and reinforced by sociologists of culture).

As a consequence, the need to demystify supposedly high culture feels like the natural thing to do in legitimating opera. The NNOB is simply producing a counter-discourse to the discourse of opera as elite culture. Through this cultural work, they manage to align themselves with the civil side of the binary code of the civil sphere (Alexander 2006), thus being perceived as an inclusive and democratic organization, rather than an exclusive and undemocratic organization serving the elite.

There are also elements of demystification in the Met's performance of legitimacy, but the Met puts a much stronger emphasis on artistic content in its legitimation work. Having the position that the Met has, in terms of size and artistic integrity, it is no wonder that the artistic aspects are emphasized. Nevertheless, the Met faces the same challenges as other opera houses in creating enthusiasm for the art of opera among a younger audience. But even in this aspect of their legitimation work they tend to focus on the quality of the art being performed, rather than the demystification of it. Both organizations strive to achieve legitimacy as a performing arts organization in balancing its external recruitment of audiences with the maintenance of the stages of the opera houses as sacred places, where the manager's inclusive legitimation work has no place.

Notes

1. Such studies have nevertheless been carried out in relation to other cultural policy areas, such as the museum sector (Karp et al. 1992; Kawashima 2006).
2. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/13/arts/music/met-opera-cuts-22-nonunion-jobs-mainly-through-layoffs.html?_r=1(last accessed, September 30, 2014).
3. In 2013, 49 % came from donations, and 28 % from Box Office sales (MET 2013, 16).
4. *Aftenposten* is the biggest daily newspaper in Norway, http://www.tns-gallup.no/tns-innsikt/de-offisielle-lesertallene-for-papiraviser-for-2013-14-1 (last accessed, March 31, 2015). It is a subscription newspaper with a liberal-conservative profile, based in Oslo. The time period for the main analysis is January 1 to October 31, 2014. October 31 is chosen because I was doing archival searches on that day, and I wanted the study to be as contemporary as possible. The total amount of articles on the Met in the New York Times in the specified time period is 452, as compared to 262 articles on the NNOB in *Aftenposten*.
5. As John Meyer and Brian Rowan argued in their 1977 article: "organizations which exist in highly elaborated institutional environments gain the

legitimacy and resources needed to survive" (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 352). This will again, according to Meyer and Rowan, lead one to expect that organizations will perform legitimacy in accordance with the institutionalized myths: "Institutionalized organizations must not only conform to myths but must also maintain the appearance that the myths actually work" (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 356).

6. As stated by Morris, the chairman of the executive committee at the Met: "Directors of the Met are opera lovers, and the return they're looking for is to provide what directors and opera lovers want, which is to be the best opera house in the world." http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/03/23/a-fight-at-the-opera (last accessed, March 24, 2015).
7. DiMaggio (1982b, 35) elaborates: "By entrepreneurship, I mean the creation of an organizational form that members of the elite could control and govern. By classification, I refer to the erection of strong and clearly defined boundaries between art and entertainment. … I use the term framing to refer to the development of a new etiquette of appropriation."
8. This was the case with the Paris Opera (Johnson 2007, 2008).
9. This was the case with *Teatro Colón* in Buenos Aires (Benzecry 2011, 2014) and *La Scala* in Milan (Santoro 2010).
10. Prior to the Second World War, opera and ballet were performed on private initiative in private theaters. The first public money was spent on opera in 1950, when the newly established Norsk Operaselskap (Norwegian Opera Company) received money from both the state and the municipality of Oslo.
11. Ballet has been an integral part of the Norwegian national opera since its inception. Today, they have a policy that the performances of opera and ballet are considered equal, meaning that there should be as many ballet as opera performances per season (interview with CEO Remlov, December 11, 2012).
12. Norway was under the Swedish throne from 1814 to 1905, and between 1524 and 1814 it was part of the political entity Denmark-Norway. Consequently, many of the national arts organizations were located in Stockholm or Copenhagen, which both have opera houses dating back to the latter half of the eighteenth century.
13. At the moment (2015), eight parties are represented in the Parliament.
14. In 2013, NNOB received NOK 557 458 000 from the Government in operating subsidies, in 2014 it received NOK 576 969 000 (Prop. 1 S (2013–2014), 94), and in 2015, NOK 589 604 000 (Prop. 1 S (2014–2015), 83).
15. The NNOB is the largest arts organization in Norway in terms of public spending.
16. http://www.operaen.no/Default.aspx?ID=28627 (last accessed, February 19, 2013).

17. There was also a democratic turn in the cultural policy discourse in the USA in the 1990s, but it had little impact on the actual practice of the high cultural arts organizations (McDonnell and Tepper 2014, 24).
18. In his study of Argentinian opera fans, Benzecry (2011) concludes that the fans are not motivated to invest most of their spare time on opera as an (unconscious) strategy to accumulate cultural capital, but out of a genuine passion and love for the music. In fact, he documents that the fans cannot transform their knowledge of opera to social benefits outside of the opera house, as they are met with stigma in that most people think of opera fans as snobs and weirdos (see also Hennion [2001], and Benzecry and Collins [2014]). As a consequence, the fans do not talk about their attendances at the opera house to people who are not themselves music lovers (Benzecry 2011, Chap. 5). I hold the same to be true in Norway. Even though there is an overrepresentation of the elites among the audiences of performing arts organizations (Mangset 2012), this does not lead to the conclusion that they attend opera performances to gain social benefits, as some scholars operating within a Bourdieusian paradigm are prone to believe.
19. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/29/arts/music/met-opera-reports-falling-attendance.html (last accessed, November 7, 2014).
20. Although linguistically awkward, Cultural Rucksack is the official English translation. According to scholars who have evaluated the initiative (in an English language publication), "[t]he name of the program alludes to the rucksack as a national symbol of Norway, and when used in connection with culture and schools it evokes associations with the cultural baggage carried by schoolchildren" (Christophersen et al. 2015, 5). For this author the meaning of Den kulturelle skolsekken (DKS) gets lost in this translation, as the use of the term cultural baggage is not particularly suited due to its negative connotations. DKS is rather about exposing school children to artistic expressions in all its magnitude, and be of help in stimulating the children to engage in cultural activities on their own initiative. In addition, depicting a rucksack as a Norwegian national symbol can be contested.
21. http://www.aftenposten.no/kultur/Opera-inn-i-barneskolen-7513759.html (last accessed, November 10, 2014).
22. For an international readership I want to emphasize that Norway is no longer a monocultural society, as this is still a popular belief. In 2015, 15.6 % of the population consisted of immigrants and children of immigrants. http://ssb.no/befolkning/statistikker/innvbef (last accessed, May 25, 2015). When the NNOB is referring to the demography of modern Norway they are specifically referring to reaching the immigrant community, in addition to all age groups and social classes.

23. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/07/arts/music/lets-talk-about-risk-at-the-metropolitan-opera.html (last accessed, October 26, 2014).
24. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/18/arts/music/met-opera-cancels-telecast-of-klinghoffer.html (last accessed, September 25, 2014).
25. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/19/arts/music/klinghoffer-composer-responds-to-mets-decision.html (last accessed, September 25, 2014).
26. Ibid.
27. http://nypost.com/2014/10/22/klinghoffer-actress-compares-show-to-schindlers-list/ (last accessed, October 24, 2014).
28. http://nypost.com/2014/10/22/met-gm-death-of-klinghoffer-proves-protesters-wrong/ (last accessed, October 24, 2014).
29. http://nypost.com/2014/10/21/the-death-of-klinghoffer-ignites-passion-outside-but-none-onstage/ (last accessed, October 21, 2014).
30. http://www.aftenposten.no/kultur/Operaen-kutter-31-arsverk-7155144.html (last accessed, November 10, 2014). http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/13/arts/music/met-opera-cuts-22-nonunion-jobs-mainly-through-layoffs.html (last accessed, September 25, 2014). Also the General Manager of the *Gran Teatro del Liceu* in Barcelona is quoted on saying that "[i]t is sad and regrettable to cut performances but we cannot compromise on artistic integrity," when explaining why they cancelled performances due to financial difficulties. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/spain/9057483/Barcelonas-opera-house-closes-for-two-months-in-wake-of-economic-crisis.html (last accessed, September 25, 2014).
31. http://www.aftenposten.no/kultur/Hardt-ut-mot-operasjefen-5331488.html (last accessed, November 10, 2014), Dagens Næringsliv (2011): "Knapt med kommers-kroner," June 9; Klassekampen (2011): "Feit dame står for fall," June 25; Klassekampen (2011): "Vil eksperimentere mer," June 7.
32. "Theater Talk: Peter Gelb of the Metropolitan Opera," CUNY TV, January 28, 2011. http://www.cuny.tv/show/theatertalk/PR1012428 (last accessed, November 11, 2014).
33. Ibid.
34. http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/03/23/a-fight-at-the-opera (last accessed, March 24, 2015). Attending the dress rehearsal of *Lucia di Lammermoor* on March 13, 2015, I was also struck by how involved Gelb was in supervising the production. He was sitting through the whole rehearsal engaging in conversations with the various individuals involved in the production.

35. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/19/arts/music/klinghoffer-composer-responds-to-mets-decision.html (last accessed, November 10, 2014).
36. http://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/music/the-met-the-controversial-opera-and-the-politics-of-protest/2014/10/16/e6c44984-5555-11e4-ba4b-f6333e2c0453_story.html (last accessed, October 22, 2014).
37. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/18/arts/music/met-opera-cancels-telecast-of-klinghoffer.html (last accessed, November 10, 2014).
38. The key note speaker was former mayor of New York City, Rudy Giuliani.
39. http://www.osloby.no/oslopuls/kunst_og_scene/Ibsen-blir-ballett-og-opera-7514615.html (last accessed, November 10, 2014).
40. http://klassekampen.no/61066/article/item/null/tajik-droppar-foringar (last accessed, November 10, 2014).
41. http://www.dw.de/new-yorks-met-faces-social-rejection-of-opera/a-17595752 (last accessed, November 10, 2014).
42. Gelb is here referring to a trend where opera companies and symphony orchestras are performing musicals to find a way out of financial difficulties. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/26/arts/international/opera-companies-turn-to-musicals.html (last accessed, November 10, 2014).
43. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/29/arts/music/met-opera-reports-falling-attendance.html (last accessed, November 10, 2014).
44. According to the *New Yorker*, The Met is "the world's largest and most complex arts organization." http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/03/23/a-fight-at-the-opera (last accessed, March 24, 2015).
45. The National Council Auditions is "a program designed to discover promising young opera singers and assist in the development of their careers … Starting with the Auditions of the Air in the 1930s and continuing today, the Auditions have been a defining step in the careers of our greatest opera stars." http://www.metopera.org/en/auditions1/national-council/national-council-auditions/(last accessed, November 7, 2014).
46. "The goal of the … Program, founded in 1980, is to nurture the most talented young artists through training and performance opportunities" http://www.metopera.org/metopera/auditions/young_artists/faculty-and-staff.aspx (last accessed, November 7, 2014).
47. See Cheatham (1988) for information on some of the first black singers at the Met.
48. http://www.nytimes.com/1995/10/02/arts/reinventing-supertitles-how-the-met-did-it.html (last accessed, November 7, 2014).

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CHAPTER 3

Legitimation Work in State-Funded Arts Organizations

In this chapter, I analyze how the Norwegian National Opera and Ballet (NNOB) and the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra (OPO) perform legitimacy as part of their legitimation work. Rhetoric being a crucial element of the performative dimension of the legitimation work, the focus is on the legitimation rhetoric. The organizations engage in rhetorical communication by addressing specific audiences with the intent of achieving a specific form of reaction or response from them. Officially communicated legitimation rhetoric is addressed to politicians, bureaucrats, artists, music professionals, critics, intellectuals, and the general public.

Throughout the analysis, I will investigate how the organizations work toward finding the right balance between the broad and the narrow, or the inclusive and the exclusive, in that I will look into how they address the various audiences in their publicly communicated rhetoric about their mission. We will see how the public at large, with all its magnitude, and the artists and intellectuals, the core audience, are represented. If the organizations are not conceived as legitimate by both the broad public and key actors in the artistic sphere, it is hard for politicians to continue providing financial support to the organizations.

I have chosen the NNOB and the OPO as the main empirical cases in this chapter, as they receive much support from the state, both in terms of the percentage of the organizations' budgets being publicly funded, and in comparison to state support from the Norwegian Ministry of Culture provided to other arts organizations.[1] In addition to the main empirical cases, I also draw on examples from the legitimation work related to the

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Norwegian public service broadcaster Norsk rikskringkasting (NRK), the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra (TSO), and the Norwegian National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design (National Museum). Finally, I consider symphony orchestras in other countries when relevant to the discussion. TSO is chosen as a supplementary case in that it is another state-funded arts organization dedicated to classical music. Among Norwegian orchestras, TSO receives the third highest amount of public funding, and is the largest of the regional orchestras.[2] Considering that I am interested in legitimation work in the culture sector more generally, I have also chosen to draw on examples from two organizations outside the field of music. One of these, the National Museum, is the largest art museum in Norway.[3] The other, NRK, is the only license-financed public service broadcaster in Norway, and is Norway's largest media organization (NRK will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter). I will draw on the different cases as I discuss the characteristic features of contemporary legitimation work throughout the chapter. I will analyze what role the audience plays in the legitimation rhetoric of these organizations, and how the organizations define their societal missions.

I have analyzed how the organizations publicly communicate their missions through annual reports, strategy documents, and the CEO's blog posts on the organizations' webpages. In addition, I have analyzed letters to the organizations from the Ministry of Culture in which the organizations' obligations for receiving funding are laid out. I have also studied the funding applications from the organizations to the Ministry of Culture. Finally, I have conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews (Esterberg 2002, Chap. 5) with the CEOs.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will first analyze how various audiences are represented and addressed in the organizations' legitimizing rhetoric. When performing legitimation rhetoric, these organizations are seeking to persuade users, funders, and citizens of the necessity of supporting the arts in general and the organizations themselves in particular. Next, I will look into how the organizations define their societal missions. As is the case for most publicly funded organizations, it is essential to define a *samfunnsoppdrag* (societal mission) and to communicate this to the public. Within the societal mission lies the organization's commitment to serve democracy, national culture, and the public. I will end the chapter by addressing the legitimizing rhetoric in a wider context, as part of the organizations' legitimation work.

The Audience

To maintain their position as leading arts organizations in terms of their standing in cultural policy (their relative size vis-à-vis other arts organizations in the budget of the Ministry of Culture), their standing in the art world (resulting in being respected and attractive places to work), and their standing in society (in terms of support from the audience), publicly funded arts organizations need to legitimize themselves to various audience groups, in addition to the government and private sponsors. Considering that private sponsors make up only a small part of the funding of the organizations in question, one would think this less significant.[4] But this is not the case with the NNOB: The general manager, Tom Remlov, emphasized the importance of being in dialogue with private and commercial actors as part of its engagement with the wider community that it is dedicated to serving (interview, December 11, 2012). In positioning the NNOB within the Civic World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006), Remlov sees the market from the perspective of it being part of the community that the NNOB serves. He thinks of the NNOB as a civil arts organization.

Much of the legitimation work is directed at the audience, in trying to find the right balance between reaching and representing the core audience and the broad audience in the organizations' programming and legitimation rhetoric. Remlov wrote in an article in the Norwegian cultural journal *Samtiden*: "Today's dilemma for Europe's national cultural institutions is … this: How can we simultaneously prioritize quality *and* breadth? How do we unite exclusivity and magnitude?" (Remlov 2012, 97). He is pointing to an important aspect of not only arts organizations (which he labels cultural institutions)[5] but cultural policy as such. The master of legitimation rhetoric in cultural policy is the one who finds the right balance between the inclusive and the exclusive, the popular and the elitist. For state-funded arts organizations it comes down to achieving performative success (Alexander 2004) when communicating artistically and rhetorically with both the core audience and broader segments of the public. This in turn helps politicians argue in favor of funding the organizations.

As of 2008, the NNOB has a new opera house, financed by the government.[6] There is much prestige in making the actual building, as well as the ensemble's performances, available to a broad nationwide audience. It is important for the NNOB that the new opera house is a multipurpose

building,[7] and that the organization makes its productions available throughout the country by going on tour and broadcasting some of its performances from the opera house to movie theaters around the country. The NNOB states in its strategy document that "as the only institution of its kind in Norway it shall be an opera house for the whole country … We shall therefore be nationwide in our programming" (NNOB 2010, 6). Even though it is more expensive to put on a performance in the north of Norway than to fly the audience to Oslo to attend the performance, it is crucial for the legitimacy of the NNOB that it be visible in the local community, the CEO told me (interview, December 11, 2012).

By arguing for it being multipurpose (and in implementing the strategy), the NNOB is not putting the financing of its future operations at risk. If the opera house is a building of inspiration and enjoyment for a broad segment of the audience, it is difficult for politicians to argue that they should not support it, as opposed to if it is perceived as a place where the elite can engage in their favorite activities. Norwegian cultural policy is characterized by a political consensus as regards the need for public funding of the culture sector. The only political party opposing this, arguing that cultural activities that cannot survive in the market for cultural production are not worthy of public funding, is the populist right party, Fremskrittspartiet (the Progress Party). However, when the opera house is conceived as an inclusive arena for all segments of the population, even the Progress Party agrees on continuing funding for the NNOB; as was documented in the previous chapter, it has actually continued increasing annual support to the NNOB after taking office as part of the current coalition Government.

The ambition to be inclusive and serve the whole nation goes back to the NNOB's funding in 1958. Established as a national touring opera, the NNOB was expected to perform throughout the country, provided local theater and orchestra facilities could make this possible. This was typical of the cultural policy of the time. Several touring cultural organizations were established (*Rikskonsertene* for music, *Riksteatret* for theater, *Riksgalleriet* for visual arts, and *Norsk Bygdekino* for cinema) with a mission to make physical accessibility to performances of (high) culture less dependent on geographical location (Dahl and Helseth 2006, 204–216).

The ambition to reach a broad audience will also secure the NNOB's base for the core audience in the long run. The strategy document says that

> [t]he work on increasing the audience's familiarity with, knowledge of and confidence when engaging with the art forms of opera, ballet and adjacent forms of music shall be strengthened. The work should be directed towards existing as well as new segments of the audience in all ages, with a special emphasis on children and young people (NNOB 2010, 7).

Like the NNOB, the OPO is also concerned with recruiting new audiences. In a blog post on the OPO's website, the CEO wrote that the OPO should actively seek to recruit children and young people as future musicians and audience members by educating and inspiring them.[8] When I interviewed him, he emphasized the importance of the Norwegian education system, especially primary school, in promoting the classical music tradition, so that even pupils who are not exposed to classical music at home will become familiar with the art form (interview, December 3, 2012).

Similarly, The New York Philharmonic puts a lot of emphasis on engaging with school children of various ages through such programs as "The Young People's Concerts for Schools."[9] In addition to reaching children, orchestras are trying to reach new audiences through outreach programs (Kawashima 2000) aimed at social inclusion. For the Cleveland Orchestra "Outreach has been at the core of the orchestra's mission since it was founded," The New York Times reports.[10]

"Through the breadth of our activity and what we offer the audience, we are an important arena for education" (NNOB 2010, 8), the strategy document of the NNOB says. By educating the audience, and bringing the art forms of opera and ballet to a nationwide audience, the NNOB is relating to art both as an end in itself and as a mean to educate the people. This is the kind of rhetoric that was widespread in Nordic cultural policy in the 1950s and 1960s, when the aim was to use art to educate people nationwide by bringing high culture from urban areas to local communities with the help of the previously mentioned touring organizations (Duelund 2008; Mangset 2012).

The form of education that state cultural organizations such as the NNOB can engage in is related to ideas from enlightenment thinking (Kant 1975 [1784]), in terms of approaching culture as an arena for realizing one's human potential, and growing as critical and independent citizens, on which democracy is dependent. This line of reasoning is also important in the legitimation work related to another type of state-funded cultural institution, public service broadcasting (PSB). In an analysis of white papers on PSB and cultural policy in Norway and Sweden, I concluded that "the policy documents

[in both countries] contain arguments for the key role of PSB for securing an inclusive public sphere and a national culture, and PSB is considered to play an important role in a vibrant democracy" (Larsen 2011b, 44). For PSB and media policy in general, democracy is a key element in legitimation rhetoric, with a special emphasis on freedom of speech. The legitimation of PSB is often based on a deliberative democratic model, of which Habermas (1996) is a key figure (Moe 2008; Chap. 5 in this book; Larsen 2014).

Democracy is also an element in the legitimation rhetoric of the organizations being discussed. The NNOB's strategy document states that it is important to be aware that it receives public funding in order to "secure such basic values in Norwegian society as openness and the free exchange of ideas, equal access for everyone to common goods, and the individual citizen's right to a meaningful life" (NNOB 2010, 8). These arts and media organizations serve democracy in terms of providing equal access to arenas in which important values and ideas are created, exchanged, and discussed. They aim to be inclusive out of democratic concerns. Part of being a civil organization is to create a space for citizens to meet and engage in cultural consumption which has the potential to enrich both the individual's life and the life of the community.

An important aspect of the democratic mission in NNOB's legitimation work is thus to provide equal access to the art it produces and performs. General manager Remlov wrote this in his column in the opera's program leaflet:

> For the common man the threshold for entering the world of opera and ballet has been high. But we are now moving towards easier access … The most important reason for this is our new building. It signals openness and accessibility, and it is also perceived this way.[11]

In the same post he also tells an anecdote about receiving visitors from Russia at the Opera House. When accompanying two women from the Marinskij Theatre in St. Petersburg at a chamber concert with the Opera Orchestra, someone in the audience started applauding between the first and the second movements. When he leaned toward the two ladies to apologize on behalf of the nation and explain that Norway does not have as long a tradition of classical music as Russia, one of the women replied: "It is the same way in our theatre. You should be happy, as this means you are getting in touch with a new audience." This made Remlov rethink his statement and he ends the piece by proclaiming that this is exactly the kind of audience the organization wants: people who don't know what to

expect when attending classical concerts, ballets, or opera performances, but who get excited by what is performed on stage.[12] The most important thing is thus getting people to attend performances, rather than teaching them how to behave while doing it. This was also emphasized by the CEO of the OPO (interview, December 3, 2012). CEO of the TSO, Roar Leinan, wrote in a blog post on the organization's website that the orchestra "should be the orchestra of the city [Trondheim] and the people. The threshold for paying us a visit should be low."[13] This inclusivity is also emphasized as crucial for the future of the New York Philharmonic. New York Times music critic Vivien Schweitzer writes in an article on who should lead the New York Philharmonic after current music director Alan Gilberts tenure ends in 2017: "Hopefully, by the end of the next music director's tenure, classical music newbies who show enthusiasm by clapping at the end of a movement won't be silenced by haughty stares."[14]

One reason for stressing the importance of being inclusive is to secure the financing of the organization; if the organization has broad support among the citizens, it is easier for the government to argue for continued financial support for it. The strategy document of the NNOB states: "As vivid art forms, opera, ballet and classical concerts require a present and cooperating audience. As costly art forms they also require being perceived as trustworthy by, and having support from, a large audience" (NNOB 2010, 5). That the opera house should be inclusive and attended by the whole range of the Norwegian population is emphasized throughout the NNOB's strategy document. A crucial element in reaching the goal of reflecting the demography of modern Norway (NNOB 2010) is recruiting audience members from segments of the population that are not likely to seek out opera performances on their own initiative.

As already mentioned, the TSO also stresses the importance of lowering the threshold for entering concert halls. The CEO writes that

> [o]ne of the most important missions of the TSO is to bring the classical music to as broad an audience as possible. We will do this by being an orchestra for everyone in this region that appreciates the music we present, including those who did not know that they would appreciate classical music; the new audience.[15]

For the OPO it is also crucial to recruit new segments of the population as audiences in the Oslo Concert Hall. The CEO wrote in a blog post on the OPO's website: "If we are to define one owner of the symphony orchestra, it is the audience."[16] The focus on reaching a broad audience

is portrayed as a prerequisite for the OPO's legitimacy. The audience's perception of the legitimacy of the OPO as a publicly funded arts organization is again a prerequisite for the public funding that the OPO needs in order to survive, as 87 % of OPO's income comes from the Ministry of Culture. The CEO goes on to attack the "music insiders" who claim to own the classical music scene. Instead of making the broader segments of the audience feel stupid and incompetent, the OPO should work toward including the audience's preferences, and in doing this also continue to challenge the same audience.[17] He wants to rid art music of its elitist connotations, without compromising the *art* in art music.

This inclusivity is important for contemporary symphony orchestras in a lot of countries. Although the managers quoted in this chapter made it an important part of their rhetorical performances of legitimacy, such inclusivity is also sometimes performed within the concert halls. An example of this occurred in Sweden in 2015, at a concert by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (which is based in Stockholm) at the concert hall in Gothenburg. A girl from the audience made several noises during the performance of the first piece of music. Before the start of the second piece, a man from the audience stood up and said that classical music was very important to him and that the disturbance was ruining his night. He urged the girl to leave the concert hall. As it turned out, this was a teenage girl with Down syndrome accompanied by her parents to her first symphony orchestra concert (whether the man was aware that the girl had Down syndrome remains unknown). As the parents felt uncomfortable with the situation, the three of them left the concert hall prior to the performance of the second piece of music. The manager of the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, Sten Cranner, happened to be attending the performance and witnessed the incident. He left the hall and talked to the parents, apologizing on behalf of the venue. After the intermission, he went onto the stage and addressed the audience, saying that the concert hall is for everyone and that anyone is welcome. He also said that he had talked to the parents, and that they would stay in touch and find arrangements so that the girl could attend future concerts, for it was obvious that she enjoyed the music very much. The audience responded with a standing ovation that lasted several minutes.

Through this spontaneous performance the manager was able to connect emotionally with the audience in an immediate way (Alexander 2004). He dramatized in a convincing way the inclusivity of the contemporary

discourse on classical music, as well as the civility of the performing arts organization. The manager also told newspapers that he got a lot of positive feedback from the musicians after the concert.[18] This incident illustrates that the inclusive ambitions of the managers of concert halls and opera houses go beyond being a purely rhetorical tool in legitimizing the organizations. Through their genuine beliefs in the importance of inclusivity, they are able to perform legitimacy as civil organizations in powerful ways. This incident also shows that the core audience and musicians support the inclusive legitimation work of the managers.

The Societal Mission

As already mentioned, an organization's societal mission includes a commitment to serve democracy, national culture, and the public. Where private business organizations have a *samfunnsansvar* (corporate social responsibility—CSR),[19] publicly funded organizations have a *samfunnsoppdrag* (a societal mission). For private enterprises it is beneficial to communicate a sense of responsibility toward society, to maintain good public relations. For organizations dependent on public funding, it is crucial to communicate that they serve specific needs of society. Gullberg, who held a managerial position at the aluminum company *Norsk Hydro* prior to becoming CEO of the OPO, states that "contrary to the business sector, cultural institutions do not meet a concrete and brutal competition that has immediate consequences for the bottom line … But cultural institutions experience that they have a societal mission to fulfill."[20] By defining and emphasizing a societal mission, a publicly funded arts organization seeks to convince the public that its work is serving a higher purpose than the organization itself. It is simply trying to fulfill a mission given by the community, in order to serve society. Remlov wrote in the *Samtiden* article previously mentioned:

> The term *samfunnsoppdrag* (societal mission) did not exist until this millennium, and it is an expression of a new way of thinking about society in Europe. For cultural institutions this means that to be legitimate it is no longer sufficient to point out artistic results, not even audience numbers will do … We must make it clear—not least to ourselves—that we have taken upon ourselves a mission, and that our client is the community (Remlov 2012, 98).

Remlov is legitimating the NNOB's existence by relating it to the Civic World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006), highlighting its dedication to serve a higher purpose than goals of the organization itself. When I asked him to elaborate on this statement, he said that prior to the turn of this millennium, one was satisfied with legitimating a national opera by pointing out its contribution to the development of art forms—to artistic quality. He believes this to be insufficient as grounds for legitimating the existence of an arts organization that receives most of its funding from the Government. He instead thinks of the NNOB as an integrated part of a wider community and that it should act accordingly (interview, December 11, 2012). Considering that the NNOB was established as a national touring opera located in the theater for the working class, the idea of the NNOB serving the community is not as new as Remlov suggests. However, the notion that publicly funded organizations should have a societal mission is a fairly new construct. When searching for hits on the use of the word *samfunnsoppdrag* in the Norwegian media archive Retriever.no during the 2000s, the results shows an exponential growth year by year, with 10 hits in 2000 and 2146 in 2014.[21] As Remlov points out, the increase in the use of the word indicates that preserving the autonomy of the arts is not sufficient for legitimizing state-funded culture organizations in the twenty-first century. For cultural policy and the state-funded culture sector to be perceived as legitimate, the sector needs to serve a broader purpose than the arts. Arts organizations need to have performative success (Alexander 2004) in legitimating themselves as civil arts organizations.

In March 2013 a committee appointed by the Norwegian Government delivered a report evaluating Norwegian cultural policy after 2005, with recommendations for future policies (NOU 2013: 4). The report contains a chapter on "the societal mission of cultural institutions." The committee suggests that cultural institutions, defined as "theatres, orchestras, and museums that are funded through the state budget" (NOU 2013: 4, 298), shall formulate a societal mission in "dialogue and negotiation with the funding authority" (NOU 2013: 4, 302). It is stated that the societal mission "must be a public affair, and something that is subjected to continuous debate in the public sphere … It must be a contract that is agreed upon by the cultural institution, its political subsidiaries and the interested public" (NOU 2013: 4, 298–299).

The idea of a societal mission is thus not something that the state-funded organizations have developed solely on their own initiative; it is

something that they are expected to formulate. Emphasizing a societal mission can be seen as a form of isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983), in that the organizations are trying to secure legitimacy by living up to expectations from its environment. But it is important to keep in mind that such a mission is first and foremost a rhetorical tool that is useful for both the organizations and the governments. The most important aspect of legitimation work is how well the organizations perform legitimacy on a day-to-day basis.

According to the report (NOU 2013: 4, 300), the notion of a societal mission or societal role (*samfunnsrolle*) has been important in the museum sector since the 1990s, even though it has not been clear what it means for a museum to have a societal mission. The director of the Norwegian National Museum, Audun Eckhoff, states in the foreword to the museum's strategy document 2011–2016 that

> the museums societal mission defines the museums basis for existence and the responsibility that lies in collecting, maintaining, exploring, and passing on collections within the Norwegian and foreign art history from the middle ages until today. The mission is also about how we create and organize the meeting between human beings and art.[22]

The NNOB defines its societal mission as follows:

> We shall present opera, ballet and concerts of high artistic standards, representing a broad spectrum of expressions and being available for as broad an audience as possible. We shall, as the only national and nationwide institution in our art form, contribute to the development of the nation's opera and ballet productions (NNOB 2010, 2).

According to their societal mission, they are developing the art forms on behalf of the nation, and they are making their best effort to have the NNOB's performances available nationwide. In another passage, Remlov writes that "we include an audience from Longyearbyen to Lindesnes, as our societal mission requires."[23]

When the OPO was criticized by a music critic in the Norwegian daily newspaper *Aftenposten* for trying too hard to reach a relatively young audience (people in their 30s) through its programming for the 2012–2013 season, the CEO of the OPO responded in a blog post that this is a perfectly natural way of thinking about the program of the orchestra.

He argued that the OPO's main responsibility is to satisfy its core audience, but that it is also dedicated to reaching new audience groups, including those who are not familiar with the codes of the concert hall or all the terms used by music insiders. After providing several examples of concerts targeted at a broad audience in arenas other than the concert hall, Gullberg concluded his post by saying that these are examples of active audience development and that the fact that the OPO is trying to make classical music relevant for common people is in keeping with its societal mission.[24] He also told me that the ambition to reach a young audience is not new, but that the magnitude of cultural offerings available for the people to consume is now so vast that the OPO has to argue more explicitly for the importance of communicating with a broad audience in order for society to perceive it as deserving state funding (interview, December 3, 2012). In a blog post from 2013 he writes:

> As long as we are dependent on funding from the state, it is impossible to survive without a solid legitimacy amongst the people. This means we have to redefine target groups to incorporate a broader segment of the people, in terms of age and demography. This can be achieved partly through creative programming and partly through conquering public spaces more actively.[25]

Even though thinking in terms of target groups is in line with the World of Fame, as theorized by Boltanski and Thévenot, Gullberg is also relating to the Civic World in his legitimation work (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006, Chap. 6), as he is thinking in those terms not only to serve the strategic interests of the organization, but also out of a desire to bring as many as possible into the world of classical music.

The fact that the OPO is a Norwegian orchestra is also of importance in its legitimation work. It is a goal of the OPO to engage Norwegian soloists and conductors, and cooperate with other arts organizations.[26] Gullberg also told me that they considered it part of their responsibility toward society to actively engage Norwegian contemporary composers and give up-and-coming Norwegian conductors the chance to promote their careers by conducting the OPO (interview, December 3, 2012). "Part of our societal mission is to function as a greenhouse for Norwegian music, Norwegian composers, conductors, and soloists."[27] Promoting Norwegian music and cooperating with other arts organizations are goals emphasized in the allocation letter from the Ministry of

Culture, stating the obligations which the OPO should fulfill as a result of receiving funding from the Government (Kulturdepartementet 2012). In other words, this is not generated solely on the initiative of the OPO, but is a prerequisite for the OPO's funding, and can, as was the case with the organizations emphasis on its societal mission, be read as a case of isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). In particular, it can be interpreted as a case of coercive isomorphism, which "results from both formal and informal pressures exerted on organizations by other organizations upon which they are dependent and by cultural expectations in the society within which organizations function" (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 150).

Moreover, that an arts organization should try to reach new audience groups and be an inclusive arena in society has also been emphasized in recent state cultural policy. In 2011, the Norwegian Ministry of Culture presented a white paper called *Culture, Inclusion and Participation*, in which one of the main goals was to "strengthen inclusion and new voices in the culture sector" (St.meld. nr. 10 (2011–2012), 9). Culture organizations are encouraged to try to include new target audiences within their existing budgets. When the organizations at hand make inclusion an important part of their performances of legitimacy, this is partly to satisfy their funders, the Government, and partly to secure future audiences. There are elements of isomorphism in the organizations' performances of legitimacy, but they are not purely acting in (perceived) strategic ways. As has been demonstrated throughout this chapter, they are also motivated by a love for the art form and a belief in the importance of the arts for society and all its citizens, which in turn is important for their performative success.

In an article from 2012, Swedish cultural policy scholar Roger Blomgren (2012) concludes that democracy has not been an important part of cultural policy and that the autonomy of the arts is the most important feature of both cultural policy and cultural policy research. The findings presented in this chapter, however, indicate that democracy is very much a part of cultural policy rhetoric, and more so now than ever. I have also (Larsen 2011a, b; Chap. 5 in this book) studied Swedish cultural policy through a comparative study of the legitimation work related to PSB in Norway and Sweden. Contrary to Blomgren's study, I found democracy to be an important aspect of legitimizing rhetoric, especially in Sweden.

State-funded cultural organizations need to define a societal mission in order to be successful in their legitimation work. That these organizations

use the term "societal mission" in legitimizing their existence in the twenty-first century does not mean that they did not need to legitimize their existence in the twentieth century. It does however reflect a need to be precise in one's legitimation rhetoric, and to do this by defining a mission that embodies the values assigned by society to the organizations . By making the task of serving society and the people, rather than the arts, the primary objective of the organization's work, it is easier for it to continue with its artistic work, as it is serving a higher purpose than merely developing and maintaining elite culture. A successful performance (Alexander 2011) of legitimacy as an arts organization in the twenty-first century entails being perceived as an authentic civil arts organization.

Conclusion

A key to being successful in communicating with the art world, the public at large, and politicians and bureaucrats, is finding the right balance between the broad and the narrow. The NNOB and the OPO do this by actively recruiting new segments of the public to attend performances of traditional art forms, and by making these performances available in arenas other than the opera house and the concert hall. A driving force in the legitimation work of performing arts organizations is the demystification of high culture. The most important feature in this demystification is to communicate that the concert halls and opera houses are not an exclusive arena for the elite. The actors engaging in legitimation work are changing the way they are talking about these arenas and the performances taking place there, but this is not necessarily the same as changing the content of the art being performed. It is difficult to please artists and intellectuals with this change of emphasis in legitimation rhetoric, as they may perceive this as a devaluation of artistic quality. The text being performed by organizational actors needs to contain enough material on artistic quality to satisfy this important audience group.

By defining a societal mission, state-funded cultural organizations explicate the values assigned to their work that go beyond serving the artistic sphere. The organizations communicate an ambition to serve society, national culture, and democracy as best they can, in fulfilling the mission given to them by the people. This line of reasoning is a powerful rhetorical tool in performing legitimacy to a broad audience as state-funded arts organizations in the twenty-first century.

Notes

1. The NNOB is the arts organization that receives the most funding from the state in Norway: In 2011, it received NOK 488,575,000 (Prop. 1 S (2011–2012), 105), which accounts for 77 % of its total income (NNOB 2011, 78). "NNOB is the largest cultural institution in the country, measured both in terms of budget size and number of annual man-labor" (NNOB 2010, 12). The OPO is the orchestra that receives the most state funding in Norway: In 2011, it received NOK 128,477,000 in operating subsidy from the Government (Prop. 1 S (2011–2012), 94), which accounts for 87 % of the OPO's income (OPO 2011, 27).
2. In 2011 TSO received NOK 67,273,000 (Prop. 1 S (2011–2012), 94). Trondheim is the third largest city in Norway, after Oslo and Bergen. The OPO and Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra are considered national orchestras, which makes TSO the largest regional orchestra.
3. It received a total of NOK 252,414,000 in operating subsidy from the Government in 2011 (Prop. 1 S (2011–2012), 82).
4. In 2011, private sponsors made up 3.5 % of the NNOB's operating revenue (NNOB 2011, 78–82), and 0.7 % of the OPO's operating revenue (OPO 2011, 27).
5. It is common that the organizations studied in this book are labeled as 'institutions' in cultural policy documents, in the organizations' own documents, in the public debate, in everyday language, as well as in scholarly articles on cultural policy. Nevertheless, I am using the term organizations, except for when I quote from these documents. Labeling them as organizations is in line with sociological theory (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Tolbert and Zucker 1983; Scott 1995; Weber 1978; Zucker 1991; Kangas and Vestheim 2010; Meyer and Rowan 1977; Meyer and Scott 1983). The oldest of these definitions are from Weber (1978, 48), who defines an organization as "a social relationship which is either closed or limits the admissions of outsiders" with regulations that are "enforced by specific individuals: a chief and, possibly, an administrative staff, which normally also has representative powers." When Remlov is performing legitimacy in the aesthetic public sphere he is exercising his representative powers.
6. The total cost of the opera house was NOK 4,356,000,000 (St.meld. nr. 32 (2007–2008), 144).
7. The idea of a multipurpose opera house was launched by the former Minister of Culture, Turid Birkeland (1996–1997), in the debate concerning the construction of a new opera house in Norway in the 1990s (Røyseng 2000).

8. http://oslofilharmonien.no/kunder/oslofil/oslofil.nsf/pages/ny-sesong-nye-blogginnlegg (last accessed, June 12, 2015).
9. See http://nyphil.org/education/for-schools/overview (last accessed, March 22, 2015).
10. New York Times (2015): "A maestro's bravura moment," July 12, Zachary Woolfe.
11. http://www.operaen.no/Files/Billeder/Operaen/PDF/Bare-klapp-august2010.pdf (last accessed, February 19, 2013).
12. Ibid.
13. http://www.tso.no/om_tso/direktorens_hjorne/#/v%C3%A5r-og-h%C3%B8st (last accessed, May 7, 2013).
14. http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/15/arts/music/the-new-york-philharmonic-and-the-search-for-a-new-music-director.html?smid=fb-nytimes&smtyp=cur&bicmp=AD&bicmlukp=WT.mc_id&bicmst=1409232722000&bicmet=1419773522000&_r=0 (last accessed, March 11, 2015).
15. http://www.tso.no/om_tso/direktorens_hjorne/#/v%C3%A5r-og-h%C3%B8st (last accessed, May 7, 2013).
16. http://oslofilharmonien.no/internet/oslofil.nsf/pages/den-vanskelige-paminnelsen (accessed June 12, 2015).
17. Ibid.
18. http://www.gp.se/kulturnoje/1.2682658-hogljudd-protest-pa-konserthuset (accessed April 15, 2015), http://www.expressen.se/gt/funktionsnedsatta-ebba-19-ombads-lamna-konsertlokal/ (accessed April 15, 2015).
19. CSR is often defined as "the firm's consideration of, and response to, issues beyond the narrow economic, technical, and legal requirements of the firm … to accomplish social benefits along with the traditional economic gains which the firm seeks" (Davis 1973, 312).
20. http://oslofilharmonien.no/kunder/oslofil/oslofil.nsf/pages/kulturens-samfunnsansvar (last accessed, May 24, 2013).
21. Even though there are more sources in the archive at the end of this period than at the beginning, this still indicates a strong growth in the use of the word *samfunnsoppdrag* in the public sphere. The search was completed on November 4, 2015.
22. http://www.nasjonalmuseet.no/no/nasjonalmuseet/om_museet/strategi_2011-2016/ (last accessed, June 12, 2015).
23. http://www.operaen.no/Files/Billeder/Operaen/PDF/Et-annet-sted-februar2011.pdf (last accessed, February 19, 2013). Longyearbyen is the northernmost town in Norway, located on the island of Svalbard, while Lindesnes is the southernmost town on the Norwegian mainland.
24. http://oslofilharmonien.no/kunder/oslofil/oslofil.nsf/pages/publikumsdissing-eller-samfunnsoppdrag (last accessed, June 12, 2015).

25. http://oslofilharmonien.no/kunder/oslofil/oslofil.nsf/pages/kulturens-samfunnsansvar (last accessed, May 24, 2013).
26. http://oslofilharmonien.no/kunder/oslofil/oslofil.nsf/pages/ny-sesong-nye-blogginnlegg (last accessed, June 12, 2015).
27. http://oslofilharmonien.no/kunder/oslofil/oslofil.nsf/pages/kulturens-samfunnsansvar (last accessed, May 24, 2013).

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CHAPTER 4

The Crisis of Public Service Broadcasting Reconsidered

In any liberal democracy, independent journalism is understood as the normative ground on which a well-functioning media system is to operate. One institution of independent journalism with a particularly interesting history is public service broadcasting (PSB). After the BBC was founded in 1922, it came to serve as a model for how to regulate radio as a mass medium, and broadcasters regulated by public authorities emerged in several European countries, all avowed with a mission to inform, educate, and entertain. As the PSB companies are not dependent on commercial revenues, and are structured so as to keep the government at arm's length, PSB composes an important part of the infrastructure of a relatively autonomous public sphere.

As pointed out in Chapter 1, several scholars (e.g., Garnham 1992; Scannell 1989) have linked the discussion of PSB to Habermas' (1989, 1992, 1996, 2009, Chapter 9) theories of the public sphere and deliberative democracy. Media scholars have argued that PSB possesses the potential to ensure a unitary public sphere, as a place for rational discussions on societal issues. With a cultural sociological (Alexander 2003) approach to journalism, another useful term is that of a civil sphere, which also refers to a sphere independent from the market and the state (Alexander 2006; Luengo 2012). With such a perspective, PSB can be viewed as an institution that "generates the capacity for social criticism and democratic integration at the same time" (Alexander 2006, 4). Although most media scholars engaging in normative defense of PSB base their argument on the contribution of PSB to the public sphere and deliberative democracy, it makes perfect sense

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to think of PSB in terms of a communicative institution in the civil sphere, as this captures the whole range of activities of media organizations with a mission to inform, educate, and entertain.[1] A Habermasian perspective on PSB tends to focus on the role of independent journalism as a facilitator of political discussion and its contribution to educating the public into becoming independent and critical citizens, which eventually lead them to make informed choices on election day. A civil sphere approach, on the other hand, will be able to give full attention to PSB as a place for creation and maintenance of we-ness and solidarity. As Alexander has pointed out, civil society is "the we-ness of national, regional, or international community, the feelings of connectedness to 'every member' of that community, that transcends particular commitments, narrow loyalties, and sectional interests" (Alexander 2006, 43). In addition, such an approach does not neglect the importance of critical discussions for democracy.

The Crisis Discourse in Scandinavian Broadcasting

Scandinavian broadcasters in the public's service have a high standing, in terms of trust and market share in their respective national media markets (Roppen et al. 2010; Hujanen et al. 2013). In order to uphold this position, they are in need of assuring the public of their independence from the state and the market. There have been some exceptions to the demand of being commercial-free, but for the broadcasters to be operating in the public's service it is crucial that they do not serve only commercial interests. And even though the public broadcasters are regulated through national cultural policies, we are not talking about state TV considering that the media organizations have editorial freedom. When either the state or the market has been perceived as coming too close to the operations of the media organizations, a crisis discourse has been produced by various actors.

The crisis discourse related to PSB in Scandinavia has been prevalent in two historical times: first, with the onset of commercial broadcasting in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and second, with the digitalization of broadcast media, starting in the late 1990s. After having a monopoly on TV broadcasting from its onset, the Scandinavian broadcasters Danmarks Radio (DR), Sveriges Radio (SR), and Norsk rikskringkasting (NRK) did not face competition from commercial broadcasters until the 1980s,[2] when politicians allowed for local transmission in the national markets, as well as satellite transmissions.[3] As the broadcasters faced competition from commercial actors, the relevance of a media organization in the public's

service had to be legitimated with other means than the argument of simply regulating this powerful broadcast medium to benefit the public's interest, which was an important part of the initial legitimation of such a broadcasting model.

Shortly after this deregulation national cultural policies opened up for a second national broadcaster to be distributed nationwide, as the technology now allowed for more channels to be carried in the analog terrestrial network. The Danish TV2 was established in 1988, the Norwegian TV2 in 1992, and the Swedish TV4 in 1992. They were all defined as commercial public service broadcasters, meaning that they were (partly) financed by advertisements. The Norwegian TV2 and Swedish TV4 were fully financed by commercials, while the Danish TV2 was financed partly by a license fee and partly by advertisements. When TV2 was about to be launched in Norway the CEO of NRK, Einar Førde, said to his fellow NRK employees that it was important that TV2 had (a moderate degree of) success to avoid ending up with the deal DR got dealt in Denmark, where it had to split the license fee with TV2 to help the new channel up on its feet (Rossavik 2007, 310). In order to get the privileged position of being distributed throughout the country, alongside the license-financed public service broadcasters, the commercial public service broadcasters were obliged to fulfill some cultural policy obligations. Swedish TV4 has been a fully commercial broadcaster since 2007 (Lund et al. 2009), whereas Norwegian TV2 and Danish TV2 are still defined as public service broadcasters, with a broadcasting license from the government.

Digital technology has since the late 1990s been perceived as a threat to PSB in that it challenges both the position of the public service broadcasters in the national media markets and the relevance of broadcasting as such. As digital technology allows for on-demand consumption of radio and TV broadcasts, and it helps provide access to an unlimited amount of information for everybody connected to the Internet, PSB organizations as providers of common experiences to the citizens, a characteristic feature of radio and TV in its earlier days, become less salient. In an age of media pluralism, it is rather live transmissions of media events (Dayan and Katz 1992) that manage to gather large numbers of citizens in simultaneous consumption and postevent discussions. One might then argue that this reduces our common experiences, and our belonging to imagined communities (Anderson 1991).

The democratic values attached to broadcasters in the public's service have been more strenuously explicated and legitimized when faced with technological and economic pressures from the outside. In the remainder of this

chapter I will analyze how threats to independent journalism in these organizations have been mediated culturally through the commercialization crisis and the digitalization crisis. I will discuss how the impure forces of the state and the market have been perceived as dangerous and kept at a distance from the pure independent journalism guiding PSB. Through this analysis we will get a grip on the role played by the cultural commitments to journalism itself (Alexander 2015), and how the commitments are connected to the binary codes of the civil sphere discourse (Alexander 1992, 2006; Alexander and Smith 1993). The analysis is based on previous studies of Scandinavian PSB organizations in times of change, of which one is my own PhD dissertation on the legitimacy of PSB in Norway and Sweden in the 2000s (Larsen 2011a).

The Commercialization Crisis

The debate on whether to establish a second TV channel took off in Norway in the mid-1980s. Several actors in the private sector were eager to establish a commercial broadcaster, arguing that it was time to modernize the Norwegian TV industry as technological advances now allowed it. Furthermore, commercial actors, politicians, and segments of the audience all applauded such a development as it would enhance content pluralism. Simultaneously, several intellectuals warned against a decline in quality that would follow from commercial TV. They were afraid of Norwegian culture becoming Americanized, losing its connections with its own history, in addition to a decline in the awareness and practice of the Norwegian language(s) (Enli et al. 2013).

Similar worries were also raised in the Swedish debate on PSB during the commercialization crisis. The voices critiquing the introduction of commercial broadcasting in Sweden argued that they defended the public service values against the leveling effect of commercial TV with its cultural industrial logic (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002 [1947]) and promotion of aestheticism decoupled from its referential function (Baudrillard 1994). On the other hand, the introduction of commercial TV can be seen as the audience qua viewers gaining importance in that the TV companies, both public and private, had to base their legitimacy on ratings in order to gain legitimacy among the broad segment of the audience (Nielsen 2010; Syvertsen 1997). To use ratings as a way to get feedback from the audience was launched as an idea in the 1940s: The American sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld was in Norway in 1948, helping to establish Norwegian sociology as an academic discipline. He offered to assist NRK in establishing

regular survey research on radio listening in Norway, in co-operation with polling institutes. But Kaare Fostervoll, the CEO of NRK at the time, was forced to decline the offer since important editors in his organization were skeptical: They perceived audience measures to represent a commercial turn in paying too much attention to audience preferences (Dahl 1999; Slaatta 2010). This elitist attitude, in combination with a strong ambition to educate the public, is sometimes referred to as Reithianism, named after the first CEO of the BBC, John Reith, and the author of the most cited book on the idea of PSB—*Broadcast over Britain*. While Reithianism was prevalent in the early days of PSB, it has gradually decreased as PSB has moved into a commercial age.

It was not until the 1970s that NRK started using such measures in relation to radio scheduling, and in the late 1980s it became a success criteria internally, as NRK had entered the commercial area in TV. From 1992 a polling institute was paid to do continuous measures of TV viewing, and this became important in NRK's TV scheduling, pushing the narrow content out of prime time TV (Rossavik 2007, 312). As the public service broadcasters have tried to beat the commercial broadcasters at their own game ever since, the popular taste has gained status among the content producers. The use of ratings is still, nevertheless, seen as an adaption to a commercial logic among segments of the audience (Edin 2000, 135–161). Being popular is not sufficient to satisfy the demands from the intellectuals. Up to this day, ratings have remained an important yet controversial element in the PSB organizations' legitimation work (Larsen 2014).

Securing Media Pluralism

When commercial public service broadcasters (Danish TV2, Norwegian TV2, and Swedish TV4) were introduced in the Scandinavian countries in the late 1980s and early 1990s, they were legitimated as a provider of media pluralism in that they would act as a counterweight to both the dominant position of the license-financed broadcasters and the commercial TV channels. Politicians argued that the broadcasters would provide programming of a higher quality than the commercial channels, as well as counterbalance the content of the PSB channels. Norwegian cultural policy stated that the main mission of TV2 should be to deliver "a Norwegian alternative and be a counterweight to the ever increasing flow of foreign mass-produced entertainment and programs of a pure commercial nature" (Innst. O nr. 2 [1990–1991], 9–10). However, since the traditional public

service broadcasters had such a dominant position in the national media markets (in terms of ratings) and had the privilege of being funded by a license fee, the commercial broadcasters in the public's service did argue that they faced a difficult task.

In the 2000s the license-financed national media organizations argue along the same lines as did the commercial public service broadcasters. The difference is that the traditional PSB organizations position their work in the 2000s within an international rather than a national market. The CEO of Sveriges Television (SVT),[4] Eva Hamilton, stated in a TV interview that SVT represents a national organization in the global media market. And that even though this position makes SVT's tasks challenging, SVT strives to meet its public service responsibility out of respect for the Swedish people; it represents the Swedish people and is therefore obliged to offer them something which differs qualitatively from globalized capitalism's homogenized culture (Larsen 2010, 271–272). SVT is portrayed as a small player on the global media arena, dedicated to promote diversity to counterbalance the one-sided content delivered by the commercial actors. The CEO is set on keeping SVT unpolluted from the market.

That the argument for a second national broadcaster in the public's service is echoed in the arguments for a national broadcaster in an internationally dominated market points to diversity being an important element in the value of journalism in the public's service. In cultural policy (Larsen 2011b), in the media organizations' legitimation work (Larsen 2010; Chapter 5 in this book), and in the public debate (Larsen 2008), content pluralism is considered important, and the market is not perceived as being capable of providing this on its own. Rather, one is in need of an active cultural policy, and media institutions dedicated to contributing to the maintenance and development of a civil public sphere, in order to secure journalism in the public's service. In addition to commercial-free PSB companies at arm's length from the government, cultural policy can help promote media pluralism through economic support of newspapers based on objective criteria to uphold content pluralism (Steen-Johnsen et al. 2016). Strong state intervention in combination with press freedom is an important feature of the Democratic Corporatist Model for media regulation, according to David Hallin and Paolo Mancini (2004). But having such a cultural policy is not sufficient for a truly independent journalism in the public's service; it is also crucial that the actual media companies think of themselves as organizations embedded in the values of a civil sphere (Alexander 2006).

Keeping the State at an Arm's Length Distance

The media organizations' independence from the state was also an issue in the debates over deregulation. In the early 1980s a political argument for deregulation in Denmark was to open up for a plurality of opinions. The right-wing parties in the Parliament, especially Partiet Venstre (the Liberal Party), argued that an intellectual, left-wing elite in the capital dominated the news and was setting the agenda for political and cultural discussions in the country (Jauert 2003). They did not perceive DR as an arm's-length organization, and wanted to counterbalance the politically one-sided content with commercial alternatives.

Similar arguments have for years been employed as a standard critique of NRK by the Norwegian populist right-wing party, Fremskrittspartiet (the Progress Party). Their former leader, Carl I. Hagen, used the acronym ARK, Arbeiderpartiets Rikskringkasting, to describe the media organization. He substituted the N (Norsk—Norwegian) with A (Arbeiderpartiet—the Labor Party) to emphasize that he found NRK to be too oriented to the left politically, that it instead of being a broadcaster in the public's service was a broadcaster in the Labor Party's service. According to the journalist Frank Rossavik (2007, 283), Hagen got the idea from the Danish right-wing populist politician Mogens Glistrup, who used the same rhetorical strategy in blaming DR's main news show TV-Avisen (the TV-Newspaper) for being too leftist. Glistrup named it Til Venstre Avisen (To the Left Newspaper) (Rossavik 2007, 283).

As the Labor Party has dominated Norwegian politics in much of the postwar era, and three of the CEOs have been former politicians representing the Labor party,[5] it is not farfetched to view NRK as a social democratic media organization.[6] Considering that the twentieth century has been the social democratic era in Scandinavia (Arter 1999; Sejersted 2011), it is nevertheless questionable whether a Scandinavian media organization in the public's service should seek *not* to be social democratic.

To secure the editorial freedom of the broadcasters, most of their revenues have been earned from a license fee paid initially by everyone in possession of a radio receiver,[7] and later a TV set,[8] and now in some countries everyone in position of a computer or a hand-held device capable of receiving audiovisual content.[9] Being funded by a free-standing fee not only makes sure that the media organizations are not dependent on commercials, but it also keeps them at arm's length from the government. Even though several European countries

(Finland, Iceland, the Netherlands, and the Flemish part of Belgium) have recently abandoned the free-standing funding scheme, and Germany has introduced a house-hold fee to replace the license fee (Moe 2012, 56–57; Berg and Lund 2012, 8; Prop. 2012–2013:164; Ohlsson 2015), the Scandinavian countries still have broadcasters financed by a license fee, which "accounts for 92–98 % of the revenues" (Roppen et al. 2010, 136).

A common worry among PSB professionals is that a change in the funding scheme will lead to a shortening of the length of the arm keeping the polluting force of the state at a distance. They argue that if media organizations in the public's service were to be financed through the state budget rather than the free-standing license fee the funding of particular organizations would be subject to budget prioritization from year to year, thus being less independent of political decisions (Larsen 2011a). The main idea behind the arm's length principle is that the government provides financial support while it is up to the specialists to maintain and develop the professional standards of the particular field in question. In the particular case at hand, the editors are the specialists maintaining the professional standards of independent journalism in the public's service. But the same principle is also applied to bodies like arts councils or research councils, where the money set aside by the government to specific art or research fields is allocated to concrete artistic or research projects by specialists in the various fields.

Arm's length bodies are an important tool in cultural policy (Mangset 2013; Hillman-Chartrand and McCaughey 1989; Moe and Mjøs 2013), among other things to help maintain freedom of speech. For media organizations in the public's service, being regulated as an arm's length body secures their editorial freedom. They nevertheless have to fulfill cultural policy obligations in order to uphold their privileged position in the national media market. This also goes for the commercial PSB companies. In the license for Norwegian TV2 running until December 31 2015, the most important cultural policy obligations are that the program offering should be broad and varied; that TV2 should be located in Norway's second largest city, Bergen;[10] that TV2 must have daily news broadcasts produced in-house, weekly Norwegian language programs for children, and regularly aired Norwegian language programs for young people, have 50 % of the program offering in Norwegian, and have both Norwegian languages (Norwegian Bokmål and Norwegian Nynorsk) present in the total program offering.[11] As can be seen from this list, an important cultural policy goal of regulating mass media as a public service is to preserve,

promote, and develop the national culture and the national languages. This has also been emphasized in legitimating NRK in the twenty-first century, where NRK has been presented by its CEO, Hans Tore Bjerkaas (2007–2013), as one of few media organizations dedicated to producing high-quality Norwegian language content. In a lecture at the University of Oslo on February 21, 2008, he stated that "NRK's simple way to see the future is that we are a quality deliverer of Norwegian-based, Norwegian-language content on all platforms in the future" (Larsen 2010). The former CEO Einar Førde (1989–2001) did also emphasize NRK's key role for Norwegian language culture. He is quoted in a newspaper interview from 1990 on saying: "I want to claim—and now I am talking about very serious matters—that Norwegian language do not have a secure foundation without a public service broadcaster" (Rossavik 2007, 321).

Breaches on the Arm's Length Principle

In Sweden and Denmark, the size of the license fee is decided in the form of a contract lasting for several years, similar to the arrangements of the BBC. In Norway, on the other hand, it is decided on a yearly basis by the Parliament (Roppen et al. 2010, 135). One might then argue that the length of the arm keeping the state at a distance is shorter in Norway than in the other Scandinavian countries. The contract period in Sweden was, nevertheless, shortened from six to three years in 2006. This actually spurred a lot of criticism in the public sphere. The idea of shortening the contract period was launched by the center-right coalition Government after taking office in 2006. The Minister of Culture, Cecilia Stegö Chilò of Moderata samlingspartiet (the Moderate Party), who introduced this idea, did however resign after two weeks, when it was brought to light that she had not paid the license fee for the preceding 16 years out of political reasons (Larsen 2008). That this was sufficient for the minister to resign shows how important an institution PSB is considered to be in Sweden.

In Denmark too there have been several incidents of breaches on the arm's length principle, caused by the center-conservative coalition Government (holding office between 2001 and 2011) having "enunciated intimidating public criticism of specific DR programs, especially the news coverage of the Iraq War and documentaries critical towards government policies" (Nielsen 2010, 127).[12] One of the gravest incidents occurred in 2003, when the Danish Minister of Culture, Brian Mikkelsen of Det Konservative Folkeparti (the Conservative People's Party), actually sent

an e-mail to "the head of the board where he criticized DR news coverage of the Iraq War and indirectly threatened with organizational sanctions" (Nielsen 2010, 127).

The Norwegian Minister of Culture, Thorhild Widvey of Høyre (the Conservative Party), has also been criticized for interfering with the editorial freedom and thus the independence of NRK, in that she in January 2014 questioned whether NRK's hugely successful website and app for weather forecasts, yr.no, is to be considered part of NRK's public service mission. This resulted in criticism from the CEO of NRK, several politicians in the Norwegian Parliament, and journalists and commentators in the major newspapers. In February 2014, Widvey was once more criticized for breaches on the arm's length principle. This time the controversy emerged from her making a phone call to the head of the board at Trondheim Art Museum to get on top of things regarding a topic that was about to be discussed in the press. The topic was a text by the director of the museum in the new program catalogue, where he was criticizing the Conservative Party's coalition partner, Fremskrittspartiet (the Progress Party). Widvey's phone call turned into a media scandal. The Minister had to defend herself in public, as she was criticized for interfering in the content production of the art museum. Critical actors were polluting her as undemocratic in her strive to control the content being produced by these independent and civil organizations.

What these examples illustrate is that when politicians are expressing their view on the content produced by these media organizations or otherwise interfere with the organizations' independence, the state is perceived as polluting pure independent journalism. This illustrates how the cultural commitment to independent journalism (Alexander 2015) is guiding the legitimation of broadcasters in the public's service. Actors performing legitimacy on behalf of such broadcasters are all relating to the collective representation (Alexander 2006; Durkheim 2001 [1912]) of independent journalism. The arm's length principle is sacred in the cultural policy discourse of the Scandinavian countries, and defending it from profane forces is an important element in keeping the media organizations pure.

The Digitalization Crisis

In the digital age, PSB companies also make use of the Internet as a platform for distribution of their content. The companies' presence on the Internet has, nevertheless, been controversial, in that the commercial media

companies have perceived it as a threat. It has been argued throughout Europe that PSB companies have developed online services that might as easily have been developed in the private media sector. But due to the dominant market position of the public service broadcasters, the public actors have taken the lead in developing these services. There are, however, differences between the Nordic countries in this respect (Nord 2012).

DR's website is the most popular of the Danish websites, and DR has faced more criticism from its competitors than has the PSB companies in Sweden and Norway. DR has strongly developed on new media platforms, not only providing national, regional and local news but also offering public information, and sites for health and games. In 2006 DR introduced more than 90 sites to provide news and information at the country level (Nord 2012, 50).

NRK is granted permission to have advertisements on its website, and it started exercising this right in 2000. As a consequence it faced criticism from both competitors and intellectuals during the first decade of this millennium. The competitors argued that NRK's model of mixed revenues represented an unfair advantage, and the public perceived the advertisements as not being in line with the public service ideals that should guide NRK.[13] NRK's board of directors put an end to this in 2010. Even though policies allowed for NRK to continue with online advertisements, the board of directors decided to define NRK's website to be part of the organization's public service mission (St.meld. nr. 38 [2014–2015] Chapter 13). Considering that the organization gained little income from the advertisements ("In 2006 it accounted for 0.2 % of the total revenues of the NRK" [Roppen et al. 2010, 141]), stopping them was beneficial to the organization, in that the advertisements were harming its legitimacy as an independent media organization in the public's service. NRK was once again purified as a commercial-free media organization dedicated to independent journalism.

The websites of SVT and SR are far less popular in the Swedish media market than those of DR and NRK are in their respective national markets. This can be due to SVT and SR being separate companies: Whereas DR and NRK are joint broadcasters on radio and TV, radio and TV were split into separate companies in Sweden.[14] But the Swedish companies have also been more cautious in competing with commercial actors on the Internet, and they have put a lot of emphasis on being true to the PSB ideals. The webpages of SVT and SR are for the most part a support for traditional PSB, with most of the content being linked to radio and TV programs

(Roppen et al. 2010). According to one of my informants at SVT, Johan Lindén, a former head of the news and society department, allowing advertisement on the website has never really been debated in Sweden:

> In Norway there is a debate at the moment on whether the NRK should have advertisements on its website. We don't have that debate in Sweden, because we don't have any advertisements. I think the audience likes very much to be able to visit a website that is about news or entertainment or skits or whatever, that does not have a whole lot of advertisements (interview, September 19, 2007).

The CEO of SR has also stated that there "was a sense of 'puritanism'" in Sweden (Nord 2012, 54) regarding commercial-free websites (see also Enli 2008).

Being true to the idea and values of PSB has been important for SVT in legitimating its relevance in the 2000s. It has actively been positioning itself in opposition to commercial actors and the leveling effect of cultural globalization. Due to economic globalization and concentration of ownership in the media industry, and its effects on the homogenization of media content, SVT's CEO has argued that it is of utmost importance that the organization focuses on maintaining a high standard of quality in all its productions.[15]

Nevertheless, SVT has in the mid-2000s been corrected by the public when putting too much emphasis on the numbers it reaches with its productions, both in terms of ratings and target groups. The biggest protest occurred in 2006 in the form of the petition "No soap operas instead of news," signed by 17,000 young citizens protesting SVT's strategy to reach young audiences, and in doing so prioritizing entertainment instead of educational programming in its program offering.[16] They were especially critical of SVT's decision to terminate its documentary series on foreign affairs issues, Dokument utifrån. This was the biggest protest against SVT's programming in the history of the media organization. When first confronted with the protest, the editor of the News and Society Department, Johan Lindén, said to the Swedish newspaper Expressen that he was moved and excited by the protest; he also told the journalist to give his phone number to the leader of the protest, Ali Hamidian, as he was eager to hear the opinions of the protestors.[17] The protest resulted in Lindén promising to develop at least one new magazine on foreign news and several new programs on societal issues in 2007.[18]

The protesters argued that thinking of programming in terms of target groups represented a commercial turn, and thus an abandonment of PSB ideals. "We don't want SVT to adapt to the commercial channels," said Hamidian when handing over the list of signatures to SVT.[19] At this meeting it was also announced that the protesters would be invited to partake in a full-day seminar discussing the programming of SVT.[20]

As a consequence of this criticism, shortly after her appointment as CEO on December 6, 2006, Hamilton engaged in legitimacy repair by stressing that SVT should serve the whole Swedish population, and not place a special emphasis on specific segments of the audience. All in all, these events led to SVT being in need of legitimizing itself in terms of its mission as a public service broadcaster.[21] While SVT was relating its practice to the World of Fame by dividing its audience into target groups (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006, 183), the actual audience making up the group wanted the organization to legitimate its existence in relation to the Civic World. This example shows how protests from the audience might result in correcting the media organization's practice. As Hamidian writes in the first sentence of an op-ed piece in Svenska Dagbladet: "Taking up the fight pays off – we made it!"[22]

By engaging in this protest, audience citizens helped SVT from being polluted by its reference to the World of Fame; they helped SVT remain a civil organization. When the audience feels that a media organization in the public's service is abandoning its ideals, it is important to protest so that the organization is steered on the right course in delivering independent journalism in service of democracy and society.

In Norway things are different: As NRK has high ratings[23] and is perceived by the public as a trustworthy and independent media company year after year (NRK 2011), it does not perceive itself as being in need of active legitimation work, and this lack of work is hardly protested in the public sphere. Rather, sitting still in the boat does much of the job for NRK (Larsen 2011a). This is a paradox, as NRK is the Scandinavian licence financed PSB company that has been facing the biggest threat of pollution by both the market and the state, as the website has carried advertisements (market) and the license fee is determined on a yearly basis (state). It seems as though PSB is viewed less as a sacred institution in Norway than is the case in the other Scandinavian countries. This corresponds with the finding that it is more widespread to be both pragmatic and instrumental when legitimizing PSB in Norway, whereas in Sweden the legitimacy relies on being true to the idea of PSB (Larsen 2011a).

That the Swedish public demands more from their PSB organizations than is the case in Norway may also be because of the individual ambition of the PSB organizations. While SVT has an ambition of being a world-class public service broadcaster, NRK strives to be the broadcaster with the biggest reach in Norway (Larsen 2008; Enli 2008). The titles of the organizations' strategy documents from the middle of the 2000s illustrate these differences: While SVT's document was titled "Free Television in the World Class" (SVT 2006), NRK's was titled "Something for Everyone. Always" (NRK 2007). Simultaneously, these differences in the broadcasters' ambitions and the public's demands toward them correspond with broader cultural differences between the countries. It is common, both for academics and lay people, to depict Swedes as more oriented toward Europe than Norwegians, who tend to emphasize their belonging to Scandinavia rather than Europe. These differences are historically constituted in that Sweden has been a dominant country in the Nordic region, whereas Norway has been under the Danish and Swedish throne for centuries, gaining its independence as a modern nation state as late as 1905. Where the nation building in Sweden has focused on its great history, the Norwegian has been centered on the people's struggle for independence (Østerud 1987, 1994; Rokkan 1987). Although these power relations have changed due to Norway's prosperity as a consequence of large oil and gas reserves, the cultural differences tend to remain (Eriksen 2010). The historical differences have been manifested in different national cultural repertoires (Lamont 1995; Lamont and Thévenot 2000), which in turn have influenced how PSB has been discussed and legitimated (Larsen 2010, 2011b; Chapter 5 in this book).

Securing Independent Journalism in a Digital Age

An important part of the initial idea of PSB, as formulated by David Sarnoff[24] and John Reith (1924), was for public service broadcasters to educate the audience. When I interviewed leaders of various departments within NRK and SVT in 2007 and 2008, they did not want to abandon the idea of PSB as an educator in a digital media landscape. They argued that the future of PSB depends on the actual media organizations being perceived as trustworthy deliverers of high-quality content in this age of information. The difference from earlier periods in the broadcasters' history is that the audiences now to a larger degree actively seek out this information on their own initiative, rather than the broadcasters being

the only, or one of few, deliverers of content on these media platforms. In fact, maintaining "NRK as Norway's most important source for new knowledge and common experiences" (NRK 2012) is the main objective in NRK's strategy document for the period 2012–2017 (Larsen 2014).

Nita Kapoor, former head of NRK's Culture Department, told me that she "thinks that both enlightenment and education are important in relation to our mandate and our mission" (interview, March 13, 2007). Among the PSB professionals it is argued that the enlightenment project is not outdated due to digitalization and on-demand media consumption. To the contrary, public broadcasters should be considered a central digital common in today's media landscape.[25] Through focusing on the quality of the content regardless of the platform where it is distributed, it will still be possible for broadcasters to maintain their democratic mission in a digital media environment. Remaining pure from the polluting forces of the state and the market is as important as ever. For the current CEO of NRK, Thor Gjermund Eriksen, it is the single most important aspect of the organization's legitimacy. At a seminar on the future of NRK in 2014, he stated that "the most important thing for NRK is independence, independence, independence."[26]

Maintaining a distance to the market, by keeping the content universe of the PSB companies a commercial-free zone and not engaging in commercial logics, has been as crucial to the legitimacy of PSB as keeping the government at arm's length. By serving the democracy and the nation's citizens (as opposed to private enterprises or the state), independent journalism in the public's service remains unpolluted. The combination of being regulated as independent from the state and the market and being rooted in the values of the civil sphere (Alexander 2006) enhances the trustworthiness of public service media organizations, as compared to other content deliverers on digital media platforms. In its institutionalized form, such professional journalism can help secure a well-functioning liberal democracy.

Notes

1. Alexander labels media organizations as communicative institutions. They play a key role in the civil sphere because "[t]he media of mass communications … constitute one fundamentally significant articulation of the imagined and idealized civil domain" (Alexander 2006, 75).
2. The Scandinavian countries held out against commercialization longer than the rest of Europe (Hillard and Keith 1996, Hujanen and Jauert 1998).

3. MTG launched the Scandinavian broadcaster TV3 in the three national markets in 1987. The channel was transmitted via satellite from London, being regulated by British legislation.
4. The Swedish TV broadcaster in the public's service has been named SVT since 1993. See note 14, this chapter.
5. Kaare Fostervold (1948–1962), Bjartmar Gjerde (1981–1989), Einar Førde (1989–2001).
6. One CEO, John G. Bernander (2001–2007), has also been a former politician for Høyre (the Conservative Party).
7. DR was established in 1925, SR (which was named AB Radiotjänst until 1957) was established in 1925, and NRK was established in 1933 (broadcasting in Norway was first regulated by the privately owned Kringkastingsselskapet AS, established in 1925).
8. DR started regular TV broadcasts in 1951, SR in 1956, and NRK in 1960.
9. In Sweden, a fee for computers and hand-held devices was introduced in 2013. But in 2014, the Supreme Court decided that this was illegal, as the law on broadcasting states that the fee is for devices that are made for the purpose of receiving TV signals. Considering that this is not the main function of a computer, tablet, or mobile phone, the Supreme Court ruling decided that it is not legal to collect a fee for these media devices. As a consequence, citizens who paid the fee without owning a TV set got their money refunded. http://www.svd.se/naringsliv/tv-licensen_3655238.svd?sidan=7 (last accessed, July 3, 2014).
10. NRK is located in Oslo, the capital and largest city.
11. The broadcasting licence for TV2 is available here: http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/KUD/Medier/TV2-avtalen_underskrevet_av_Hildrum_og_Huitfeldt_03des2010.pdf (last accessed, April 15, 2015). See note 8 in Chapter 5 for a brief description of the two Norwegian languages.
12. Denmark was part of the multinational operation fighting Saddam Hussain's regime in Iraq.
13. http://voxpublica.no/2007/07/gj%C3%B8r-nrk-helt-reklamefritt/ (last accessed, July 16, 2015).
14. "For nearly forty years, all Swedish public service broadcasting was organized in a single company. In 1993, however, the group company was dissolved, and radio and TV were split into separate companies, SVT for TV and SR for radio. Together with a third company, UR, which produces educational programming carried in windows in SVT and SR channels" (Harrie 2009, 188).
15. Interview on the TV program Gomorron Sverige, SVT, 2007.
16. Also journalists at SVT protested: 45 of SVT's TV journalist signed an op-ed piece criticizing the management for its increased emphasis on

ratings, approaching the audience as consumers rather than citizens. http://www.dn.se/arkiv/debatt/svtledningen-underminerar-grunden-for-var-existens-2 (last accessed, August 19, 2015).

17. http://www.expressen.se/kvp/skaneuppror-mot-svts-nya-planer/(last accessed, August 19, 2015).
18. http://www.expressen.se/nyheter/protestlistor-mot-svt-gav-resultat/ (last accessed, April 7, 2015).
19. http://www.expressen.se/kvp/protest-mot-svt-i-malmo/ (last accessed, August 19, 2015).
20. Ibid.
21. This corresponded with a European trend in legitimating PSB: "The attention focused on the mission of public service broadcasters is greater than ever before, both at the level of European and national regulators, and at the level of the public broadcasting institutions themselves" (Bardoel and d'Haenens 2008, 342–343).
22. http://www.svd.se/lyssnare-ar-medborgare--inte-siffror (last accessed, August 19, 2015).
23. NRK1 has had the largest daily reach of TV channels in Norway every year between 2002 and 2012, with an average reach of 55.5 % of the population. In Sweden SVT1 has also had the largest daily reach in this time period, but it only has an average reach of 42.2 %. In Denmark TV2 has had the largest daily reach every year in this period. DR1 has an average reach of 47.7 %. See: http://nordicom.gu.se/sv/mediefakta/statistikarkiv (last accessed, June 11, 2015).
24. The first to launch the idea of broadcasting as a public service was (most likely) the American broadcaster and entrepreneur David Sarnoff, who is quoted as stating in 1922 that "broadcasting represents a job of entertaining, informing and educating the nation, and should therefore be regarded as a public service" (Moe 2008, 43, Briggs 1985, 18).
25. Graham Murdoch defines digital commons as "a linked space defined by its shared refusal of commercial enclosure and its commitment to free and universal access, reciprocity, and collaborative activity" (Murdock 2005: 227).
26. The seminar was hosted by the progressive think tank Civita on April 24.

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CHAPTER 5

The Legitimation Rhetoric of Public Service Broadcasters

In this chapter, I look at the national public service broadcasting (PSB) organizations in Norway and Sweden, Norsk rikskringkasting (NRK)[1] and Sveriges Television (SVT),[2] and ask how they are coping with challenges to their legitimacy as publicly funded media organizations in the twenty-first century. The main challenges emerge from the processes of digitalization and economic and cultural globalization.[3] More specifically, I will analyze how national broadcasters in Norway and Sweden regard the PSB mission and legitimate their position in today's media environment, how they relate to the classical PSB features of enlightenment and democracy, and how they approach the public. The analysis is based on interviews, organizational documents, and the CEO's public appearances in debates over PSB. Differences and similarities are explained and interpreted in light of social, cultural, and historical variations within the two countries, which have much in common in this respect (Stråth 2005; Sejersted 2011).[4]

Theories on PSB and the Public Sphere

While some scholars have argued for a decline in importance, and eventually the death of PSB in an age of digitalization and globalization (Jacka 2003; Hartley 1999), others have claimed that PSB is more important than ever and that it plays an important democratic role in the digital media environment (Garnham 1992; Murdock 2005). These are all theories founded on normative ideals of democracy and the public sphere.

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For Nicholas Garnham (1992) it is important to maintain a single public sphere, and PSB, he considers, is the only institution capable of securing such:

> [T]he problem is to construct systems of democratic accountability integrated with media systems of matching scale that occupy the same social space as that over which economic or political decisions will impact. If the impact is universal, then both the political and media systems must be universal. In this sense, a series of autonomous public spheres is not sufficient. There must be a single public sphere … (Garnham 1992, 371).

Garnham has been criticized by, among others, Elizabeth Jacka (2003) for proposing a modernist defense of PSB. Jacka states that PSB is outdated because we now live in a postmodern society. Inspired by Chantal Mouffe (1993) and John Hartley (1999), she argues for abandoning the notion of a universalistic and rational public sphere in favor of a pluralistic and postmodern notion of the public sphere and democracy. Jacka sees no future for publicly funded media.

Hartley (1999) argues that TV has played a leading role in developing earlier forms of citizenship into the current form, which he labels "DIY citizenship." He builds on T.M. Marshall's (1992) history of citizenship with its three phases of civic (eighteenth century), political (nineteenth century), and social (twentieth century) citizenship, each building on, rather than supplanting, the other. He goes on to present the fourth stage, cultural citizenship, theorized by early TV researchers like Richard Hoggart (1960) and Raymond Williams (1968), who were interested in TV as a means to teach cultural citizenship. Hartley then introduces the fifth stage of citizenship, "DIY citizenship." He writes: "Television has … moved … from the promotion among its audiences of an 'addressee position' based on common *identity* and 'cultural citizenship' during its first half-century, to a more recent acceptance of *difference* in its audiences, promoting 'DIY citizenship'" (Hartley 1999, 159).

The defenders of PSB base their argument around a Habermasian, or modern, approach to the public sphere, whereby rational argumentation in a universalistic and unitary public sphere, in principle open and by nature inclusive of all fellow citizens, makes up the foundation for the legitimacy of a liberal representative democracy (Habermas 1989, 1996). The critics, on the other hand, lean more on postmodern approaches that reject the modern ideals of a universalistic and consensus-driven rational discourse.

Instead, they look upon the public as consisting of several sub-spheres. A prevalent figure in this approach is Mouffe (1993). She does not consider herself a postmodernist, but she explicitly opposes the Habermasian perspective. Jacka (2003) bases her argument for a postmodern democracy, as an alternative to the modernist (Habermasian) approach, on Mouffe's work.

Habermas has himself argued (somewhat implicitly) for the key importance of PSB as a public sphere institution. He writes:

> Mediated political communication in the public sphere can facilitate deliberative legitimation processes in complex societies only if a self-regulating media system gains independence from its social environments, and if anonymous audiences grant feedback between an informed elite discourse and a responsive civil society (Habermas 2006, 411–412).

The opportunities for the anonymous audience's feedback can be seen as enhanced by increased interactivity, and Habermas' description can then be read as encouraging the current media development. Also, Habermas (2006) finds that the Internet as a place for political discussions has the most potential when centered around already established quality media organizations. As PSB organizations can be seen as such an organization, it is capable of increasing citizens' engagement in political communication. Another scholar eager to incorporate the democratic potential of the new media within the notion of PSB is Graham Murdock (2005). He argues that PSB organizations should be the focal point in the new digital information networks, which he labels "digital commons."

As a consequence of the changing media environment, it is now common among both media strategists and scholars to talk of public service media (PSM) rather than public service broadcasting (PSB) Lowe and Bardoel 2007). But my interest lies in the cultural commitment to these media organizations (Alexander 2015). Whether the technology is electronic or digital is thus not the main concern. The idea of PSB has been applied to broadcasting organizations in the public's service since the 1920s. Even though scholars have engaged in conceptual discussion of what the term "public service" should mean for every technological change since the advent of the institution of PSB (Gramstad 1989; Søndergaard 1999; Syvertsen 1990, 1999; Collins et al. 2001; Lowe and Hujanen 2003; Born 2005; Lowe and Jauert 2005; Lowe and Bardoel 2007; Lund et al. 2009; Rolland 2010; Moe 2011),[5] the idea has survived previous changes in technology and the particular organizations' media

environment (as was discussed in the last chapter). There is no need to change the label encapsulating the idea of a media organization in the public's service just because of digital technology. The journalistic ideals tend to survive the perpetual crisis of journalism (Alexander et al. 2016).

Performing Legitimacy Through Interviews and Documents

Interviews and documents make up the data for the analysis in this chapter. I have conducted five interviews at SVT and four at NRK. The informants are former or current program directors, executives, editors or heads of the society, documentary, news, or culture departments within the organizations. The choice of these informants is due to the focus upon the normative argumentation for the importance of PSB, related to the classical aspects of spreading information and culture to, and enlightening, the people (Reith 1924; Syvertsen 1999, 9).[6]

The document study is based upon an analysis of documents produced by the broadcasters themselves. However, these documents are related to those produced in the political sphere. The annual report relates to the governments' criteria for giving the organization permission to be a broadcaster financed by a license-fee. An important aspect of the report is therefore to show how the organization meets the criteria from the government. The strategy document is also related to the governments' criteria, but where the annual report is based on what the organization has done, the strategy document is about what it is going to do—how it is to meet the criteria from the government and face the challenges in the media market.

Through their strategy documents and annual reports, organizations try to build a trustworthy relationship with their social environments. Through such ethos communication (Aristotle 1926), they seek to underline their legitimacy toward the target group of these documents, which are the organizations' employees, politicians, sponsors, supervising authorities, and the general public. The trust invested in the organizations from the public is also present in the actual documents, in terms of numbers from surveys related to various aspects of the public's trust in these organizations, and statistics on who consumes the products presented by the organizations to the public. Since the organizations must portray their work's importance and how they will meet the government's criteria in these documents, they are a good source for studying how the

organizations perform legitimacy as a public service broadcaster.[7] Even though the documents are read mostly by bureaucrats, the organizations' employees, and media researchers, they are available online and are thus also meant for the general public. In addition to interviews and documents, the data for the analysis in this chapter also consist of TV and radio shows, and public seminars where various representatives of the organizations have debated the organizations' future. Let us now look at how the CEOs of these organizations relate to the processes of globalization.

Globalization and PSB

When interviewed on SVT's early morning show *Gomorron Sverige* (Good Morning Sweden) on January 25 and March 7, 2007, SVT's CEO, Eva Hamilton, argued that it is important for SVT to represent an alternative to the uniformity of an ever more globalized media market, characterized by format production and the American culture industry. She argues that SVT differs from the commercial channels not only in that it focuses upon narrow subject areas in its programs but that it offers programs within all genres and has productions of higher quality than its competitors. NRK's CEO, Hans Tore Bjerkaas, also stressed the importance of high quality as a key factor for the survival of NRK, when giving a talk at the University of Oslo on February 21, 2008, titled "NRK and Democracy." He was relating quality to the use of the Norwegian language: "We must create attractive content that can compete with the content that is produced other places, such that the Norwegian language will be used in audiovisual productions that are on par with the best of what is produced in the world."[8]

Hamilton's critique of the standardization in the TV offering that follows from the commercial logic of globalized capitalism is itself conducted within a market discourse. She speaks of SVT's challenges in competition with the big commercial actors. She argues that SVT is no longer the big actor within the Swedish TV market, since they now have to fight the multinational media giants: "When we speak of the commercial actors they all belong to big media conglomerates, media empires."[9] She looks at SVT's activity from a competition perspective relating it to the Market World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006); SVT is an actor that has to compete with big corporations for audience attention. Within the discourse, she positions herself as an opponent of commercialisms' enhanced influence and presents her own work as a fight against the leveling aspect of cultural globalization.

Bjerkaas also approaches the public service mission from a competition perspective, but he does not give such a negative characterization of the other media organizations in the global market. He says: "NRK has been district champion and sometimes Norwegian champion. The arenas for competition in the near future will be global, the world championship, when it comes to quality."[10]

Hamilton says that SVT represents a national (and therefore unique) organization in the global media market, which makes SVT's task challenging. But it strives to meet its public service responsibility out of respect for the Swedish people. This makes SVT dedicated to offer the public something that differs qualitatively from globalized capitalism's homogenized culture:

> Entertainment and sports are the most important carriers of judgments in society … Are we to let the commercial channels, who for the most part are dominated by a highly international and homogenous American program offering, run these arenas which carry judgments to such a high degree?[11]

She argues that SVT should offer entertainment which in a qualitative way differs from that offered by the globalized American culture industry. The vice-head of SVT's culture department, Peter O. Nilsson, also approaches the aspect of high quality from a market perspective, when stating that: "We are the only ones who do culture on TV, which I think is a shame; we almost only compete with ourselves" (interview, November 8, 2007). The PSB organizations are the only ones who do culture because it is not a profitable business for commercial actors. Hamilton and Nilsson are both presenting a critique of the standardization effects of commercialism, and simultaneously presenting this critique from within a market-influenced discourse.

In legitimating the organization, the PSB professionals are relating to the Market World, emphasizing market success. But this is done with reference to serving the people, thus in the end anchoring the activity of the organization in the Civic World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006). As broadcasters in the public's service they are, per definition, civil organizations belonging to the Civic World and contributing to the civil sphere (Alexander 2006). Their legitimacy depends on how well they perform as such through their legitimation work.

One consequence of the organizations' focus on their competition in the market for audiovisual content is that it is the organizations themselves rather than the politicians that do the heavy lifting in the legitimation work.

Instead of pointing to the politically motivated privileged position that the organizations have in their national media markets, they are emphasizing their market success in the organizational performances of legitimacy.[12]

Both the CEOs of the NRK and the SVT focus upon increased international competition and stress the importance of delivering high-quality products if they are to stand a chance in this new situation. Bjerkaas focuses upon the importance of sustaining the Norwegian language and culture, while Hamilton is more occupied with the importance of delivering something that differs qualitatively from the homogenized commercial offering. This focus on competition might be influenced by a change in these two PSB entities' position within the market: while they traditionally had a dominant position in their respective national media markets, they are now portrayed as small actors fighting the multinational media.[13]

Avoiding Criticism

Even though SVT's CEO stresses the importance of the organization providing a program offering in entertainment and sports, SVT (2006a) has a hard time justifying these subject areas and relating them to the public service mission in its annual report. It seems that SVT feels the need to highlight its difference from the commercial channels in these subject areas more than in others, stressing the breadth of its offering as well as its ratings. Such a need might be due to the fact that very few non-subscription channels have program offerings in such areas as culture, documentary, and society. Organizational actors at SVT might therefore feel that providing such an offering becomes legitimate in itself. But it may also be a result of SVT's legitimizing rhetoric stemming from a fellow citizen discourse, based on a Habermasian ideal of the public sphere (Habermas 1989, 1992), and related to the Civic World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006). SVT relates to the audience as fellow citizens—"contributing to democracy through well informed fellow citizens is a cornerstone in SVT's public service mission" (SVT 2006a, 12). In such a discourse, entertainment, sports and other program areas with high ratings are important for two reasons: Firstly, they legitimize the license-fee; "public service should be a popular affair and not just a business for the elite" (SVT 2006a, 4). Secondly, there is the intention that the audiences of such programs will also watch programs of a more educational nature. This goal is implicit but follows from the logic of the fellow citizen discourse. Despite operating within such a discourse, SVT has prepared itself for criticism stemming

from a pluralist discourse; from people who want PSB to focus on subject areas not covered by commercial channels, thus complementing the commercial offer.[14] Such an argument is based on a pluralist notion of the public sphere, as described by Mouffe (1993), Jacka (2003), and Hartley (1999), and related to the Market World, as described by Boltanski and Thévenot (2006). In the general description of the public service mission and the subject areas of news, society, children's programs, entertainment, culture, and documentaries in SVT's (2006a) annual report, a fellow citizen discourse is dominant. In the subject areas of drama and sport, on the other hand, a complementary discourse is activated to a higher degree.

NRK is also concerned with balancing the broad with the narrow in its program offering. The head of NRK's documentary department, Lars Kristiansen, referred to this balancing as the core dilemma of the PSB organization (interview, December 20, 2007), in that they must air broad programs which draw many viewers (to get the people's approval) and at the same time air narrow programs that are not profitable for the commercial actors (to gain legitimacy as a publicly funded media actor). NRK's Vidar Nordli Mathisen mentioned at the seminar "NRK as a digital media house" in 2007, that NRK's successful balancing of the broad and the narrow was key to its remarkable support from the public, which ranks quite high when compared to that of other PSB organizations worldwide.[15] Furthermore, criticism from a complementary point of view does not have the same proportion in Norway as in Sweden (Larsen 2008). Correspondingly, the NRK may not feel the same need to defend itself against such criticism. A complementary discourse is therefore activated to a lesser degree in NRK's (2006) annual report.

Hamilton placed the critical voices of both politicians and viewers outside an internal SVT discourse, by stating that she gets "kind of nervous when politicians talk a lot about TV … They seldom watch TV and their knowledge about TV, the TV–market, the TV–world, is often at the level of the average TV–viewer."[16] Being in charge of a modern media organization is portrayed as a task too complex for non-media professionals to grasp. Through this positioning, she effectively undermines all criticism of SVT: the criticism is advanced by amateurs who do not understand the complexity of the task. It is therefore not valid. Hamilton stresses that the only thing required of the Swedish people is to understand that every decision made at SVT is made for the good of the people. This is because SVT belongs to the Swedish people, and the operation of the organization is so complex that the people cannot understand it. Even though communicating in an

arrogant tone, she nevertheless relates SVT to the Civic World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006) in her rhetorical performances of legitimacy.

As a main strategy to legitimize its existence as a publicly funded media organization, SVT (2006a) portrays its different productions and the entire offering as systematically better than the allegedly uniform offer from the commercial TV companies. NRK (2006), on the other hand, uses the strategy of showing how its programs are appreciated by the audience and how respected NRK is in comparison with its commercial counterparts. The presentation of the different subject areas in NRK's report is accompanied by some form of statistics. In most cases these are ratings and/or statistics related to the satisfaction with NRK's productions compared to the commercial channels' productions within the same subject areas.

Where NRK rely on ratings and trust indicators, SVT rely more on its awards—"SVT has won a lot of awards for its homepage in international competitions. And that is world class" (interview with Lindén, September 19, 2007).[17] It seems that NRK focuses upon quantitative measures, whereas SVT focuses more upon qualitative ones. One might be tempted to say that a focus upon quality is more in line with the public service mission. But then again, SVT's focus upon its physical evidence of quality (its awards) may be as strategic a choice as NRK's focus upon ratings; the one feature of one's work that stands out in comparison with one's commercial competitors is used for all it is worth, in line with logic of the World of Fame (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006, 178–185).

> No one within PSB believes that ratings are the only way or the best way to measure if you are on the right track. You need a combination of tools. International benchmarking is far more important than any managers will admit, that one can compete internationally with one's drama productions or homepage or something else (Lindén, September 19, 2007).

Lindén gives credit to NRK's strong support among the Norwegian people—"But NRK is the world's leading TV company, if you talk about market share and, sort of, the people's support" (interview, September 19, 2007)—and at the same time discredits a focus upon ratings. Instead he stresses how important it is to win international awards for one's productions (which SVT does a lot). Such a difference can be due to differences in the national cultural repertoire of evaluation (Lamont and Thévenot 2000a). An evaluation of the national broadcaster in economic terms may be more accepted in Norway than in Sweden. A major difference between NRK and

SVT is that the former focuses on the people's appreciation of its offer as a legitimizing strategy, while the latter tries to convince the public of its unique high-quality offer and its effort to serve the public. An important aspect of being a PSB organization is to fulfill its democratic role and its obligation to enlighten the public. Let us now look at how the organizations at hand relate to these matters.

Democracy and Enlightenment

NRK does not speak of enlightenment in its strategy documents: In four of NRK's (2002, 2007, 2012, 2015) documents, the term "folkeopplysning" (enlightenment [of the people]) is never mentioned.[18] In SVT's (2006b, 2006c) the term is mentioned once in each of the documents. The term "samfunnsoppdrag" (societal mission), on the other hand, is mentioned seven times in NRK's (2007) document. Societal mission is launched as a key term for NRK's goals in the period from 2007 to 2012, given the following definition by former CEO, John G. Bernander, in the document's foreword:

> Societal mission points to NRK's special responsibility as a public service broadcaster and the special task we have in the Norwegian media environment. NRK is expected to deliver content with a quality and breadth that no other media enterprise in Norway can or will match (NRK 2007, 2).

NRK's Kristiansen (interview, December 20, 2007) told me that they consider the term "enlightenment (of the people)" an old-fashioned and more or less outdated term, a term belonging to an area of social democratic hegemony. The term "societal mission" covers many of the same aspects as the term "enlightenment (of the people)."

> At the moment there is a word flashing over NRK, which probably has replaced the term "enlightenment (of the people)," and that is the "societal mission" … That is about contributing to the enlightenment (of the people), about contributing to the public discourse, the public debate, about giving a voice to groups that is not usually heard. It's about being aware of problems that are not usually on the agenda (interview, December 20, 2007).

What Kristiansen is describing in this passage, is basically how NRK can help contribute to maintaining a civil sphere (Alexander 2006) of critically discussing citizens (Habermas 1989). Former head of NRK's culture department, Nita Kapoor, and NRK's TV broadcaster, Arne Helsingen, also said that they consider the term "enlightenment (of the people)" as a somewhat outdated term, but nevertheless find the idea important and worthy of preserving.[19] Even though the term is perceived as outdated due to changes in the national cultural repertoire (Lamont 1995; Lamont and Thévenot 2000b), the values pertained to the idea is nevertheless, as collective representations (Durkheim 2001 [1912]), made relevant in the organization's performances (Alexander 2004) of legitimacy.

When looking at the Government's policy documents stating the expectations to the PSB organizations receiving funding, the difference in the use of the term becomes even clearer. In the Norwegian case, the word is never mentioned, although the content of the documents is almost identical. NRK statutes state that: "In its core activity NRK's program offering should contain programs that are informational and developing, and that enhances the people's general knowledge" (St.meld. nr. 6 [2007–2008], 45). And the NRK decree[20] (St.meld. nr. 6 [2007–2008], 31–32) says that: "NRK should contribute to promote the public debate and take part in providing the inhabitants with sufficient information to take an active part in democratic processes," and further that: "NRK should offer services that can be a source of insight, reflection, experience and knowledge." These formulations cover most aspects of the enlightenment mission. In Sweden, the Government is more direct and states in the general guidelines for the broadcasting-license that "the program offering should … in its entirety be characterized by enlightenment ambitions" (Prop. 2005–2006, 29). Also in the public debate on PSB the term is more easily used in Sweden than in Norway: "It seems like the word 'Enlightenment (of the people)' has more positive connotations in Sweden than in Norway, both in the public debate and among the managers of the PSB organizations" (Larsen 2008, 334).

Even though in Sweden one uses the term as a key feature of the public service mission, NRK's Helsingen told me that "NRK has had a tradition for creating good national broad content out of relatively narrow themes. So we don't hide things. Instead we try to make it broader. In this respect, I think we have been better than the Swedes" (interview, March 10, 2008). And SVT's Lindén told me that they had discussed in SVT in the 1990s whether to keep on using the term since

> it felt old fashioned, a part of the old way of structuring social life in Sweden. It didn't quite feel like it was anchored in the modern Swedish culture and society, the way it used to be. But even so, SVT decided, now in the 2000s, to keep the term alive. So it is an ambition to make information, knowledge, and perspectives accessible for the whole of Sweden's population since it is important for Swedish society. But this paternalistic notion that we should educate the Swedish people is not that strong anymore (interview, September 19, 2007).

This paternalistic attitude, which characterized the original idea of PSB and the PSB organizations in their early phase (Jauert and Lowe 2005), is implicitly portrayed by CEO Hamilton, while she explicitly distances herself from the idea:

> We are going to do both broad entertainment and the most narrow, like qualified, programs … Because I think that this also makes the narrow programs more accessible. So then SVT1 and SVT2 become something one actually uses, without sitting down and "combing one's hair" on the sofa, and "now I will learn something."[21]

By using the metaphor of "combing one's hair," PSB's paternalistic enlightenment attitude is portrayed as old-fashioned and a bit too grave. At the same time, Hamilton is eager to preserve SVT as a national provider of programs which qualitatively hold a high standard. She is adapting the idea of PSB to dominant ideas at the present time; the paternalistic attitude belongs to a time when the public sphere was not as interactive and fragmented as it is today, with increased interactivity in traditional one-way media, such as TV and (online) newspapers, and when the average level of education was at a lower level than today. This is the same form of rhetoric that the informants in both countries use: they distance themselves from the educational/pedagogical aspects, but hang on to the ideal of inclusion and quality. The pedagogic attitude and the canonical content that characterized the PSB organizations in their early phase seem to be replaced (at least rhetorically) by a diversified and easy accessible offer (related to both the mediums used and the content). In this way, the enlightenment mission does not have to be abandoned but can live on in a fragmented public sphere. In both SVT and NRK, one considers the audience to seek the information they are interested in on their own initiative. NRK's Helsingen said the term "enlightenment (of the people)" feels old fashioned because "the term implies a passive recipient,

and present-day people are, or should be, active seekers of information" (e-mail-correspondence, April 15, 2008). Thus, people can be enlightened when they wish to be, in line with "DIY citizenship" (Hartley 1999). The modern idea of enlightenment (Kant 1975 [1784]; Habermas 1985) is adapted to postmodern ideas (Lyotard 1984; Foucault 1966, 1969), rejecting the rationality, universality, and emancipatory aspects of the enlightenment tradition. The PSB "practitioners" do not see the modern and postmodern ideas as opposites, as do the PSB theoreticians; the former portrays an attitude (rhetorically) where a changing context does not need to entail a complete rejection of existing ideas, whereas among the latter this is regarded as a binary opposition. The "practitioners" of course have to take a modernist stand, since their job depends on the continued importance of PSB. But this still shows us how the scholarly ideas of such authors as Garnham (1992) and Murdock (2005) can be effectively operationalized in discursive practice. The normative ideals of deliberative democracy and the public sphere (Habermas 1989, 1996) and its application to PSB organizations are, as collective representations, influencing the script being performed by the actors (Alexander 2004) when legitimizing the organizations.

The educational project of these PSB organizations is based on a subject model of the enlightenment mission. Here the people are considered as acting subjects, as opposed to the object model where they are considered as an object for the presentation of information from above (Vestheim 1995, 89). The first CEO of the BBC, John Reith's (1924), idea of PSB can be read as based on an object model, but the PSB organizations in Scandinavia have to a larger degree based their enlightenment approach on a subject model, as a consequence of the social democratic tradition (Jauert and Lowe 2005, 17). According to Peter Duelund (1994, 33), the Nordic enlightenment tradition is based on a fundamental respect for the receiver, while the continental European tradition to a larger degree has a paternalistic attitude. For Duelund this makes the Nordic countries come closer to realizing the Habermasian (1989, 1996) ideal of the public sphere, where critical and independent actors are crucial for the legitimacy of a liberal democratic society.

SVT talks a lot about approaching the audience as fellow citizens, both in its organizational documents, in the research interviews conducted for this project, and in the public debates on SVT (Larsen 2008). To relate to the citizens in such a way follows from this subject model of the enlightenment mission. In applying the term "fellow citizens" in its organizational

performances of legitimacy, SVT is relating its work to the Civic World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006). PSB is legitimized with reference to something that is bigger than the organization itself as well as the sum of individuals in Swedish society; PSB is related to social solidarity and Swedish culture. SVT is a civil organization dedicated to serving Swedish democracy, culture, and society. The PSB organizations are for the actors performing legitimacy the only media organization in Sweden that addresses the audience as fellow citizens instead of consumers. They argue that private media organizations are legitimated with reference to the Market World, while SVT is legitimated with reference to the Civic World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006).

NRK's representatives never use the term fellow citizens, either in the official documents or in the research interviews conducted for this project. In general, the term is hardly used when legitimizing PSB in Norway (Larsen 2011a).[22] Rather than concluding that this is due to Norwegians being less concerned with solidarity, it makes sense to think of this as related to cultural differences between the two countries, resulting in the term "fellow citizen" having different connotations. In addition to connoting solidarity and democracy, in Norway the term also connotes something elevated and ceremonial and therefore elitist. Elitist projects are often perceived as foreign in Norway (Skarpenes 2005, 2007; Haarr and Krogstad 2011).[23] If we only relate to the common worlds of Boltanski and Thévenot in analyzing legitimation work, we will miss out on such nuances. Rather than concluding that one is not operating within the Civic World when legitimating PSB in Norway, it is more in line with the empirical findings of this study to conclude that solidarity as a value is expressed differently in the legitimation rhetoric employed in the two countries. That these differences are evident in several empirical contexts (Larsen 2010; Gomard and Krogstad 2001; Stray 2009) can again be understood in light of historically constituted national cultural repertoires (Lamont 1995; Lamont and Thévenot 2000b).

Levels of Abstraction in the Public Rhetoric

Where one at SVT activates a quite philosophical and abstract rhetoric when talking about one's mission—"Part of our mission is to protect the democracy and the humanistic assessments" (SVT 2006a, 6)—one seems more occupied with the technical aspects of broadcasting and content production at NRK; "We have to make programs that people will choose at the program level … The competition is moving from channel to program"

(Bjerkaas February 21, 2008). This may be a result of the broadcasters' position among the politicians (Storsul and Syvertsen 2007) and the people. The NRK holds a stronger position than SVT in both respects—"It seems to be a much broader support in the political system, and in the public debate, for NRK" (interview, Lindén, September 19, 2007).

The different rhetoric can further be related to differences in cultural and intellectual traditions. The Swedes have a stronger tradition for elitism and high culture as a consequence of their different history from Norway (Sweden being a dominant country in the Nordic region), resulting in nation-building taking different forms (Østerud 1987). This makes a more philosophical and abstract rhetoric both legitimate and necessary, in the sense that parts of the public will demand a high level of ambition and an advanced rhetoric from this cornerstone institution of the public sphere.

In Norway, the national cultural repertoire is a bit more down-to-earth and pragmatic than is the case for Sweden (Gomard and Krogstad 2001). Furthermore, an anti-elitist attitude seems more dominant in Norway. The rhetoric that SVT uses could then be considered somewhat ill-placed by the Norwegian public. The different levels of abstraction in the public rhetoric may thus be strategically chosen by the actors to avoid public criticism. At the same time, these cultural differences will also influence the actors on a pre-reflexive cognitive level, working through the national habitus (Elias 1996).

Such a cultural repertoire became evident when CEO Bjerkaas introduced a speech titled "NRK and Democracy" held at a seminar at the University of Oslo expressing difficulties relating to such big and abstract terms as democracy and freedom of speech (the speech's title was given by the seminar's organizers):

> I am a bit skeptical to them being very big. I feel a need to approach them from below, and try to link them to concrete praxis before I am completely safe that I am using them correctly. I have been to some European meetings with other CEOs of PSB-organizations who use these words very easily, which I find pompous and solemn. And those who use these words most easily are those who have a program offering that means the least for the nation's program offering. So I am a bit withdrawn.[24]

And when I asked NRK's chairman, Hallvard Bakke, to articulate NRK's mission from a democratic point of view, he replied that "it is to impart knowledge and insight about society that make the individual citizen, *if we use that fancy word*, most suited to take care of his democratic function" (interview, April 28, 2008).

Sweden's more abstract national cultural repertoire influenced many of the informants' description of the PSB mission. An example is Nilsson's description of the role of culture from a democratic point of view:

> Culture often creates greater understanding for other people, makes differences more explicit, so that one can understand them, so that one can understand oneself and the world … If we through our programs can make humans understand the culture, then they can understand themselves and the time of their existence (interview, November 8, 2007).

He said during this description that he thought it became very high-flown, but nevertheless used these terms. Such abstract language was used on several occasions during the interview, for example, when stating that "public service is the only [media actor] talking to the whole human being" (interview, November 8, 2007).

Finally, the broadcasters' different levels of aspiration may influence their rhetoric. In SVT one speaks of oneself as one of the world's leading PSM organizations, its strategy document being called "Free Television in the World Class" (2006b, c). The person responsible for the development of SVT's strategies, Jan Petersson (interview, October 5, 2007), said the term "world class" was chosen to enhance the employees' performances and make them reach for ambitious goals. Such a level of aspiration can again be related to the organizations' political and public support. Since NRK faces little public critique compared to SVT and SR (Larsen 2008), it does not feel the need to legitimize its existence to the same degree as its Swedish sisters. Correspondingly, the SVT has a more sophisticated rhetoric about its public service mission, and employees keep producing a lot of material about the public service idea and PSB's unique position in today's media environment, arguing that it's more relevant than ever. In performing legitimacy, SVT emphasizes its service to the people, relating to the collective representations of Sweden as a culturally advanced egalitarian society.

Conclusions

As we have seen in this chapter, both NRK and SVT base the argument for their continuing importance on their unique position in the international market. They differ, however, in that NRK focuses on its importance for sustaining the Norwegian language, while SVT focuses on its importance

for providing the Swedish public with high-quality programming. Furthermore, the NRK, to a higher degree than SVT, bases its self-image on the shift from a PSB to a PSM organization (Lowe and Bardoel 2007). SVT is still basing its rhetoric on its dedication to serving the democracy and enlightening the people, while NRK focuses on being a high-quality content deliverer in a digital media environment. The enlightenment aspect of PSB is today understood, by both organizations, as being a provider of diverse and easily accessible programs related to both the content and the medium. The paternalistic attitude is abandoned for an attitude where one considers the public as interested in looking up information on its own. The enlightenment ambition is thus adapted to the current media environment.

The differences in the organizations' rhetoric can be related to the cultural and intellectual traditions in the two countries, the organizations' support among the people and the politicians, organizational differences, and the different levels of aspiration. SVT needs to justify its existence to a higher degree than NRK, and in doing so it relates to the national repertoire in Sweden, activating a somewhat philosophical and abstract rhetoric, relating its mission to democratic and humanistic values. Since NRK does not have the same need to justify its existence, and the cultural repertoire in Norway is more down-to-earth and pragmatic, NRK focuses more on technical aspects of the organization's future in its legitimation rhetoric. Both organizations, nevertheless, in their performances of legitimacy relate to collective representations of the importance of independent media organizations for democracy and a civil public sphere.

Notes

1. NRK delivers content on radio, TV the Internet, mobile phones, and tablets. NRK has been a state-owned limited company since 1996, and the state holds all its shares. NRK is obliged to follow the Norwegian Law on Broadcasting (LOV 1992-12-04-127), NRKs statutes and the NRK decree (both are stated in the white paper [St.meld. nr. 6 (2007–2008)]). Because NRK is a limited company it is also under the regulation of the Norwegian Law on Limited Companies (LOV 1997-06-13-44), and especially § 20-4 to 20-7, which cover state-owned limited companies.
2. SVT is one of three PSB companies in Sweden. The limited companies SVT, SR, and UR are owned by the foundation Forvaltningsstiftelsen. The foundation owns and administers all the shares in the three companies

(Prop. 2005/06, 20). The PSB companies are obliged to follow the Swedish Law on Free Speech (SFS 1991:1469), the Swedish Radio- and TV Law (SFS 1996:844), and (in the time period for this particular investigation) the white paper "Regeringens proposition 2005/06: 112." In order to make the comparison in this chapter manageable, I chose to study only one of the Swedish companies: SVT. For methodological reasons I then chose to focus on NRK TV rather than NRK Radio.

3. For a discussion of these challenges, see: (Lowe and Hujanen 2003, Lowe and Jauert 2005, Lowe and Bardoel 2007, Lowe and Steemers 2011, Carlsson 2013).
4. The Scandinavian countries have many common features regarding their social democratic welfare states (Esping-Andersen 1990), and media systems (Hallin and Mancini 2004). They are thus well suited for a comparative analysis with a "most similar systems design" (Przeworski and Teune 1970). Of the Scandinavian countries, I have chosen to compare Norway and Sweden in this chapter. Norway and Sweden have more in common with each other than either of them has with Denmark (Gundelach 2000, Sejersted 2011). Furthermore, a two-nation study "enables the researcher to investigate a much larger number of contextual or micro variables than is feasible in large-scale multinational studies" (Hantrais 1999, 99).
5. Prevalent PSB scholars have argued that one should exchange the term public service broadcasting for public service communication (Born 2005), public service media (Lowe and Bardoel 2007), digital commons (Murdock 2005), or public service content (Jakubowicz 2007).
6. I have conducted informant interviews, using the interviewees as a source to gain knowledge of the organizations involved (Zelditch 1962). My informants speak as agents, as representatives of media organizations and departments within these organizations. It is therefore important to be able to quote them with their name and title. I asked for every informant's approval to cite them with their name and title. No one found this a problem. The informants cited in this chapter are: Hallvard Bakke (Chairman, NRK), interviewed April 11, 2008; Arne Helsingen (TV-broadcaster at NRK), interviewed March 10 and followed up by email on April 15, 2008; Nita Kapoor (Former head of NRK's culture department; until the end of 2007), interviewed March 13, 2008; Lars Kristiansen (Head of NRK's factual department), interviewed December 20, 2007; Johan Lindén (Former vice-program director and commissioning editor of News and Current Affairs and vice-head of news operations at SVT), interviewed September 19, 2007; Peter O. Nilsson (Vice-head of SVT's culture department), interviewed November 8, 2007; Jan Petersson (Head of strategies at SVT), interviewed October 5, 2007.

7. The main documents for the analysis are the annual reports of NRK and SVT from 2006, the strategy document in Norway for the period between 2007 and 2012, and the strategy document in Sweden for the period between 2007 and 2009. But I do also draw on documents produced at a later stage.
8. Defending the Norwegian language against the threats of globalization and the expansion of the English language is also emphasized in a white paper on language (St.meld. nr. 35 [2007–2008]). Such a focus on the Norwegian language is due to the written Norwegian language being relatively young, and further that we have two written languages within a population of 5 million. This makes the languages (Norwegian Bokmål and Norwegian Nynorsk) relatively limited. Furthermore, NRK is one of few places in Norway where Norwegian Nynorsk is practiced orally, because the language was constructed as a written language based on a collection of dialects, as an alternative to Norwegian Bokmål, which was developed from Danish. NRK is thus an important tool in maintaining the Norwegian language. But such a focus on the language can also be interpreted in light of the differences in the national cultural repertoire (Lamont and Thévenot 2000a) of the two countries, since maintaining and preserving the Norwegian language is a tangible task that can easily be legitimated with the use of the Norwegian repertoire, which is (as will be demonstrated through this chapter) very down-to-earth.
9. SVT: Gomorron Sverige, March 7, 2007.
10. University of Oslo: Lecture, February 21, 2008.
11. SVT: Gomorron Sverige, March 7 2007.
12. Also the Norwegian state monopoly on wine and spirits, Vinmonopolet, focus upon their competitive advantages in the market for alcohol in their performances of legitimacy. Just as the PSB organizations, the monopoly on wine and spirits has a privileged market position, provided by the government due to their specific societal role: Vinmonopolet was established as a political tool to limit the citizens' access to alcohol, and is regulated by and own law, (LOV 1931-06-19-18). But this is rarely explicated by the organization. Even though the organization has a monopoly on selling wine and spirits in Norway, it emphasizes quality as an important dimension when performing legitimacy, both in terms of knowledgeable and service-minded employees, and in terms of the products offered to the consumers. They have a goal of surpassing the expectations of the customer both in terms of the service provided, their technical expertise, and their assortment. Similarly as with the PSB organizations, quality and the audience's satisfaction are seen as legitimate criteria to emphasize when performing organizational legitimacy. The organizations are serving

the people rather than the government. Serving the people is of course an explicitly formulated aspect of the NRK's mission as a broadcaster in the public's service, but that Vinmonopolet is also emphasizing its dedication to serving the public, shows how important it is for publicly funded organizations to be successful in communicating with a broad public that they are dedicated to serve the needs of the people, rather than the interests of political, cultural, or financial elites. For a further comparison of the legitimation rhetoric employed by Vinmonopolet, NRK, and SVT, see Larsen (2014).

13. As was shown in the last chapter, this resembles the strategy employed by the national commercial broadcasters when established in the early 1990s.
14. This is a PSB model that resembles the American model, with its public broadcasting service, PBS.
15. The seminar was held at the House of Free Speech in Oslo, on January 22, 2007.
16. SVT: Gomorron Sverige, March 7, 2007.
17. Lindén is here referring to the fact that SVT has a strategic goal of delivering "Free Television in the World Class" (SVT 2006b).
18. "'Enlightenment (of the people)' is a direct translation of the Norwegian word 'folkeopplysning'; the 'of the people' is intended to distinguish the term enlightenment from its broader notion, related to the age of enlightenment and enlightenment philosophy, and the use of parentheses to not distance it too far from the definition of enlightenment provided by such philosophers – the phrase 'popular education' might give more meaning to an English audience" (Larsen 2011b, 45). In the Swedish language the word 'folkbildning' is the closest word to the Norwegian folkeopplysning.
19. In Norway it is a common belief that the term is old-fashioned, a belief that is expressed in both academic literature (Engelstad et al. 2005, 300) and government initiated reports (NOU 1999:27).
20. The decree should, on a general level, express the community's expectations and demands to NRK" (St.meld. nr. 6 [2007–2008], 5).
21. SVT: Gomorron Sverige, January 5, 2007.
22. Such an absence of the use of this important democratic term is also prevalent in the legitimation of Norwegian policies on primary education (Stray 2009).
23. As an illustration of this, Haarr and Krogstad (2011) documented a quite significant and expanding contempt for the representations of a cultural elite in Norwegian newspapers over the last 30 years.
24. University of Oslo: Lecture, February 21, 2008.

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CHAPTER 6

Dynamics of Legitimation Work

Through the various cases discussed in this book we have got a grip of some fundamental dimensions of contemporary legitimation work. By comparing such a wide range of cases, I have engaged in what Eviatar Zerubavel calls social pattern analysis, which "involves a *theme driven* rather than a data-driven style of inquiry, where specific situations are viewed as *exemplifying* general patterns" (Zerubavel 2007, 140). Furthermore, I have combined theory and data in such a way as to achieve maximal interpretation (Reed 2011) when theorizing (Swedberg 2014) the social process of legitimation work, with all of its evaluative (Lamont 2012) and performative (Alexander 2004) dimensions. In this chapter, I will describe some specific features of legitimation work in more detail, before returning to sociological theory and discussing the implications of the cultural approach to organizational legitimacy employed in this book.

Transition of Positions and Legitimacy Repair

Because many cultural policy debates take place within a national public sphere how one discusses these issues is influenced by the cultural traditions of the respective countries, as actors are both influenced by a national habitus (Elias 1996) and relate to national cultural repertoires (Lamont 1992, 1995; Lamont and Thévenot 2000b) in their legitimation work. How much criticism is generated due to organizational changes, or changes in cultural policies related to the organizations is also subject to national variation. In a study of public discussions on PSB issues in Norway and

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Sweden (Larsen 2008), I found that SVT and Swedish cultural policy were criticized and corrected in the public sphere to a much larger degree than was the case with NRK and Norwegian cultural policy. It triggered massive criticism in the Swedish public sphere when SVT applied a commercial logic in communicating with the public, in terms of its thinking of target groups in its programming, while NRK to a large degree got away with basing its legitimacy on rating. Among other things, this resulted in the previously mentioned petition "No soap operas instead of news," signed by 17,000 young Swedes (Chapter 4). This corresponds to the fact that both the SVT management (Chapter 5) and Swedish cultural politicians (Larsen 2011b) focus on the idea of PSB and its contribution to democracy in their legitimation rhetoric. Since they draw on a deliberative model of democracy (Larsen 2014) infused with Habermasian normative ideas (Habermas 1996) in justifying the role of PSB in society (Garnham 1992; Scannell 1989), it is hard to legitimate a focus on target groups and ratings as part of the program strategy of the PSB company. As a result of SVT anchoring its organizational legitimacy in the Civic World, it is struggling to also relate to the World of Fame in its legitimation work (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006).

Due to the massive protests, SVT actually withdrew the strategy targeted at reaching young audiences. It was one of the first decisions the newly appointed CEO of SVT, Eva Hamilton, made after she entered the position in November 2006. She repaired the legitimacy damage that the predecessor Christina Jutterström had created. This was important for the organization at the same time as it represented an opportunity for the individual leader of the organization to come off as vigorous.

Legitimacy repair as part of legitimation work is important for organizations, governments, or ministries, in that it is an opportunity to appear vigorous, especially in times of crisis. When an art world perceives public authorities as approaching the policies related to the world in a way that harms that world, it is important for the people in charge of the policies to be able to restore their legitimacy. We saw an example of this in Chapter 2, with the newly appointed Norwegian Minister of Culture restoring the distance to the Norwegian performing arts organizations, after her predecessor was criticized for interfering with the organization's content production.

The immediate time period after taking office as minister of culture or entering the position of CEO of an arts or media organization is a crucial time for those actors to engage in legitimacy repair if the relation with key

players in the art world has been damaged prior to them stepping into the position in question. Being the one who repairs legitimacy is especially helpful for individuals who are newcomers in a position at the top of an organizational hierarchy. As they are not connected to the damage created by the predecessor, they are in good shape to be able to fuse (Alexander 2004) with the text (the organizational mission) when performing legitimacy in the form of repair.

Finding the Right Balance

A particular form of legitimation work is co-operative legitimation work, meaning that several actors engaged in the legitimation of a particular organization are acting in concert when (re)negotiating what the idea and practice of the organization should be. The CEO of a particular arts organization and the minister of culture can, for example, engage in co-operative legitimation work in publicly changing their minds so as to provide for an opportunity for both to save faces, which was illustrated in Chapter 2. As both parties benefit from keeping a friendly relationship, it is important to manage to voice one's opinion in public while providing the opportunity for one's adversary to save face when changing his or her original statement. They must co-operate in their face-work (Goffman 2005 [1967]).[1]

An important aspect of legitimation work, as it plays out in the culture sector, is for all of the actors to negotiate an appropriate balance between the inclusive and exclusive aspects of an organization's mission. With the right balance, the art world will find the work of the organization credible, the politicians will find the organization worthy of support, and the public will find it relevant. Finding the right balance between the inclusive and the exclusive elements of running an arts or media organization is at the center of all the cases discussed in this book.

The actors most often relate to the Civic World in their legitimation work. Although it is necessary for some actors to also relate to other worlds, especially the World of Fame but also the Market World, the Industrial World, and the Inspired World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006), the most important basis for the organization's legitimacy is how well they manage to communicate with the community in an inclusive manner, prolonging civil solidarity in working toward reaching goals transcending the actual organization. At the end of the day, it all comes down to how well they perform legitimacy as civil organizations, and through that manage to anchor their activity at the democratic side of the binary code of the civil sphere (Alexander 2006).

That being said, there are also differences in what the organizational performances look like. Being inclusive is an important value in all the countries studied. But the degree to which the exclusive should also be enhanced in the performances differs between the cases. As we have seen in the discussions of the PSB organizations (especially Chapter 5), the quality of the content and how they differ from commercial actors has been emphasized in Sweden, while in Norway these dimensions have been less prominent. Similarly, in the comparison of the NNOB and the Met (Chapter 2), we saw that the American opera house emphasized artistic quality to a larger degree than did the Norwegian opera house. This does not show us that the values attached to the various organizations are different in different countries. Instead we learn that the language in which the legitimation rhetoric is performed takes different forms in the various countries. I am of course not referring to the fact that the actors speak different languages in the different countries, but rather that they employ different value-laden words and phrases when addressing the public. As has been shown throughout this book, the notion of different national repertories of evaluation (Lamont and Thévenot 2000b) has been helpful in analyzing these differences.

In a study of how public service broadcasting is legitimated in Norway and Sweden (of which, parts are presented in Chaps. 4 and 5), I found that there are similar values attached to the organizations in both countries (Larsen 2011a). For example, white papers on PSB and overall cultural policy in both countries emphasize the need to secure a national culture, a vibrant democracy, and an inclusive public sphere (Larsen 2011b). These are values traditionally attributed to such media organizations. However, the values are expressed differently in that the Swedish rhetoric is generally more principled and philosophical than the Norwegian when arguing for the importance of PSB. In Sweden, the importance of the idea of PSB and how this idea is more important than ever in a digitized age is emphasized, while the Norwegian legitimation rhetoric is more concrete and pragmatic, centered on technical issues and NRK's role in the preservation of the Norwegian languages (Larsen 2010, 2011b).[2]

It makes sense to think of the differences mentioned above as the social worlds representing a similar normative context in the two countries due to a common history and a shared social democratic tradition (Esping-Andersen 1990; Stråth 2005; Sejersted 2011), and that the language of the context takes different forms due to differences in the national habitus (Elias 1996) and the historically constituted national cultural repertoire

(Lamont 1995; Lamont and Thévenot 2000b). Sweden has a stronger tradition for elitism and high culture than Norway, as a consequence of Sweden having been a dominant country in Scandinavia for centuries. Norway, on the other hand, has been part of both Denmark and Sweden until 1905. As a result, Norway does not have a long tradition of having a cultural elite.[3] The history of the nations has influenced the respective repertoires, resulting in differences in abstraction and to what degree the debates are ideational or pragmatic. It is more accepted and sometimes even demanded that one in Sweden "breaks out" of egalitarian ideals on a cultural level and activates a more abstract and philosophical rhetoric. Such rhetoric would most likely be perceived as elitist and therefore misplaced by a Norwegian public. This is because very few Norwegians will engage in public defense of elitist projects, due to Norway's egalitarian culture (Lien et al. 2001; Gullestad 1991; Daloz 2007; Haarr and Krogstad 2011; Skarpenes 2007; Skarpenes and Sakslind 2010; Jarness 2013; Ljunggren 2015).[4]

The discourse on opera and classical music as high culture has demonstrated its cultural power in the studies of the performing arts organizations. It is so widespread that it is influencing actors on a non-reflexive, cognitive level. Independent of whether the organizations being legitimized can be said to be elitist and exclusive on an empirical level, actors engaged in legitimation work have been actively promoting a counter-discourse in trying to convince the audience of the civil nature of their organization. As we saw in Chaps. 2 and 3, the NNOB has been an inclusive organization dedicated to reaching as many as possible with its productions ever since its foundation in 1958. Even so, opera has been an easy target for the populist Progress Party in attacking the elite and their exclusive activities. But due to the fact that the new opera house in Oslo has become a place used by the citizens regardless of whether they attend an opera or ballet performance, even the Progress Party has stopped attacking opera as high culture.[5] At least this has been tshe case for as long as they have been in Government (since 2013). It seems that the Norwegian people have come to terms with the necessity of spending a significant amount of the state's culture budget on an opera house. In addition, the new house has got a lot of coverage in international media for its architecture, and it has also gained importance artistically, with international names performing on stage every season.[6] Due to the significance of having a world-renowned opera house, Norwegian politicians are not likely to cut spending on opera. The opera house has managed to become a collective representation of modern-day Norway.

The Arm's Length Principle

As has been discussed in several places across this book, the arm's length principle is a sacred principle in cultural policy, and defending it takes on a ritual-like form. As a consequence, it has become impossible to define what quality means when related to aesthetic practices. Promoting quality as a value in itself becomes the subject of cultural policy. This can lead to criticism in the public sphere, in that quality is perceived as an empty signifier. To try to correct this, different actors have tried to fuse the signifier with the signified. Among other things, the Norwegian weekly newspaper *Morgenbladet* initiated the essay competition "Quality in Culture: Suggestions for Future Cultural Policy" in June 2014,[7] and the Arts Council Norway initiated a research project on "Art, Culture, and Quality."[8] Both of these initiatives came as a result of the emphasis on quality as one of the main pillars in the cultural policy of the current conservative coalition Government.

But such initiatives will hardly change the situation, as the performance of legitimacy in the public sphere follows a predictable pattern when discussing quality in cultural policy: cultural policy actors will promote the value of artistic quality and emphasize that the content of artistic quality is something to be decided by the experts within the respective artistic worlds. Parts of the public will criticize cultural policy actors for not defining quality. But at the same time, these critics will actively go out and defend the arm's length principle if they perceive the government as breaching or threatening it. Quality is thus destined to remain an empty signifier when cultural policy actors perform legitimacy in the public sphere.

For the managers of the performing arts and PSB organizations, the challenge is to come off as authentic when protecting the arm's length principle. In order to have performative success, they cannot take directions from the funders, whether they are public or private. As the arm's length principle is about artistic autonomy, it is not emphasized in the inclusive legitimation work of the organizations. Artistic autonomy is rather an addition to the performance of legitimacy as civil organizations. Considering how important demystification and inclusivity are in the contemporary legitimation work of arts organizations, the managers run a real risk of being perceived as inauthentic by the audience when defending artistic autonomy, their public performances of artistic legitimacy being perceived as empty rituals (Alexander 2004).

The inclusive legitimation work helps legitimate the relevance of the state-funded organizations to broad segments of the audience, but content producers and intellectuals express difficulties with such an attitude. As was discussed in Chaps. 2 and 3, both the NNOB and the OPO have drawn criticism from the art world on account of their season programming, among other things for not putting enough emphasis on contemporary music in general, and on Norwegian contemporary music in particular. In 2011 the NNOB received criticism from several opera professionals for not prioritizing newly written Norwegian operas in their repertoire,[9] and a music critic in *Aftenposten* criticized the OPO for trying too hard to reach young audiences in the season program for 2012/2013 (Chapter 3).

Also the NRK finds that the most difficult audience to please are the TV and film professionals. On several occasions, the NRK has been criticized for producing too much of its drama productions in-house, and through that not taking part in stimulating a vibrant, national TV industry.[10] It is argued that NRK, as a broadcaster in the public's service, should make sure that it is possible to make a living by working with TV drama in Norway. This is about to change, as Widvey, the current Minister of Culture representing Høyre (the Conservative Party), presented a white paper on PSB in June 2015, where one of the policy goals is that 35 % of the NRK's production should come from out-of-house units in 2016 and 2017, with an increase to 40 % in the years to follow (St.meld. nr. 38 [2014–2015], 121). Both the TV professionals and the current Government thus agree that NRK also needs to anchor its activity in the Industrial World (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006) in its legitimation work.

Due to the rhetorical skills of intellectuals and the professional affiliations of the representatives of organizations in the art world, these groups have easy access to the edited public sphere, and its means of symbolic production. This is especially true in Norway, with a population of only five million people. That these voices are heard is important in that it helps balance the legitimation work between the inclusive and the exclusive, which is a key in simultaneously satisfying all the public. If the organizations are no longer perceived as relevant by the content producers, it is hard to argue that they are worthy of financial support. Furthermore, their legitimacy on the international stage may be weakened. Being perceived as a high-quality arts organization by an international audience is in the interest of both the organization and the politicians, as it enhances the cultural credibility of the organization, the city, and the nation.

As has been shown throughout this book, one way to achieve the inclusive ambitions and simultaneously uphold artistic credibility is to continue to demystify high-culture organizations as public spaces and arenas for art performances without compromising the content being performed on stage. Similarly, the PSB organizations need to maintain an emphasis on their contribution to democracy, culture, and the public sphere, while at the same time not threaten the quality of the individual productions.

Legitimacy and a Cultural Sociology of Organizations

As was discussed in Chapter 1, there has been an increased interest in the study of legitimacy in organizational sociology over the past decades. Nevertheless, the tools developed within this subfield of sociology are not sufficiently cultural to be able to capture the complexities of the legitimation work of organizations in contemporary societies. As has been demonstrated throughout the empirical chapters of this book, legitimation is a contingent social process, involving cultural work and performances. Although neo-institutionalism, with its emphasis on ritual, myth, and isomorphism has helped us theorize the influence of background structures on organizational legitimacy, it has not paid sufficient attention to how the foreground scripts are performed. Neo-institutionalism does not capture in a sufficient way how organizational actors communicate with various audiences in their public performances and legitimation work. By adding theoretical tools from contemporary cultural sociology in its French and American versions, we get an advanced tool kit for studying organizational legitimacy.

Although the empirical cases studied in the book have been limited to arts and media organizations the cultural approach to organizational legitimacy is in principle well suited for studies of all kinds of public and non-profit organizations, as they all engage in the public sphere and perform legitimacy to various audiences. In addition, it may also be fruitful to employ tools from this approach in studies of other types of organizations, as private, for-profit organizations also need to perform legitimacy toward different audiences. But as these are not really civil organizations, the approach might need some adjustments as it is not necessarily for for-profit organizations to perform in the public sphere to the same degree as it is for non-profit organizations.

In addition to studies of organizations, a cultural approach to legitimacy attuned to cultural action might also be applicable to other cases than

organizations. As has been demonstrated by Alexander (2010), cultural performances are a crucial aspect of contemporary political campaigning, and Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) show that legitimation is important for solving everyday disputes. By combining the insights from these theories, we get an analytical perspective suited for employment in a whole range of empirical settings, from mundane activities to the global political stage. In addition to cultural work and performance, scholars should also pay attention to the influence of national cultural repertoires (Lamont and Thévenot 2000a) and national habitus (Elias 1996) when engaging in national comparisons, especially if studying performances taking place in a public sphere (Habermas 1989; Alexander 2006; Jacobs 2012).

As a way of continuing the development of a truly cultural approach to organizational legitimacy, both organizational and cultural sociology will benefit from nurturing a closer relationship to each other. Organization scholars need to engage more closely with cultural theory, and cultural sociologist should take more interest in studying organizations and legitimacy. Only through advancing a cultural sociology of organizations will we be able to understand the complex social process of achieving and maintaining organizational legitimacy, with all of its cultural work and social performances.

Notes

1. Erving Goffman (2005 [1967], 5) defines face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self, delineated in terms of approved social attributes – albeit an image that others might share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself." He uses the term "face-work" to "designate the actions taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face. Face-work serves to counteract 'incidents' – that is, events whose effective symbolic implications threaten face" (Goffman 2005 [1967], 12).
2. These differences can be illustrated by reference to the titles of the white papers in the two countries from the mid-2000s (when the analysis was undertaken). The Swedish paper was titled "More Important than Ever Before: Radio and TV in the Public's Service" (*Viktigare än någonsin! Radio och TV i allmänhetens tjänst 2007–2012*) (Prop. 2005/06), and the Norwegian was titled "Broadcasting in a Digital Future" (*Kringkasting i en digital fremtid*) (St.meld. nr. 30 (2006–2007)).

3. When Norway was part of the political entity Denmark–Norway (1524–1814), most of the intellectual life and the state administration were located in the Danish capital of Copenhagen.
4. That being said, the NRK has had a hard time in satisfying segments of today's (relatively small) cultural elite, as the elite wants the NRK to focus on the content that separates the NRK from its commercial broadcasters, a model resembling the American Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and National Public Radio (NPR), which are being legitimized with reference to a pluralist discourse (Larsen 2008). Simultaneously, the elite seems to have come to terms with the fact that having a broad and inclusive NRK is a far better option than not having an alternative to commercial broadcasting.
5. In addition to being an attraction for both domestic and international tourists, the house is used for a variety of activities, from pop and rock concerts, movie screenings, and location for TV shows to conventions and conferences. Due to its architecture these events can also take place outdoors, as the roof can be used as a seating area. The roof is also a popular spot for locals to hang out on sunny days. The artistic employees of the house might partake in some of these events, an interesting example being the opera choir doing a concert with the Norwegian black metal band Satyricon on the main stage of the house.
6. The artistic leader of the opera company at the NNOB, Per Boye Hansen, comments on the economic difficulties related to the increased expenses on pensions in 2015 by stating: "I hope that the politicians will come to their senses and see the enormous potential that lies in filling our fantastic opera house with art on the highest international level. On our best we are already there. We already attract many travelers and the NNOB has made Norway move towards being perceived as a culture nation. The international recognition is growing at a fast rate" (Dagsavisen [2015]: "Operadirektør møter hard kritikk," September 28, Bente Rognan Gravklev).
7. http://morgenbladet.no/boker/2014/essaykonkurranse_0#.VSVGz_nF9u4 (last accessed, April 8, 2015).
8. http://www.kulturradet.no/fou/vis-artikkel/-/aktuelt-ny-forskningssatsning-om-kunst-kultur-og-kvalitet (last accessed, April 8, 2015).
9. Dagens Næringsliv (2011): "Knapt med kommers-kroner," June 9; Aftenposten (2011): "Hardt ut mot operasjefen," June 22, Ann Christiansen; Klassekampen (2011): "Feit dame står for fall," June 25, Ida Karine Gullvik; Klassekampen (2011): "Vil eksperimentere mer," July 6, Ida Karine Gullvik.
10. Dagbladet (2012): "Krever avklaring NRK-debatt," November 30, Anders Fjellberg; Dagens Næringsliv (2012): "Krever Rossiné's avgang,"

December 3, Bjørn Eckblad; Dagbladet (2012): "Tristessen NRK drama," December 7, Øystein Karlsen; Aftenposten (2012): "Filmregissører krever avtale med NRK," December 7, Jan Gunnar Furuly; Dagens Næringsliv (2012): "Skaperstorm," December 4; Dagens Næringsliv (2012): "Ingen jobb for gamle menn," December 8, Hans Petter Sjølie; Aftenposten (2012): "Vi har for lav tillit," December 8, Jan Gunnar Furuly; Dagens Næringsliv (2012): "Hvorfor legge ned NRK Drama," December 27, Terje Gaustad; Aftenposten (2013): "Ny dramasjef til ha originalt innhold," June 18, Kjersti Nipen.

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Index[1]

[1] Note: Page number followed by 'n' refers to endnotes.

H. Larsen, *Performing Legitimacy*,
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