



HANDBOOKS IN COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

# The Handbook of European Communication History

Edited by Klaus Arnold, Paschal Preston,  
and Susanne Kinnebrock

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# The Handbook of European Communication History

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Edited by

Klaus Arnold,  
Paschal Preston, and  
Susanne Kinnebrock

Editorial Assistance: Mandy Tröger

**WILEY** Blackwell

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# List of Contributors

**Irati Agirreazkuenaga**, University of the Basque Country, Spain

**Konstantin Alexeev**, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia

**Klaus Arnold**, deceased

**Juan Pablo Artero**, University of Zaragoza, Spain

**Olivier Baisnée**, Sciences-Po Toulouse, France

**Péter Bajomi-Lázár**, Budapest Business School, University of Applied Sciences, Hungary

**Gabriele Balbi**, USI Università della Svizzera italiana, Italy

**Aukse Balcytiene**, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

**Carlos Barrera**, University of Navarra, Spain

**Adrian Bingham**, University of Sheffield, UK

**Thomas Birkner**, WWU Münster, Germany

**Marcel Broersma**, University of Groningen, the Netherlands

**Niels Brügger**, Aarhus University, Denmark

**Anthony Cawley**, Liverpool Hope University, UK

**Jan Cebe**, Charles University, Czech Republic

**Hugh Chignell**, Bournemouth University, UK

**Marie Cronqvist**, Lund University, Sweden

**Antonio Cuartero**, University of Málaga, Spain

**Alina Dobрева**, Central European University, Hungary

**Koenraad Du Pont**, Brussels Center for Journalism Studies – KU Leuven, Belgium

**Susanne Eichner**, Aarhus University, Denmark

**Joris van Eijnatten**, Utrecht University, the Netherlands

**Matilde Eiroa**, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Spain

**Merja Ellefson**, Umeå University, Sweden

**Gabriele Falböck**, University of Vienna, Austria

**Alicia Ferrández Ferrer**, University of Alicante, Spain

**Andreas Fickers**, University of Luxembourg and Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History, Luxembourg

**Anke Fiedler**, Ludwig Maximilian University Munich, Germany

**Roderick Flynn**, School of Communications, Dublin City University, Ireland

**Rosa Franquet**, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), Spain

**Juan Antonio García Galindo**, University of Málaga, Spain

**Heike Graf**, Södertörn University, Sweden

**Jaume Guillamet**, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain

**Damian Guzek**, University of Silesia, Poland

**Mark Hampton**, Lingnan University, Hong Kong

**Michael Harnischmacher**, University of Passau, Germany

**Emmanuel Heretakis**, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

**Matthew Hibberd**, Università Svizzera Italiana, Switzerland

**Christoph Hilgert**, Ludwig Maximilian University Munich, Germany

**Svennik Høyer**, deceased

**Jochen Hung**, Utrecht University, the Netherlands

**Yeşim Kaptan**, Kent State University, USA

**Susanne Kinnebrock**, Augsburg University, Germany

**Beata Klimkiewicz**, Jagiellonian University, Poland

**Olga Kolokytha**, University of Vienna, Austria

**Barbara Köpplóvá**, Metropolitan University Prague, Czech Republic

**Olga Kruglikova**, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia

**Risto Kunelius**, University of Tampere, Finland

**Helena Lima**, University of Porto, Portugal

**Claire McCallum**, University of Exeter, UK

**Patrick Merziger**, University of Leipzig, Germany

- Monika Metykova**, University of Sussex, UK
- Michael Meyen**, Ludwig Maximilian University Munich, Germany
- Agnieszka Morriss**, City University London, UK
- Dana Mustata**, University of Groningen, Netherlands
- Sian Nicholas**, Aberystwyth University, Wales, UK
- Kaarle Nordenstreng**, University of Tampere, Finland
- Christian Oggolder**, Austrian Academy of Sciences and Alpen-Adria Universität, Austria
- Peppino Ortoleva**, Università degli Studi di Torino, Italy
- Nils E. Øy**, Volda University College, Norway
- Walery Pisarek**, deceased (previously at The Pontifical University of John Paul II, Poland)
- Paschal Preston**, Dublin City University, Ireland
- Elizabeth Prommer**, University of Rostock Institute for Media Research, Germany
- Nelson Ribeiro**, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Portugal
- Giuseppe Richeri**, University of Lugano, Switzerland
- Ramón Salaverría**, University of Navarra, Spain
- Katharine Sarikakis**, University of Vienna, Austria
- Anne Schmidt**, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Germany
- Christian Schwarzenegger**, Augsburg University, Germany
- Eugenia Siapera**, Dublin City University, Ireland
- Balázs Sipos**, Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary
- Kristin Skoog**, Bournemouth University, UK
- Sergio Splendore**, Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy
- Hans-Ulrich Wagner**, Hans-Bredow-Institute – Research Centre Media History, Germany
- Anne-Katrin Weber**, University of Lausanne, Switzerland
- Lennart Weibull**, University of Gothenburg and The SOM Institute, Sweden
- Jürgen Wilke**, University of Mainz, Germany
- Marina Yanglyaeva**, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia
- Yulia Yurtaeva-Martens**, Filmuniversity “Konrad Wolf,” Germany



# Author Biographies

**Irati Agirreazkuenaga** is an Assistant Professor at the Journalism Department, School of Social Sciences and Communication at the University of the Basque Country, Bilbao. Her research interests include public media and citizen engagement in civic and political life, transmedia products in public service media, communication strategies for minority-language media and the role of the media in empowering minority identities, among others. She is vice-chair of the Diaspora Migration and the Media Section in the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA).

**Konstantin Alexeev** is an Associate Professor at the Department of Journalism History at St. Petersburg State University and a doctoral candidate of Philological Sciences. His research interests and teaching concentrate on the history of Russian journalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the history of sports and leisure-time journalism in Russia. His key recent publication is, *Pre-revolutionary Sport Journalism in Russia (History and Traditions)*, St. Petersburg: Nord star.

**Klaus Arnold** (†2017) was Professor of Media Studies at the University of Trier. His main research interests were European media history as well as quality and innovation in journalism. In the years before his untimely death, Klaus was a key driver and Editor of this book project.

**Juan Pablo Artero** is an Associate Professor of Journalism at University of Zaragoza, Spain. He has been an executive board member at the European Media Management Association (2008–2012). His research interests are focused on media economics, management and policy. His academic publications account for more than 60 books, book chapters, and journal articles, in both Spanish and English.

**Olivier Baisnée** is an Assistant Professor in Political Science at Sciences-Po Toulouse (University of Toulouse, France). His research interests have focused on European correspondence and journalism, international comparison of news production, and the historical sociology of the journalistic field.

**Péter Bajomi-Lázár** is Professor of Mass Communication at the Budapest Business School – University of Applied Sciences, Hungary. His research interests include comparative media systems, media policy, and political communication.

**Gabriele Balbi** is Assistant Professor in Media Studies at USI, Università della Svizzera Italiana, Switzerland. In the Faculty of Communication Sciences, he is also director of the China Media Observatory. His research interests focus on media history and historiography from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century.

**Auksė Balcytiene** is Professor of Journalism and Communications at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania. Her fields of expertise range from journalism cultures and comparative studies of democratization to changing meanings and boundaries of journalism in contemporary societies.

**Carlos Barrera** is an Associate Professor at the University of Navarra's School of Communication, where he has also been director of the master's course in Political and Corporate Communication and editor of the journal *Communication & Society*. Most of his publications focus on media history, media, and politics, and history of journalism education.

**Adrian Bingham** is Professor of Modern British History at the University of Sheffield, United Kingdom. His main research interests are in the political, social, and cultural history of twentieth-century Britain. He has worked extensively on the representation of gender, sexuality, and class in national popular press in the decades after 1918.

**Thomas Birkner** is Akademischer Oberrat (Assistant Professor/Lecturer) at the University of Münster, Germany. He is author of books and articles on the history of journalism, the mediatization of politics, and co-editor of volumes on theories of media change and media diversity. His research interests include journalism, communication theories, communication and sports, and political communication, especially media and political leadership. He was Visiting Professor of Communication and Journalism Research at the Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich during the winter of 2014/15 and since 2016 he has been Chair of the Communication History Section of the German Communication Association.

**Marcel Broersma** is Full Professor of Journalism Studies and Media and Director of the Centre for Media and Journalism Studies at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. He has published widely on historical and current changes in journalism. His publications include *Form and Style in Journalism* (2007), *Rethinking Journalism* (2013), and *Rethinking Journalism Again* (2017).

**Niels Brügger** is Professor and Head of the Centre for Internet Studies as well as of the internet research infrastructure NetLab, Aarhus University, Denmark. His research interests are web historiography, web archiving, and media theory. Within these fields he has published monographs and a number of edited books as well as articles and book chapters. He is co-founder of the Centre for Internet Studies (2000), and of the journal *Internet Histories: Digital Technology, Culture and Society* (Taylor & Francis, 2017).

**Anthony Cawley** is a Senior Lecturer in Media in the Department of Media and Communication, Liverpool Hope University, United Kingdom. His research interests include media history, media innovation and economics, online journalism, and news-media framing of current affairs. His research has been published in international peer-reviewed journals.

**Jan Cebe**, PhD, is an Assistant Professor and member of the Departments of Media Studies at the Charles University and Metropolitan University in Prague. His research focuses primarily on the history of twentieth century media both in the world and the



former Czechoslovak context, with a focus on journalistic organizations. He is a member of international scientific and research organizations involved in the areas of communication (ECREA, IAMCR).

**Hugh Chignell** is Professor of Media History and Director of the Centre for Media History at Bournemouth University, United Kingdom. He is a steering committee member of the “Entangled Media Histories (EMHIS)” network. He is mainly a radio historian, currently working on the history of radio drama.

**Marie Cronqvist** is an Associate Professor in Media History and Journalism at the Department of Communication and Media at Lund University, Sweden. She is the main coordinator of the research network “Entangled Media Histories (EMHIS)” and her research deals mainly with Cold War culture, postwar propaganda, and transnational broadcasting.

**Antonio Cuartero** is a PhD student at the Journalism Department of the University of Málaga. He was awarded a scholarship (FPU) from the Spanish Education Ministry. He is a graduate in journalism and holds a Master’s degree in Research and Journalistic Communication. In Fall 2014 he was an Associate Research Student at the University of Roehampton in London.

**Alina Dobрева** is a Researcher at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. Her research interests are in the area of media freedom and pluralism, public opinion, media effects and political campaigns, and democratization in Central and Eastern Europe.

**Koenraad Du Pont** is an Associate Researcher of the Brussels Centre for Journalism Studies. He holds an MA in International Politics (Université Libre de Bruxelles, 2004) and a PhD in Romance languages (KU Leuven, 2007). His doctoral thesis was on the war diaries (1915–1918) of the Italian avant-gardist Ardengo Soffici. Koenraad has published articles on World War I testimonial literature, trench journalism, travel journalism, commemorative journalism, and Italian futurism.

**Susanne Eichner** is Associate Professor at the Department of Media Studies at Aarhus University, Denmark. In her research, she employs a cross-media approach focusing on media reception, media sociology, production ecology, and popular serial culture. She is the author of the book *Agency and Media Reception. Experiencing Video Games, Film, and Television* (2014) and editor of *Fernsehen: Europäische Perspektiven* (2014, with Elizabeth Prommer) and *Transnationale Serienkultur* (2013, with Lothar Mikos and Rainer Winter).

**Joris van Eijnatten** is a Cultural Historian at Utrecht University, the Netherlands. He works on various interrelated fields, including the history of ideas, religion, media and communication. His research involves source material ranging from the eighteenth century to the present. Joris van Eijnatten is an editor of the open-access journal *HCM*, the *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity*. His current project involves digital humanities research into popular conceptions of Europe and modernity in twentieth-century newspapers.

**Matilde Eiroa** has a PhD in Contemporary History and is Associate Professor at Carlos III University, Madrid. Her research focuses on twentieth-century Spanish history, including women’s history. In 2013 her book *Isabel de Palencia. Diplomacia, periodismo y militancia al servicio de la República* won the twenty-third Victoria Kent Research Award.

**Merja Ellefson** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Culture and Media Studies, Umeå University, Sweden. Her research interests include comparative communication and press history with a focus on countries around the Baltic Sea; mediated memories; nationalism and construction of ethnic majorities and minorities; minority media; media, ethnicity, gender and social class.

**Gabriele Falböck** is a Lecturer at the University of Vienna and at the University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten. Her research interests are migration and ethno media, historical analysis of media for children and their usage, mediated memory and identities, the phenomenon of kitsch, cult, and nostalgia. She is head of the Working Committee for Historical Communication Research (AHK), and editor of the journal *Medien&Zeit*.

**Alicia Ferrández Ferrer** is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Alicante (Spain) who received her PhD in Social Anthropology in 2014 and her MA in Migration and Intercultural Relations in 2006. Her research interests are migration and communication in global cities, especially related to migrants' political and civil rights. She has carried out fieldwork in Spain and the United Kingdom.

**Andreas Fickers** is Professor of Contemporary and Digital History at Luxembourg University. His research interests are transnational media history, European history of technology, and digital history. He is currently directing the Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C2DH) and head of a Doctoral Training Unit on digital history and hermeneutics.

**Anke Fiedler** is a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Information and Communication of the University of Brussels (ULB). In 2012, she completed her doctorate in Communication Science at the University of Munich with a dissertation on media control in the GDR. In the winter term 2015/2016, she was a Visiting Professor at the University of Berlin.

**Roderick Flynn** is an Associate Professor at the School of Communications, Dublin City University where he chairs the MA in Film and Television Studies. He has written extensively on Irish media policy and more broadly on questions relating to the regulation of media ownership. He is the co-author (with John Horgan) of *Irish Media History* (Four Courts Press 2017) and of *The Historical Dictionary of Irish Cinema* (Scarecrow 2018) with co-authors Tony Tracy and Pat Brereton.

**Rosa Franquet** is Professor of Communication, Project Manager of GRISS (Image, Sound and Synthesis Research Group) and Academic Coordinator of doctoral studies in Audiovisual Communication and Advertising at the at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (2010–2017). She is also Vice-president of the Asociación Española de Investigadores de la Comunicación (AE-IC). She has been a researcher and visiting professor at various universities such as the University of California at Berkeley, University of London (Goldsmiths), and University of Melbourne (Australia).

**Juan Antonio García Galindo** holds a PhD in Contemporary History. He is Professor in Journalism and Vice-Rector of Institutional Policy at the University of Málaga. His work focuses on the history of journalism and communication in the twentieth century. He was the Dean of the Faculty of Communication Science of the University of Málaga and President of the Spanish Association of Communication Historians (AHC).

**Heike Graf** is Associate Professor at the Department of Media- and Communication Studies at Soderton University, Sweden. Her research interests include migration studies, especially ethnic diversity and diversity management in media organizations, and lately media use by refugees in the new country with fieldwork in Sweden and Germany.

**Jaume Guillaumet** is a Professor at Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona, and coordinator of the Research Group in Journalism (GRP by its initials in Catalan). He conducts research projects in the fields of history of the press in the Catalan language, and journalism in political transitions. His main published works are *La premsa comarcal* (1983), *Prensa, franquisme i autonomia* (1996), *Història del periodisme* (2003), *Els orígens de la premsa a Catalunya, 1641–1833* (2003) and *L'arrencada del periodisme liberal, 1833–1874* (2010).

**Damian Guzek** is an Assistant Professor at the Journalism Unit of the Institute of Political Science and Journalism within the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Silesia in Katowice. He is the YECREA Representative in the Temporary Working Group on Media and Religion of the European Communication Research and Education Association. His research interests are focused on media concentration as well as media and religion.

**Mark Hampton** is Associate Professor at Lingnan University. He is the author of *Visions of the Press in Britain, 1850–1950* (2004) and *Hong Kong and British Culture, 1945–1997* (2016), and co-editor of *Anglo-American Media Interactions, 1850–2000* (2007) and *The Cultural Construction of the British World* (2016). Since 2005, he has been a co-editor of the journal *Media History*. He is general editor of the forthcoming six-volume *Cultural History of Media* in the Bloomsbury “Cultural histories” series.

**Michael Harnischmacher** is an Assistant Professor/Lecturer at the Centre for Media and Communication at the University of Passau, Germany, where he teaches communications and practical journalism. He has received his PhD in 2010 for a study comparing journalism education in Germany and the United States.

**Emmanuel Heretakis** is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies at the Kapodistrian University of Athens. He is a mathematician, with experience in the advertising business for almost two decades. He has published more than 10 books and around 200 articles on the mass media.

**Matthew Hibberd** is Director of the Institute of Media and Journalism (IMeG) and Masters in Media Management at the Università Svizzera Italiana, Lugano, Switzerland. He is an Honorary Professor at De Montfort University, Leicester, United Kingdom. He was Professor of Communications and Head of the Communications, Media and Culture Division, University of Stirling, from 2011 to 2016. He is a Fellow of the UK-based College of Teachers (FCollT) and the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA).

**Christoph Hilgert** is a Research Associate in the Department of History at LMU Munich (Germany), where he manages the publications and public relations of the Graduate School for East and Southeast European Studies. He is a steering committee member of the “Entangled Media Histories (EMHIS)” network. His research interests are transnational radio history, twentieth-century youth culture and media, journalism history, and the field of public history.

**Svennik Høyer** was a Professor, and later Professor Emeritus at the Department of Media and Communication at the University of Oslo. After making his contribution to this book and a very long and distinguished career as a scholar of journalism and media history, Professor Høyer died on 8 January 2017.

**Jochen Hung** is an Assistant Professor at Utrecht University, focusing on the cultural history of interwar Germany. He has co-edited *Beyond Glitter and Doom. The Contingency of the Weimar Republic* (2012) and *The Material Culture of Politics* (2018). His study on the history of the newspaper *Tempo* and the change of its conceptions of modernity, *A Moderate Modernity. The Newspaper Tempo and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic, 1928–1933* is forthcoming with University of Michigan Press.

**Yeşim Kaptan** is an Assistant Professor at Kent State University. She received her PhD in Communication and Culture and Folklore (double major) from Indiana University, Bloomington. Her research interests are transnational media, global communication, culture industries, identity politics, and consumer culture. She has published research in the *International Journal of Communication*, the *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *The Global Media Journal*, and various English and Turkish media journals.

**Susanne Kinnebrock** is Professor of Public Communication at the University of Augsburg, Germany. Her main research interests are Central European media and communication history of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, gender media studies, and narrative journalism.

**Beata Klimkiewicz** is an Associate Professor in the Institute of Journalism, Media, and Social Communication at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland. Her research interests include media and communication policy, media system change in Central and Eastern Europe, and media pluralism and diversity.

**Olga Kolokytha**, PhD, is an Assistant Professor and Postdoctoral Researcher with the Media Governance and Media Industries Research Laboratory, at the Department of Communication of the University of Vienna. Her research interests lie in the area of communication and the creative industries and include cultural institutions, cultural policy and politics, creative industries in times of crisis, arts and culture as a political instrument, and cultural “Eurosphering.”

**Barbara Köpplová** is an Associate Professor, media historian, and member of the departments of Media Studies at the Charles University and the Metropolitan University in Prague. She lectures on comparative media history and her research activities are focused on the history of Czech and German journalism and journalists in Bohemia in the twentieth century. She is an author of numerous articles and books on media history. In 1990s and early 2000s, she was a member of the Council of Czech Public Radio.

**Olga Kruglikova** is an Associate Professor of the Department of the History of Journalism at St. Petersburg State University. She has researched and lectured on the history of Russian journalism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and on the history of the Russian conservative press. One of her key publications is *Journalism and Social Activities of Mikhail Katkov: Publicist and Power* (Saarbrücken: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2011).

**Risto Kunelius** is Professor of Journalism at the Faculty of Communication Sciences, University of Tampere, Finland. His work has focused on journalism and political power, professionalism and the public sphere as well as on coverage of global issues (climate

change, surveillance, and free speech). Recent books include *Media and Global Climate Knowledge: Journalism and the IPCC* (Palgrave, 2017) and on surveillance and journalism *Journalism and the NSA Revelations: Privacy, Security, and the Press* (Reuters Institute/I.B.Tauris, 2017).

**Helena Lima** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Journalism and Communication Studies, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Porto. She is director of the master's course in Communication Sciences, and has served as advisor to doctoral dissertations in the fields of journalism and political communication. Her PhD was on the history of Porto newspapers. Her main research interests and publishing areas are journalism, media history, and political communication.

**Claire McCallum** is a Lecturer in Twentieth-Century Russian History at the University of Exeter, United Kingdom. Her current research focuses on the representation of idealized masculinity in visual culture in the two decades following the end of World War II.

**Patrick Merziger** is an Assistant Professor of Communication and Media History at the University of Leipzig, Germany. His research interests focus on media history, the history of popular culture, and humanitarianism in the twentieth century.

**Monika Metykova** works as Senior Lecturer in Media Communications and Journalism Studies at the University of Sussex, United Kingdom. Her research focuses on media/journalism and democracy, migration, and cosmopolitanism as well as European media spaces and policy. Recently she co-edited the monograph *Living in the Digital Age: Self-Presentation, Networking, Playing and Participating in Politics* (published by Masaryk University) and her book *Diversity and the Media* was published by Palgrave in 2016.

**Michael Meyen** is Professor of Communication at the University of Munich. His research interests include media freedom, media systems, media discourses, the history of media and communication and the history of communication research.

**Agnieszka Morriss** completed her PhD thesis on the Polish Service of the BBC during World War II in the Journalism Department at City University in 2016. She currently works at CIEE Global Institute in London where she teaches International Journalism. Her publications include: "The BBC Polish Service during the Second World War," in Nelson Ribeiro and Stephanie Seul (eds.), *Revisiting Transnational Broadcasting: The BBC's Foreign-language Services during the Second World War* (Routledge, 2016), and "Monitoring of the Polish Broadcasting Radio Station 'Blyskawica' during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944," Imperial War Museum website (2016).

**Dana Mustata** is an Assistant Professor in Television and Media Studies at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. Her research focuses on the history of Romanian television, television histories under communism, and material cultures of television in Cold War contexts. She is co-founder of the European (Post)Socialist Television History Network.

**Sian Nicholas** is Reader in Modern British History at Aberystwyth University, and co-founder and co-Director of the Aberystwyth Centre for Media History. She is the author of *The Echo of War: Home Front Propaganda and the Wartime BBC* (1996), and has published widely on wartime broadcasting, war reporting, and media culture and national identity.

**Kaarle Nordenstreng** is Professor Emeritus of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Tampere. His research has covered international communication,

media ethics, and communication theory. Among his recent books are *Communication Theories in a Multicultural World* (co-edited with Christians, 2014) and *A History of the International Movement of Journalists: Professionalism Versus Politics* (with Björk et al. 2016).

**Christian Oggolder** is Senior Scientist at the Institute for Comparative Media and Communication Studies of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt (AAU). His research focuses on media history, societal challenges, and the role of the media, and digital culture.

**Peppino Ortoleva** is Full Professor of Media History and Theory at the University of Turin. He has been active for more than 40 years as a scholar, critic, and curator, at the crossroads of history, media studies, TV and radio authoring, museums and exhibitions. He has published numerous books and more than 200 scholarly articles on the history of the Italian media system, on the youth movements of the 1960s, on private television in Italy and its cultural and political role, and on cinema and history. He has curated many exhibitions and he is now a curator, at the city museum, Catania, Sicily.

**Nils E. Øy**, (1946) is currently an Associate Professor II at Volda University College. He was the former editor-in-chief of two Norwegian dailies, and the former head of the Institute for Journalism, Fredrikstad, and head of the Norwegian Press Association, as well as the Secretary General for the Norwegian Association of Editors (1996–2013). He is member of several government commissions on open access to official meetings and documents.

**Walery Pisarek**, Dr.h.c.mult, was a well-respected linguist and communication researcher who died in 2017 whilst this book was being prepared. He was an Emeritus Professor of the Jagiellonian University and a Professor at the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow. He was also a long time director of the Press Research Centre in Krakow (1970–2000) and vice-president of the International Association for Mass Communication Research (IAMCR) (1976–1988).

**Paschal Preston** is Professor Emeritus in School of Communication, Dublin City University. He is the author or editor of six books and more than 50 journal articles and book chapters. He is founding Director of the Communication, Technology, Culture (COMTEC) research unit which had a 25-year record of transnational research, including 20 multi-country research projects. He has undertaken consultancy for many public sector organizations and acted as advisor/evaluator to several national research funding bodies.

**Elizabeth Prommer** is Professor of Communication Science and Media Studies, and Director of the Institute for Media Research at the University of Rostock. Her research focuses on the “moving picture” on all possible media platforms (cinema, TV, internet, mobile media and new forms in the future) and the changing audiences in converging media environments. Recent books include *Gender – Medien – Screens* (UVK Konstanz, 2015) and *European Perspectives on Television, Fernsehen: Europäische Perspektiven* (UVK Konstanz, 2014).

**Nelson Ribeiro** is Associate Professor in Communication Studies at Universidade Católica Portuguesa in Lisbon where he is the Dean of the School of Human Sciences. His main research interests are political economy of the media and communication history, focusing on transnational communication and on the usage of the media as

instruments of propaganda and public diplomacy. He is a former Chair (2016–2018) of the Communication History Section at the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA).

**Giuseppe Richeri** is Professor Emeritus at Lugano University (Switzerland) where he has been Director of the Media and Journalism Institute (2000–2014) and Dean of the Communication Sciences Faculty (2004–2008). Since 2012 he has been a Visiting Professor at the Communication University of China in Beijing (China) where he is a PhD supervisor. He has been an advisor for the Italian Communication Authority, UNESCO, the European Council, the European Union, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and is a member of UNESCO Chair “Humanisme Numerique” at Université Paris 8.

**Ramón Salaverría** is Associate Dean of Research at the School of Communication, University of Navarra, Spain. He was Chair of the Journalism Studies Section of ECREA during 2010–2012. His research focuses on media convergence, online news storytelling, and digital journalism trends. He has published many research papers, monographs, and book chapters on these topics. His most recent edited book is *Ciberperiodismo en Iberoamérica* (*Cyberjournalism in Iberian America*) (2016), a history of online journalism in the 22 countries of that region.

**Katharine Sarikakis**, PhD, holds the Chair of Media Governance, Media Organization, and Media Industries at the Department of Communication, University of Vienna, and, since 2016, the Jean Monnet Chair in European Media Governance and Integration. She is the Chair of the Communication Law and Policy Division of the International Communication Association and the founding editor of the *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*. She has published widely on European and global media and cultural policy issues.

**Anne Schmidt** is a research scholar at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin. Between 2002 and 2008 she worked as an exhibition curator in Germany and Switzerland. Her research interests include cultural and economic history, history of emotions, history of knowledge and media and communication studies. She is currently working on a book that traces processes of subjectification in German advertising culture.

**Christian Schwarzenegger** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Media, Knowledge of Communication at the University of Augsburg, Germany. His research interests include mediatization and media change, communication and memory, communication history, as well as qualitative methods of communication research. He is Vice-chair of the Communication History Section in the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA) and the Communication History Division of the German Communication Association (DGPK).

**Eugenia Siapera** is Professor and Head of the School of Information and Communication Studies, University College Dublin, Ireland. Her research interests are social media, journalism, political theory, multiculturalism, cultural diversity, and media. The second edition of her book *Understanding New Media* was published by Sage in 2018.

**Balázs Sipos** is Associate Professor of History at Loránd Eötvös University (Budapest). His research interests focus on media history, women’s history and new political history. He authored four monographs, the most recent being *Modern, Graduate Women in the Horthy Era* (with a co-author, 2017).

**Kristin Skoog** is a Senior Lecturer in Media History in the Faculty of Media and Communication at Bournemouth University (UK) and a steering committee member of the “Entangled Media Histories (EMHIS)” network. She is interested in the social and cultural history of broadcasting and is currently researching radio and reconstruction in post-war Britain, and women’s radio and women broadcasters in Britain and Europe.

**Sergio Splendore** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Milan (Italy). His research centers on media sociology with a deep interest in journalism studies and media production. He has authored or co-authored papers in these areas for *Journalism*, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, *New Media & Society*, *Media, Culture and Society*, *Journalism Practice*, and *Sociology Compass*.

**Hans-Ulrich Wagner** is a Senior Researcher at the Hans Bredow Institute for Media Research and Director of the Research Centre for Media History (Forschungsstelle Mediengeschichte) in Hamburg. He is principal researcher in several research projects and co-founder of the research network “Entangled Media Histories (EMHIS)” and the collaborative project Transnational Media Histories, a joint program with the Centre for Media History at Macquarie University. His publications deal with the various issues of mediated public communication in the past, the main focus being the investigation of long-term media effects, and especially of mediated memory-building.

**Anne-Katrin Weber** is a Lecturer at the Department for Film History and Aesthetics at the University of Lausanne. Her research focuses on the history of early television and media archaeology. She is the editor of *La télévision du téléphonoscope à YouTube*, *La télévision du téléphonoscope à YouTube: pour une archéologie de l’audiovision*, Lausanne: Antipodes, coll. Médias et histoire, 2009). She is also editor of an issue of *View. Journal of European Television History and Culture*, entitled “Archaeologies of Tele-Visions and -Realities” (with Andreas Fickers, 2015).

**Lennart Weibull**, holds PhD in Political Science and is Senior Professor at the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication and at the SOM Institute, University of Gothenburg. He has carried out research and published in areas such as media structure, the history of the newspaper, radio and television, media ethics and media use. He is co-founder of the national SOM-surveys, which study public opinion and media use in Sweden since 1986.

**Jürgen Wilke** is Professor Emeritus of Communication Research at the Institut für Publizistik, Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz (Germany). He has published numerous books and articles, particularly on media history and media structure, news selection and news agencies, international communication, and political communication. He was appointed to a personal chair at the Lomonossov University (Moscow) in 2004, and has been a corresponding member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna since 2005.

**Marina Yanglyaeva** teaches at the Faculty of Journalism, Lomonosov Moscow State University and is Head of the Centre for Media and Communication Studies in Finland and Scandinavia. Her research interests include media and political communication, political mediametry, media geography, mass media and communication in northern Europe, and image studies.



**Yulia Yurtaeva-Martens** is a Research Fellow at Film University “Konrad Wolf,” Babelsberg. Her research focuses on (East-)European communication history during the Cold War, and media archives. Her recent publications include *Song Contests in Europe during the Cold War* (with Lothar Mikos), *New Patterns in Global Television Formats* (Intellect, Chicago 2016), and “Jetzt festivalt auch die Television – Television Festivals of the 1960s,” in Moine and Kötzing (eds.), *Cultural Transfer and Political Conflicts. Film Festivals in the Cold War*, edited by Caroline Moine and Andreas Kötzing (V&R unipress, 2017).



# Preface

It takes time, an international array of scholars and, last but not least, a creative vision to compile a handbook on Europe's Communication History. The plan for this Handbook developed shortly after the foundation of the Communication History Section within the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA) in 2009. And right from the beginning, it was the founding chair of the ECREA Communication History Section, Klaus Arnold, who pushed forward the Handbook as the section's first joint project. The Handbook was driven by a firm belief in the value and benefits of a common European communication history despite Europe's diversity. Consequently, significant themes of common interest were identified and diverse teams worked together to author the chapters which follow in this Handbook. In the end, almost 80 authors from the fields of communication, history, media and journalism studies volunteered and contributed to its production. The resulting text delivers on the original vision and aim: to illuminate important moments and aspects in European communication history from different national and cultural perspectives.

The planning and authoring work on the Handbook took almost seven years as the original starting point can be dated back to a workshop in Dublin in September 2011. Thus, the editors regard the successful outcome and final completion of this major collaborative effort with great pleasure. At the same time, however, our hearts are saddened because three of our contributors will not be able to see the results of their efforts: Sverre Høyer (1931–2017), the Norwegian-born and highly-regarded international expert on political communication, press history, and journalism, passed away shortly after completing his contribution; so too did Walery Pisarek (1931–2017), a pioneer and mentor of media studies in Poland who has been fondly remembered for his significant academic achievements in media research in Poland and other countries.

Third, we note and mourn the death of Klaus Arnold (1968–2017), the original initiator and highly active editor of this Handbook until he became seriously ill. Being aware of his fatal illness and imminent death, Klaus made very brave and diligent plans to smooth the hand over of relevant roles and tasks to his two fellow editors. Indeed, Klaus came to regard the Handbook as his academic and professional legacy. The two remaining editors readily concur that this pioneering Handbook be treated as an important part

of Klaus's legacy, especially with respect to the community of those scholars who include a historical perspective as central to their analyses of communication in Europe. The remaining editors are confident that the Handbook will make a significant contribution toward internationalizing communication history.

We extend a big "thank you" to all our contributors for their crucial roles in furthering the exciting project of a distinctive "European" Communication History Handbook. And, last but not least, our special thanks go to Mandy Tröger for her truly excellent work in sub-editing, and generally assisting the editors, in finalizing the text of all the chapters which follow.

Susanne Kinnebrock and Paschal Preston,  
October 2018

# Introduction

## *European Communication History: A Challenging if Timely Project*

Paschal Preston, Klaus Arnold, and Susanne  
Kinnebrock

### **A Re-Turn to the History of Mediated Communication?**

Historical approaches to communication and media matters have become quite fashionable as we proceed through the second decade of the twenty-first century. Indeed, we are currently witnessing a surprising “turn,” or rather re-turn, to historical analyses after a long phase of neglect within the mainstream of academic studies of communication and media.

There has long been an interest in historical approaches and understandings of mediated communication among members of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), the oldest and most genuinely international professional association in this field. A similar interest has rapidly grown within the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA), the much younger association for communication scholars in Europe.

But recent years have also witnessed a dynamic new interest group focused on historical themes and issues within the largely USA-based International Communication Association (ICA) – a body previously marked by tendencies toward social scientific and somewhat a-historical approaches to research. In sum, we can point to a real surge and intensification of interest in historical aspects of mediated communication in more recent years.

Of course, both history and European perspectives had been central to many of the pioneering attempts to theorize and make sense of the rise of the distinctly “modern” social, economic, and political transformations in the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth centuries. For example, David Hume’s (1741) political essays, including that on “The Liberty of The Press,” were animated by a historical and distinctly European imaginary – in keeping with the fact that a substantial share of his royalty earnings were derived from readers based on the continent. At the same time, we observe that Hume’s accounts of the distinctive forms and role of political “liberties,” press freedom and

public opinion in different societies prove to be no less ethno-centric and celebratory of the British model than many later efforts at comparative communication research:

*Nothing is more apt to surprise a foreigner, than the extreme liberty, which we enjoy in this country, of communicating whatever we please to the public, and of openly censuring every measure, entered into by the king or his ministers [...]. As this liberty is not indulged in any other government, either republican or monarchical; in Holland and Venice, more than in France or Spain; it may very naturally give occasion to the question, How it happens that Great Britain alone enjoys this privilege? [...] [In Britain] the republican part of government prevails, although with a great mixture of monarchy, it is obliged to maintain a watchful jealousy over the magistrates, to remove all discretionary powers, and to secure everyone's life and fortune by general and inflexible laws. [...] There is as much liberty, and even perhaps, licentiousness in Britain, as there were formerly slavery and tyranny in Rome (David Hume, 1994[1741] "On the Liberty of the Press," p. 1).*

In keeping with the rather restricted notions of democracy prevailing among his readers in the "polite society" of Europe during his own lifetime, Hume was wary of any absolute principle of a free press. Indeed, in the same essay, he declared that "the unbounded liberty of the press" comprised a potential threat, indeed "one of the evils" facing precisely "those mixt forms of government" which combined both republican and more traditional, monarchical elements – the blend which he favored so much along with most of his readers in the merchant, manufacturing, professional, and other middle-class elites of western and northern Europe in the period prior to the French Revolution. Yet rather similar historical and European orientations can be found in several subsequent nineteenth-century studies engaging with cross-national and comparative analyses of the evolving forms and practices of "democracy," "public opinion" and the press or (print) media. Among those, we may briefly consider the example of Sir Thomas Erskine May's (1878) two-volume work on *Democracy in Europe – A History*. In typical fashion, Sir Thomas Erskine May underlines how the scientific discoveries and technological innovations and inventions of late nineteenth-century Europe should be seen as closely linked to the rise of distinctly "modern" and more liberal political institutions, including the (limited) forms of political democracy and "public opinion" then prevailing.

Indeed, May's (1878) multi-country study also declared that no prior period of European history can be compared to the last half century, "for scientific discoveries and inventions, for bold speculations in philosophy, for historical research, and original thought"; he further argued that most of Europe had by then "attained that degree of advancement, that a large measure of political freedom" had become essential to its well-being (May's 1878, pp. lii and liv). May's work sets out to survey and map the historical development of tendencies and trends toward "democracy" and related issues of public opinion and the role of the press across much of Europe. Much like Hume more than a century before, May's (1878) survey of the European scene emphasized the virtues of gradual political change, as he clearly favored the "re-casting" rather than abolition of old medieval institutions. Indeed, May (1878, p. lvii) cites Comte to the effect that "the English aristocracy is ablest patriciate the world has seen since the Roman Senate."

A marked orientation toward historical perspectives had been central to several subsequent pioneering attempts to systemically theorize and make sense of the rise of truly mass media from the end of the nineteenth century and the diffusion of the first multimedia wave in the early decades of the twentieth century (e.g. as noted in prior surveys by Hardt 1992, 2001; Williams 1965, 1983). For example, Karl Bücher (1901), an institutional economist and one of the founding fathers of media and journalism studies,

as well as the sociologist Robert E. Park (1923) both analyzed the historical tendencies of newspapers to shift from organs of enlightenment and political debates oriented toward the public to become more like commodities and vehicles for the delivery of advertising during the era of the second industrial revolution, the decades immediately before and after 1900.

Furthermore, Max Weber's plan for a major study about the new mass press, which he presented at the founding congress of German Sociological Society 1910, included a historical diachronic perspective. For example, he proposed to explore how the role of newspapers had developed and changed over the previous few decades (Weber 1924). Historical dimensions also formed an essential part in Walter Benjamin's (1936) reflections about the fundamental changes new media like photography and film brought to art and its reception. Indeed a historical reflection on the role of the media with respect to public opinion, political institutions and military affairs formed a core component of the agenda addressed in Harold Lasswell's seminal text, first published in 1927 (Lasswell 1927).

However, as the new field of "communication studies" became institutionalized in USA-based universities during the early decades after the Second World War, it lost many of its prior connections with history. As the new field sought to establish itself within USA university settings, most of the influential figures tended to privilege positivistic methodologies and present-time orientations. This reflected the wider cultural and political currents evident in the USA at the same time. Indeed this turn from history was defined in the mid-1950s as a "postmodern" bias by one former junior associate of Paul Lazarsfeld, the sociologist C. Wright Mills (Preston 2001).

This conception of communication studies had a strong influence on scholars in European countries. In Germany, for example, the once influential, if not predominant, historical research tradition became rather marginal in the 1960s and 1970s (Löblich 2010). Notably the most influential historically based communication theory published in these years was not written by a communication scholar but by a sociologist: Jürgen Habermas (1992[1962]) described the bourgeois public sphere in the late Enlightenment period as some kind of ideal type, where emancipated citizens discussed political affairs in an autonomous arena free from economic interests and government influences. Habermas constructed this ideal type to show how the public sphere decayed since the late nineteenth century: an emerging mass culture was portrayed as being a-political and concentrated on satisfying entertainment needs. The public sphere degenerated in his view to an arena dominated by individual and partial interests which impedes consensus decisions based on rational argument.

Indeed, accelerated processes of media change as well as the increasingly pervasive role of mediated communication focused the interest of communication and media scholars on current phenomena such as successive new media technologies or the wave of commercialization in the 1980s/1990s. But it simultaneously raised some attention to historical modes of explanation. This is especially true for the last two decades, when historical perspectives on mediated communication once again gained relevance in communication studies.

This (re-)turn to history seems to have been stimulated by efforts to make sense of the most direct and fundamental changes in media landscapes over recent decades, i.e. the expanding array of "new" digital media and technologies and their deeper cultural and social implications. For example, we observe that in the field of cultural studies some of the most influential texts dealing with new media theories and practices place a clear emphasis on the importance of historical perspectives. In brief, such texts recognize that

if teachers and students are to properly grasp and engage with the role, significance, or specificities of new digital media developments, then they have to know something about the prior history of mediated communication and its complex interplays with social and cultural change (e.g. Chun and Keenan 2006; Lister et al. 2003; Manovich 2001).

Another reason for the current growth of interest in historical perspectives relates to the international growth, spread, and diversification of communication and media studies. There is a wider recognition that many of the prevailing theories tend to reflect specific historical settings and socio-cultural experiences which ill-match those of scholars situated outside the core Western (and especially, Anglophone) cultural, political, and historical contexts. There is a growing awareness of the need for much more cross-national, comparative, and international histories of mediated communication to better identify, map and understand the multiple patterns and variations across differing cultural or political and socio-economic settings. Indeed, this may be seen as an essential and preliminary step if communication theories and concepts are to be refined in ways that improve their salience – and any claims to “European” or even “universal” reach in the twenty-first century.

Furthermore, this Handbook has been (reflexively) informed by recent internationalization tendencies in the media and communication studies field, including calls to construct more cosmopolitan theories and orientations (Curran 2002, pp. 180–183). In this respect, the Handbook resonates with the field’s gradual (if still early-stage) evolution – from an initial orientation toward British and north American historical experience toward one which embraces the much greater diversity of (hi-)stories from other geo-cultural and socio-economic settings as well as the differing political regions of Europe and the wider world.

Further reasons for the growing interest in communication history include the sheer impact of the ever-increasing role and influence of mediated communication in most areas of political, socio-economic as well as cultural affairs. The deepening and still-evolving “mediatization of everything,” including the growing ubiquity of media devices and systems as factors (or actants), are now more visible and pervasive features of late-modern social interactions and everyday life. These developments pose questions of how we should now consider “communication @ the centre” of every major area of social, political, and cultural life (to quote the theme of the ICA conference in 2011). They also serve to raise interest in questions of how our contemporary “ubiquitous and ambient” media relate to the role and operations of prior generations of media.

## **Changing Times-Spaces in Europe – Historical Takes or (Re-)Turns**

The late Enlightenment period was informed and marked by intensified exchanges between the leading intellectuals across Europe. With respect to the leading intellectuals, merchants, and other elites, we may note semblances of a shared cultural and political public sphere from the eighteenth century, especially in the decades leading up to the French Revolution. Indeed, by then, the different nations and peoples were made aware of significant developments and historical moments unfolding in other parts of Europe. At first, this may have been enabled by symbolism and rituals associated inter-marriage between the European royal families and of course of wars. But by the nineteenth century, the developing links and exchanges were further amplified as a result of more dense settlement and population patterns, the expansion of trade, finance, and other economic exchanges and novel political arrangements such as the Concert of Europe.



It is now more than a century since the French sociologist, Durkheim, observed a tendency for the formation of common identities in Europe arising from increasingly common experiences of working and living conditions associated with the extensive forms of industrialization, urbanization, divisions of labor, and secularization associated with the onward march of modern capitalism. Durkheim's ideas closely resonate with unfolding concepts and imaginaries of change in the spatial scales of political and economic interdependencies (or in the social divisions of labor and interrelations) proposed more than a century ago by other European social and political theorists such as Tönnies (2001[1887]) and Hobson (2005[1902]). Taking account of more popular ideas and forms of knowledge, we may note that people have long had some awareness of key developments in other European countries (or at least more than the happenings in more distant continents or world regions). In this sense, European (communication) history can be seen as much more intensively entangled and transnational than global (communication) history. And so, it is timely and relevant to make efforts at writing European communication history – indeed there is a lot to be analyzed and discovered in terms of communication history.

It is now almost three decades since the Wall dividing East and West Berlin was pulled down and the system of state socialism prevailing in much of Eastern and Central Europe collapsed. These and related events promoted a new wave of optimism in the late 1980s, not merely about the future unfolding of an increasingly united and integrated world-region within Europe. The political initiative to unify Germany was paralleled by moves within the sub-region now known as the European Union to deepen the integration of economic relations by creating a much-heralded “single market” for services industries (the largest part of most modern economies) by 1992.

The new political and regulatory regimes supporting this push for a “single market” also extended to the communication, media, and cultural services sectors, as exemplified by new EU-wide governance regime favoring “trans-frontier broadcasting” as well as enhanced roles for commercial television services (Papathanassopoulos and Negrine 2011, pp. 63–83). Nevertheless, despite such intensified modes of economic, political, and regulatory integration within the EU region, the discourses and journalistic practices in the mediated communication sector remain rooted in banal nationalism and are widely recognized as contributing to the much-discussed “democratic deficit” with respect to the structures and processes of the EU project (see below).

The end of the Cold War and the intensified integration of Europe also prompted much optimistic talk about the universal and evolutionary superiority of the liberal capitalist system, the intensified globalization of markets and the extended sway of the liberal political system of electoral democracy. For the majority of the populations in many of the less developed countries, including some in Europe, the practical manifestation of such ideals were the one-size-fits-all dogmas of the so-called Washington Consensus and the structural adjustment policies implemented by bodies such as IMF, World Bank, and what became the WTO. The prevailing moves and moods (or structure of feelings) of the political and economic elites were perhaps best symbolized and given concentrated expression in the much-cited proclamation of “the end of history” (Fukuyama 1998).

During the 1990s, academic theorists also imagined and advanced some distinctively optimistic, if not entirely new ideas about shifts and changes in forms, co-ordinates and meanings of time and space parameters. In some cases, these tendencies were often amplified by techno-centric readings of the rapid rise and diffusion of the Internet/World Wide Web as a radically novel communication network, frequently conceptualized (described and prescribed) as inherently “global” in its form, scope and reach (Giddens et al. 2006; Preston 2001; Siapera 2011).

Ideas and arguments typically associated with concepts such as globalization and (diminishing) “space-time-distanciation” (e.g. Giddens 2002) certainly privileged space over time. But the analysis of many such proponents was marked by a rather impoverished historical understanding of earlier phases and forms of more or less intensified political and economic integration and exchanges, at both European and world levels. Furthermore, as Harvey and other critics have argued, many also tended to veil the specifically neo-liberal political (economic) forms and content of the prevailing modes of spatial integration that mark and stamp the contemporary processes of “globalization” (Crouch 2011; Harvey 2005).

Nevertheless, from the late 1980s, we also observe an expansion of intellectual efforts to imagine and construct more cosmopolitan theories or complementary frames of political thinking, concern, and social analysis which transcend the national. Some are motivated by political ideals and socio-cultural visions to devise new identities and discourses which transcend the national and better align with the deepening forms of economic and social integration, and/or environmental interdependencies unfolding across Europe and indeed, the world. They aimed to reach beyond the comfort zones of established research or unthinking nationalism that have operated as “crucial containers” in shaping so much social science and humanities work, not to mention everyday politics and journalistic discourses, since the rise of “mass media” in the nineteenth century (e.g. Beck and Grande 2007; Habermas 2001, 2003).

In the contemporary setting of Europe in the second decade of the twenty-first century, however, there are much fewer grounds for confident optimism about the dynamism and universal virtues of the neo-liberal capitalist order or about the ever-onward deepening of economic and political integration at the European and world scales. For one thing, the political-economic setting in much of Europe over the past decade has been strongly marked by fall-out from the deepest and most sustained financial crisis and economic depression since the 1930s (Crouch 2011). The subsequent economic crisis and neo-liberal austerity regimes led to levels of unemployment, declining economic activity, and economic insecurities not seen in quite a few European countries since the 1930s and the ensuing period surrounding World War II. It is also manifest in a feeble banking system and financial sectors in many European countries that have only survived thanks to huge inputs of public sector funding.

The economic and financial policy challenges of post-crisis years (especially 2010–2014 period) witnessed several crucial threats to the viability and sustainability of the decades-old project of increasing EU integration, together with its flagship, the euro currency and the Eurozone sub-region. Indeed, the project of increasing EU integration was called into question and brought to the edge of collapse in ways that would have been unimaginable, say 50 or 25 or even 10 years previously.

The latter years of the post-crisis decade witnessed gradual but distinct shifts from financial and economic-policy focused challenges toward more political and culturally (identity) based threats to the deepening integration across the European Union region which has been unfolding since the end of World War II. Indeed, the past five years have seen a significant rise in widespread manifestations of new and “populist” forms of right-leaning nationalism, xenophobia, and racism in many European countries – of a sort and on a scale that has resonated with the growth of fascism and protectionism in the 1930s. This contemporary right-leaning nationalism, xenophobia, and racism is often animated by an explicit intent to reject and undermine the now 60-year-old project of deepening integration across the European Union region.

In this contemporary socio-economic and political setting, it is perhaps not surprising to find a much-diminished salience of assertions concerning the onward march of globalization and (especially of) “the end of history” (Fukuyama 1998) – at least compared to a quarter century ago. There is now much less confidence in the universality or sustainability of the capitalist market and the hegemonic neo-liberal regulatory regime compared to the situation in the 1980s or 1990s. On the other hand, new transnational anti-capitalist movements such as Occupy Wall Street or Attac emerged and drew support from mass protests, rather like those, such as Syriza and Podemos, which later manifested in Southern Europe during the 2010–2015 period. Such ground-up developments seemed to clearly signal, in certain subaltern European public spheres at least, that a (re) turn to thinking and debating the meaning of “Europe” along the dimension of time and history was gaining in importance once more. Seemingly new concepts and ideas such as “another Europe is possible” do not merely seek to maintain, but aim to radically reform the inherited path of deeper economic, financial, and political integration within the EU region. They also seek to reach back, appropriate, and re-mobilize key aspects of the strongly European and internationalist spirit that animated the two most significant social movements of the late nineteenth century: the labor movement (with its trade union and socialist political currents) and the women’s liberation and rights movement (“first wave” modern feminism).

Thus, we observe amidst the past decade of a “great western” economic crisis, a marked turn toward history in the search for the sources and solutions to the pressing practical political, economic, and financial problems in contemporary Europe. It appears that, in many respects, the broader political-economic settings in Europe today are once again prompting and favoring a (re-)turn toward historical analysis.

## **Only Dusty Old Papers or New Insights? Media History and the Internet Age**

Not unlike in the larger economical-political realm we observed in the last decades a still enduring crisis of mass media and journalism. As new media, mainly the internet/World Wide Web, began to spread all over the world in the 1990s, they were greeted by certain high-profile if techno-centric theorists such as Toffler (1983), Toffler and Toffler (1995) and Negroponte (1995) who painted a very optimistic and partly naïve picture. In brief, they proclaimed that the new ICTs would introduce a fundamentally new economic and social system, change the character of work, create a more egalitarian society with diminished class, race, or gender conflicts and a decentralized system of consumption, including the end of the old mass media systems (Preston 2001) and a “way new journalism” (Quittner 1995, cited in Quandt 2013, p. 737).

We can observe that digital media (or “new ICTs”) did not alter the economic and social system in fundamental ways despite many of the robust claims and “digital deliria” of the techno-centric theorists since the 1990s. At the same time, we observe that the old mass media still exist and play a major if not dominant role in internet/World Wide Web domains. Of course, journalism responded to the internet by becoming more multimedia based, hypertextual, and making it much easier for the audience to give feedback and comment on articles than in old media times. But the modes and ways of doing journalism, its core values and its self-conception did not change very much. Practitioners still deem it important to give accurate and objective reports of relevant events/themes or to

comment on them. And this is still mostly done not by amateur bloggers or prosumers, but by journalists and other professional newsmakers (Chadwick 2014; Preston 2009a; Siapera 2011).

However, the rise of the internet/World Wide Web and digital media has been accompanied by some significant changes in the established mass media system, especially the news media (Preston 2009a, b). For example, as newspaper circulation and revenues decreased, it proved difficult to produce quality news via the internet where people are not willing to pay for such journalistic content, and meanwhile concentration in media markets continued. Aspects of these recent developments are explored more fully in the following chapters, especially in the latter part of this book. Moreover, developments such as “free” content on the internet, together with many commercial TV-channels that were established in Europe under neo-liberal regulation in the 1980s/1990s, seem to pose questions about the future viability of public broadcasting (PSB). Despite of its rich tradition in many European countries, some now ask if PSB is still necessary or whether it is justified to finance these programs with state subsidies (Bardoel and d’Haenens 2008).

It would be too much to expect that historical analysis can explain the various and complex aspects of current media change or give even a prognosis about future developments. However, historical analysis studying former media change and media innovations can give important insights, what is really “new” in new media and where we can find, often quite surprising, continuities, or mere variations. For example, audience participation and the production of user generated content reached a new level in the age of the internet/World Wide Web. But that does not mean that these ideas or modes of communication are something completely new: Letters-to-the-editor have a long tradition (Mlitz 2008), social movements produced their own grass-roots magazines (Atton and Hamilton 2008), and in totalitarian settings, e.g. in communist Eastern Europe, underground publications, the *samizdat*, played an important role especially among intellectuals (Skilling 1989).

When studying relations between old and new media a historical perspective is indispensable (Williams 1974). What kind of features did new media adopt from old media? What is imitation and what is innovation? Are there certain continuities or patterns concerning the forming and spreading of new media we can find at different historical periods? And what happens to old media? According to Riepl’s law, formulated by the German newspaper editor and historian Wolfgang Riepl (1913), old media do not disappear but change their function. Although this “law” might on this very general level not withstand empirical testing, it stirs curiosity, how the old mass media survived the challenges put forward by new competition. Usually they not only changed their function, but also their contents or modes of presentation. Historical analyses can give here at least some hints, how newspapers, television, or professional journalism can cope with the internet age and the current crisis, e.g. with more local news, more background stories, higher quality presentation and content, etc.

When it comes to media innovations and their relation to socio-cultural changes, historical case studies and historical comparisons are essential to provide insights concerning the role and the relevance of the various and usually intertwined factors involved. The technology centered perspective is prominently represented by McLuhan (1964) and became fashionable in the postmodern culture and celebratory perspectives that accompanied the rise of the internet from the early 1990s (Preston 2001). In contrast, social shaping approaches tend to stress the relevance of cultural and social-economic factors, that influence and form the whole innovation process from the development up to application and consumption. In this perspective, economic and political interests, consumer behavior, etc., are more relevant for the innovation process than the purely

technological features. A pioneering and well-known advocate of this approach is Williams (1974, 1983), one of the most central figures in the field of cultural studies. According to Williams, new technologies are not simply developed and then set the conditions for social change and progress. Instead, he stresses that media innovations are the outcome of political and economic intentions and audience needs that were generated by more general changes in society (Williams 1974). Other historically oriented analyses suggest that the complex innovations in the communication and media sector are the result of the interplay between many factors and although some scientific knowledge and creative ideas are needed the process is mainly driven by the social sphere (Winston 1998).

But, we suggest, historical analyses are valuable and essential, not only because they enable grounded understandings of technical innovations. Indeed, a long-term perspective is also needed if we are to understand the factors that shape the structures of the media system and media organizations, the practices of producers, audiences, and recipients, or indeed, key aspects of the functioning of the public sphere: How important was political influence and how did it change? What about economic interests and the cultural and societal backgrounds? What affected the public sphere? Is the commercialization of media a linear and still ongoing trend? Why are media companies and newsrooms differently organized today from 50 years ago? Did professional values of journalists and audience expectations change? Etc. And the other way around: how did mass media change politics, culture, and society?

## **A Rising Field – Research on the History of Mediated Communication in Europe**

Cross-national studies have provided valuable findings about commonalities and differences in European media structures, public communication, or journalism, but usually they lack historical depth. Variations and convergence cannot be fully understood without looking at longer periods of time in a diachronic perspective and without more structured historical analyses of the emergence and institutionalization of specific moments of mediated communication in Europe.

We observe that since the early years of this century, many communication scholars have recognized or proposed more transnational approaches to media history (e.g. Dahl 2002; Jensen 2002; Scannell 2002). The lack of interest in transnational media historiography prior to the twenty-first century in some countries can be linked to the mainly nation-centered structure of mass media (e.g. Fickers 2011). Indeed, for some writers, television was closely “tied up with the national project” and no other media institution was more central to the modernist project of “engineering a national identity” (Chalaby 2005a, p. 1). But taking longer time periods into account the national perspective becomes questionable: Many nation-states only have short histories and old kingdoms or empires frequently changed shape several times (Ellefson 2011). Moreover, a predominantly nation-centered approach misses out not only common developments and convergence processes but also transnational transfers and the “complex trajectories” of media forms and contents as they go through processes of “adaption, resistance, inertia, and modification in their circulation between and across different cultural frames and contents” (Fickers 2011, p. 17).

We also observe that several introductions into transnational mass media history have been published in recent years, with some focusing on news media and journalism (e.g. Chapman and Nuttall 2011; Høyer and Pöttker 2005). We find that some, such as the books by Chapman (2005), Briggs and Burke (2005), Bösch (2017) cover large time

periods, comprise different types of mass media and consider a number of key countries. Some of these tend to emphasize certain factors, ideas, or events that influenced the development of mass media in often quite similar ways. The newly established ICA Communication History interest group recently published a Handbook of communication history (Simonson et al. 2013) that encompasses various modes of communication, media, social practices and institutions as they have developed across diverse cultures and different world regions. Kinnebrock et al. (2011) edited two special issues of the journal “Medien und Zeit” which engaged with diverse aspects of a specific European communication history. We also observe a growth of cross-national and historical studies of editorial cultures and news making practices as well as parallel studies of the development of communication studies fields – some of which have been EU-funded multi-country research programs (e.g. Preston 2009a).

Besides these introductions and overviews, more specialized transnational (European) studies can be found (see Arnold 2011). For reasons of space we cannot aim to provide a complete overview here, rather we limit ourselves to a small, indicative sampling of the growing corpus of major works or larger studies that focus on developments since the late nineteenth century, the time period most relevant to this Handbook. Many transnational approaches focus on comparisons. For example, Requate (1995) analyzes the professionalization of journalists at the turn of the century working out the differences between the United States, the UK, France, and Germany. Bösch (2009) concentrates on press scandals in the UK and Germany around 1900. Owing to the rise of the popular mass press in both countries the publication of previously tabooed norm violations, such as homosexuality or corruption, was a common phenomenon in both countries. The period of fascism is analyzed by Zimmermann (2007). He is comparing media systems in Nazi-Germany, Italy, and Spain. Similarities and differences are explained by using concepts such as modernization, mediatization, and totalitarianism.

A number of studies compare the development of media systems in Europe in the second half of the twentieth century (Gripsrud and Weibull 2010; Humphreys 1996; Weymouth and Lamizet 1996; Williams 2005). Despite national variations due to specific political and cultural factors, the authors find convergent processes especially since the 1980s concerning structures, content, practices, or performances. Bignell and Fickers (2008) edited a book, where scholars from many European countries forming transnational teams worked together on a wider approach to television history, revealing rather surprising insights or unconventional findings, for example about the role and forms of state control in France, Greece, and Romania.

Cross-national studies concentrating on the social implications, or the diffusion and use of new media technologies or professional practices and new media formats in Europe date back to the early 1990s (see for example the collection edited by Latzer and Thomas 1994). However, in face of the ever-increasing diversity and role of new ICTs and digital media, such studies have been relatively rare in more recent times. Nevertheless, some research has been done in journalism studies concerning innovations and the diffusion of styles in news reporting (Broersma 2007; Høyer and Pöttker 2005). Case studies show how the fact-centered news model, an “Anglo-American invention” (Chalaby 1996), spread across Europe and has been adopted in varying degrees in rather long-term processes. Regarding the transfer of TV programs and the influence of different sociopolitical contexts some examples can be found in the already mentioned reader edited by Bignell and Fickers (2008).

Another sub-set of studies focuses on trans-border broadcasting. Quite often these studies just describe the institutions or characterize their programs. Relatively seldom the reception of these programs by target audiences and therefore the actual transfer or

influence process is analyzed. In contrast, a publication edited by Johnson and Parta (2010) about American foreign radio services provides novel insights in the reception of Western programs in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Another study (Ribeiro 2011) about the BBC programs for Portugal in World War II is not only considering programs and reception but the historical, political, and societal contexts. Both studies show the relative success of the American channels and the BBC. But not only listening to radio stations from other countries played an important role in European media history, especially since the introduction of satellite television and neo-liberal regulatory regimes in the 1980s, trans-border and international television began to spread (Chalaby 2005b, 2009).

Other studies are not primarily oriented toward comparisons or transfer but aim to analyze the emergence and development of transnational institutions. These kind of studies can be focused, e.g. on transnational media companies (Chalaby 2009; Fickers 2011), transnational networks like the International Broadcasting Union or the European Broadcasting Union (Degenhardt 2002; Lommers 2012; Zeller 1999), transnational legislation (Papathanassopoulos and Negrine 2011, pp. 63–83), institutionalized social practices like journalism (Barnhurst and Nerone 2009; Nerone 2013), or shared public spheres. The development of a European public sphere was a rather prominent topic in historical research. For example, in an anthology published by Kaelble et al. (2002), various authors trace early forms of the European public sphere since the 1900s. Congresses and meetings are seen as the first examples for a transnational public sphere and social movements in the 1960s/1970s are regarded as one kind of “catalyst” for the emergence of a European identity. In another anthology (Requate and Schulze-Wessel 2002), the European public sphere is not conceptualized as something that existed in reality but as a normative idea, one to which ethnic minorities in national settings could appeal.

After 1945, Europe and its public sphere was strongly influenced by the Cold War and the bipolar world order. Drawing on a European research project, Triandafyllidou et al. (2009) demonstrated that Europe as a community of values did not exist in mass media until the beginning of the twenty-first century. Before that, values were perceived as national, universal, or Western values rather than as European. In contrast, Meyer (2010) found traces of a development pointing toward a European public sphere already in the two decades before the Maastricht Treaty (1969–1991). For instance, European integration and European polity increasingly became a point of reference in newspapers.

Summing up, we might say that historical studies of media and communication across different European countries, societal, and cultural settings still remain a young but growing field of studies. However, we are confident that analyses of how mass media, journalism, and public spheres operate as both agents and products of various and complex modernization processes and how these developed in a certain geographical and cultural settings are likely to grow and become increasingly important in the coming years.

## **What is Europe? Geographical Mix, Country Selections and Criteria**

“Europe” is more than just a geographical region and, as indicated above, it connotes ideas about specific and shared values or realities characterized increasingly by transnational experiences, multiple links, converging (if not truly common) life-styles, institutions, and problems. However, like most entities, Europe is also divided into different nations, social classes, regions, ethnic groups, cultures, religions as well as genders.

In a historical perspective, we must remember not only controversies and contrasts, but hostilities that led to two major World Wars involving industrial-scale death and destruction, over the last century. After 1945, certain unification processes took place, but Europe was divided into a Western and an Eastern bloc and strongly dominated by two powers, namely the United States and the Soviet Union. The unification project now known as the European Union, was motivated, in part at least, by the spirit and rhetoric of “war-no-more” which was still quite powerful in the early post-war decades. It has since evolved and became a supranational body encompassing more and more countries and more and more competences.

Despite the manifold harmonizing processes that the European Union has initiated, the EU Member States continue to be characterized by an amazing degree of diversity. This is also true for European countries outside the European Union. This complex of diversities, but also of similarities in the European setting, comprises *the* major challenge that must be recognized and taken into account in historical analyses.

As a result, one of the most difficult tasks facing cross-country research projects in Europe concerns how best to identify suitable criteria and classification systems to cluster European countries. The challenges are considerable when it comes to coherent and operational categories relevant for comparative communication and media research. However, clustering is a necessary task if researchers seek to pick out countries for a more detailed analysis that are typical in some way or another. Most researchers agree that the much-cited Hallin and Mancini (2004) typology is rather crude and inadequate, even in the case of its intended applications in the realm of political communication.

Looking at prior cross-national studies, we note that several potential categories can be identified and mobilized to form typologies for communication structures or cultures in Europe, for example:

- Social class structures and evolving roles/forms of “publics” and public opinion
- Forms and extent of the separation of politics from media processes
- Development of media markets and/or journalistic professionalism
- State control and state interventions
- Innovators, adopters, or active appropriations of new (media) technologies, capabilities, or media practices
- Forms, extent and practices of electoral democracy
- Imperial/hegemonic versus subaltern polities/cultures
- Varieties of capitalism typologies
- Egalitarianism vs. stratification, the role of social reform and welfare
- Large and small cultures/societies/nations
- Density of population, rural vs. urban, agrarian vs. industrialized regions
- Extent of individualism vs. communitarianism
- Secularization versus religious belief systems: extent and forms
- Protestant versus Catholic or Orthodox cultural traditions
- Northern vs. Southern Europe: environmentally shaped cultures, ways of life
- Western vs. Eastern Europe: (former) communist and west/liberal countries
- Extent and traditions of multiculturalism, migration, and colonial heritage
- Successive hegemonic cities and their core-regions
- etc.

In identifying all these potential criteria and categories, there is no easy solution to the selection problem. However, as Hallin and Mancini (2004) demonstrated, it is possible



to combine many of these categories, e.g. geographical entities, characteristics of media and political systems, and cultural traditions.

The major aim of this Handbook is to recognize and reflect the complexity of the historical experience as well as the contemporary diversity of institutions, professional practices, and consumption cultures related to the domain of mediated communication. As far as is practical, the editors have sought to reflect the typical experiences and practices of different regions (North/South–West/East), cultural traditions, and media systems (separation of politics and media, development of media markets, state control/interventions). From the outset, we have also been mindful of the important distinction between large and influential national, linguistic, or cultural (or even once imperialist) entities on the one hand, and the rather different experiences, opportunities, and challenges facing smaller countries and subaltern cultures on the other. Owing to material resource considerations, the latter find it much more difficult to construct and maintain national media systems, distinctive cultural productions, or repertoires, as well as challenges in designing and appropriating new media infrastructures and techniques to express distinctive cultural story-telling and independence. For such reasons, media politics and state subsidies often play a more visible and important role in the case of smaller countries and subaltern cultures. Furthermore, in reflexive mode, the editorial selections were also aware that the histories and experiences of smaller countries and subaltern cultures have tended to be rather neglected, marginalized, or accorded more lowly status within the mainstream canon of academic communication and media studies research literature.

Thus, at an early stage, the editors decided that a flexible-but-structured approach was optimal for the selection of countries and case studies informing the various chapters in this Handbook. Flexibility is necessary given the variation in the concrete topics treated in the Handbook. When it comes to treating media change or media innovations, appropriation, adaptation or diffusion processes, a selection of case study countries with diverse developmental trajectories was deemed optimal or highly desirable.

As a general rule, a minimum of four countries are addressed and analyzed in detail as case studies or examples in each of the following chapters. The criteria outlined in this section served as guidelines and informed the selection process, although not all of them can be applied to each topic and historical period. But we were also attentive to the need for some flexibility in some cases, so that the precise selection of countries covered depends on the chapters' specific topic.

One editorial red-line throughout the book, however, is that all chapters deal with topics that are deemed relevant to students and readers across the whole of Europe. Furthermore, the editors aimed to ensure that most chapters analyze or examine at least briefly:

- a) four or more large European countries from different geographical or cultural regions (e.g. France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom)
- b) a relevant sample and mix of smaller, subaltern, peripheral, or minor countries/cultures/regions.

### **More About the Scope of this Handbook and Editorial Approach**

The original motivation and core aim of this Handbook was to fill a gap in the existing literature. As communication, media, and journalism studies were (and are) becoming much more international, we perceived a growing need for research literature that goes

beyond national perspectives and provides a basis for more transnational treatments of historical developments in the field of mediated communication. Therefore, it is not intended to analyze European countries separately or to present a compilation of national media histories. Instead, the chapters in this Handbook aim to deal with media industry and professional or policy innovations, important counter developments, audience, and consumption trends and policy issues in the field of mass media, public discourse, and journalism that were important for all or at least many European countries.

One of the first (and easiest) decisions made by the editors concerned the time period covered. We decided that this Handbook should concentrate on the development of modern mass media over the last 120 years or so. The starting point comprised the emergence of the popular press (paralleled by the changing profile of public opinion and development of increasingly politicized mass audiences), the professionalization of journalists and the first wave of multimedia around 1900, maybe the most important intersection in media history. The book will end with the emergence of the internet in the late twentieth century, another major intersection.

Following a number of consultative discussions at early meetings of the ECREA communication history section, the editors agreed to adopt a rather innovative approach to the authoring process, in line with the key aim and goal of ensuring a transnational approach and treatment of each major topic. Thus, the editors arranged that most of the chapters would not be written by single authors but by international teams with a good geographical mix and spread of knowledge formed around one lead author. Such multinational authoring teams were deemed to facilitate the core goal and challenge of this “European” focused book project: that the treatment of all topics goes beyond specific national experiences and perspectives. Moreover, the mix and composition of the authoring teams involved in producing most of the chapters has also served to enhance the coverage of research literature published in languages other than English.

The lead-author was thus deemed to play an important role, including responsibility for the mix, coherence and overall quality of case studies in the chapter as a whole. They were asked to plan the structure of the chapter, ensuring coherence in terms of content and style and write larger parts of the chapter (especially the introductory sections and the conclusion). The lead-authors’ role also included decisions concerning the co-authors and their contributions to the chapters (although some authoring teams were self-selecting and, in some cases, the editors made suggestions as to the composition of authoring teams). In some cases, the lead-authors were chosen because of their prior record in multi-country or transnational research and analysis. As far as possible, the authoring teams were chosen in terms of their capacity to embrace the relevant research literature from selected countries, including work that is not readily available in English, but only in national languages. As a result, this Handbook also serves to make some currently nationally-specific research literature and findings more readily available for a wider and international audience.

The editors also asked the lead-authors of each chapter to include an introduction section to outline and explain the precise selection of case study countries. The concrete aims of the chapter and the relevance of the topic are also outlined at the outset of the chapters. The editors also asked for a short conclusion at the end of each chapter, highlighting the major findings, alongside considerations of the similarities and differences between the countries, and potential reasons for these.

Thus, although it should be obvious by now, the editors would now formally wish to draw attention to the major, indeed crucial role played by the lead-authors with regard to the production and overall quality of the chapters contained in this Handbook. Quite

simply, without their knowledge, expertise, and efforts, neither the transnational storytelling that informs the following chapters, nor the production of the overall Handbook, would have been possible.

## **Thematic Introduction to the Sections and Chapters**

At this point, the editors believe that, thanks to the significant contributions of multiple authoring teams responsible for every chapter, they have been largely successful in meeting the original aims and goals set out for this particular Handbook: to cover key features of the diverse histories, practices, experiences, and ideas surrounding modern mediated communication institutions and practices across Europe.

As the contents pages indicate, chapter topics range from the emergence and spread of print media and subsequent “new media” developments, press freedom, media in war-time, the East/West divide, commercialization and professionalization, gender and migration issues, outside influences and internationalization processes among many other themes.

The book is organized in four main parts. Although it was never intended to produce a strictly chronological history of mass media, public communication, and journalism in Europe, the first three sections follow a roughly chronological order. These parts deal with media innovations, major changes, and developments in the media systems that affected public communication, societies, and culture in certain time periods.

Part I is centered around the institutionalization of modern mediated communication in the European context. Its nine chapters address and cover key media related developments unfolding during the period from the closing decades of the nineteenth century to World War II (approximately 1880–1945).

By way of example, this first section of the Handbook, commences with the chapter dealing with the struggles over “press freedom” and “public spheres” and competing conceptualizations, values, norms. Chapter 2 moves on to address the rise and growth of the popular press in different national settings in Europe. The next chapter engages with the emergence of film whilst the fourth chapter addresses radio broadcasting, both of which comprise important new media and cultural forms to emerge in this period. The significant role and lasting impact of World War I as a sort of hot house for the development of distinctively modern propaganda, public relations, and mediated political and marketing communication techniques comprise the theme of Chapter 5. Chapter 6 is concerned with 1920s and the wider context of expanding mass media, tabloidization, and political polarization. The emergence and rise of fascism amid economic and political crises in a number of European countries forms the focus of Chapter 7. Chapter 8 moves on to address the significant features and ramifications of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the subsequent establishment of the Soviet media system. The novel role, features, and forms of international radio broadcasting comprise the topics addressed in Chapter 9.

Part II addresses certain key moments in the evolving history of mediated communication “in a binary Europe” during the period between the mid-1940s and the late 1980s. This part includes chapters dealing with topics ranging from the extent of continuities and new beginnings at this time, media, and the Cold War including East/West conflict, to the rise of television as the “dominant” medium during this period. This section also includes chapters focused on authoritarian media control in Eastern Europe, Spain, Portugal, and Greece as well as on the introduction of commercial broadcasting in Europe.

Part III of this Handbook is focused around the theme of media development in Europe after the end of the Cold War. Specific chapter topics range from “media change in Central and Eastern Europe,” to the issues of media concentration and the rise of multinational companies. Chapter 17 addresses the issues surrounding “democratic deficits” in relation to the EU project and the role of media as well as any emergent European public sphere. Chapter 18 concludes this section by addressing the emergence of the internet as well as its impacts and implications for news services or even “the end of journalism.”

The fourth and final part is centered around several major or long-running themes treated together under the broadly pitched title “Historical Trends in European Media and Public Communication.” It commences with Chapter 19 which addresses the “professionalization of journalism” in the European setting whilst Chapter 20 moves on to examine the history and development of journalism education in Europe. In Chapter 21, the focus shifts to audiences and audience practices and behavior in relation to new media developments. Chapter 22 returns to journalism related issues, addressing questions related to the “Americanization” of journalistic practices and norms in Europe. The theme of “gender, media and modernity” comprises the focus of Chapter 23, whilst the following chapter engages with the topic of migration and its relation to the media. The final chapter examines the scope and role of “imagined new spaces of political solidarity” during the 1880s–1920s, including the ideas and practices of theorists and movements transcending the national frame and scale.

## **Conclusions**

Some significant and unexpected changes have unfolded across the political and communicational landscape of Europe, especially the EU sub-region, since planning for this Handbook first commenced several years ago. The most striking and unexpected change has been the rise and spread of movements favoring extremist nationalism, xenophobia, racism, and authoritarian “populism” on a scale not seen since the rise of fascist and related other right-wing nationalist/reactionary movements in the 1930s and the period surrounding World War I. These developments threaten to derail or terminate not only the overall trajectory of deepening political integration, particularly within the EU region of Europe. If such trends continue, they are also likely to pose significant implications of these for the cross-country collaborations and exchanges in the areas of research, learning, and other academic activities, including communication studies and other social science and humanities fields. All of the latter have grown and deepened across the successive decades from the 1950s till now.

Indeed, in the relatively few short years since this Handbook project first emerged as a mere idea to its final sub-editing and publication stages, it is quite striking how the seemingly ever-onward march of deepening globalization and internationalization (and its regional expression “Europeanization”) have run into very stormy waters. The financial crash of 2008 and the subsequent regimes of “austerity” and growing economic inequality and insecurity have been accompanied by unprecedented questioning, criticism, and challenges to deeper political and economic integration. We observe a new wave of extreme nationalism, xenophobia, more open racism and populist movements all seemingly opposed to supranational policies and institutions favoring flows of trade, capital investment, and people (at European and global-level scales). These comprise serious moves or threats to reverse many of the internationalization trends, developments, and trajectories that had been presumed as typically modern and “normal” dating back to the World War II period, at the very least.

It is no exaggeration to say that the overall EU project, as a currently existing form of supranational political governance (covering most but not all of the world-region that is Europe) has come close to crashing or total collapse on several occasions since this Handbook project was first devised. Indeed, as we make the final edits on this introductory chapter, the EU is being threatened by new forms of extreme or fundamentalist nationalism and xenophobia, an appalling prospect for anyone who is vaguely familiar with the history of Europe from the early modern period. Nor is it an exaggeration to suggest that the vista of a fatal crisis of the whole EU unification project has now become manifest as the UK moves to implement its Brexit decision – to withdraw from the EU. Ironically, this threat emerges from the country that once led or brought about the first-stage of modern globalization, approximately two centuries ago. This threat is amplified as that UK decision has given confidence to extreme right-wing or xenophobic forces in other countries – e.g. Italy, Hungary, France, Poland. This cascade of recent developments raises significant if still uncertain consequences for future of EU – as well as for the kinds of international scholarly collaboration manifest in the ECREA. The threat of the break-up of the limited supranational forms of political integration achieved by the EU and the return of radical forms of nationalism are hardly welcome developments in the light of European history, even if they serve to underline the relevance of the specific theme of the current chapter.

The very idea and possibility of this Handbook were inspired and strongly facilitated by the kinds of European-level academic collaborations that have grown and expanded alongside the overall EU-wide economic and political integration project over recent decades, sometimes as a direct result of EU-funding for multi-country research studies and collaborations. The creation and continued existence of the ECREA as a key platform for academic research collaborations and exchanges owes much to those wider forms of deepening economic and political exchanges, as well as related policy coordination and convergences. In sum, without ECREA, we would not have an ECREA History Section, nor meetings of it where the idea of this Handbook was first discussed and planned.

As editors, we certainly feel confident that this Handbook has delivered a strong and distinctive contribution in terms of its original academic mission and agenda as described above. We also believe that it amply serves to demonstrate the added value and distinctive benefits of multi-country research collaborations, not least in the sub-fields of communication, media, and journalism studies.

Further than that, we can only hope that, in some modest respects, this Handbook also demonstrates the real benefits and distinctive “added value” to the knowledge base offered by cross-national historical perspectives on key developments in mediated communication in the European setting. The future or further development of such knowledge productions will be strongly influenced by the continuation of coordinated and integrated multi-country educational and research collaborations which have been supported and promoted as part of the overall project of deepening economic and policy collaboration at EU-wide level since the 1950s – and by the spin-off or imitation effects such as the creation and support for organizations such as ECREA.

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# Struggles over “Press Freedom” and “Public Spheres” *Competing Conceptualizations, Values, Norms*

Jürgen Wilke, Jaume Guillaumet, Svernik Høyer\*,  
and Nils E. Øy

## Introduction

At the beginning of this Handbook stands a chapter on the struggles over press freedom and changes in the guiding principles of public communication in Europe between around 1880 and 1945. This serves as a basis for the following chapters that focus on specific forms of mediated communication during this period. What was the legal framework at the time, and what concepts and values can be regarded as having shaped the press at the end of the nineteenth century? And how have they changed in the face of transformative processes both political and through the media during the first decades of the twentieth century?

Describing these developments is, of course, challenging given the limitations of a short single chapter, especially when considering that these decades were rather turbulent, and the historic events of the time left deep marks across Europe: the emergence of new nation states with their internal and external conflicts, World War I and the establishment of authoritarian political systems, if not dictatorships, and, finally, the catastrophe of World War II. Other revolutionary developments of the early twentieth century came with newly shaped media (film and radio) that also required a normative framework.

To develop a coherent picture is rather difficult considering the sheer number of European countries involved. Around 1880, several independent states existed in the European continent, which in some cases incorporated various peoples and languages. This is particularly true for the Habsburg Empire with all its crownlands. The number

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\*This chapter is dedicated to the memory of Svernik Høyer who died on 8 January 2017, aged 86. Having been a pioneering and significant scholar of journalism and media history in the European setting, we are privileged to have had Svernik Høyer as one of the co-authors of the present chapter.

of nation states further increased in the course of the twentieth century through territorial dissociation and independence movements; several of them were a direct result of World War I. Norway, on the other hand, had achieved independence from Sweden already in 1905.

To describe the very complex situation of press freedom and the norms of mediated communication in Europe, this chapter is divided into three parts. At first, the focus is directed at the central territorial states and great powers (Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Russia). Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Belgium are only mentioned briefly. In order to expand the scope and to include other states, the situation of the northern European (Scandinavian) countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden) as well as the situation of southern European (Romanic) countries (Italy, Portugal, and Spain) are examined separately. In comparing these countries, common features as well as differences are identified, and when appropriate, particularities in certain countries are outlined.

## The Central European Countries and Great Britain

### Historical and Political Background

At first, necessity dictates to look back into the older history of the struggle over press freedom, which has raged within Europe for many centuries. Only a few decades after Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press in the middle of the fifteenth century, first steps were taken toward controlling the production of printed matter. Germany was at the helm of this development (Eisenhardt 1970). Initially, these attempts at controlling print were undertaken by clerical institutions with occasional support of the Pope. Governing bodies, however, soon followed. While the church was mainly preoccupied with moral values and with keeping the faith “pure,” the state focused on maintaining public order, keeping governmental secrets, and on ensuring external security. In the long term, these goals turned into guiding principles.

The primary means of control was (pre-)censorship accompanied by further measures and punishments in the course of the sixteenth century. Since printing quickly spread to other parts of Europe, controlling the new technology also became a central issue in these regions (for France, see Bibliothèque Nationale de France 2015). National and regional particularities emerged early on during this process. This can be seen in the example of England, where the Stationers’ Company functioned as a self-regulating body for the printers’ guild (Siebert 1965, pp. 64–87).

This control system comprised all kinds of printed matter, including early forms of newsprints that had been published since the early sixteenth century, and it was fully developed when the first periodicals began to appear, first in Germany (1605/09), then in the Netherlands (1618/1620), in France (1631), in Spain (1641), in Italy (1643), in Sweden (1645), and in England (1665). Russia only followed decades later (1703). Surveillance of the press, at first, was not questioned but justified by the absolutist state with its monopoly of power. The gradual reduction of censorship initially took place in England where the legal and political situation had developed differently from that on the continent since the Middle Ages. The English press experienced a first (albeit short) period of freedom as early as 1640 during the Puritan Revolution (Siebert 1965, pp. 165–201). With the Press Act of 1662 (renewed in 1685 but not renewed in 1695), England had factually achieved press freedom. Therefore, England became