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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 monarchial; 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 and 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 connotates 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 or 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 story-telling 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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