

Tobias Eberwein / Susanne Fengler / Epp Lauk /
Tanja Leppik-Bork (eds.)

Mapping Media Accountability – in Europe and Beyond

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SUSANNE FENGLER / TOBIAS EBERWEIN /
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Mapping Media Accountability – in Europe and Beyond

As we move into the new era of mobile journalism, following the news on Blackberrys and watching newscasts on iPads, at any time and anywhere, exciting new possibilities emerge for journalism. Real-time technology changes the flow of information not only in the democratic societies of the West, but impacts also and possibly to an even greater extent on developing countries and countries in transition. At the same time, the future of journalism is less clearly resolved than ever before. As the reading and viewing habits of the publics change, traditional business models in journalism collapse and media markets strive under the burden of tottering economies and shifting advertising patterns. What will journalism be like in 2020? Its outline is unclear; however, even though websites, blogs and social networks provide us with endless sources of information and opinion, we will need journalism even more than before as either or both a gatekeeper and a sense-maker. Also our need, in an era of international media concentration, ever-growing lobbying – from the nuclear industries to Attac – and increasingly sophisticated public relations, to monitor journalistic independence and quality will be greater. But will internal structural regulators, for example, the traditional press councils, as trade organizations of journalists and media owners, be able to fulfill this task – or will the monitoring of media accountability become in the future a grassroots' activity of a multitude of citizens on *Facebook* and *Twitter*? And when we think about the future of journalism and media accountability – can we learn from other countries' experiences with media accountability?

These will be the key questions of this volume, which assembles reports about the status quo of media accountability in Western and Eastern Europe as well as two Arab states. Which established media accountability instruments, for example, press councils, media journalism, and ombudsmen, thrive in the varied journalism cultures of this analysis – and why? Does each media system encourage the use of diverse online media accountability instruments by media professionals and media users? A reliable comparative study of media accountability instruments is ever more important as they are currently attracting increasing attention by European and international policy makers such as the European Commission¹ and the Council of Europe².

The research presented here has been realized in the context of the EU-funded project ›Media Accountability and Transparency in Europe‹ (Media-AcT), a joint effort of 13 research institutions across Europe and beyond. An empirical study, due in 2011, on the impact of the various established and innovative media accountability instruments will be in the centre of this project; the project website³ provides detailed information on the study's progress and research results.

Media accountability: Instruments and definitions

Claude-Jean Bertrand, who pioneered a comparative study of media accountability in 2000, defined media accountability instruments⁴ as ›any non-State means of making media responsible towards the public‹ (2000: 108). His study focused on codes of ethics in 17 European countries and also included an analysis of press councils, ombudsmen and journalism reviews as examples of media accountability instruments (MAI). Ten years later, Bertrand's list of MAIs requires considerable extension since the Internet, and particularly the social web, has profoundly altered the practices of media accountability. Existing definitions of media account-

1 Cf. e. g. Commission Staff Working Document SEC (2007) 32, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/media_taskforce/doc/pluralism/media_pluralism_swp_en.pdf

2 Cf. e. g. Resolution 1636 (2008), available at: <http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/tao8/ERES1636.htm>

3 Cf. <http://www.mediaact.eu>

4 In his 2000 volume, Bertrand uses the term ›media accountability systems‹. However, this definition appears rather vague to us and leaves several issues unclear: his use of the term ›system‹ seems inappropriate due to lack of theoretical foundation in systems theory. The ›systems‹ as employed by Bertrand are in fact *instruments* to hold the media accountable and foster transparency about the media. Thus, we will speak of ›media accountability instruments‹ (MAI) in the context of this research.

ability may also need to be reconsidered. Following Russ-Mohl (2003) and Fengler (2008b), MAIs in the digital age can be classified as:

- *established instruments of media accountability*: press councils; ombudsmen; media journalism in trade journals; media criticism in the mass media; also letters to the editor, correction boxes etc.;⁵
- *innovative instruments of media accountability* emerging online: such as editorial weblogs (e.g. on the news site of the *Nederlandse Omroep Stichting*⁶); websites monitoring news content (e.g. the *British Mail Watch*⁷); webcasts of internal critique sessions or team meetings (as practiced, for instance, in the newsroom of the US daily *The Spokesman Review*⁸); online ombudsmen (such as the German ›Bronski‹ from the daily *Frankfurter Rundschau*⁹); and the media-critical activities on *Twitter* and *Facebook*.¹⁰

Clearly, some of these innovative instruments are unique to the web, others – like online ombudsmen or online press councils – replicate existing offline formats. Journalistic codes of ethics and professional norms are to be considered not as instruments, but as informal institutions constraining media professionals' behavior, which we will elaborate in the next section of this introduction. According to Bertrand (2000: 151), the aim of media accountability is to

»improve the services of the media to the public; restore the prestige of media in the eyes of the population; diversely protect freedom of speech and press; obtain, for the profession, the autonomy that it needs to play its part in the expansion of democracy and the betterment of the fate of mankind.«

McQuail (2005: 207) defines media accountability as »voluntary or involuntary processes by which the media answer directly or indirectly to their society for the quality and/or consequences of publication«. While these characterizations may constitute a valuable starting point, we will present our definition of media accountability at the end of this introduction, after considering its institutional and technological contexts in a comparative perspective.

5 For comprehensive overviews of established media accountability instruments cf. Bertrand (2000: 124) and Russ-Mohl (2003: 341).

6 Cf. <http://nos.nl/nos/weblogs/>

7 Cf. <http://www.mailwatch.co.uk>

8 Cf. <http://www.spokesmanreview.com/webcast>

9 Cf. <http://www.frblog.de>

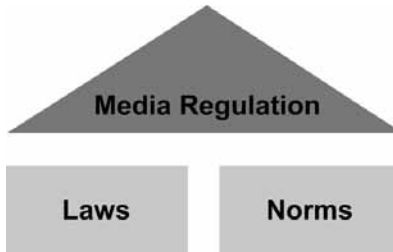
10 This list needs to be further developed in the near future, as MAIs online become even more sophisticated.

Institutions of media accountability

In democratic societies, where press freedom and freedom of expression are essential elements of the constitutions, journalism is regulated to only a small extent by laws, usually covering issues of libel, protection of youth and the right of reply. New laws, being introduced in several European countries in recent years with the aim to prevent terrorism, may have a certain impact on the freedom of journalism in the long term. Diversity of opinion is ensured to varying degrees across Europe by media competition law,¹¹ while the state, as Claude-Jean Bertrand (2000: 108) noted, should not participate in controlling or monitoring the news media in a democracy, »except by delivering the threats that media often need to start the process of self-regulation« – which often happened throughout Europe in the latter half of the 20th century.¹²

FIGURE 1

Laws and norms as formal and informal institutions of media regulation



Thus, the majority of potential conflicts in the field of journalism, such as inappropriately sensationalistic, discriminatory or biased reporting, is covered not by laws as *formal institutions*, but by professional journalistic

11 Numerous laws exist, both on an EU and a national level across Europe, regulating the infrastructure of the media sector. For a comparative analysis, cf. the ongoing study of the EU-funded project MEDIADDEM, published on its website (<http://www.mediadem.eliamep.gr>). Unlike MEDIADDEM, the MediaACT project focuses on MAIs dealing with the journalistic content of the media; we do not analyze self-control mechanisms dealing with entertainment formats (like movies), public relations, advertising, and the like.

12 For example, the creation of press councils in the United Kingdom in 1953 (replaced by the Press Complaints Commission in 1991) and Germany in 1956 was preceded by substantial political threats to create a state-controlled body to monitor the media.

norms and codes of ethics. The latter are considered as informal institutions (cf. NORTH 1990) and also serve to co-ordinate individuals' activities. However, adherence to norms as *informal institutions* cannot be reinforced in court, but can only occur on a voluntary basis (cf. Fig. 1).

In recent years, communication scholars have emphasized the network character of media accountability. They emphasize that while each single media accountability instrument may be too weak to have any considerable (even measurable) impact on the quality of journalism, media accountability instruments may exert some influence as a system of ›infrastructures‹ (RUSS-MOHL 1994). MAIs such as press councils, correction boxes and ombudsmen may have both a preventive as well as a corrective function, which emphasizes the processual character of media accountability. From an economic perspective, informal institutions, such as journalistic norms and ethic codes, are network goods in that the more the actors become involved, the more powerful and thus valuable the institution becomes (cf. LEIPOLD 2006). The increasing influence of social networks, e.g. *Facebook*, is a striking example of this assumption.

Distinguishing the degrees of institutionalization also helps to categorize media accountability instruments. We suggest differentiating between *high versus low degrees of institutionalization* and between *instruments anchored inside versus outside the journalistic profession* (cf. Fig. 2).

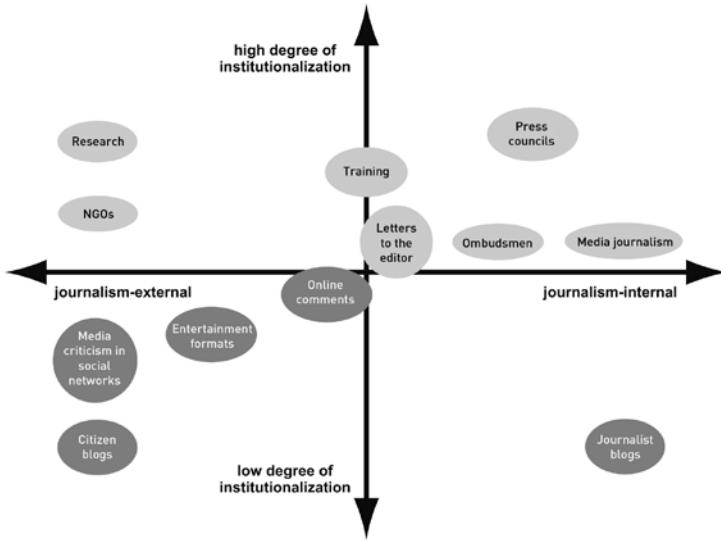
As the following chapters of this book will show in detail, some countries in Europe have more formal institutions of media accountability, and a richer variety, than others.¹³ We assume that the political and economic history of each country has also shaped its institutions of media accountability.¹⁴ Furthermore, instruments of media accountability have been transferred from one journalistic culture to another. For example the concept of ombudsmanship originated in Scandinavia in the 19th century and was revived in the United States in the 1970s. Today, while several international quality media employ ombudsmen, German newsrooms have rarely adopted the concept,

13 If we start our comparison not at the national level, but – even before that – at the level of industry sectors, we can easily observe that media companies lag behind other sectors of the industry in engaging in accountability measures (cf. KARMASIN/LITSCHKA 2008; KARMASIN/WEDER 2008). The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) is underdeveloped in the media sector (cf. also JARREN [2007a] and MEIER/TRAPPEL [2002] on corporate governance models of media companies), probably due to the notion of many media professionals that media are a ›public good‹ and thus a ›public service‹ per se. CSR is a concept which will be explored in our research project.

14 Political and economic scientists have long since been highly interested in the international comparison of institutions and norms, and its impact on societies – cf. Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) and Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904/05).

FIGURE 2

Typology of media accountability instruments



Source: Authors

although the German media system supports a large variety of MAIs. After the collapse of the Berlin Wall, Western media foundations and organizations tried to implant Western concepts of media accountability into the Eastern European journalism cultures with varying degrees of success, as the ensuing chapters demonstrate.¹⁵ It will be highly interesting to follow such ›processes of diffusion‹ (cf. KLEINSTEUBER 1993) and thus study the path dependency (cf. LICHBACH/ZUCKERMAN 2009) of MAIs in European countries and beyond.

Media accountability: Literature review

Available research has so far focused on the history (e. g. BROWN 1974; MARZOLF 1991; PÖTTKER/STARCK 2003) and status quo of media accountability instruments in the established democracies in the Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian and

15 Recently, UNESCO has worked out a ›Framework for Assessing Media Development‹ in 2008, targeting media practitioners in Eastern Europe and obviously hoping to spread the idea of media accountability into Eastern Europe beyond the EU and Central Asia (cf. HARASZTI 2008).

German-speaking countries. All of these particular journalism cultures and media systems have a high degree of media professionalism according to Hallin/Mancini (cf. below). In contrast, little or almost no research exists on media accountability in the Mediterranean countries (with the notable exception of ALSIUS 2010), Eastern Europe (except for WYKA 2005) and the Arab world (besides HAFEZ 2002). Also, MAIs in Africa, Asia and Latin America have almost never been studied apart from a few descriptive volumes or websites that list which instruments and organizations exist in the field.¹⁶

The majority of national and comparative academic studies on media accountability are descriptive and focus on a few long-established MAIs like press councils; many compare journalistic codes of ethics. For instance, Wiedemann (1992) and Puppis (2009) have compared press councils in Western Europe, and several authors have compared European resp. international codes of ethics for journalists (cf. HAFEZ 2002; KREUTLER 2007; LAITILA 1995; LIMOR/HIMELBOIM 2006). The role of ombudsmen for media accountability has been studied mostly in the United States, where the concept is most common (for a recent overview cf. STARCK 2010). In Europe, Evers et al. (2010) and Elia (2007) have done research on media ombudsmen. Media journalism in trade journals has received little academic attention in recent years, while numerous studies have been completed on media journalism in the mass media (e. g. BEUTHNER/WEICHERT 2005; FENGLER 2002, 2003; KREITLING 1996; KRÜGER/MÜLLER-SACHSE 1998; MALIK 2004; PORLEZZA 2005; RUSS-MOHL 1999; RUSS-MOHL/FENGLER 2000; WESSLER et al. 1997; WEISS 2005). Innovative forms of online media accountability in Europe gain attention now, but have not thus far been tackled systematically. Domingo/Heinonen (2008) have provided a highly useful classification for the debate by developing a typology of media-related blogs. Some studies explore the potential of media criticism in blogs in Germany and the United States (cf. EBERWEIN 2010b; FENGLER 2008b; HUTTER 2009; SCHÖNHERR 2008; THEIS-BERGLMAIR 2009; WIED/SCHMIDT 2008), but its influence on practical journalism remains largely unclear. Moreover, a small study analyzing the users of the popular German *bildblog.de* has come up with interesting insights into the motivation of readers (entertainment is a huge factor for them) and their unwillingness to pay for such activities (cf. MAYER et al. 2008). The impact of media accountability is often debated (cf. D’HAENENS 2007; JARREN/VOWE 1995; MCQUAIL 1992), but

16 Cf. e. g. the ›Global Journalist‹ resource, conceived by Claude-Jean Bertrand, now online at <http://www.rjionline.org/mas/about/index.php>

rarely studied systematically. Do media professionals and media consumers change their patterns of behavior because of the impact of media accountability instruments? Only very few small-scale and out-dated research projects (e. g. KEPPLINGER 1993; NORTHINGTON 1993) have at least partly tackled the impact of (established) MAIs on media professionals.¹⁷ One of the most important goals of the MediaAcT research project is to base future debates about media accountability on reliable empirical data.

Media accountability and the Internet

Probably the most interesting, and challenging, aspect of studying media accountability today is the analysis of the status quo and possible impact of online MAIs. The Internet now offers an almost endless array of new venues for pluralistic debates about journalism, at high speed and low cost.¹⁸ Thus, the role of the public in the process of holding the media accountable will probably change profoundly and require new concepts of media accountability.

Before the advent of the digital age, Bertrand correctly emphasized the importance of self-regulation by media owners and media professionals, pointing out that media consumers often prove too »apathetic or unorganised« to become involved in media accountability (BERTRAND 2000: 19).¹⁹ Therefore, Bertrand placed the audience on the receiving end of media accountability, noting that media accountability shall »improve the services of the media to the public« and »restore the prestige of media in the eyes of the population« (BERTRAND 2000: 151). Holding a passive image of the public in mind,²⁰ scholars considered media criticism mainly as a prerequisite for making a better-informed media consumption choice in

17 Recent studies focus on the effects of media literacy on the public's perception of the media (cf. ASHLEY et al. 2010; VRAGA et al. 2010). In general, entertainment is a potentially important factor still almost completely neglected in the study of media self-control.

18 For example, something as simple as a letter to the editor – which means that a media user gives »voice« to his dissatisfaction with a journalistic product (cf. HIRSCHMAN 1970) – involved high cost of production for the media user, including the time to write the letter, to buy the stamp, and to carry the letter to the mailbox. Therefore, many people might have preferred to choose the »exit« option instead of the »voice« option if they did not like or did not trust the media content. In the digital age, the cost of »voice« has been reduced dramatically. At the same time, maintaining media accountability instruments is no longer too costly for media companies: restrictions of space and time do not apply any more.

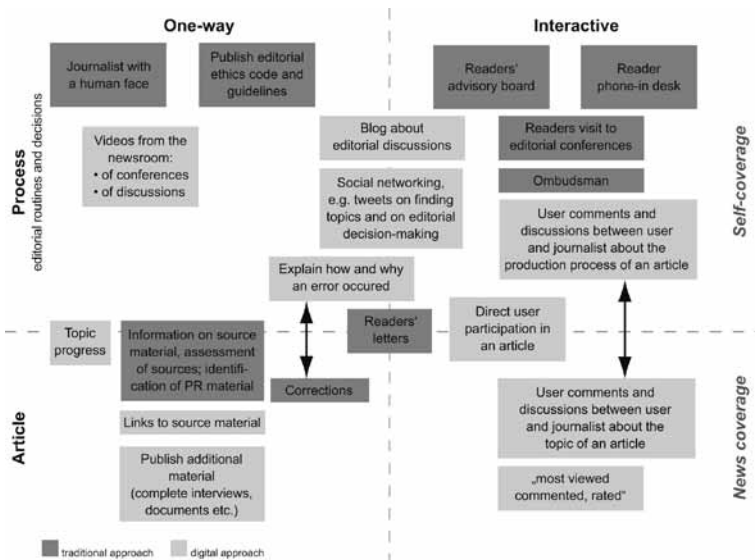
19 A possible explanation for this phenomenon may be obtained with the help of Olson's theory of groups (cf. OLSON 1965).

20 E. g., Jarren/Zielmann (2005: 553) summarize as late as 2005 that the public's interest in media journalism is low.

the past. But to date, several press councils across Europe do not include representatives of the audience (cf. FENGLER et al. in print; PUPPIS 2009).

The Internet and especially the Web 2.0 offer a mass of new venues for citizens to become actively engaged in the debate about the quality of media content. The Internet provides the audience with new instruments to reinforce journalistic norms (cf. FENGLER 2008b).²¹ Via blogs, *Facebook* and *Twitter*, comment functions, the websites of online ombudsmen and the like (cf. Fig. 3), members of the audience can easily communicate and comment on the quality of journalistic products in a digital public sphere.²²

FIGURE 3
Traditional and digital instruments for creating newsroom transparency



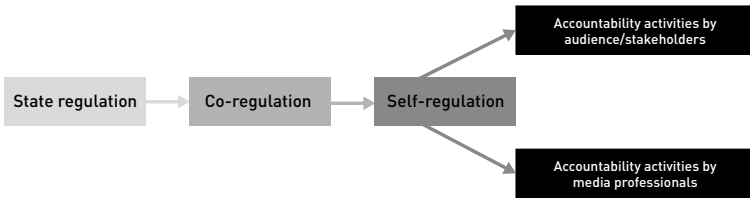
Source: adapted from Meier 2009

21 At the same time, we should keep in mind the flourishing of the alternative and Samizdat press in the 1970s as well as the wide use of citizen broadcasting after the deregulation of the broadcasting sector in the 1980s, which often times also resulted in the creation of new media criticizing the established media.

22 Media users also start to form media-related NGOs, with the United Kingdom taking a leading role in this field.

The inclusion of the audience into the media accountability process via the Internet is particularly important with regard to media systems operating under tight political constraints. In many transformation and developing countries, the government heavily restricts the media profession, which cannot thus be expected to be an effective self-critic. Furthermore, in developing Puppis' (2007) model of co-regulation, we suggest a new audience-inclusive perspective on media accountability in the digital age. This approach, mirrored in Karmasin's concept of media stakeholders (1998), includes not only groups defined as interested parties (journalists, media managers), but also citizens as having a similarly high interest in accountable and transparent media. Therefore, we suggest referring to a new model of media accountability in the digital age (cf. Fig. 4):

FIGURE 4
Media accountability in the digital age



Naturally, the Internet is also an excellent platform for media criticism by journalists and other members of the media industry. Blogs have emerged as the most popular new instrument of online media accountability. Following Domingo and Heinonen (2008), media-related blogs can be classified into four different categories:

- *Citizen Blogs*: journalistic weblogs written by the public outside the media,
- *Audience Blogs*: journalistic weblogs written by the public within the media,
- *Journalist Blogs*: journalistic weblogs written by journalists outside media institutions, and
- *Media Blogs*: journalistic weblogs written by journalists within media institutions.

However, it will be necessary to investigate the challenges that established instruments of media accountability have to face in the digital age (cf.

EBERWEIN 2010a; EVERS 2009; HEINONEN 2010). Should a press council deal with complaints about journalistic contents on *Facebook* or a news video uploaded to *YouTube*? Should a press council react to a complaint about the online content of a broadcaster or about news published in a portal like *Yahoo!*?

Mapping media accountability: A comparative perspective – Europe and beyond

In general, media accountability instruments already exist in one or the other form in most European countries, but differ from each other considerably with regard to their structures and mechanisms. While distinctive cultures of media accountability do exist in countries like the United Kingdom (cf. the chapter by Jempson/Powell in this book), in Italy or Poland only a few instruments are serving the purpose of media self-regulation. Even countries with close cultural ties show remarkable differences: e.g. readers' councils are quite common in Switzerland, but have until recently been more or less unknown in Germany. And while Germany and Switzerland both have elaborate media accountability cultures, a country as close in geography and culture as Austria is characterized by an absence of most MAIs, with a press council just being revived in 2010 and a TV celebrity tweeting on media and politics as one of the most popular organs of media self-control (cf. the reports written by Karmasin et al., Eberwein and Porlezza/Russ-Mohl in this volume). In France and Italy, with state and non-media conglomerates dominating the media, media self-control often exists in the form of satire, as Baisnée/Balland and Mazzoleni/Splendore show in this volume. The situation is similarly complex in Eastern Europe, as Bădău et al., Głowacki/Urbanik and Loit et al. elaborate in this book: Estonia has two press councils; Poland has three journalists' associations and three codes of ethics, but none of them is effectively monitored. And even in countries like the Netherlands and Finland with long traditions in accountability and a multitude of instruments, established MAIs such as press councils and media journalism in the mass media face numerous problems in the digital age, as Evers/Groenhart and Heikkilä/Kylmäälä point out in this volume.

At the meta-level, media accountability differs between the established democracies of Western Europe, with a relatively long tradition of press freedom as a necessary prerequisite for voluntary media self-control, and the young democracies in Eastern Europe, which experienced half a century with state-controlled media. The two Arab countries which form part of

our study – Tunisia (authored by Ferjani) and Jordan (by Hawatmeh/Pies) – represent semi and wholly autocratic countries with strongly controlled ›media systems in transition‹ (cf. RUGH 2004). In these countries, we have to expect that regimes ›co-opt‹ the concept of media accountability either as another means of control or to misleadingly promote it as their way to developing an independent media. Consequently, MAIs veiled by economic liberalization may only be substitutes for strong regulations and over-seeing of the mass media by the state (cf. FERJANI 2003). However, while Jordan has a political and media system carefully opened up in the early 1990s, transitions in Tunisia’s media system have not been accompanied by an opening up of the political system.

In order to structure this volume, we will employ the model of media systems in Europe (cf. HALLIN/MANCINI 2004), that explains the differences and similarities in journalism cultures by referring to system-related dimensions such as the development of politics and the public sphere, media markets, the journalistic professionalism, as well as the degree and nature of state intervention in media markets. We expect that Hallin/Mancini’s model will partly explain the differences in media accountability, as the authors briefly mention press councils when considering the varying degrees of journalistic professionalism across Europe. For example, the Democratic Corporatist Model may prefer involving different parts of society which can be a reason for the strong position of media councils in Germany and Scandinavia. Italy’s journalism culture is, by contrast, characterized by a strong political parallelism between media and politics. Therefore it is not surprising that media state regulation often appears in disguise of self-regulation.

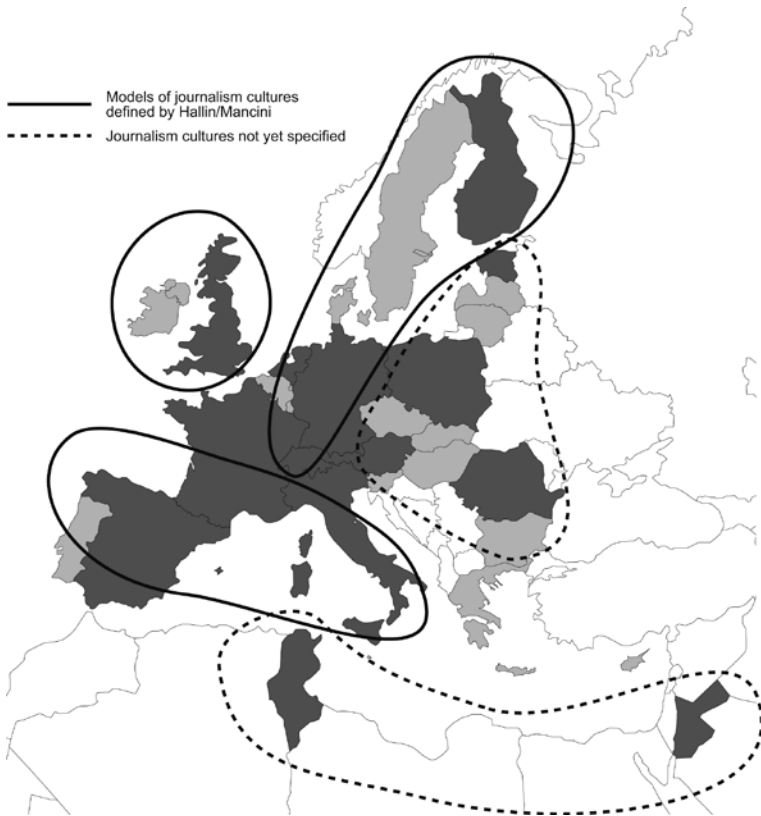
Hallin/Mancini’s well-known model (2004: 67f.) divides media systems and journalism cultures into three groups:

- the Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralist Model (represented in this volume by France, Italy and Spain),
- the North/Central European or Democratic Corporatist Model (represented by Austria, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland), and
- the North Atlantic or Liberal Model (represented by the United Kingdom).

Following the strategy of involving the most contrasting cases (cf. WIRTH/KOLB 2003), this study also includes (cf. Fig. 5):

- Estonia, Poland and Romania as Eastern European countries and
- Jordan and Tunisia as two examples of Arab states.

FIGURE 5
Journalism cultures in Europe and beyond



Source: adapted from Hallin/Mancini 2004

However, as often noted, neither Eastern European media systems nor other continents, apart from the United States, have to date been included in Hallin and Mancini's model. Initial attempts to extend the model towards Eastern Europe and beyond (cf. BLUM 2005) have to be considered insufficient. The socialist history and the previously strongly controlled media systems of Eastern European countries give good reasons to assume that they have their own journalism culture, which can be further divided into sub-cultures. Lauk (2008c), for example, roughly divides Eastern EU member states in two categories by pointing towards the relationship between the political system and the media system. She distinguishes coun-

tries with a relatively broad press freedom but extant substantial state interference (e. g. Poland and Romania) and countries where the media have more successfully distanced themselves from political powers (e. g. Estonia). In general, little is currently known about the status quo and quality of media accountability systems in Eastern Europe, where self-regulation mechanisms were only partly established during transformation processes (cf. THOMASS/TZANKOFF 2001: 247). This book seeks to partially bridge this gap and update existing research.

Conclusions

It will be most interesting to observe how various media accountability instruments fare in the different media systems across Europe and beyond – and how the Internet is changing the landscape of media accountability in the individual countries being studied. We will also see how the journalism cultures represented in this book differ in terms of the degree of MAI institutionalization, and whether the audience has already become a relevant factor. A pertinent issue is that the Hallin/Mancini model may only partly be used to explain the variety of media accountability across Europe. For example, Austria, which Hallin and Mancini classify among the ›Democratic Corporatist‹ group of Northern/Central European countries, resembles the Mediterranean media culture, with regard to the absence of most of the MAIs that can be found in Germany and Finland. Media criticism frequently occurs in the form of entertainment, satire and mockery in France and Romania – both countries also report a high degree of political influence in the media.

Having mapped the field of media accountability research, we define media accountability instruments as *any informal institution, both offline and online, performed by both media professionals and media users, which intends to monitor, comment on and criticize journalism and seeks to expose and debate problems of journalism:*

- *at the individual level (e. g. plagiarism of a single journalist, misquotations in an article),*
- *at the level of media routines (e. g. the acceptance of corruption among journalists),*
- *at the organizational level (e. g. PR influence on editorial decisions in a newsroom), and*
- *at the extra-media level (e. g. state repressions against journalism).*

The most fascinating prospects for media accountability may exist just here, if we consider the sea-changes currently affecting the journalistic profession: newsrooms and resources for research are shrinking at a rapid rate, to name just a couple, and the possibilities of media professionals to exercise media accountability are increasing at the same time. Meanwhile, media users may gather on *Facebook* sites or team up online for crowdfunding a journalism critically investigating the media business. The audience could be engaged in discussions with newsrooms via *Skype* or *Twitter*. Overholser's ›pro-am model‹ (cf. OVERHOLSER 2006) – often exercised by the digital pioneer *Guardian online* – might be extended to media criticism: professional and citizen journalists might join forces to monitor the media both offline and online. However, if citizens collaborate in the production of media criticism, if the lines between journalists and their audiences are blurring – how valuable will the concept of *self-control* then be, and how can it be protected from state interference in the digital age? Many fundamental questions need to be clarified if we want to assess the potential of media accountability in helping secure quality in journalism. Hopefully this book can answer not only some of them, but also provide more raw material for further discussion.