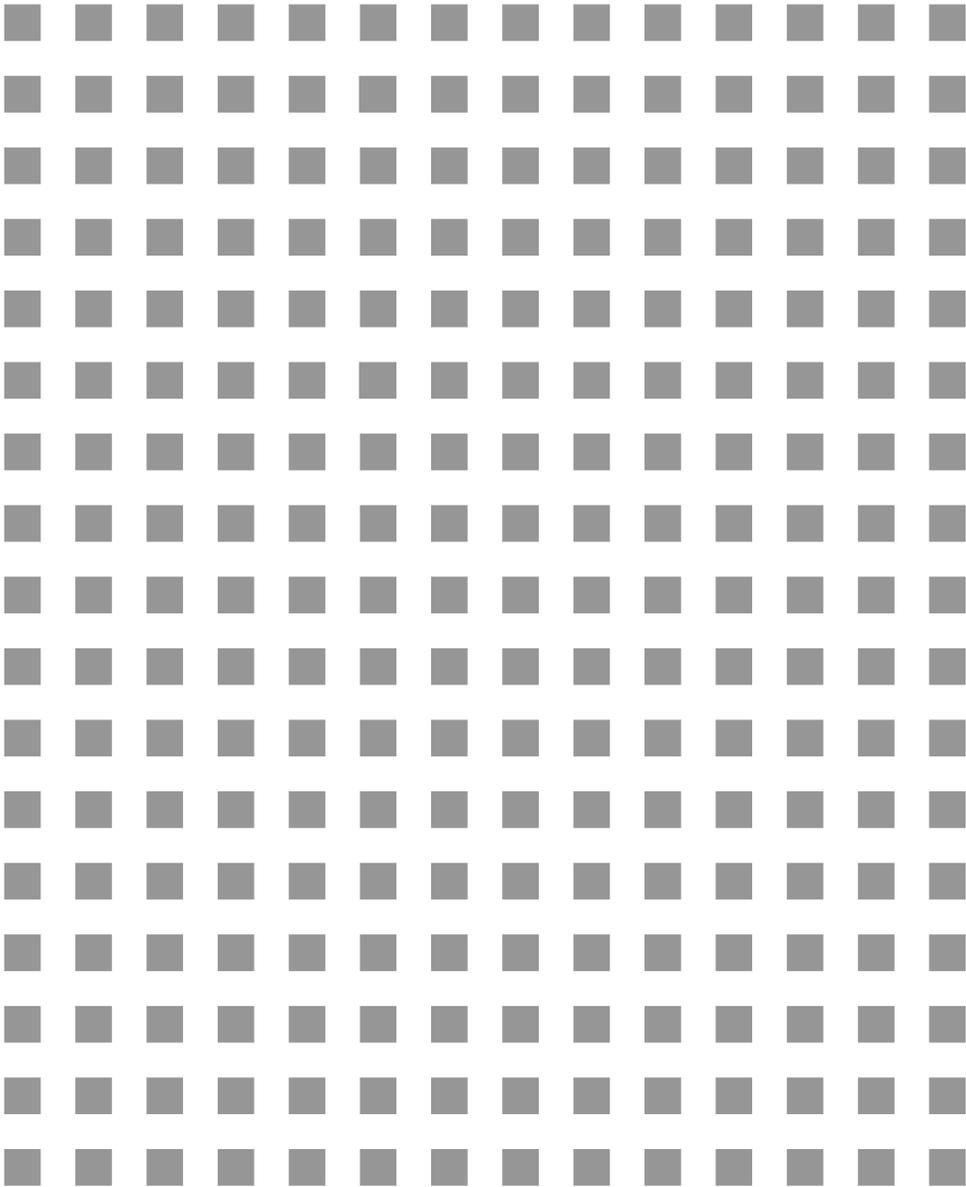


# Book reviews



**Daniel C. Hallin, Paolo Mancini (eds) (2012), *Comparing Media Systems Beyond the Western World*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 345, ISBN 978-I-107-69954-0**

The book *Comparing Media Systems Beyond the Western World* is a continuation, in terms of the examined area and intellectual intent, but not of the examined objective, of the already classic for world media studies work of the authors of *Comparing Media Systems. Three Models of Media and Politics* (Cambridge 2004, Polish edition 2007). The proposed by Hallin i Mancini typology of media systems based on four criteria (development and structure of the media market, forms and the level of political parallelism, role of the state and of the development of professional journalism), verified in vast empirical examinations, has become the most influential classification of systems since the time of the equally known *Four Theories of the Press* (Urbana 1956). The Hallin and Mancini models of media systems which were called Liberal or North Atlantic, Democratic Corporatist or North/Central European and Polarized Pluralist or Mediterranean (hereinafter: three models), despite the indicated imperfections, are currently the point of reference for media researchers all around the world.

As announced by Hallin and Mancini in the introduction, the book attempts to not only create new and exhaustive typologies of media systems for the non-Western world, nor a kind of “universal schema,” but to broaden the area of comparative analysis of systems (p. 2). The creators of the three models of media systems, however, determined that the criteria established by them may turn out to be a very effective tool, not only to “classify” media systems from outside the empirically well examined Western world, but to conduct comparative analyses, search for similarities and differences, and reasons for them (p. 4).

The book includes eleven separate texts written by different authors and an introduction and summary written by Hallin and Mancini. The studies are grouped in two parts from which the first, entitled *Cases*, constitutes a study of seven cases from different countries, the second, however, *Methods and Approaches*, includes texts referring to theoretical, methodological aspects and systematizing the results of the conducted examinations and comparative analyses.

The agreed research perspective in the work is explained by Hallin and Mancini in the introduction by referring to the previous one, in which they used the analysis of data from the works of Western democracies limited to 18 countries from Western Europe and the USA, with usually well developed media but with different historic, social and political backgrounds. The comparative analysis was in this case easier because, despite the differences, these countries have a lot in common. Despite many similarities, the analysis showed that even in such circumstances a one unified “Western model” of media does not exist. Hallin and Mancini declare that the goal of *Comparing Media Systems. Three Models of Media and Politics* was not to create a new universal theory, a successor of the over half-century-old *Four*

*Theories of the Press* which could be “to be applied almost everywhere,” (p. 2). Whatever their intentions were, this is exactly what happened and, thus, the second book is an answer to the spectacular response in the academic world to their first spectacular work. In that second book, the reader encounters the effect of an impressive academic attempt to look at media systems from outside of the Western world from the perspective of the three models created by them.

The case study in the first part (pp. 11–176) presents the work of seven researchers from different academic centers from around the world — from San Diego, through Wrocław and Moscow. The chosen media systems are analyzed by them in the context of the Hallin and Mancini models with the use of the four criteria established by them. Interesting analyses relate to countries from outside of Europe, such as: the Republic of South Africa, Israel, China and Brazil, from which “peripheral powers” became global players also in the field of mass communication. Europe is represented by post-communist countries whose media systems were fully or partially transformed in terms of political and social systems, from closed authoritarian systems to more or less advanced consolidated democracies (Poland, the Baltic States, Russia).

The Polish researcher Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska, in her text *Italianization (or Mediterraneanization) of the Polish Media System? Reality and Perspective*, characterizes the Polish media system as a hybrid of the liberal and Mediterranean system. It should be added that many researchers from Central Eastern Europe classify its native systems — due to their politization and clientelism — as close to the Mediterranean model. Due to that, this direction of transformation is described as “Italianization” of post-communist countries (p. 5). However, as indicated by the author, in the Polish system you can find many Mediterranean features but the level of clientelism is lower, just like the level of political parallelism, thus, as located in the centre of the diagram — between two ideal liberal and polarized pluralism models in which not one model of the areas analyzed by Hallin and Mancini was located.

Auksė Balčytienė, in her study called *Culture as a Guide in Theoretical Explorations of Baltic Media*, comes to conclusions different from those of Dobek-Ostrowska. The polarized pluralism model popular amongst post-communist countries does not fit — in her opinion — to the three described Baltic countries (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) which formed their political and social culture under the influence of very different influences from neighboring countries (Poland, Germany, Sweden and Denmark). The observation that post-communist systems develop in different ways is confirmed by Elena Vartanova in her text called *The Russian Media Model in the Context of Post-Soviet Dynamics*. The Russian system formally did indeed adopt democratic standards in the sphere of media but informal rules and practices cause it to still remain an “imitation” of the Western model. We can identify in it many characteristics of a polarized pluralism or liberal model, but the fundamental differing factor is a strong (sometimes on the brink of being pathological) connection between media, journalists and the state, legitimized by “a shared belief — consciously

or unconsciously — in the regulatory/decisive role of state (or state agencies)” which is characteristic for quasi-authoritarian systems (p. 141).

A similarly large state influence on the media system is seen by Yoram Peri (*The Impact of National Security on the Development of Media Systems: The Case of Israel*) in Israel, where the media system, due to this factor cannot be classified, despite many factors, as fully liberal (p. 25). Such adaptation is precluded by the long-lasting conflict in the Middle East, which is characterized by the strong influence of the state on media and promoting the national consensus under the slogans of a doctrine of national security (p. 21).

The effect of the research in the form of an alternative model for countries with different political and cultural traditions was presented by Adrian Hadland in *Africanizing Three Models of Media and Politics: The South African Experience*. He proposes to reject the “paradigm” of three models (meaning — Eurocentric model) and to approve the “Africanized model” which would include the African specifics: postcolonial development of media in circumstances of an unconsolidated democracy, authoritarianism and endless military conflicts. In Hadland’s opinion, the joint African alternative model is possible because countries from that continent had similar experience in the past, they have a common culture and values, and similar challenges and barriers in development (p. 117). In media systems in Africa, a high level of political parallelism can be observed, escalated by direct interventionism of the state in media and direct relations between media, politics and business. These negative tendencies are increased by the low level of professional journalism, which is the effect of the weak journalism societies which are: subject to multiple types of pressure, weakly organized and very often endangered by repressions (pp. 116–117). New interesting categories of comparative analysis were proposed also by Alfonso de Albuquerque in the text on Brazil (*On Models and Margins: Comparative Media Models Viewed from a Brazilian Perspective*). The author supplemented the criteria of comparative analysis of the three models by relations between peripheral and central media systems (p. 73). The author rightly raises that the dynamics of development of many countries and regions of the world is growing, places in the global hierarchy are more fluid and countries that were seen as “peripheral” are not such today. Brazil is one of them because its media strongly influence other countries through, for example, the production of very popular soap operas — telenovelas (p. 90).

The author who most clearly is distancing himself from searching for the level of similarity between the non-Western systems and the three models, is Yuezhi Zhao (*Understanding China’s Media System in a World Historical Context*). The author presents, in a historic and normative context, the Chinese media model based on the following “foundations”: Lenin’s and Mao’s heritage, traditions of Confucianism, the ideological fight with “Western imperialism” and perceiving values in many spheres (political, cultural, religious) differently than the Western world, in particular, relations with the state (p. 150). Regulatory positivism of the state is included in



*Mancini's Comparative Framework outside the Western World*. Three models based on “four pillars” (criteria of analysis) serving as “ideal types” can, in her opinion, be determined as a universal tool for describing the dynamics of mutual relations between media and politics in different contexts (p. 227). In the author’s opinion, amongst other important factors influencing media which should be considered, are globalization of the markets and the activities of international organizations (EU, World Bank, NGOs). Even the unique nature of media systems born in democracies and created as a result of “the third wave of democratization,” can be described at least in the form of hybrid models, in which factors specific for them condition model characteristics. Such factors that can be easily identified are, for example, a low level of legal culture, which may influence the pluralism and autonomy of media (s. 241) or symbiotic relationships between the sphere of media and authority (p. 245), including important political actors in the form of charismatic leaders (Latin America, Russia). Similar to the issue of hybridization of media systems, Natalia Roudakova in her study called *Comparing Processes: Media, “Transitions” and Historical Change* rightly notes that in the unique “political grey zone” between classic liberal democracy and classic dictatorship there is a permanent process of transformation of systems with mixed features (p. 276).

In their final comments, Hallin and Mancini underline that they would like the joint research effort showed in the reviewed volume to become a “bridge” between their work on the models of media systems and new research which does not have to follow in the direction of one concept or paradigm which is “probably unrealistic and counterproductive” (p. 304), but in the direction of widened comparative media research. *Comparing Media Systems Beyond the Western World* should become an ambitious challenge for the academics of the media and political studies to take up new comparative analysis in the fields of the increasingly global and diverse media systems and their mutual impact on political systems.

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**Edwin Bendyk (2012), *Bunt Sieci (The Web Rebellion)*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Polityka Spółdzielnia Pracy, pp. 208, ISBN 978-83-621-4886-8**

*The Web Rebellion* was written in reaction to the mass protests against Poland being on the verge of signing the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), which is a multinational treaty for the purpose of targeting counterfeit goods as well as establishing standards for intellectual property rights enforcement. The protests took place in January and February 2012 and only a handful of social life scholars had been able to foresee their volume and intensity. The participants of the protests were essentially young people, who did not have much in common, including



Vendetta” of the Wachowski brothers, led the dissatisfied onto the streets, where they learnt that they were changing from a group of individuals into a collective entity, acting together despite the lack of formal leadership (pp. 12–13).

Edwin Bendyk poses the question about the identity of Polish rebels:

Who are they? Are they the descendants of Karl Marx, fighting for cyber-communism and the abolition of ownership, or rather epigones of neoliberalism, children of Leszek Balcerowicz longing for setting the energy of individuals free from redundant limitations imposed by the institutions of the state, which cannot be trusted? Or maybe post-modern followers of nationalistic ideas, encouraged by the slogan “Internet, Honour, Motherland”? (p. 13).

The rebellion was caused by Web kids who grew up with the Internet and on the Internet. Web kids are those, who, in the words of Piotr Czerski, born in 1981, the author of the manifesto *We, the Web Kids*, claim:

[...] we do not “surf” and the Internet to us is not a “place” or “virtual space.” The Internet to us is not something external to reality but a part of it: an invisible yet constantly present layer intertwined with the physical environment. [...] What we value the most is freedom: freedom of speech, freedom of access to information and to culture. We feel that it is thanks to freedom that the Web is what it is, and that it is our duty to protect that freedom. We owe that to future generations, just as much as we owe to protect the environment (pp. 24–25).

Edwin Bendyk claims that the rebellion of the Web started because the old, analogue world of hierarchy has become a new digital world of the Internet. Two incongruent worlds have collided, and the area they fight over is the attitude towards information, communication, knowledge and culture. This is the war of worlds, in which the stake is not only the money from selling music, movies, software or games. The real issue is how we perceive power, freedom, privacy, democracy, the public sphere, ownership and common goods. These two worlds offer a different outlook on information, more specifically — the access to information. In the old world information was not for everyone. The one that had access, had the power. In the new digital world the access to information still matters, but the ever-developing, educated citizens now successfully learn more and owing to the Internet they can share their knowledge with others. Internet browsers and trade platforms have caused profit margins to drop by dozens of percent. Thanks to Wikileaks, even the most top secret information is brought to light. In the old world of hierarchy the access to information was rationed and controlled. In the digital world access to information is a priority and all attempts to restrict it cause fear and protests. It makes the world harder to control. The strike of the Internet in the USA on January 18, 2012 was a clear demonstration of the issue. The English version of Wikipedia blocked access to its resources for 24 hours. The slogan “Can you imagine the world without free access to knowledge?” was used to draw Internet users’ attention to the matter.

The Web kids approached the problem the way Y-generation usually does, that is as if it was a project, a task to tackle in the most effective way. They are the representatives



How to write a good book? What must a literary work of art consist of to deserve the name of an interesting achievement? What to write about? These and many other questions are answered by Jacek Dąbała in his book *Tajemnica i suspens w sztuce pisania. W kręgu retoryki dziennikarskiej i retoryki medialnej* [Mystery and Suspense in the Art of Writing. Journalistic Rhetoric and the Rhetoric of the Media]. In an extremely accessible way the author provides the reader with all the most important elements of knowledge on the art of book writing and reveals the secrets indispensable to all students of this art who want to trust their own abilities and set pen to paper.

In the first part of the book, the author describes the phenomenon of *Creative Writing: Its History and Problems*. The chapter presents a wide spectrum of the most important stages of the emergence of creative writing as literary art. Against the background of the evolution, the author endeavours to present the complexity of debate and controversy that, at the beginning of the second half of the 20th century, established creative writing as an independent academic discipline. In the course of discussions — continuing over decades — on various issues of this discipline concerned with both fiction and non-fiction, Dąbała shows both positive, i.e. approving, and critical attitudes of literary theorists towards this field of knowledge. In this scientific debate and polemic, the author himself emphasizes the place and meaning of facts and the truth of the reality. In the further part of this chapter he also describes the evolution of Creative Writing basic problems that can be divided into textual (plot, dialogue, style, characters) and extra-textual (psychological, technical and market-related knowledge about writing). The author analyses each of those elements, providing rich illustrating material drawn from the best-known and most popular books.

The two following chapters are: *Mystery — the Basic Method of Constructing a Literary Plot* and *Suspense, or the Art of Evoking Emotions in Creative Writing*. The art of writing, according to Dąbała, is an art of constructing a plot, and inside it — of asking the reader compelling questions, and skilfully delaying giving answers. There may be two kinds of questions: those reaching forward to the future (suspense) and those reaching backward to the past (mystery).

Following chronologically the logic of constructing the plot and sequence of events in a book, the author first addresses various arcana of creating “mystery” hidden at the very depth of the story. He believes that they can all be brought back to inventing the way in which the character himself/herself would solve that mystery. To create it, it may be useful to design an appropriate background, i.e. geographic and social circumstances, the emergence of particular events and situations related to the character with his/her inner experience: doubts, faith, reactions. According to Dąbała, mystery consists in continuous solving in a text an intriguing riddle, something that seems to be “brewing.” The task of a writer is, in turn, to keep balance between amazement, doubt and surprise. This should be accompanied by the reader’s subjective guesses that strengthen the secret and make it — in a certain sense — immortal. The mystery stirs the curiosity of a reader, posing a lot of questions without



work's structure and the protagonist with his/her inner experience and mystery that is supposed to be eventually solved — delimit the foundations and directions of the work that every one of us can undertake having read Dąbała's book.

In my opinion, the book by Jacek Dąbała is an extremely valuable scientific study that concisely presents the most important components of the basic aspects of the art of writing. Due to its rich contents and light literary form, the book is an extremely valuable publication describing the success of books that have already been created and guaranteeing the success of those that are to be written. A particularly important advantage of the book is the fact that to explain various theoretical mechanisms of the art of writing and writer's "craft," the author gives numerous examples drawn from well-known and highly valued novels, which helps him elucidate individual components of mystery and emotional tension. Undoubtedly, Dąbała's manual, being a practical guide on how to write a book, is also a priceless source of knowledge about the components and contents of a literary work of art, and consequently helps to read books and understand them better.

In my opinion, Dąbała's study is a valuable handbook for students of journalism and for all those who strive to learn the arcana of the dramatic art at the level of writing, image and sound. Therefore, revealing the secrets of creative book writing, it may also provide great help in creating films or radio and television programmes.

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**Katarzyna Gajlewicz-Korab (2012), *Obraz muzułmanów we Francji w tamtejszych tygodnikach opinii* (The image of Muslims in France in the Opinion of Local Weekly Magazines). Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPRA-JR, pp. 227, ISBN 978-83-7545-321-8**

In the spring of 2012 the book by Katarzyna Gajlewicz-Korab entitled *The Image of Muslims in France in the Opinion of Local Weekly Magazines* appeared on the Polish market. The author devoted her book to the analysis of an interesting and important issue, not only for religious reasons, but also social, political and cultural ones. She examined the image of Muslims in France in the most influential opinion forming weekly newspapers representing different political options. It is worth emphasizing that this publication has qualities of both political science and media competent work.

It is well known that public feelings associated with the Muslim community in France are very tight. There is no doubt that in order to regulate the situation of the Muslim community, special rights, particularly in regard to religion, should be granted to them. In modern, secular France, which takes care of the equality of all



The results once again confirmed the thesis that only events in which the members of the Muslim minority were engaged had an impact on the variety and number of press articles.

Examining the subject matter of the published materials, the author relied on the clearly designed categorial key, consisting of eight categories, namely: social, political, religious, economic, terroristic, criminal, moral, and other. Due to this approach to the material analyzed she created an accurate picture of the Muslim minority in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, *Le Point* and *L'Express*. It is worth noting that the researched body of material was also analyzed in terms of features such as the authorship of the text, the tone of the statements or the genres of the analyzed materials.

In my opinion, the clear and transparent design of the book allows the reader to explore both French media system problems and the issues related to the presence of Muslims in a European country.

A relevant advantage of the reviewed book is also the rich literature used in the writing, especially in the first and second chapter, and an extensive source texts, both in Polish and French. I would also like to emphasize the precise language and the fluency of the narrative, which makes reading a pleasure.

I think that this is an extremely valuable publication, especially for Polish readers, whose knowledge of Islam is much more limited than the average Frenchman's and who use French media much less frequently than English media.

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**Tobias Eberwein, Susanne Fengler, Epp Lauk, Tanja Leppik-Bork (eds) (2011), Mapping Media Accountability in Europe and Beyond. Köln: Herbert von Halem Verlag, pp. 267, ISBN 978-3-86962-038-1**

The need for responsible and accountable media is now more important than ever and media organizations and journalists are well aware of this. This is related to several factors. First, over the past decade the discontent on media performance has increased. In Europe we see an incident-driven picture of scandals where the press has been involved, such as the hacking scandal in the UK in July 2011, which amounted to the Leveson Inquiry and in March 2012 the bus accident in Switzerland where many Dutch and Belgian children died and various media published private pictures of the deceased children. Second, the use of the Internet has not only fuelled optimism about democratic participation and active citizenship, now that everyone can contribute to media coverage, but it has also undermined the credibility of media coverage as citizens are not too keen on keeping to journalistic ethical principles. Can we trust what we read in the newspaper, and know which websites are reliable



common accountability instruments, such as the press council, the ombudsman and letters to the editors, are considered instruments anchored inside the journalistic profession. But, media journalism, which is plotted as internal journalism, could also be on the other side of the scale, as it means not more than that there is media coverage about the media. The “instrument” media journalism becomes even more unclear when discussed in different countries. While we can speak of a form of accountability when there is a critical coverage on the way media perform, most examples are of any type of media or journalism coverage or media trade journals, which do not automatically deal with media criticism or have the aim of holding the media to account. Other examples of instruments outside of journalism are research and NGO’s, also derived from Bertrand. What these instruments mean remains unclear in this book, which is disappointing in a rigorous attempt to concretize the concept of accountability in a clear typology.

Following the introductory chapter, the succeeding sections cover an analysis per country. Until recently academic literature on accountability often remained at a theoretical or policy level with little empirical research. This research provides a practical analysis of the concept and also extends its borders past Western European countries. This is a valuable asset to examine how journalistic culture, political system and historical background influence the type and amount of used instruments and the reason for their success or failure.

Each chapter is built up in the same systematic way, providing an introduction and overview of the country’s journalistic culture and media system after which the instruments are described, divided in established and innovative instruments. This provides interesting parallels across countries. Surprisingly, countries that have similar cultures and are geographically located close to each other, such as Germany, Switzerland and Austria, have different accountability measures. While Germany and Switzerland have an established culture of accountability, Austria just reintroduced its press council in 2010.

The different chapters show that new technologies have provided more opportunities for media to be held to account and to provide more transparency. The editor-in-chief of the public broadcaster in the Netherlands, for example, writes weblogs to justify or provide explanations for mistakes made. Also some ombudsmen in different countries have an online forum to connect with the public. The instruments do raise the question as to their innovative character. The fact that there is a new platform where accountability can take place does not mean that the accountability act itself is new. When large mistakes were made, editors-in-chief used to write a commentary in the newspaper and in the past the ombudsman connected with the public through email or by phone. What makes online accountability instruments innovative is the fact that the relationship between media and the public becomes more accessible and approachable, and this is both a prerequisite as a consequence of a good accountability system.

This book shows the advantages of large-scale comparative research. It provides a comprehensive overview of accountability, crossing borders past Western European countries. It also takes into account new developments, particularly the advent of new technologies. This research shows that the variety in media accountability instruments is very much dependent on the development of the professional culture and the role of civil society. Countries of the Democratic Corporatist model (Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland) and the Liberal model (the United Kingdom) show to be the most advanced in media accountability practices, while France and Italy from the Polarized Pluralized model have relatively little variety in instruments. The Central and Eastern European countries (Estonia, Poland, Romania) are still in the early development stage, while in the Arab states (Tunisia and Jordan) accountability does not work due to restricted media freedom.

Nevertheless, this book also shows the pitfalls of such large-scale research. The book remains at a descriptive level, providing an overview of accountability instruments. But the existence of these mentioned instruments is only half of the story. The starting point of self-regulation is that media not only introduce instruments, but actually also cooperate in using them and create a journalistic culture where transparency and self-reflection become more for the common good. In some chapters the implementation of the instruments is mentioned briefly, but most chapters remain with an overview of the existing instruments or measures.

Even though more and more instruments of accountability are present and new technologies have provided even more opportunities, if instruments are not used or journalists do not cooperate in implementing them, then the concept of accountability loses its value.

For instance, the Netherlands is a country where, as described in the book, many instruments exist and only in recent years many newsrooms have initiated new forms. However, underlying this, there is still a very defensive attitude among journalists towards opening up to the public and the profession. At this point even the future of the Press Council is not sure, as many prominent media do not feel the need to support it or financially contribute to it. As they say, media organizations believe they can handle the complaints better by themselves. Ironically, in practice this is hardly done.

This example shows that the existence of accountability instruments alone is not sufficient for a healthy media accountability environment. Further research is needed into the implementation of accountability. And this has not been untouched by the researchers of MediaAct as this book is only the first in a sequence. Following books will deal with media accountability activities online and the perception of European journalists on media accountability. Moreover, the research group will also bring out a guidebook with best practices of media accountability.

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