Introduction

Shifts in media technologies have been at the centre of the debates about the latest shifts in politics. While new media are now referred to as one of the main underlying factors for the era of post-truth and the rise of populists, some years ago they were celebrated for enabling horizontal communication which would pave the way for horizontal power structures. As Jan Rohgalf, one of the authors in this chapter, puts it: "Hitherto hailed as tools of democratisation and the weapon of choice against autocrats worldwide, social media recently became the target of a lot of finger-pointing".

While there are many interpretations about the meanings and consequences of the shift happening in media, the shift itself remains without doubt: traditional media is losing its power to distribute news. For centuries, the dissemination of information was in the hands of those who created it, who then sent it to the masses for consumption through printed newspapers, radio and television broadcasts. Today, gathering almost 1.8 billion users, Facebook is already the largest media company on the planet with advertising sales of billions of dollars a year. In a digital era where information loses its limits and boundaries and content flows between Instagram, Snapchat and videos on Facebook, the need to organise beyond the nation state becomes not necessary, but mandatory for media and communication experts and activists.

As Robin Mansell reminds us, living in a "digitally mediated society" means that not only the visible streams of information are of importance but also the invisible streams of data and their management by algorithms.

In a time of post-truth, how can we combat the rise of a false reality? Which media infrastructure is necessary for alternative narratives that finally bring transnational agenda to the citizens? What can be learned from existing alternative media platforms in this regard? Is social media

still offering resources for new ways of protest? And how do we deal with the new power of algorithms when for most of us they are blackboxes? While the first and the last article address some of these questions from a theoretical standpoint, the contributions in between come from voices that already are proposing and implementing new models of media, successfully shifting the mainstream narrative and responding to the rise of nationalism.

The chapter opens with Jan Rohgalf, researcher at the University of Rostock, pointing out the similarities between the structure of social media and communication strategies of populist actors. Alena Krempaska and Peter Weisenbacher from the Human Rights Institute in Bratislava, analyse the change in Slovakia's media which is as vicious as it is representative for the situation in many Central and Eastern European countries. Adam Ramsay, editor at openDemocracy UK, presents his reflections on the possibilities of establishing a transnational media agenda that helps breaking boundaries in Europe and beyond. Jakub Dymek, journalist and analyst for Krytyka Polityczna in Poland, explains new forms of transnational cooperation and exchange of information between journalists. The chapter continues with two interviews presenting innovative examples of journalism in Europe: Esther Alonso, marketing director at eldiario.es, explains the working process and structure behind the online newspaper *eldiario.es* and Ramy Al-Asheq, founder of Abwab, explains the origins, objectives and challenges of launching *Abwab,* the first newspaper for newcomers in Germany. In the last article of the chapter Robin Mansell, Professor of New Media at the London School of Economics, thinks about the back-end of our "digitally mediated societies" and asks whether algorithms can be subjected to governance.