

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

its role as a natural, structural role of the state's responsibility for "common social values based on Confucianist values" (p. 151). In order to understand the Chinese model of journalism which Yuezhi Zhao calls the "commercialization without independence" and "professionalization without guarantees" (p. 162), instrumentalization of media should be seen as part of the mission "to enlighten the public to recognize their and the nation's interests" and the response to the need to be "the conscience of society and the voice of people" (p. 164). Zhao also notes that the state's ownership of media does not dominate the media system in all spheres, leaving them and the recipients lost of possibilities and discretion. There is more control in the sphere of information media but the communist party is not as rigorous as it used to be in terms of production and distribution, and entertainment or business media (p. 153). Zhao underlines the paradox of the fact that one of the most tightly controlled media systems generated "some of the most lively and spontaneous challenges to the politics of neoliberal development" (p. 171) and dynamic media market, whose commercialization and development cause the Chinese global project, soft power, to become more and more attractive for the world, in opposition to the Western media plunging in a crisis (p. 173).

The second part of the book *Methods and Approaches* includes texts covering issues related to media systems in a wider perspective, including methodological possibilities (and rightness) of using the comparatist method of Hallin and Mancini for the analysis of systems from outside of the Western world or creating models based on the phenomenon of the nowadays observed transnationality of media systems.

From the perspective of the Hallin and Mancini models, Marwan M. Kraidy (*The Rise of Transnational Media Systems: Implications of Pan-Arab Media for Comparative Research*) the arising transnational pan-Arabic system is seen as a hybrid of the liberal and polarized pluralism models (p. 199). The modern development of 22 separate markets is characterized by the tendency to create a regional pan-Arabic market which — as transnational and, at the same time, fitting in the global system — preserves its uniqueness: external distinctive features as a region (Arabic language, religion, culture) and internal diversity (from the conservatism of Saudi Arabia to the relatively liberal Lebanon).

The difficulty with using the criteria of the comparatist method proposed by Hallin and Mancini to the analysis of countries from Asia, from Japan and South Korea to Vietnam and China, has resulted in Duncan McCargo in *Partisan Polyvalence: Characterizing the Political Role of Asian Media* not proposing the pan-Asian model. He states, however, just like Zhao earlier, that such alternative models can be distinguished and "it is clear that the rise of China does offer an alternative way of understanding future political directions for both the Asia Pacific region and the rest of the world" (p. 222). In accordance with McCargo, China as the new global power is a challenge for the current models of development of the Western type which are not a "global norm" but rather an exception in the world (p. 145). A slightly different view is presented by Katrin Voltmer in her study called *How Far Media Systems Travel? Applying Hallin and*

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 wale 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