

DANIELA DIMITROVA (ED.). GLOBAL JOURNALISM: UNDERSTANDING WORLD MEDIA SYSTEMS. ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD PUBLISHERS, PP 258. ISBN: 1538146851.

Many researchers, especially in the Western world, hold that media and thus journalism is in severe crisis, and the profession is threatened by several internal and external phenomena such as the change of the media environment, digitalization, the emergence of social media, political pressure and commercialization. However, if one looks at this claim a bit closer, it might turn out that these statements and the corresponding worries are mostly coming from the Western countries, and typically reflect the values and belief systems of these regions. Therefore, when researchers analyze the field of journalism and media from a one-sided and less flexible Western perspective, the outcomes and conclusions might fail to understand the unique nature of media systems and media cultures that differ not only from region to region, but also from country to country. Without understanding the given region's cultural, historical, economic, political, and societal particularities, our chances to examine complex communicational systems authentically remain close to zero.

In the edited volume entitled *Global Journalism: Understanding World Media Systems* Daniela Dimitrova and her colleagues offer new ways of approaching media systems by taking both the local context and technological changes into account. The editor indicates in the preface that the book's purpose is not to approach world media systems and global journalism with a normative lens:

A basic premise in this book is that there is no ideal media system. While it may be easy to see the media in dichotomous terms—free versus censored, open versus closed, one-sided versus diverse, or objective versus subjective, the book cautions against simple generalizations. (p.14)

Since publications in the field of communication and media research come mostly from the perspective of Western researchers, to avoid ethnocentrism, Dimitrova invited twenty-two authors from twelve countries to offer a geographically more diverse outlook.

The book is structured in three parts. Part one focuses on the key concepts, in which authors address basic concepts in global journalism such as news flows,

the role of technology, media freedom, journalistic cultures, digital era, and journalism ethics and journalists' responsibilities in the 21th century.

Part two elaborates on the world's regions. In this part of the book, the authors offer a wide and deep insight into the world's regions and their media cultures. In these chapters, the reader can not only understand how the professional practices and values can vary between regions and countries, but they can also have a view on what factors can shape media systems across cultural contexts. The authors take us on a journey to Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, North Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, Western and Northern Europe, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, and North America.

Part three looks at global issues, events and topics that have deep and significant effects on the audiences on a worldwide scale. In the three chapters of this final part, the authors discuss the digital transformation of international and national news agencies, international conflicts and crises, and the relation of public diplomacy and international communication. Without any 'simple generalizations', these chapters outline that throughout the still developing globalization of societies, media technologies might influence—to various extents—all those countries that are not disconnected from the global communication chain.

In an introductory chapter, prior to the first part, Daniela Dimitrova provides a framework for the study of global media systems by combining the most important features of existing media models. As mentioned before, Dimitrova argues for a more a detailed, non-normative approach. Thus the book defines global journalism as the following: “*journalism produced within a specific media system, which is typically a national-level media system, embedded within a regional and global network.*” (p. 24.) The author claims that the framework offered by the book builds

[...] on the core principles of previous models, (...) it aims to present a comprehensive, multidimensional model that captures the effects of several macro-level factors simultaneously, while acknowledging that additional elements may be at play at the micro level. This type of approach is fluid and enables scholars to determine relationships between systems while, at the same time, identifying regional patterns. (p. 24)

Daniela Dimitrova's edited book covers a wide range of topics from fake news to media ethics. The new and more nuanced media model that the book offers relies on synthesizing various media theories and empirical data, which can hopefully help researchers to understand more about the peculiarities of the world's media systems. At the end of each chapter the authors set questions based on their studies, which clearly indicates that this book is not only a textbook for

scholars and researchers but it is also an object to trigger the critical thinking of students learning about global journalism and media systems.

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