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**WĘGLIŃSKA AGNIESZKA (2021), PUBLIC TELEVISION IN POLAND. POLITICAL PRESSURE AND PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA IN A POST-COMMUNIST COUNTRY, PP. 135.**

In a book called “Public Television in Poland. Political Pressure and Public Service Media in a Post-communist Country” deals with the topical current problem of the functioning of Polish public television (TVP) in the conditions of unchanging interest of politicians from the perspective of journalists working there. The presentation of the outlined problem through the eyes of journalists was motivated by several reasons. Primarily, it is a journalist who influences the selection of information. Secondly, based on selected information, television programs are prepared, and thus journalists are responsible for the content broadcast, which should be part of the public mission to which the public broadcaster is obliged to fulfil. Due to the obligations, incumbent on journalists, they are perceived as guarantors of democracy, but, as the author rightly points out, it is possible only if journalists are guaranteed autonomy and independence from political actors and the market. It is worth noting that these are only theoretical assumptions that must always be verified by reality. This is the subject of this book.

The author’s aim of the book is to analyze the work of TVP journalists in the context of the implementation of public tasks specified in the Broadcasting Act and the documents binding within the public broadcaster. The author also considered it justified to pay attention to a much broader context concerning the discussed issues. The author did so by referring to the existing theoretical findings in the field of public broadcasters, the situation of this type of broadcaster in other post-communist countries, European media legislation implemented in the Member States, methods of media financing, relations between public broadcasters and politicians, and the role of journalists in a democratic system.

The following research questions were subordinated to the implementation of this goal: (1) In what aspects does TVP draw on the guidelines of the EU institutions and international organisations? (2) In what aspects does TVP reflect the tendencies present across CEE media systems? (3) How did the transformation of TVP proceed in terms of the change from communism to liberal democracy? (4) In what areas is TVP subject to the political or market influence? (5) How exactly is the remit of TVP defined? (p. 4).

The above questions, all characterized by a high level of generality, were supplemented with specific questions: (1) How do the legislator regulations regarding PSM work in practice with reference to TVP? (2) How do the journalists understand and pursue public objectives? (3) How has the multi – platform nature of new media changed contemporary television journalism? (4) To what extent do the way of managing the broadcaster, structural changes and job security translate into the situation of the network’s journalists? (5) Do the journalists of TVP identify with the brand and its objectives? (p. 4-5).

The book consists of two parts, with two separate chapters within each of them. The first part of the book is theoretical. It presents the concept of public broadcasters from the perspective of both Western European and post-communist countries. The first chapter discusses the concepts of creating and defining a public service broadcaster. Therefore, the four basic models of public electronic media management (governmental, professional, parliamentary and civic) and the factors taken into account by Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini in the classification of media and political systems prepared by them were recalled.

Subsequently, attention was drawn to the technological changes that took place in the area of broadcasters and recipients, which inevitably forced the redefinition of the public broadcaster and its goals. The second chapter presents the models of public media that developed in post-communist countries in Europe after the period of systemic transformation that took place since 1989. This chapter recalls the theoretical investigations in this area made by the team of Michael Brüggemann and Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska. Moreover, examples of simultaneous transformation of the media system in two post-communist countries, the Czech Republic and Hungary, were discussed in detail. By juxtaposing these two examples, it is possible to capture convergent but distinct points, proving that despite a similar past, the treatment of public service broadcasters may differ.

The second part of the book is entirely devoted to journalism in Polish public television. The third chapter focuses on Polish public television. The functioning of the state broadcaster in the Polish People’s Republic (PRL) and the simultaneous transformation of the political, economic, social and media system from the communist regime to liberal democracy were discussed in detail. This, as the author explains resulted in the adoption of the Broadcasting Act constituting the foundations for the activities of Polish public television and commercial television. This chapter also presents all the necessary information to understand the conditions, in which public television operates: the internal structure, the goals and the principles of financing its existence.

Chapter four is the longest and, at the same time, empirical part of the book. The methodology of the conducted research was presented and properly justified, as well as formulated hypotheses and the research procedure explained. The study covered 44 journalists who had been working for at least several years

in public television and representing various TVP branches (located across parts of Poland). The research comprised conducting and recording interviews, during which the issues of interest to the author were raised. Thus, several key categories for the study were distinguished: diversity, objectivity, journalistic responsibility, tabloidization and commercialization, influence on recipients, technological transformation, intergenerational relations, safety and comfort of work, as well as politicization and pressure from politicians. It is important to appreciate the multiplicity and variety of topics discussed. This allowed for a comprehensive treatment of the outlined issues.

It is also worth mentioning that the book is supplemented with several tables and graphs prepared by the author, which perfectly illustrate and complement the content. The rich bibliography also deserves special attention.

Summing up, it should be emphasized that in the reviewed book it is extremely valuable to supplement theoretical investigations, both general and detailed, by large-scale empirical research. In this way, the author of the publication comprehensively illustrated the subject of research and exhaustively answered the research questions, which guide her. Therefore, it should certainly be considered that the findings made in the book „Public Television in Poland. Political Pressure and Public Service Media in a Post-communist Country” constitute an extremely important contribution to the existing arrangements regarding Polish public television, which is a crucially important element of the Polish media system.

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