Intermediate Journalistic Cultures. International Comparative Studies in Journalism

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ABSTRACT

Defining journalistic culture is a complex process as it is necessary to explain on a general level the nature of culture is as a lifestyle. The attitudes of journalists are broadly embedded within meaning spheres that shape typical and traditional values of a common professional conduct. Throughout the last century, Western journalistic culture is taken as reference at all times to act as a model for imitation. However, this article presents the contextualization of different journalistic cultures as informative practice that currently varies from place to place and is determined by the different social, political, cultural and economic situation. The multiplicity-or multipolarity- in journalism, has led to the study of so-called intermediate journalistic cultures defined by having different features of the Western journalistic culture. Today, more than ever, those fragmented cultures mould and develop the static and mono-based standardization of all international journalistic features. The following study clarifies the singularities of journalistic cultures in different regions around the globe. It is a huge task, but necessary to underpin the theoretical notions of an important line of research born in recent decades: international comparative studies in journalism.

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Introduction

Defining journalistic culture is a complex process as it is necessary to explain on a general level what culture is as a lifestyle. The attitudes of journalists are broadly embedded within meaning spheres that shape typical and traditional values of a common professional conduct. This concept is at the border that shapes national cultures (Hofstede, 1980). To Hanitzsch (2007: 374), journalistic culture includes: a) the whole of the main orientations (values, attitudes and beliefs) and b) practices and artifacts (products and texts) present in the work of professionals of the information.

Journalistic culture, therefore, builds the identity features of the roles and routines that, in the abstract context, represent the symbolic framework of a collective. His knowledge, then, is essential to the journalist because journalistic culture defines the perimeter that surrounds his work. According to Esser (2004: 155), different cultures cannot be understood as communities of homogeneous values, but rather as hybrids that involve national traditional elements linked to other international, interacting with each other dynamically.

Throughout the last century, Western journalistic culture is taken as reference acting at all times as a model for imitation. But sometimes this imitation excludes the reality of the informative practices, as they vary from place to place, determined by the different social, political, cultural and economic situations. After the examination of the most relevant works published around the World, in this article we present the contextualization of different journalistic cultures. The multiplicity -or multipolarity- in journalism, has led us to study the so-called *intermediate journalistic cultures* defined by having different features of the *Western journalistic culture*. As can be seen in the figure presented above, in the following pages we describe two groups of regional journalistic routines depending on contextual factors:

This conceptualization can be very useful to develop comparative international studies, as it shows two hegemonic models with their particularities. Thus, in our contribution we have tried to achieve the next research objectives:

1) To draw a global map of journalistic practices.

2) To describe the different informative cultures innate to each region of the World.

Fig. 1   Hegemonic journalistic cultures in the World
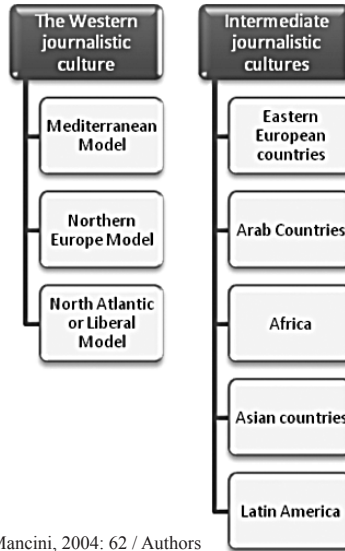
Source: Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 62 / Authors

3) To explain the concept of "intermediate journalistic cultures".
4) Justify the use of international comparative studies in the analysis of different journalistic cultures.

Today, more than ever, phenomena like globalization demand a deeper understanding of the fragmented cultures which mould and develop the static and mono-based standardization of all international journalistic features.

Conceptual Basis of Intermediate Journalistic Cultures

From concept of *cultural intermediaries* suggested by Bourdieu (1984: 359) and from the point of view of Zelizer (2004: 52) who speaks about journalists as an *interpretive community* based on subjective selection, the author provides a re-conceptualization of the role of media and journalists in countries where the journalistic culture differs from that of the concept of Western journalistic culture. Bourdieu (1984: 99-114), through his social field theory highlighted in his book *Distinction: A social critique of the judgment of taste* of 1984, and defines the boundaries of journalism as a profession, and how it intersects with other professional fields such as politics and the economy.

So, from the point of view of Bourdieu (1984) and Zelizer (2004), we note that journalism in developing countries and in undemocratic political regimes, it can also create a media community with particular characteristics based on a common set of rules. Thus, establishing a determinate field of work that unravels the different professional identities within modern journalistic culture in these countries, which are defined based on the concept of presentation and representation, given by Bourdieu (1984).

Zelizer (2007: 25) states that journalism is shown as an interpretative social field of the community in which it is located, with its own rules. A circumstance that makes that journalism appears in a state of constant negotiation and *relativization* with respect to different cultural perspectives. This argument leads us to propose three fundamental points in the processing and analysis of journalists as part of the social media fields:

1) The definition of journalists as such in their societies and scholars in their respective studies.

2) Possible definitions of journalism in these intermediate journalistic cultures.

3) The problem in locating a unified and homogeneous organization due to decentralization in media.

To understand intermediate journalistic cultures it is necessary to:

1) Define journalists as symbolic producers, able to conceptualize and build and transmit meanings of cultural forms. Moreover, are able to articulate and disseminate ideologies that identify a nation. Journalistic cultures influenced by either concept cannot adapt to other cultures and people, therefore it cannot communicate competently at intercultural and multicultural levels. In large multicultural environments, according Sonwalkar (2004: 112-113), due to the phenomena of multiculturalism, local cultures and different policies (re)presented in the country, must be worked in a way that improves the democratization local. As well as this sense of nationalism and the regional cohesion, it is necessary to better understand and integrate with global cultures and politics.

In many cases, certain ethnocentrism and individualism tendencies by the dominant or dominated journalistic cultures may become unavoidable and even functional, from the point of view of conservation of the native culture. Therefore, to better understand cultural diversity journalism across the globe, the article presents below the defining characteristics of main cultural groups, defined as intermediate journalistic cultures

2) Emphasize the relevance of these managers as symbolic because those countries (postcolonial, developing or under undemocratic regimes) are major producers of strategic meanings that order the reality (Mahon, 2000).

Following the *Mass media declaration* by UNESCO in 1978, the public debate about media control and granting of licenses in authoritarian regimes in the Third World began. These documents, at all times, were taken as liberal principles concretized in the freedom of the Western press (Golding and Harris, 1997: 5). However, it seems inappropriate to perform a theoretical foundation based solely on media. Like Khondler (2000), this study suggests an approach to globalization away from a reductionist concept focused exclusively on the economic or exploitation relationship, because it is believed think that globalization is a multidimensional and complex process that must consider other factors associated with symbolic notions of cultural diversity and identity.

Although sometimes, as Zelizer (2007: 21) purports, Western journalistic culture (dominated by the Anglo-American variant) is often taken as example or standard. As well as for social, political, economic and cultural features, there are currently numerous distinctive journalistic practices throughout world determined by the contexts in which they are located. Today, there are common and differentiating features that define forms of practicing journalism worldwide. These singularities are what lead us to try to clarify the common and distinctive features of the journalistic culture in different regions of the globe.

The Western Journalistic Culture

When speaking of Western journalistic culture it should be noted that media systems are not homogeneous, because they have specific characteristics; specific political systems; communication variables; and social, technological and economic factors that define different journalistic cultures (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 271). Moreover, most countries do not consist of a single communication and media system with a single goal or philosophy, but rather the model is created according to the diversity and freedom of access to the media or the social and cultural order established (McQuail, 1999).

The current Western democratic societies comprise semi-autonomous institutions ordinates in fields (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991). According to this scheme, journalism is the field that develops the limits of autonomy between the state and the capitalist market. This structure of journalism, as Benson describes (2010b: 616), causes information content to be created, first, according to the journalistic field position with respect to other bigger fields such as political or economic; and second, to its own journalistic internal factors, such as cultural logics, historically based on the practices and social class differences.

Hanitzsch and colleagues (2011: 286) proposed, in a study mapping journalistic cultures across nations: a comparative study of 18 countries, with distinctive features that define the Western journalistic culture: 1) The separation of journalism and government organs, 2) the non-interference or intermediation in the affairs to be treated and, 3) the journalist acts as controller and observer of the political and economic elites.

To analyze the Western journalistic culture, Hallin and Mancini (2004: 19) proposed four dimensions:

1) The development of markets for the media.

2) The political parallels and links between the media and political parties.

3) The development of professionalism of journalists.

4) The degree and nature of state intervention in the media system.

From these dimensions a framework of analysis is devised based on the following models: 1) Mediterranean Model or Pluralist Polarized: where are found France, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain; 2) Northern Europe Model or Corporative Democratic: where are found Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland and; 3) North Atlantic or Liberal Model: where are Britain, the United States, Canada and Ireland.

This design shows structurally-distinct differences in national journalistic cultures in Western nations. Something that was proposed by Weaver (1998) in The Global Journalist, by setting guidelines based on the analysis of the profiles of journalists and socio-demographic variables such as sex, age, education, ethnicity and the labor market. Today, the so-called globalized journalism crosses national and cultural borders (Löffelhoz and Weaver, 2008: 3). The *global character* of the journalistic culture has spread from North America and Europe -which have acted as the epicenter to whole world, thanks to technological advances. This situation has led to new journalistic context based in the hybridization.

Intermediate Journalistic Cultures

The research in communication conducted in the past century has been influenced by political, economics and sociological models; examples of these approaches are the divisions between the First, Second and Third World, or between the North and South. These terms develop a center-peripheral approach. According to Mowlana (1997), in order to investigate the communication problems in a more integral

way, academics have to go deeper and incorporate these models in their analysis and linguistic and social-cultural frameworks (Hanusch, 2009: 613). Recent trends in communication research emphasize the need to consider other factors based on a consensus of the actions of all interests, needs and abilities of those involved (Malikhao and Servaes, 2007: 1). Thus, it can be seen how this field has increased qualitatively (studies increasingly deepened through their analysis in this area) and quantitatively (increasingly number of scholars from many parts of our planet work on this area within journalism).

Comparative studies on international traditional journalistic culture have progressively increased in recent years -in number and diversity-. It must be noted that these that come from countries with little academic and research tradition in the Social Sciences.

The following sections define the characteristics of the media and journalists in so-called intermediate journalistic cultures. These groups of countries share certain situational characteristics: they are identified because they are developing countries or with different political regimes to those democratic ones. In the following pages, the study shows an analysis of the studies that are being carried out in countries around the world with a restrictive political situation, which has led to the media and journalists to occupy a certain position or range in the social scale that defines their professional roles.

Eastern-European Journalism

Today it is not possible to have a definitive point of view on the enormous scope of the process of change that since 1989 has happened and is happening in countries of the former Soviet Union. So, the author's intention with this analysis is to present the evolution of post-communist countries within a broadest context. This process of change doesn´t hold precedent in our modern history because of the magnitude and complexity involved a double, triple or quadruple transformation in notions of modernization, globalization and internationalization (Jakubowicz and Sukosd, 2008). According to Merkel (1999: 377), Eastern Europe has faced a transition based on three aspects:

1) The political transformation from dictatorship to democracy.

2) The economic transformation from an economy of State to an economy of market.

3) Sometimes the transformation of the state itself, as the disintegration of the USSR.

In the late eighties, the release of the media was an axiom of political transformation in countries of centre and east of Europe. Evidence of this is the study carried out in the Czech Republic and Hungary and Slovakia by Metyková and Waschková Císarová (2009) where they propose an understanding of journalism as a profession rooted in the ideas of institution, professionalism and technological aspects under an Anglo-American model. However, throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, the freedom of the media in these regions has been repeatedly questioned. In countries such as Poland, Albania, the Czech Republic or Russia the totalitarian practice of the new political elite has exerted increasing pressure on the media, in an attempt to suppress critical voices (Bajomi-Lazar, 2008). That pressure has characterized the media system in some countries, such as Russia and Ukraine, in which exists a relationship based on the extreme distrust between media and political power. Even the state controls of the communicative structure (Voltmer, 2006: 10-11). Recent studies like Baysha and Hallahan (2004), Willard (2003, 2007), and Grynko and Tsetsura (2009) show that in some Eastern European countries there are currently some problems with similar roots:

a) Restriction of freedom of expression.

b) Strong links with traditional values and rituals.

c) A work overload.

d) The inequality in newsrooms.

The process of transformation of the media in post-communist democracies can be described through of *four theories of the press* development by Schramm, Siebert and Peterson (1956), or in *the development of context of civil society* posed by Splichal (1994); Gross (2002); and Sparks and Reading (1998). These authors refer to the transformation of the media as a progressive movement and one that potentially never ends from totalitarian and authoritarian models to libertarian and socially-responsible models. Bajomi-Lázár (2008: 76), according to Sparks and Reading (1998), asserts that in these regions the transition of the media is in a state of transformation of basic institutions towards a democratic model (abolition of government information and monopolistic broadcasts). The culmination of this adaptive process establishes a formal criteria and minimal freedoms for media.

East-Asian Journalism

One area of the world where there is a greater degree of cultural differences and, therefore, more difficult to be a journalist, is in Asia (Hanusch, 2009: 617). Probably the two most distant countries from the Western mentality, according to Xu (2005: 24), are Singapore and Malaysia, where there are a high respect for author-

ity and a special search of benefit of community to the detriment of the individual. These ideas greatly contradict the journalism organized in base to the capitalism because placed the economic benefit -theoretically- to a second level of meaning, keeping in the first level the ideal of coexistence. According to Xu (2005: 2) *Asian values* are based on: a) the piety, b) hard work, c) the community-nation above individual interests, d) responsibility rights about, e) education, f) social stability; g) harmony, and h) respect for authority.

The interrelationship of these areas has produced a type of media system within the Asian journalism different to the dominant Western culture.

In the study *Chinese Culture Connection* of 1987 which was carried out the analysis of Chinese culture from the dimensions developed in the 80s by Hofstede. Researchers concluded that in Eastern cultures, rather than search the truth, journalists were more concerned with finding the virtues. In another study conducted in China, Cao (2005) concludes that despite the significant change in the newspaper industry and its rapid commercialization, most of the press in China is part of the propaganda apparatus of the *Party Publicity Inc*. Chinese media, while ensuring the single party *status quo* within a relatively modern society, continually stimulate the anti-Western sentiment in their coverage of international reality (Cao, 2005).

Based in other studies conducted in China by Guo and Chen (1997), Zhao (1998), and Huang (2001), we deduce that the Chinese media is composed of two main media groups:

1) Propagandistic: this group develops the apparatus of propaganda of Communist´s Party

2) Commercial: media that without reducing the formal interference of the State focus their information in the Market and reproduce some of the organizational structures of the West.

In Central Asia, independent journalism has experienced problems such as from politics, economy and self-censorship. The media system of these countries has tried to develop a model based on the dominant model of Western countries (Kenny and Gross, 2008), but it has been impossible for the specific circumstances within these countries and the worse economic conditions -than other postcommunist nations. Thus, today still exists a culture that promotes and disseminates the traditionalist mentality in whole region (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan).

According to Kenny and Gross (2008: 523) journalistic renewal prospects of these countries are far from encouraging. *Reporters Without Borders* shows in their re-

ports that there are areas in the region (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) where journalists have been physically assaulted, threatened, imprisoned and killed.

Pacific Island, journalistic culture was assessed by Hau'ofa (1993: 392) under the approach of the so-called *Pacific Way*. This researcher found the same problems as in other regions of Asia, because differences in societies like Malaysia and Polynesia were still very deep, and the concepts of domination and subordination were still deeply rooted in the population. Xu (2005: 3) corroborates these theories by stating that the main obstacles to group Asian journalistic cultures are the big differences between regions and countries. One notion that politicians have used as excuse to restrict the freedom of media. Based on this idea of danger, it would lump all non-Western and Western countries within the same *basket* (Hanusch, 2009: 617).

Arab Journalism

There is a general tendency to consider uniformly and homogeneously the people involved in the system of media and journalists in Arab countries (Mellor, 2008). Although, the Pan-Arab culture now has become a window to the outside and an extraordinary marketing strategy that aims to benefit from increased market share (to solidify into a single stream multiple trends), many differences in journalistic cultures of the different Arab countries remain. At present the research and studies of the Arab media are central to understanding its role in contemporary politics (Mellor, 2008: 466).

According Ramaprasad and Nabil Hamdy (2006: 168), the Arab regions have significant journalistic traditions with their own identity that have played fundamental roles in all countries. Since the first publication of a newspaper in 1816 in Baghdad (Rugh, 2004), the radio began to broadcast in the 1920s, and television broadcasts were established in the late 1950s (Boyd, 1999), Arab news media have made similar functions to their counterparts in the West, but maintain the distinctive characteristics of their countries. The information and comments provided by the news services have often been characterized by a certain political bias, while they have pursued their cultural reinforcement function based on the concept of *pan-Arabism* and the *Nation-state*. Accordingly, the functions of the media are closely regulated by local cultural norms and political conditions of the time (Rugh, 2004: 7-8). According to this author, in Arab countries, with few exceptions, the media reflect authoritarian traits that usually include government messages. This is something that causes that press systems not to be described exclusively from the four theories

of the press defined by Schramm, Siebert and Peterson (1956). Notwithstanding virtually in all regions media operate within some kind of authoritarian framework (Ramaprasad and Nabil Hamdy, 2006: 168).

There is a considerable body of study about Arab journalistic cultures (Mellor, 2008: 481). In the following pages, the study will present some of best examples that define the media situation in this context. One of the classic publications is *Media Hits of Egyptian gatekeepers* conducted in 1979 by Boyd and Kushner, whose study focused on the habits of the media in Egypt. In their analysis the authors noted the tendency of journalists and media to follow the way of working of the foreign media. Meanwhile, Bekhait (1998), also in Egypt, did a survey on national press journalists in order to analyze news values. Their results showed that the media tended to include or exclude certain social news, and that news affect on certain values and visions of the reality of the audience. Al Rasheed (1998) in a survey of journalists in Kuwait highlights that about half of the respondents had a college degrees and that about 10% had a graduate degree. Also, less than 50% of journalists were Kuwaitis. For the group of journalists surveyed, the security was the most important factor in their work, followed by editorial policy. Another interesting study was conducted by Tash (1984) in Saudi Arabia. In this study the respondents considered their professional role as complementary to the function of the regime in improving the *Principles of Islamic Confederation* and government aid for development.

Kirat, in 1987, provided a portrait in which he acknowledged that the media in Algeria encouraged socialist revolutionary ideals, national development aims and advocating for the social change. Rampal examined in 1996 education programs in the countries of North of Africa (Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia). This study revealed some limitations affecting journalism as a profession. The author highlights the frustration of journalists due to the lack of objectivity and political and legal constraints imposed on the media in their respective countries. The recent study *The culture of Al Jazeera: Inside an Arab media giant* conducted in 2007 by Zayani and Sahraoui examines the organizational culture of Al Jazeera. This work revealed, among other findings, the frustrations of some staff members for certain favoritism and lack of sense of belonging to the media, forgetting the meaning of media channels as a means of renewing the *pan-Arab* identity.

Results of these studies presented, and others appearing on the scientific arena today, indicate a role of media as a service of policies of development in their countries. Furthermore, postcolonial Arab states tend to associate the education and modernization as the base of the progress. Situation that has led to a hybridation

between the Western intellectual progress and traditional and native ethics (Mellor, 2008: 476).

Sub-Saharan-African Journalism

The journalistic culture in Africa can be understood from the pre-colonial period (Shaw, 2009: 495) because the legacy of oral tradition has been very important for the development of media in Black Africa (Bourgault, 1995: 2). During the colonial period of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the political influence of the metropolis influenced the colonial newspapers (Shaw, 2009: 503). The situation that was kept by the colonizers until half a century after the first independence occurred in Africa, a fact particularly evident with respect to media. This lack of ideological basis for developing a self-political and media culture caused the African continent to become a prey to dominant Western values. Thus this region was continually hampered by external cultural influences (Uche, 1991: 3). This effect has been increasing, because the civil society in Africa has always been very limited and fragmented, with a rather weak formal political system (Schmidt, 2000: 321).

In the 70s and 80s, according Bourgault (1995: 173), the development of journalism in Africa was forged under the premises of nation building and the creation of a free press. Thus, the media stopped being vigilant of government to become a public facilitator for development of areas such as health, agriculture and education. That change in attitude promoted that the journalism of the decade of the 90s was based on Western democratic values, thanks to the role of the private media. This situation induced a renovation of the atmosphere of autocratic regimes towards democratic changes across the whole continent (Shaw, 2009: 500). In the same decade, began to talk of *neocolonialism*, which prevented the evolution towards a national ideology in Africa. Uche (1991: 8) noted in a study of Nigerian cultural preferences in 1983, how 70% of the music that appeared in the most popular radios in Nigeria was foreign, mainly from United States, the Caribbean and Eastern Europe.

Currently, as Nyamnjoh states (2005: 2-3), the media are victims of hierarchical imposition of national and global cultures, and cultures of the media industries who choose the routinization, standardization and homogenization of the content in media. The views or opinions that do not conform to corporate settings are excluded and marginalized, so that African views and cultural values are doubly excluded:

a)   For ideological hierarchies of the most advanced cultures.

b)   For cultural factors of the media industry, more interested in profits and in self-promotion than in multiculturalism.

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Latin-American Journalism

The Latin American region, from the media point of view, appears more diverse than homogeneous (Buckman, 1996). Through of the study of journalists and journalism in Latin America is difficult to establish a common structural framework that defines all these countries (Mellado Ruiz, 2009). The two most obvious features are, probably, the existence of plural societies and the strong influence of Catholic Church (Winn, 2006). Some general social traits that characterize the Latin American region are:

1. *Unstable democratics*, determined by constants institutional breakdowns of national political systems that, until now, have not allowed that democracy to be stable, consistent and permanent (Pinto, 2008). The democratic instability has been accompanied by a socio-political instability, with military interventions in some cases that have slowed development impulses within journalism, its training and its study (Mellado Ruiz, 2009).

2. *Influences of the old continent.* Within the Latin American region, large cultural influences from southern Europe, especially of Spain and Portugal, were found (Buckman, 1996). It is possible to appreciate the reproduction of some distinctive features of media systems of South-Eastern Europe in Latin American media: a low level of newspaper circulation, a long tradition of advocate journalism, the instrumentalization of private media, politicization in the regulation of public broadcasting and media, and the limited development of journalism as an autonomous profession (Hallin and Papathanassopoulos, 2002: 176).

3. *Dominant interferences.* Finally, Latin America has been characterized by the introduction of external economic models (Europe and USA) linked to social and cultural openings subordinated to hegemonic countries (Mellado Ruiz, 2009: 194).

In Latin America, the concept of civil society is becoming more important after 1960, mainly thanks to the struggles against military dictatorships. Since then the concept has been refined to reach a model based in the neoliberal antiauthoritarian model, concept that in most of the countries in the region emphasizes in the economic freedom and deregulation (Birle, 2000). In recent decades, Latin American societies have been moving ever closer to the democratic model, causing the media system to become increasingly independent of government (Buckman, 1996). This approach is based on the idea that citizens require complete information to be well informed when making their decisions (Kodrich, 2009).

In 2002, the *Latin American Federation of Journalists* (FELAP) warned in its memorandum of *Press Freedom Day* about that: "…Latin America, in the social

field, worsens the situation of journalists, bound to multiple employments, to the precariousness, or to absolute loss of their job (in Real Iglesias, 2004: 504).

This is a general framework of social situations that exists in many of these countries. And that as it shown in the study conducted by Kodrich (2009) in Mexico, Nicaragua, Colombia, Venezuela, Argentina and Chile, the media reflect in their information the social justice, poverty and inequality.

During the early years into the XXI century, we have seen how the estimates made by the FELAP have been achieved and many of these features have become characteristic features of the media market in Latin American: free market, high migration, environmental problems, global financial flow, unsatisfied social demands, high concentration economics, and establishment of the knowledge society. The technological revolution, the media convergence and the role of consumers have transformed expression forms of journalism (Mellado Ruiz, 2009: 197).

These changes that are occurring at the beginning of twenty-first century are not isolated within a region or a specific market in Latin America. These are occurring due to the existence of a great monopoly in the media, the transformation of media structures, and the effect of globalization as a means of adapting to the new market needs.

Throughout these pages, the intermediate journalistic cultures in various regions of the planet have been defined. Although there exist disparities among regional groupings and individual countries, it is also clear that these variations between nation and states have been declining gradually over time. These differences have been eroded to the point that some authors ask if there exists a single global model of media or even a set of values, attitudes and professional practices that are shared by the majority of journalists.

This question leads us to think about the influence and effects of processes of convergence / homogenization and globalization in the media system within journalistic cultures.

Discussion

The authors quoted in the previous pages are aware that there exist comparisons between journalistic cultures around the globe and these can only be offered as a close reflection of its real complexity.

Although globalization expands the ideal of Western journalism based on the supposed independence of journalists in their work, significant differences in some of regions of the globe have been found. In many countries, governments and business elites through the funding of media- impede journalists from acting independently.

In general terms, Western journalistic culture and intermediate journalistic cultures, highlight their differences in beliefs and personal convictions of journalists, in the reliability of the systems of media, and in rules or in professional journalists laws.

Many of the studies cited show the idea of a consensus on certain universal principles in which the journalistic profession is based. Thus, there are some aspects that particularly define journalistic cultures: firstly, individually, with the establishment of professional ideas of each information manager; and secondly, within professional identity groups within social, cultural, political and economic levels. These two different contexts (individual / collective), offer the key to the roles played by journalists in a particular journalistic culture.

The foundations of international comparative studies in journalism were built, in part, by Weaver *et al.* (1996) with a pioneering study that analyzed the journalistic culture of over 20 countries. This study established that the patterns, similarities and differences in different journalistic cultures could not be classified within political or cultural standards. Another interesting idea that emerged in the project, stressed the need to group countries, to consolidate an image approximate to the reality.

This notion has been taken up by Hanitzsch *et al.* (2011), who compared the roles of countries through their classification into different groups. Within the group based on a *Western journalistic culture*, these researchers include: Austria, Australia, Germany, Spain, Switzerland and the United States. In a second group enter countries with so-called *Western peripheral journalistic culture*: Brazil, Bulgaria, Israel, Mexico and Romania. Both groups share many common characteristics. Finally, the study sets up a third group where countries in non-democratic or democratic transition appear: Chile, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Russia, Turkey and Uganda. This is the largest group with a large number of countries with heterogeneous characteristics.

Therefore, limitations in studying the countries of the third group are those that have led the authors to label them as countries based on *intermediate journalistic cultures*, grouped them geographically and by region. Enumeration of groups that can facilitate the researcher's fieldwork because countries often share historical, political, cultural, economic and social values.

It must be emphasized that this grouping by region has been carried out by Hallin and Mancini (2004) within the Western journalism, although a relative lack of depth in those works that examine countries that do not share the traits of journalistic Western was found. Therefore, in this article an analysis as a basis to establish common patterns and to identity of intermediate countries is offered.

Conclusion

According to the fixed objectives, the study has tried to depict the structural frameworks that define the situation of journalists in the different global regions. The article has offered some of the shared intercontinental characteristics and the collective features that contextualize all these countries defined within *intermediate journalistic cultures*.

Therefore, this article is the first theoretical step towards an analysis of a data set within international comparison. Our intention has been to draw some guidelines to advance the study of journalistic cultures around the world. In the next points we summarize the findings of the previous pages:

Firstly, a theory of journalistic culture has been created with a simplification of current data bases. With the results offered it is possible to build a perspective map of international comparative studies, an emergent line of researching in Journalism.

Secondly, a theoretical base has been provided which allows the elimination of the concept of "universality", a predominant concept until now in the study of journalistic cultures which are different from Western ones.

Thirdly, the concept of national or regional culture has been taken as an understanding basis of journalism. By doing so, the comprehension of the society through the comparative analysis will allow us to understand more thoroughly the reasons and the natures of different journalistic cultures.

Fourthly, the comparison of different journalistic cultures in an international level is the key to understand the results obtained from a specific journalistic culture. Beyond that reality, the study of intermediate journalistic cultures has, in a general sense, a poor record of analysis. Even nowadays intermediate journalistic cultures continue to be relatively unknown.

Fifthly, international comparative analysis offers a great diversity and abundance of practical knowledge. A consistent theoretical base, as it was offered in this article, is fundamental as an organizational and consultant tool.

Sixthly, the analysis of the elements which configure the international comparative research in communication also benefits the process of transnational diffusion and the process of political, informative, economic and technological integration.

Finally, can be affirmed that through the comparison of how journalists develop their tasks in different media environments, it is possible to clarify and, in a certain form, generalize the theories which have been drawn according to determined contexts. Those theories can be later adapted to apply them in a much more general way.

Future research efforts on international comparisons should focus on differentiating and identifying the key factors that shape each journalistic culture. For this purpose a contextualization that provides the most solid indication possible about different factors that determine a type of journalism or another must be performed.

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Posredničke novinarske kulture. Međunarodne komparativne studije novinarstva

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SAŽETAK

Definiranje novinarske kulture složeni je proces, jer, nužno je na općoj razini objasniti, priroda kulture jednaka je prirodi stila života. Stavovi novinara prožeti su značenjskim sferama koje oblikuju tipične i tradicionalne vrijednosti zajedničkog profesionalnog ponašanja. Kroz prošlo stoljeće, zapadnjačka novinarska kultura uzima se u svakoj prilici kao referenca i model za imitaciju. Ovaj, međutim, članak predstavlja kontekstualizaciju različitih novinarskih kultura kao informativnih praksi koje trenutno variraju od mjesta do mjesta i određene su različitim društvenim, političkim, kulturnim i ekonomskim čimbenicima. Multiplicitet – ili multipolaritet – novinarstva, doveo je do proučavanja takozvanih *posredničkih novinarskih kultura* koje definiraju odlike različite od onih *zapadnjačke novinarske kulture*. Danas, više no ikad, te fragmentirane kulture oblikuju i razvijaju statičnu i mono-baziranu standardizaciju svih novinarskih odlika. Slijedeće istraživanje razjašnjava osobitosti novinarskih kultura u različitim regijama diljem svijeta. Velik je to zadatak, ali nužan kako bi se poduprijela teorijska shvaćanja jedne važne istraživačke branše rođene posljednjih desetljeća: međunarodne komparativne studije novinarstva.

Ključne riječi: posredničke novinarske kulture, zapadnjačka novinarska kultura, komparativne studije novinarstva, međunarodno novinarstvo