

Bing Tong, **Journalism and Communication in China and the West: A Study of History, Education and Regulation**, Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, 384 pp., \$126.47 (hardback).

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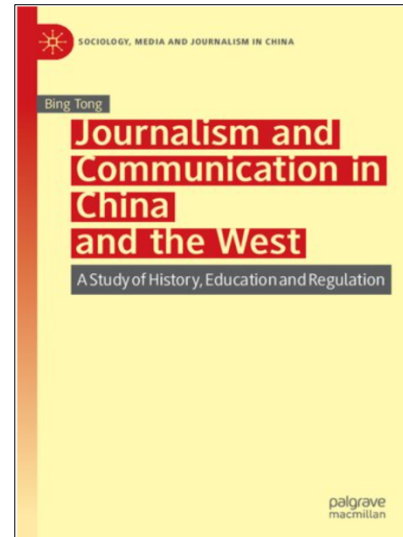
In this era, technological changes are everywhere and have a much more profound impact on today's life. It's too much to say that

the training of future professionals in the field of communication and journalism has been directly impacted by the technological changes introduced by cyberspace and the successive developments of the Network: Web 2.0 or social Web, Web 3.0 or semantic Web, and Web 4.0 or the Internet of things. (Cervi, Simelio, & Tejedor Calvo, 2020, p. 2).

Therefore, much attention has been devoted to the effect of technological changes on journalism and communication; however, there seems to be no comprehensive, comparative study for journalism and communication in China and the West. For this purpose, Bing Tong's **Journalism and Communication in China and the West: A Study of History, Education and Regulation** gives us an overall and clear view. This book provides a detailed and sophisticated account of the history, education, and regulation of journalism and communication in China and the West, which, to some degree, may be often neglected in the studies of journalism and communication.

The book is organized into seven chapters. Chapter 1 first introduces the reader to the major three purposes of studies of comparative journalism and communication, and lays the foundation for the rest of the book. It then discusses the extensive objects of the studies of comparative journalism and communication under certain spatial-temporal conditions, including the virtual and the actual, the macro and the micro, the external and the internal, media or works, and things and people. It concludes with the introduction of research methodology of comparative journalism and communication, namely the comparative study. This chapter is an excellent introduction to the significance and method of studies of comparative journalism and communication.

Chapter 2 is devoted to offering what is a clear and practical overview of journalism and communication history. The chapter first makes readers aware of the historical process of journalism and communication activities. It also devotes some space to reviewing the journalism and communication history of six countries, including Germany, the United States, the UK, France, Japan, and Russia. It goes on to deal with the journalism and communication undertakings in China, which have undergone four periods, and finally moves on to dealing with the basic law of the formation and development of journalism and communication and the imbalanced development of the press in China and the West. This chapter provides



its readers with an introduction to Chinese and Western journalism and communication history in an inclusive way, to arm them with some relevant background information.

Chapter 3 looks into the journalism and communication ideas in China and Western countries. Based on different social and economic backgrounds, political cultures, and journalism cultures, 9 main ideas are investigated: the nature and functions of media, authenticity, communication, values, propaganda, public opinion, rights, and the audience of news. Finally, some concluding remarks are presented. Through the investigation, this chapter not only provides readers with similarities and differences about journalism and communication ideas in China and the West, but also helps them “promote the reform and progress of journalism and communication ideas and practices” (p. 66). For example, different opinions and different academic expressions on the same topic are generated; the same or similar standards or the basic requirements of journalism and communication, including authenticity, objectivity, impartiality, and tendentiousness are proposed; and cognitive differences are embodied in some ideas subject to the influence of value orientation.

Chapter 4 focuses on the differences and similarities between the journalism and communication systems in China and the West. This chapter first analyzes the forms of ownership of Chinese and Western news media, arriving at three conclusions. First, private ownership plays a major part in the ownership forms of news media in Western countries. Second, the forms of ownership of news media and their development are closely associated with economic and political systems. Third, the forms of ownership of news media are not fixed. It then continues presenting an analysis of the editorial policies of Chinese and Western news media (including the United States, France, the UK, Germany, and Japan) and thus reveals four evident differences, namely concerning standpoint and inclination, information and opinions, satisfying readers' demands, and style and characteristics. It ends by describing different organizational structures of news media in China and the West, making a comparison from four aspects of ownership and management, editorial department and manager department, news right and speech right, and management level and efficiency. For example, ownership and management are separated in Western media, while ownership and management are integrated in Chinese media. Western media have also separated editorial departments from management departments, while Chinese media have been satisfied with support from the government. It is also favorable to separate the news right and the speech right in Western media, while Chinese media stress the consistency between the inclination of news reports and the standpoint of speech. Generally speaking, the news satisfies the audience's desire for news and acts, while the speech reveals the political standpoint and proposition of the publisher in Western media. However, all speeches and reports shall completely accord to the party line in Chinese media. Western media also only set up a few levels of management and enjoy high efficiency, while Chinese media set up too many management levels and suffer from low efficiency. Therefore, this chapter helps capture the differences and similarities between the journalism and communication systems in China and the West as well as shed light on their development.

Chapter 5 is concerned with the regulation and supervision of journalism and communication in China and the West. First, it makes an analysis of social regulations for journalism and communication in China and the West (including the United States, Japan, and Germany) and investigates the similarities and differences between the social regulations. Second, it carries out a comparison between the legal systems of journalism and communication in China and the West, with respect to rule of law and rule of man, legal

system and party discipline, protection and management, and theory and practice of internal press freedom. Third, it provides an inspiring comparison between journalism and communication ethics in China and the West, namely a comparison of journalism and communication ethics and journalistic self-discipline in the United States, Germany, Japan, and China. This chapter thus guides readers through the history, literature, and practices of Chinese and Western legal systems.

Chapter 6 provides a general account of the practice views of Chinese and Western journalism and communication. It opens with a description of the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western news sources and processing. It also examines the issue of news commentary, which “plays a big role in guiding public opinions” (p. 304), paying special attention to its status. It then examines the layout features of Chinese and Western news media. Readers will discover the differences of the layout styles and characteristics in China and the West. Also, it makes an analysis of advertising dissemination between Chinese and Western news media. It concludes with a summary of the practice views, pointing out three manifestations of the disparity, which includes different roles, functions, and operating mechanisms of the news media.

Chapter 7 gives a valuable overview of Chinese and Western news education. It starts with providing a full picture of news education in Western countries, which include the United States, Germany, Japan, the UK, and France. It then discusses journalism education in China by covering some issues of the history, status, and improvement of journalism education and the norms and curriculum for journalism majors. Finally, it sums up six basic differences of Chinese and Western journalism education, in terms of training objectives, curriculum settings, teaching approaches, graduation and employment, education investment, and government regulation. Therefore, this chapter deepens readers’ understanding of different news educations provided in China and the West.

This book offers a comprehensive and detailed overview of journalism and communication in China and the West by making a comparative review and discussion of the issues of history, education, and regulation of journalism and communication. Through comparison, the results (e.g., the similarities and differences of Chinese and Western journalism and communication) are objectively assessed and discussed. The book is also written in a very understandable and reader-friendly way. However, it does not include a reference list or a list of further reading, which would be helpful for readers to get some noteworthy references and supplementary sources. A useful appendix or an elaborate index on some terms and expressions could have also been included. Furthermore, a brief conclusion following each chapter would have been valuable.

On the whole, this book is undoubtedly a much-needed publication on the international market. It will be invaluable both as a reference book for teaching and learning and as a starting point for research and analytical purposes.

Reference

Cervi, L., Simelio, N., & Tejedor Calvo, S. (2020). Analysis of journalism and communication studies in Europe's top ranked universities: Competencies, aims and courses. *Journalism Practice*, 00(0), 1-21.