**9th Graduate Spring School & Research Conference on Comparative Media Systems**

**co-organized with the ECREA CEE Network**

**Comparing Post-socialist Media Systems**

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**PhD STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

**Bissie Anderson**

**University of Stirling**

## **A comparative analysis of global pioneer journalism ‘encoding’ practices**

This doctoral project explores the concept of relationality, or the deep audience engagement, by means of ‘encoding’: how meaning is co-produced by pioneer journalists around the world. Hepp and Loosen describe pioneer journalism as “journalistic communities of practice” that experiment with organizational forms, products, and structures – communities that seek to re-imagine journalism, and particularly its relation to audiences and the public. Taken together, as “models or imaginaries of new possibilities”, these communities of practice could serve as an empirical point of departure for examining journalism’s discursive re-imaginings and possible futures.

Through the analysis of meta-journalistic discourse, in-depth interviews, and multimodal analysis of story artefacts, the study examines global journalistic values and ideologies of pioneer communities of practice, with a focus on how these manifest in the way journalists make editorial decisions and engage with the public. The project aims to build a grounded mid-range theory of relationality in pioneer journalism by exploring the concept from a social, semiotic, and techno-material perspective to 1) understand what relationality means; 2) how it is articulated in different parts of the world; and 3) whether it lives up to its potential to improve journalism’s relation with audiences.

A qualitative comparative case study of start-ups in Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Malaysia, Singapore, and the UK (which comprise my sample) should offer insight into how journalism praxis is being reimagined across what Hanitzsch et al. (2020) classify as monitorial, advocative, developmental, and collaborative journalistic cultures. The idea is to draw together nuanced perspectives on relationality and thus inform a broader, global conceptualisation of audience engagement beyond the Western world (Cheruiyot & Ferrer-Conill, 2020), but also ensure depth of analysis by focusing on a select few cases. Ultimately, this doctoral study seeks to contribute to theorizations of audience engagement by means of exploring the context-specific articulations of the audience-journalism nexus in pioneer journalism.

**Iva Bubanja**

**Faculty of Political Sciences**

**University of Belgrade, Serbia**

## **The use of strategic framing by Serbian media in crisis reporting**

Serbia, like other Central and Eastern European countries, has attempted to introduce democracy, and to transform its economy to a market system, after the fall of the socialist regime. These changes affected all spheres of life and business. Due to incomplete democratic changes, Serbia has become a prime example of a hybrid regime, characterized by low level of political culture and political participation, widespread corruption, and a biased media system. In such a regime, political influence on the media, as well as media manipulation, is high, and the pressure on journalist work and reporting is constant. Such an environment supports strong connection between media and politics, as political subjects are usually the main sources of information, and journalists use their statements to interpret public events (reporting as routine work). In this type of a media system, it is interesting to observe the symbolic presentation of politics, especially at Serbian national TV Channels. The research aims to determine the characteristics of the strategic frames, their elements, and to indicate the arsenal of symbolic meanings necessary for the symbolical politics realization in Serbian media practice. The PhD thesis analyzes the journalistic use of strategic framing in media reports about crises, as in these moments, people are insecure and uncertain and usually rely on media information.

**Petar Čakš**

**Institute of Media Communications, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, University of Maribor, Slovenia**

## **How regulation affects domestic music rotation – The case study of long-term consequences of implementing cultural quota on radio music in Slovenia**

As we live in a society where radio faces great competition of on-demand music platforms, much more effort is needed for radio music programming and for musicians to stand out. But previous to the new music reality, radio music quota has been a part of media law for many years in several countries around the world, including some music superpowers, as well as in European post-communist countries. According to Machill, listening to the music on the radio is cultural practice, and music is perceived as a cultural product. Therefore, music quota is a part of cultural quota, and a specific form of media regulation, with the aim to protect mostly new or strongly affected markets of cultural products, with the intention to preserve and develop domestic cultural identity. The aim of this study is to present the consequences brought about by the adoption of an even stricter legislation on music quota. In Slovenia, music quota has been part of the law for more than a decade. Unsatisfied with the frequency and timing of airing, Slovenian musicians have decided to put their effort into changing legislation. Annual research of IPF (Collective Society for Performers and Phonographic Industry Rights) has shown a strong decline in airing Slovenian music in the years following the implementation of new music quota regulation, which has even been partly taken out of practice by the constitutional court. As a result, the domestic music industry is, beside the decline of airing Slovenian music, now facing the lack of income from royalties.

**Jacobo Herrero Izquierdo**

**University of Valladolid (Spain)**

## **Televisión Española and the last legislature of Adolfo Suárez (1979 - 1981)**

There is an extensive literature on the transition process from dictatorship to democracy in Spain. With the death of Franco in 1975, there began a period of change and transformation in the country, which would be both exciting and extremely complex in equal parts. In the media field, the most important mass medium of the time, Televisión Española (TVE), faced its particular transition. And it did so in a context of television monopoly, partisan quarrels to control a highly effective instrument of power and an heir of Franco's regime, and political negotiations to draft its most important law to date: the Statute of Radiotelevisión Española (1980). The last legislature of Adolfo Suárez, the first president of the Transition and former director of Radiotelevisión Española between 1969 and 1973, who ended up resigning in January 1981 after an intense process of “harassment and demolition” targeted at his person, was particularly turbulent. Against the backdrop of those years, shortly before the regional public televisions began to fill in the broadcasting scene and affected by a European environment in which private television was beginning to proliferate, the television issue gathered momentum and arguably played a leading part in political current affairs. This communication proposal delves into the role played by TVE during that period and seeks to provide answers to a series of questions: How was the small screen handled by the political power? How did the opposition parties use it? To what extent did television issues affect the government of Adolfo Suárez? Was there a specific programming strategy orchestrated by the Executive? If so, how was it carried out and what were its objectives? The answer to these questions can be found in the study of TVE’s contents, programs, broadcasts, manoeuvres and strategies, as well as the media and public opinion reactions that followed. This is the purpose of the work presented here, which seeks to approach a medium that marked the political change in Spain, but was also, to a certain extent, "the unfinished business" of democracy.

**Juraj Jerin**

**Doctoral programme “Political Science”, Faculty of Political Science, Zagreb**

## **Fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria in the area of media freedom in the Western Balkans**

Freedom of expression and of the media is an important part of the Copenhagen political criteria, and an essential proof of a country's readiness to become a member of the European Union. Ensuring this freedom represents one of the main challenges that Western Balkan countries face.

The presentation will give an assessment of the developments in this field during the last decade, by analysing the European Union’s documents, predominantly the European Commission’s regular communications on EU enlargement policy, and the individual countries’ progress reports.

The worsening of the position of the Western Balkans' media, as a consequence of the 2008-2009 economic crisis, initially placed freedom of expression high on the agenda of the EU enlargement policy. At the beginning of the previous decade, it was decided to make use of the potential of accession negotiations, in order to make progress on this issue, with a clear understanding of the need for a longer engagement with a view to achieve sustainable results.

However, according to the Commission’s Enlargement Package 2020, freedom of expression and independence of the media is the area in which there has been the least progress in the last year. Threats, harassment, violence against journalists, and political interference in the media are stated as common issues in the countries of the Western Balkans.

Poor performance of several EU Member States on media freedom is an additional cause for concern, with potential negative reflections on Union's credibility vis-a-vis accession candidates. It remains to be seen whether the recently revised enlargement methodology, with envisaged stronger focus on fundamental reforms, could give a new impetus for strengthening media freedom in the region.

**Johanna Mack**

**Institute for Journalism Studies**

**Erich-Brost-Institut for International Journalism**

**Technical University Dortmund**

## **Comprehending Media Systems for Media Development – Insights from Theory and Implications for Practice (With Perspectives on the Case of Guinea-Bissau)**

Media development assistance is intricately connected to the functioning of media systems. This contribution argues that in-depth theoretical knowledge about media systems is crucial for informed practical interventions and that the interlinks between media systems research and media development cooperation require academic exploration. How can the media system of a least developed, continuously unstable, and under-researched country like the lusophone state Guinea-Bissau in West Africa be analysed, and can improved knowledge production about media systems support media development in such challenging contexts?

Media systems research is increasingly opening up to media systems beyond the West, including countries that strongly depend on development assistance and including the African continent, whose media systems remain under researched. While the geographical scope widens, models are questioned and re-invented and terms are newly discussed and re-phrased.

As media systems research increasingly recognizes and tries to overcome its Eurocentrism, recent studies point to the relevance of African perspectives on political, social, economic, cultural and developmental entanglements and demand new theory building.

This contribution deals with media development as a variable in media system research and proposes that media development assistance is an important influence factor on the development of media systems and their transnationalization. On the flipside, the funding and implementation of media development interventions are based on knowledge about media systems, that is generated by donors and practitioners (grey literature), but the existing indices and indicators could be significantly improved by empirical academic research.

The review of the most relevant and current academic as well as grey literature will be illustrated by insights from the field in Guinea-Bissau.

**Lucia Mesquita**

**Dublin City University, Ireland**

**Should violence be considered a dimension of the Comparative Media Systems theory in the Latin American context? A longitudinal study of collaborative journalism practices in Latin American countries**

In their seminal outline of media systems theory, Hallin and Mancini were western-centric, and Latin America was not part of their original study. Nonetheless, it is illuminating to consider the media systems in Latin America under their framework. Some authors have tried to expand Hallin and Mancini’s outline to understand the media systems in other parts of the globe (e.g., Waisbord, 2009; de Albuquerque, 2011; Guerrero, 2014), concluding, among other findings, that Latin America portraits a captured media system, showing a low level of mass journalism circulation and low level of journalistic professionalism. Also, as Guerrero and Márquez-Ramírez argued, the main characteristics of the media systems in the region remain unchanged: media ownership concentration and state intervention. Therefore, the focus of this presentation will be the exploration of this theory, and its extension. In particular, this study aims to understand which role violence plays in the media systems theory. The ongoing state of violence in the region makes journalists restrict their action, engaging in self-censorship and agenda-cutting. As Chacón and Saldaña demonstrated, many journalists rely on collaborative efforts to continue reporting in rough conditions safely. Previous research (Mesquita and de-Lima-Santos, forthcoming) echoes these findings. It shows that news organisations are collaborating to avoid and even combat the attacks perpetrated by agents of the State and the public. According to the study, news organisations are getting together to learn how to protect themselves and their sources and share the risks. Another line of protection that has emerged recently is the collaboration with attorney associations and offices to provide small and medium news organisations with the support they need to answer lawsuits (e.g. Abraji will launch in 2021 Center for Legal Protection of Journalists). In summary, using collaborative journalism as the case study, this research will examine whether violence should be considered a dimension of the Comparative Media Systems theory in the Latin American context.