

Erik Bleich, Irene Bloemraad, Els de Graauw, *Migrants, Minorities, and the Media: Information, Representations, and Participation in the Public Sphere*, London: Routledge, 2018, ISBN (eBook): 978-1-315-31129-6, 162 pages

Review by Marius Ioan TĂȚAR

The media play an essential role in democracy, being at the center of political communication flows between citizens, political and social actors and institutions. Mass media not only inform the public about key issues and decisions, but also influence the attitudes, perceptions and, eventually the public participation of audience members, by selecting and emphasizing certain topics, and framing them in particular ways. Acknowledging that the media play crucial functions in society, the book edited by Erik Bleich, Irene Bloemraad and Els de Graauw focuses on how the media depicts migrants and minorities and what are the implications of media coverage for participation in the public sphere. The volume provides a series of comparative media analyses on migration and diversity in countries from Europe, North America and East-Asia. The chapters of this book were originally published as articles in a special issue of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.

In the opening chapter, Bleich, Bloemraad, and de Graauw situate the contributions to this volume in the broader research landscape. The editors mainly delineate three ways to connect media studies to scholarship on migrants and minorities. These three areas that stand out as arguments for why media studies should be of interest for scholars of migration and minorities: the media provide a source of information about groups or issues related to migration and diversity; the media convey or construct particular representations of minorities and immigrants, including negative depictions; and the media act as a space for the participation of migrants and minorities in a public sphere where they can advance their interests and identities. The second part of this introductory chapter deals with methodological issues regarding the selection of media sources, sampling and

analysing the data. In terms of methodology, the contributions to this volume are using computer-based coding and human coding, as well as both quantitative content analysis and more interpretative examination of tone and group portrayals of migrants and minorities. The last part of this chapter summarizes the contributions in this volume, highlighting that all the chapters adopt a comparative approach and are organised along the substantive dimensions mentioned above, namely the media as a source of information, a site of symbolic representations, and an arena of participation.

The media as a source of information is analysed in chapter 2 by Bloemraad, de Graauw, and Hamlin. They focus on immigrants' civic visibility by examining coverage of the Vietnamese and Indian communities in newspapers in San Jose, Boston, Vancouver and Toronto from 1985 to 2005. The chapter aims to measure visibility and to explain variation in newspaper coverage by place and national-origin group. The authors find little evidence that newspaper coverage is affected by the demographics of an area, newsroom factors or simplified models of the national political and discursive opportunity structures. Instead, they explain the variation of coverage between various groups and places by an embedded context of reception approach that highlights the dynamic interplay between national opportunity structures and an immigrant group's mode of incorporation. The authors suggest that migrants whose arrival is facilitated and valorised by government or who make their voices heard through political structures gain civic visibility in the local media and, presumably, in the eyes of decision-makers and residents.

In chapter 3, Alexander Caviedes presents a quantitative examination of how newspaper articles in the UK, France and Italy, most commonly frame immigration and migrants. The author aims to test whether the narrative linking immigration to security issues is gaining relative prominence in the European news, compared to narratives that associate migration to economic issues. While security related topics such as references to physical threat, crime or discussions of the border are present in the news, they are not necessarily becoming more salient than economic themes such as the labour market, asylum and fiscal costs. The findings of this chapter challenge assertions of an emerging single coherent European-wide mode for framing immigration along the lines of securitisation, and it reveals that economic issues remain at least equally important in the press' depiction of immigration.

In chapter 4, Andrea Lawlor asks if news framing of immigration varies between local and national media and between traditional and new gateway cities

for migration. Using 12 years (2001–2012) of print media data from 15 Canadian and British print media sources, the authors conducts cross-city, within-country and cross-national newspaper comparisons based on various economic change and threat of violence media frames. Findings suggest both that there is little variance between national and local media and that cross-city news coverage does not vary based on local contextual factors such as changes in the unemployment rate or rate of foreign-born persons. The main variation observed is between countries, with Canadian newspapers using more economic frames, while British media using more crime and security frames.

To understand how the media portray minorities, Erik Bleich, Hannah Stonebraker, Hasher Nisar and Rana Abdelhamid, are focusing in chapter five especially on testing scholarly propositions that Muslims are depicted in a systematically negative way. They compare the tone of newspaper headlines across time and across newspaper type and compare the portrayal of Muslims to that of Jews and Christians, in the British print media between 2001 and 2012. The findings presented in this chapter show that the British press headlines do not portray Muslims in a consistently or uniformly negative light. However, the most widely read paper in the study's sample (the right-leaning tabloid) were notably more negative than those from the lowest-circulating paper (the left leaning broadsheet). Moreover, Muslims are consistently portrayed more negatively than Jews and frequently more negatively than Christians.

In chapter 6, Erin Tolley proposes a theory of racial mediation and examines how candidate race affects media coverage of political viability. Using two different types of content analysis—manual and automated—the article assesses print media coverage of white and visible minority candidates in the 2008 Canadian federal election. Although the study found no relationship between candidate race and overall viability coverage, it did suggest that candidate race influences the viability coverage of new political entrants, a finding that was confirmed by the automated analysis. According to the author, this finding suggests that some degree of racial mediation is occurring, with journalists making choices and judgements about the potential of candidates based partly on their race. Methodologically, the chapter highlights how a researcher using an automated approach to content analysis could reach different conclusions than a researcher relying on a manual approach.

Chapter 7 by Joseph Yi and Gowoon Jung explores the media as a public space that offers participation opportunities to discuss migration and minorities related issues

in South Korea. As the authors point out, much of the multicultural discourse occurs in the internet-based cyber-media, which offer space for various producers, including mainstream media professionals, netizens and resident foreigners. The findings reveal that a prevailing discourse of victimhood is associated with small, ideologically homogeneous groups of media producers, namely mainstream media and nativist websites; in contrast, mixed and nuanced discourses are more common in large and heterogeneous, online communities, where users interact with a variety of viewpoints. These conclusions are drawn from an empirical analysis of 16 websites, supplemented with informant interviews and observations.

Overall, the book brings substantive and methodological contributions to the studies focusing on the complex interplay between migrants, minorities and the media. All that contributions to this volume adopt a comparative approach that tie their conclusions to broader debates about the role of the media in covering, representing and channelling public participation on issues such as migration and minorities. Moreover, this volume opens several fruitful directions for future research. While most chapters of this book focus on the print media, the editors acknowledge the need for more research on the coverage of migrants and minorities in other types of media. The written press has received much scholarly attentions since, as the editors of this book point out, in practical terms, it is easier to study the written press because of better archiving, and it is easier to deal only with words during coding and analysis than to include an evaluation of visuals, as with television and magazines. However, the written press is only an ingredient, and probably not the most important, in the media mix the public consumes in an increasingly digitalized world (Tatar 2016, 2018), marked by the expansion, diversification and fragmentation of the media space.

References

- Tătar, Marius Ioan (2016) "Consumatorii de mesaje media: Cine se informează despre politică în România post-comunistă?" in Ioan Laza and Florin Ardelean (eds.) *Mass-media in post-comunism. Mostenire, evolutie, tendinte*, Bucuresti, Ed. Tritonic, pp. 205-222.
- Tătar, Marius Ioan (2018) "Încrederea publicului în mass-media din România post-comunistă: Rolul politizării și consumului media" in Ioan Laza and Florin Ardelean (eds.) *Mass-media și istoria recentă. Mecanisme de construcție simbolică a realității*, București, Ed. Tritonic, pp. 306-338.