

as a basis for assessing the distinctiveness of perspectives, politics and practices in the US as compared to Europe.

Note

1. A clarification to footnote 59, Chapter 1 is in order: Robin Mansell (PhD 1984) trained as a psychologist, social psychologist and communication policy analyst (with an emphasis on public utility economics, regulation and institutional economics) and holds the British qualification CEng (1998) and IEE (Institution of Electrical Engineers), London, to which she has on occasion given policy advice, not to the IEEE in the US.

References

- Calhoun, C. (1995) *Critical Social Theory: Culture, History, and the Challenge of Difference*. Oxford: Blackwell.

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Deirdre Kevin, *Europe in the Media: A Comparison of Reporting, Representation and Rhetoric in National Media Systems in Europe*. London and Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2003. £31.50. 203 pp.

Europe in the Media is a slim volume on a vast subject: the author has set herself a mammoth task, aiming to draw together the results of a number of national research projects on the media coverage of European political and cultural affairs and the media representation of Europe, and all this in a book of hardly 200 pages. Working for the European Institute for the Media in Düsseldorf, Deirdre Kevin attempts to 'outline some of the important debates regarding European integration and also to describe the media landscape in which these debates are informed, reflected, and facilitated' (p. xvii). The book is based on empirical data collected by research groups in France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the UK and Poland; the latter represents the only EU applicant country at the time of research and thus provides material for a case study of special interest. Individual country reports are based on the observation of more than 50 media outlets in total, as the press as well as public and commercial television channels are compared. The print media are monitored in two weekly periods in 1999, the first in May 1999, the other in June 1999, during the last week of the European Parliament election campaign. Television programming is examined in two periods, namely one six-week period in May and June 2000, to assess the range of programmes, themes and scheduling patterns in each country; the second period of data collection took place in September 2000.

A very general introduction sets the scene for this comparative study of media coverage of political and cultural affairs relating to Europe across different national

media systems. The following 11 substantive chapters begin with an outline of the functions of the European Union, the question of European identity, the processes of integration and debates about Europe and the EU. This is followed by a chapter on the wider context of media developments in Europe, underlining the fragmented nature of the European media landscape in which discourses about specific issues relating to the EU, individual European countries and a wider Europe are taking place. Such issues at the time of research include the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the Common Agricultural Policy, immigration and human rights; the focus is on the depiction of 'others' in order to define the types of cultural identification in different national news media. Chapter 3 compares the data collected in relation to specific types of news outlets (national and regional and/or quality and tabloid press as well as public and private broadcasters); the book identifies clear national differences in the amount of news on Europe. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 consider the coverage of the European Parliamentary Election, the war in Kosovo as well as economic affairs and the impact of EMU, while Chapter 7 examines how individual countries report on cultural affairs in other EU or wider European countries. Findings here show that cultural affairs of the 'big powers', the UK, Germany and France, are most commonly reported on, while smaller countries, especially non-EU countries, get little coverage. The study seems to indicate that the range of countries featuring in the German media – especially the German press – is extremely wide (p. 113), while 'UK media coverage of Europe is less wide-ranging and often more heated than in other countries' (p. 115).

The problems of reporting on Europe from a national or supranational perspective are discussed in Chapter 8 on the basis of interviews with journalists, editors and politicians, indicating that only particular elite groups seem to find it easy to identify with Europe (p. 121). Television programming according to range of channels, genres and formats in six European countries is considered in Chapters 9 and 10. Here, public broadcasters are seen to produce more programmes that provide 'civic education' mixed with infotainment, while the commercial channels are more likely to aim for high ratings by producing a sleazy and stereotyped picture of European nationals for late-night viewing; here, differences in national programming are certainly interesting but would deserve more detailed study.

The final chapter sums up the findings, and it would be a travesty of the vast amount of data processed by this book to try and condense this summary once more to mere sound bites. Any comparative study of the diverse national media landscapes of such a range of different countries with their own distinctive histories of media systems has to take into account that often one cannot compare like with like, thus the large number of countries as well as types of media considered here make the final picture all too complex. This does not devalue the work provided in this study, but underlines that more limited yet more in-depth comparative studies might lend themselves better to producing more concrete analyses in relation to the democratic or communications deficit of the project of European integration. The author's ambitious aim to seek answers to questions about 'the role of the media in the democratic process at the European level and the extent to which the media contributes to and reflects the process of European integration' (p. xvii) might then become more feasible. Of course, in order to define journalistic 'best practice', academics may demand that 'the media should play a role in informing people of issues that affect their daily lives and in orientating people and helping them

understand central aspects of integration' (p. 166); however, writing this review shortly after the 2004 European Parliamentary Election, with the xenophobic hysteria of most of the British tabloids in full swing, it seems all too obvious that the role played by the media is determined by multiple economic, political and social factors which must be considered for any full analysis. We may be perturbed by the tabloids' nationalistic ravings, but perhaps we should not be surprised that the readers' feelings of resentment, lack of education and political powerlessness can be exploited in this way.

Thus, identification with a common European culture seems volatile and limited, and this must be – at least partly – due to the question of languages and language learning in Europe. Kevin observes that 'The extent to which multilingualism increases appears to be related to the growing business and political elite in Europe' (p. 31). With the language of global business and politics being English, it seems, unfortunately, that there is little incentive for young native speakers of English to bother with learning another European language, while 92 percent of secondary school students in the 15 EU countries are studying English as a foreign language (p. 31). If learning a foreign language is predicated on a positive engagement with another culture, then this book's findings show that the British monolingual culture is reflected in the UK media's general treatment of Europe and its people, characterized by 'an "isolated" approach . . . including the low attention paid to policies and to other Europeans, [while] the UK is for all other countries the most frequently discussed member of the EU' (p. 173). If the 'democratic deficit' highlighted by Eurosceptics is to be overcome, then a more widespread understanding of each other's language would also be a good start for European citizens.

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Adam Gamble and Takesato Watanabe (eds), *A Public Betrayed: An Inside Look at Japanese Media Atrocities and their Warnings to the West*. Washington, DC: Regnery, 2004. \$27.95/£15.60. xx + 444 pp.

Although the Japanese media have provided the focus of a number of excellent studies over recent years – in particular Susan Pharr and Ellis Krauss's edited volume *Media and Politics in Japan* (1996) and Krauss's single-authored *Broadcasting Politics in Japan* (2000) – one aspect of Japan's popular media has, until now, been overlooked. Whether au fait with the language or not, whether first-time or regular visitor to Japan, one feature of Japanese life that shocks and amuses in equal measure is the adverts on subway trains for Japan's weird and wonderful weekly magazines (*shukanshi*). The impact of these adverts and the magazines they publicize owes a great deal to the seemingly random mish-mash of stories ranging from serious investigative journalism via sports writing to pornography. As Gamble and Watanabe write: 'It is as if text and photos from *Newsweek*, the *New Yorker*, *People*, *Playboy*, and the *National Enquirer* had all been stapled together inside the same