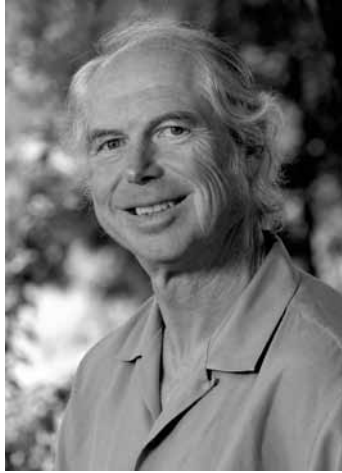


媒介系統比較研究

對談人：丹尼爾·哈林(Daniel Hallin)、陳韜文

統稿：陳韜文

翻譯：梁靖雯



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「我們的新書《超越西方世界的媒介系統比較》的作者們用有力的案例證明了世界媒介系統的多樣性，同時也指出了西方媒介的實踐和機構已被引入世界其他系統，並且為了和其他系統的脈絡相適應而被改造。這才是我們期望發生的：比較研究的整體理念在於緊貼脈絡，而非僅假定媒介機構和實踐在何處都是相同的。毫無疑問，我們相信，雜交，而非融合，更有可能成為全球交流的結果。」

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Comparing Media System

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Abstract

Daniel Hallin, the coauthor of *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*, in response to a question on the generalizability of the models identified in the book, maintains they are not intended to be universal. Rather, they are abstracted from specific contexts in various European and American countries. For him, the key to comparative study is contextualization. He advises comparative communication researchers to treat the concepts in the book as reference points and to formulate frameworks based on the context they are studying. On the choice between small-N and large-N studies in comparative studies, Hallin observes that the state of comparative communication research has not reached the point where fruitful statistical studies can be done. On the contrary, the small-N case study approach can generate the deep understanding of media systems that the field badly needs. When asked how the Chinese media system may fit the models he has identified in his book, Hallin argues that China should be conceptualized on its own because of its special logic. However, he argues that the comparative dimensions he used in his analysis—the structure of media markets, the role of the State, the forms of “political parallelism” and journalistic professionalism—

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may have their equivalents in China and elsewhere, and they should be analytically relevant. To Hallin, the days are over when anyone could study a single national media system in isolation; comparative communication research has come of age in this globalizing world.

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丹尼爾·哈林教授簡介

丹尼爾·哈林是美國加州大學聖地牙哥分校傳播學教授。他在柏克萊加州大學獲得政治學博士學位。他的著作包括《未經審查的戰爭：媒介與越南》(*The "Uncensored War": The Media and Vietnam*)、《我們令美國獨占鰲頭：電視新聞與公共空間》(*We Keep America on Top of the World: Television News and the Public Sphere*)、《媒介系統比較：媒介與政治的三種模型》(*Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*)和《超越西方世界的媒介系統比較》(*Comparing Media Systems beyond the Western World*)等。《媒介系統比較》一書獲得哈佛大學肯尼迪學院舒文斯坦新聞與政治研究中心金匠著作獎(The Goldsmith Book Award of the Shorenstein Center on Press and Politics)、美國傳播研究協會鑽石著作獎(The Diamond Anniversary Book Award of the National Communication Association)和國際傳播研究協會傑出著作獎(The Outstanding Book Award of the International Communication Association)。該書被譯為意大利語、西班牙語、葡萄牙語、波蘭語、捷克語、烏克蘭語、匈牙利、韓語和中文等多種語言。哈林教授的研究包括媒介與政治、媒介與戰爭、媒介與公共衛生、新聞專業主義的歷史和比較媒介系統，尤其是歐洲和拉丁美洲的媒介系統比較。

DH：丹尼爾·哈林

JC：陳韜文

JC：《媒介系統比較：媒介與政治的三種模型》(2004)一書憑藉其深厚的理論意涵、嚴謹的實證邏輯和持續的影響力，成為傳播領域中的一部重要著作。在此書中，您和曼思尼(Mancini)主要把研究範圍限定在西歐和美國。對此，一個常見的疑問在於，你們所提出的模型能否應用在非西方社會。您和曼思尼隨後編輯出版了《超越西方世界的媒介系統比較》(2012)一書，考察了在亞洲和拉丁美洲的媒介系統。與此同時，不同文化相遇時出現的文化雜交(hybridization)的可能性，而非徹底的文化替換，則在文化全球

化的研究中得到了眾多的論證。您還提出，全球正向《媒介系統比較》所提出的自由模型 (Liberal Model)¹ 歸聚融合。我們首先想聽一聽您對原有模型的普適性的最新思考。

DH：採用「最相似系統」設計 (“most similar systems” design)² 並把分析限定在西歐和北美是我們審慎的決定。在我們看來，正是企望建構一個能普遍適用於任何媒介系統的框架的設想阻礙了領域中的比較分析。這種情況最明顯地體現在《傳媒的四種理論》(Four Theories of the Press) 的分析框架中——旨在普遍適用，實際上僅就少數媒介系統加以概括，主要局限在美國、英國和蘇聯系統，並把其他系統與這些等量齊觀。我們相信，一項比較研究必須立足於細緻考量所選案例的媒介和政治系統的實證和理論文獻。一項研究，如果涉及案例的數量過多、須要建立的理論概念的範圍過廣，那分析將難以有效進行。我們從未希望我們的三個模型——即從案例中建立的媒介系統發展主要模式的三種理想類型 (ideal type)——能成為「普適的」。然而，在思考歐洲和北美以外地區的媒介系統的相似點和差異性時，它們在某些方面仍可能是有用的。在書中，我們發現西方媒介系統的確影響了其他系統，因此，屬於西方媒介系統的一些要素很可能出現在其他系統中。特別是東歐，它的媒介系統與我們的極化多元模型 (Polarized Pluralist Model) 具有很強的相似性，同時也有一些不同點。正如我們在書中說的那樣，媒介研究通常把自由模型視為「現代化」的理想代表，並把它作為與其他媒介系統進行比較的一個主要方面。但是，如果把媒介系統看成一種實證的社會構成，這樣再與西方媒介系統比較的話，全球大部分地區很可能與南歐的極化多元模型更為接近。事實上，通過與我們的三種模型進行比較來理解我們研究地區以外的媒介系統是存在局限的。

我們也清晰地認識到，在媒介研究中，以北美和歐洲為焦點會被視為強化歐洲中心主義之舉。我們聚焦於它們是因為我們熟悉這些案例，現實也存在大量相關文獻，而我們也大體上掌握所需要的語文能力。而且，我們非常希望，通過揭示「西方」媒介系統的多樣性，闡明「西方媒介」並非只有單一的模型，並把這些系

統看成具體歷史的社會產物，我們的研究可以澄清「西方媒介」這一概念的內涵。

JC: 您對世界各國媒介系統邁向自由模型的融合問題又有甚麼反思？

DH: 關於融合，當人們開始說我們預測所有媒介系統向著自由模型歸聚時，我們感到十分吃驚。我們特別在書中增加了一章³以強調媒介系統間的不同，並以此作為全書論述的一個前提條件。我們覺得必須承認這樣的事實，我們研究的三個系統彼此之間的差別，在五十年代到七十年代時最為突出，現在已顯著減少。不少人對媒介系統的「美國化」(Americanization)進行過論述。在某些方面，這是對的。在歐洲，商業主義在媒介中一度增長，使得歐洲系統特有的(與美國相比)政黨報刊出現衰退之勢。這些推力同樣出現在全球其他地區。在不少案例中，商業化以新自由主義重組和經濟全球化的形式出現，引起市場自由化和國家角色的轉變。媒介流動的全球化也讓不同地區的新聞記者和受眾接觸到普遍盛行的報導模式，例如半島電視台(AI Jazeera)所展示的那樣。然而，我們企圖在那一章表明，我們並不認為朝著自由模型的融合會指日可待，也不認為我們觀察到的歐洲系統的特徵會消失。我們注意到一些差異性似乎維持不變——意大利報紙的政黨特徵依然明顯；法國報紙與美國相比仍舊更傾向於把評論和報導相混合；區別於商業廣播的公共服務廣播仍然強盛，儘管在西歐許多地區它不再像過去那樣處於壟斷地位。倘若我們真的相信這些系統差異會消失的話，我們也不必寫下這本書。當然，我們沒有充分的理由假定全球媒介系統單一地向著自由模型歸聚。我們的新書《超越西方世界的媒介系統比較》的作者們用有力的案例證明了世界媒介系統的多樣性，同時也指出了西方媒介的實踐和機構已被引入世界其他系統，並且為了和其他系統的脈絡相適應而被改造。這才是我們期望發生的：比較研究的整體理念在於緊貼脈絡，而非僅假定媒介機構和實踐在何處都是相同的。毫無疑問，我們相信，雜交，而非融合，更有可能成為全球交流的結果。

JC: 2004年出版的《媒介系統比較：媒介與政治的三種模型》重新激起了在世界各地研究媒介系統的興趣。基於您自己的經驗和從您的

著作中收到的反饋，您會為從事媒介系統比較研究者提出哪些主要的建議呢？

DH：對於這些研究者，最重要的一項建議是要謹記——正像我之前觀察到的那樣——比較研究是與社會脈絡相聯繫的。因此，你必須謹慎地對你想研究的特定脈絡，也就是特定歷史情境下的媒介機構、政治機構、社會結構、文化系統，進行理論化。你必須思考你正在研究的脈絡是如何區別於其他脈絡的。這正是為甚麼當別的學者說他們想把我們的概念——尤其是我們的三種模型——應用在超出原有範圍的其他案例時，我們會感到不安。我們希望我們的概念能成為有用的參考基點；但我們會建議其他地區的研究者，如果他們認為我們的分析是有價值的話，那不要嘗試直接把它「應用」在其他脈絡，而是跟隨我們的例子，在仔細分析其他脈絡的基礎上建立新的框架，並且把那些脈絡與我們研究的相比較。

JC：在書中，您顯示了如何卓有成果地運用理想類型來分析一系列擁有共同重要特徵的國家。但是一些批評則認為這種分析所用的樣本太少，建議對全球國家進行數據統計分析，更準確地估算研究結論的普遍性。您對此有甚麼回應呢？

DH：我們的結論——至少是其中的大部分——並不在意於它們普遍性的大小。它們的用意在於對特定歷史情境的媒介系統發展進行概念化。對大量案例進行統計分析當然能對特定目標的比較研究有所幫助。然而，在我們看來，這很容易造成顯淺或誤導的分析，尤其是當研究領域尚在起步階段，你用以分析的案例還有所欠缺的時候。查爾斯·梯利 (Charles Tilly) 十分強調這一點，我在此引用他的論述：

總的來說，當研究者著眼於數量較少的例子時，比較研究……能帶來更豐富的智力回報。這並不是因為少量樣本自身蘊含著更大的價值，而是因為大量樣本帶來的只是虛假的安全感。當面對少數案例時，研究某一結構或過程的研究者只能選擇對歷史情況和掌握到的案例特徵專心探討，因而能朝著符合常識條件和有效比較的目標更努力工作。當面對大量案例時，批判性辯護和對脈絡的熟悉程度都會降低。在過

去幾十年間，有數以百計的研究是以數據統計的方式對全球大部分國家進行分析，然而它們並沒有對社會科學做出長期而有價值的貢獻。⁴

他的結論十分強硬。我不知道在今天他是否還會表達同樣的觀點。但在我看來，大樣本 (large-N) 的統計研究在相當成熟的領域是最有成效的。在這些領域裏，存在強而有力的理論因素讓你期待某些變量之間存在跨系統的關係模式，同時你也清晰地知道如何通過提問來跨系統地測量這些變量。我並不認為當下針對媒介系統的比較研究正處於這樣的階段。

JC：無論從規模還是性質來看，中國都是一個從事比較媒介研究者在進行世界媒介系統歸類分析時必須要考慮的重要案例。中國能組成一個屬於自己的理想類型嗎？對於解釋中國媒介系統的變革，您認為在您書中所確立的媒介系統的分析維度和邏輯是否足夠呢？

DH：中國當然須要基於自身來進行概念化，也許是通過與其他相似或相異的系統——像馬來西亞或新加坡等其他「市場威權」(market authoritarian) 系統——進行對比分析而成。中國系統明顯有別於我們所分析的三個系統，它有自身特有的邏輯，正如這三個系統那樣各具特徵一樣。不過，我們分析中的一些要素也許仍會有用。在某種程度上，與我們的三個理想類型不同，我們的概念框架的其他部分，⁵例如比較媒介系統的四個維度，則具有廣泛的普遍性，儘管我們的概括是以西歐和北美為基礎。這四個維度，媒介市場的結構、國家的角色、「政治對應」(political parallelism) 的形式、新聞專業主義，正如卡琳·沃默 (Katrin Voltmer) 指出的那樣，是分析媒介與經濟系統、國家、政治衝突和爭論系統 (這首要指的是西方的政黨和公民社會，但在別的系统它也可以以別的形式出現)，以及新聞業內部結構之間關係的基本概念。在別的地區，它們可能有對等的概念。真正的理論化工作包括指出在特定的脈絡中它們以何種形式出現，乃至為何及如何相互聯繫在一起。

JC：信息技術的發展作為變革媒介環境的因素常常被提及，而您的分析框架並沒有將此包括在內。為甚麼您把這種可能與媒介和政治

系統有重要互動作用的因素排除掉呢？您有沒有考慮過把信息技術作為分析框架中的一個重要維度呢？如果有的話，媒介與政治系統的互動模式會有怎樣的改變？如果沒有的話，您能否解釋一下原因呢？

DH：我們在《媒介系統比較》中有關融合的一章裏稍稍談及到技術。⁶ 技術當然是重要的（儘管它可能不像別的變量那樣在不同系統中有很大的差異）。毫無疑問，技術變遷對削弱現有媒介系統的穩定性和改變媒介結構起著重要作用——例如，通過減少國家媒介系統之間的分隔程度而達致。但技術發展並不獨立於社會、政治和文化系統。電視之所以有它目前的發展歷程，部分原因是因為它引進於國家正在經濟發展和建立國家過程中發揮中心角色的時期；而互聯網則發展於市場力量處於主導地位的新自由主義時代。當然，技術會以不同的方式在其他系統中發展。例如中國，與美國、意大利或巴西相比，國家仍然扮演更重要的角色。

JC：本世紀之前，比較研究經常被提起，但很少被實行。您認為比較傳播學的時代是否已經到來？能解釋一下您的意見嗎？如果答案是否定的，我們可以做什麼來推動傳播學的比較研究呢？

DH：我確實認為比較傳播學的時代已經到來，或者正步向比較傳播學的年代。我的判斷部分是因為學術界的全球化，一大批具有批判意識的學者在更廣泛的國家工作，並參與到全球學術交流之中。當然，這種情況目前仍十分不均勻，必須改善學術的基礎結構，並在學術發展相對薄弱的地區鼓勵研究。

JC：目前，您被視為傳播領域中比較研究的一位權威人物。作為一位傳播學者，比較視角對您來說有多重要呢？您能否回顧一下引導和促使您「投身」比較研究的相關歷程嗎？即便當您回到研究單一媒介系統時，您也會在分析中滲入內隱（implicit）的比較嗎？

DH：我認為，不參考其他系統的學術成果，孤立地研究單一國家媒介系統的時代已經過去了。我在美國修讀政治科學時，有一種頗為奇怪的劃分美國政治學子領域的方法——學者們認為沒有必要瞭解其他系統以及比較政治學。然而，漸漸地，我意識到這是一種幼稚的學術見解。同時，越來越多的學者也意識到，美國政治系

統，就像其他系統那樣，應作為一個特定的個案來思考，而不是一般意義上的「政治學」。在世界的其他地區，我認為存在一種趨勢，要麼拋開理論框架單純地做描述工作，缺乏綜合理論和實證兩部分工作，要麼引用西方的理論框架，毫無批判地應用在其他脈絡，沒有問一問「它們通用嗎？」「它們可能需要怎樣的調整？」這些情況正在改變。

JC：您在博士階段接受的是政治學的訓練。您怎樣評價傳播學以外的社會科學，特別是政治學，在您研究中的重要性呢？您認為，對年輕學者來說，在他們的博士課程中，多包含一門甚至更多的社會科學是否更有利呢？

DH：媒介研究者須要與從事研究政治、社會、文化的學者不斷對話。媒介機構與其他社會和政治機構相互交織、互動。在西方，這確實如此，儘管西方媒介系統的分化程度在許多方面都相當高，而在全球其他地區，這種相互聯繫的局面更為明顯。媒介系統是從更大的社會政治系統脈絡下發展的。這意味著媒介研究學者須要瞭解有關國家、政治文化、社會分層等方面的學術成果。媒介研究學者在歷史上已經因為與社會科學，更普遍地說是與社會理論，相脫離，而長期蒙受損失。當然，如果政治學者和其他社會科學學者開始學習媒介研究的學術知識——在某種程度上這也開始出現了——這也是相當好的。

JC：您利用了針對個別媒介系統的研究來作為您書中的資料。這種取向基本上是機構分析和歷史分析。對於研究媒介系統的學生來說，您覺得，應不應該在傳播學課程中把有關歷史和歷史方法的學習放在更重要的位置呢？

DH：對的，我再次強調這是比較方法的一部分，是理解社會關係如何被系統脈絡塑造的一部分。媒介系統隨時間發展變化，受到路徑依賴的影響，也就是說，它們是被自己所處的歷史脈絡所塑造的。如果不去關注歷史，我們是無法理解媒介系統的邏輯，也無法對它們的結構給出令人信服的解釋。

JC：感謝您與我們學刊的讀者分享您的見解。

丹尼爾·哈林著作選

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註釋

- 1 譯者注：哈林和曼思尼在書中提出了三種媒介系統的理想類型：地中海/極化多元模型 (Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralist Model)、北歐/民主法團模型 (Northern European or Democratic Corporatist Model) 和北大西洋/自由模型 (North Atlantic or Liberal Model)。極化多元模型的特徵包括報刊發行量較少、報刊以精英政治為導向、國家和政黨對媒介施行較強的干預、新聞專業主義的程度相對較低，商業媒介的發展較弱，法國、希臘、意大利、葡萄牙、西班牙都是有代表性的例子。民主法團模型則擁有大規模的報刊發行量，歷史上以政黨報刊為主的格局轉變為當今以商業報刊為中心的模式，強調新聞專業主義和制度化自律，雖然存在較強的國家干預，但保護言論自由也同樣受到重視，並以公共服務廣播 (public-service broadcasting) 為特色，澳大利亞、比利時、丹麥、芬蘭、德國、荷蘭、挪威、瑞典、瑞士都屬於這一類型。自由模型有著中等規模的報刊發行量，商業報刊的發展較成熟，媒介機構的自主性較高，強調新聞專業主義，除英國和愛爾蘭以外，以商業廣播為主導，主要國家包括英國、美國、加拿大、愛爾蘭。
- 2 譯者注：「最相似系統」設計是解決比較研究中常見的「變量太多，案例太少」(many variables, few cases) 情況的一種分析方法。它強調集中研究一

組相對有可比性的案例以減少變量的數量。哈林和曼思尼曾在書中指出，採用這一設計的優點是能集中分析一系列在經濟、政治、文化上有可比性的國家，而且這些西歐和北美的國家在全球也處於主導地位，對其他系統有較強的影響力。不過它也帶來相應的限制，分析的結果不能直接應用於其他國家地區。

- 3 譯者注：這裏指的是《媒介系統比較》一書的第八章「同質化的動力和限制」(The Forces and Limits of Homogenization) (頁251-295)。
- 4 Tilly, C. (1984). *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation
- 5 譯者注：《媒介系統比較》一書中支撐三個媒介系統理想類型的理論框架包括四個媒介系統(media system)的維度和五個社會政治結構(social-political structure)的維度。除了下文提到的媒介系統的維度外，五個社會政治結構的維度分別是：國家的角色(the role of the state)，共識民主與多數決民主(consensus vs. majoritarian democracy)，個體多元主義與團體多元主義(或稱自由主義與法團主義)(individual vs. organized pluralism, or liberalism vs. corporatism)，理性合法權威與庇護主義(rational-legal authority vs. clientelism)，適度多元主義與極化多元主義(moderate vs. polarized pluralism)。
- 6 譯者注：這裏指的是《媒介系統比較》一書第八章中「技術的角色」(The Role of Technology)一節的內容(頁259-261)。

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Academic Dialogue with **Daniel Hallin**

Comparing Media System

DH: Daniel HALLIN

JC: Joseph M. CHAN

JC: *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics* (2004) is one of the most important works published in the field of communication by virtue of its theoretical significance, empirical logic, and potential influence. Its scope of analysis was mainly confined to Western Europe and the United States. Therefore, one common concern about the models you proposed is their applicability to non-Western countries. You and Mancini subsequently published an edited volume, *Comparing Media Systems beyond the Western World* (2012), which examined media systems in Asia and Latin America. Meanwhile, studies of cultural globalization have elaborated on the possibility of hybridization rather than complete cultural displacement when cultures encounter. You suggested that the world was converging toward the Liberal Model in *Comparing Media Systems*. We would first like to hear your latest reflections on the generalizability of the original models.

DH: It was a very deliberate decision on our part to follow a “most similar systems” design and confine the analysis to Western Europe and North America. In our view, it was exactly the attempt to create a universalizing framework that would be applied to any media system in the world that had held back comparative analysis in our field. This of course is symbolized most dramatically by the framework of *Four Theories of the Press*, which purported to be universal, but really conceptualized only a small number of media systems in any depth, mainly the American, British, and Soviet systems, and treated all the others as approximations of these. We believed that a comparative analysis had to be rooted in careful attention to the empirical and theoretical literature on the media and political systems in the cases selected, and we could not competently carry out that kind of analysis if the number of cases—and the range of theoretical

concepts that would have to be developed—were too large. We never intended our three models, in particular, the three ideal types we use to summarize the main patterns of media system development among our cases, to be “generalizable.” They may be useful in some ways for thinking through the similarities and differences of media systems in other regions compared with the European and North American ones, and we did observe in the book that Western media systems have of course influenced other systems, so elements of these systems are likely to be present in other systems. The East Europeans, in particular, have noted strong similarities of the East European systems to our Polarized Pluralist Model, and some differences. And as we say in the book, although media studies has usually taken the Liberal Model as the main point for comparison with other media systems, as an ideal of “modernization,” if you are going to analyze media systems as empirical social formations, and you want to make comparisons with Western media systems, in most parts of the world it is probably likely that you will find more similarity to the Polarized Pluralist Model of Southern Europe. But these comparisons with our three models will be of limited use for understanding most media systems outside the regions we considered.

We were well aware that our focus on North America and Europe could be seen as reinforcing Eurocentrism in media studies. We picked that focus because we knew those cases well, because there was a large body of literature on them, and because we had the linguistic competence to master most of the literature. We did hope, though, that our analysis would somehow help demystify the notion of “Western media” by showing that “Western” media systems are in fact diverse, that there is not a single model of “Western media,” and by treating those systems as concrete, historical social formations, rather than abstract ideals.

JC: **Would you please also share with us your latest thoughts on the convergence argument?**

DH: As for convergence, we were surprised when people started saying that we had predicted the convergence of all media systems toward the Liberal Model. That particular chapter of our book was added really as a qualification to the main argument, which stresses the differences among media systems. We felt we had to acknowledge

the reality that the three systems we were studying were not as different today as they were at the height of their development as distinct systems, say around the 1950s–70s. Many people had written about the “Americanization” of media systems, and in some ways that was right, in the sense that commercialism had increased in media across Europe, and the party press that once distinguished European systems from the American one had declined. Some of these forces apply to much of the rest of the world, including in many cases an increase in commercialization, which has taken place as a consequence of neoliberal globalization, has resulted in liberalization in many markets, and the role of the State has changed. The globalization of media flows has also exposed journalists and audiences to common models of reporting, which can be seen in the case of Al Jazeera. We try to make it clear in that chapter, however, that we do not think convergence toward the Liberal Model can be projected into the future, nor is it likely to result in the disappearance of the differences we observed among the European systems. We observe that some differences seem persistent—Italian newspapers are still partisan; French newspapers still mix commentary and reporting more than the American ones, and public service broadcasting remains strong and distinct from commercial broadcasting in much of Western Europe, although it is not the monopoly it once was. If we had really believed the differences among the systems we were studying were disappearing, it would have made little sense to write the book we did. And we certainly don’t think it would make sense to assume that media systems around the world will converge on a single model, be it Liberal or anything else. The contributors to our new book, *Comparing Media Systems Beyond the Western World*, make a strong case for the diversity of world media systems, and make the point too that where practices and institutions from Western media institutions have been imported into other systems, they have been transformed to fit the realities of another systemic context. This is what we would expect to happen: the whole rationale for doing comparative analysis, rather than just assuming media institutions and practices are always and everywhere the same, is that context matters. So we would of course agree that hybridization, not convergence, is the likely result of global exchange.

JC: The publication of *Comparative Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics* in 2004 has rekindled interest in the study of media systems around the world. What major advice do you have for researchers of comparative media systems in light of your own experience and the feedback you have received on your seminal book?

DH: One of the most important pieces of advice we have for scholars is to remember that—as I observed a moment ago—comparative analysis is about context. So you have to theorize the particular contexts you want to study, that is, the particular historically situated media institutions, political institutions, social structure, and cultural system, and you have to do this with care. You have to think through how the context you are studying differs from others. This is why we are nervous when scholars say they want to “apply” our concepts—and especially our three models—to other cases, outside the original scope of our study. We hope our concepts are useful reference points, but we would advise scholars in other parts of the world, if they think the kind of analysis we did is valuable, not to try to “apply” it to other contexts, but to instead follow our example and develop new frameworks rooted in the careful analysis of other contexts, and then *compare* those contexts with the ones we studied.

JC: You have demonstrated how one can fruitfully apply the ideal-type analysis to a number of countries sharing some of the key features in your book. But the book was criticized for using too small a sample. The suggested alternative is to apply statistical analysis to countries in order to more accurately estimate the generalizability of one’s observations. What is your response to such observations?

DH: Our observations—a very great many of them, anyway—weren’t *meant* to be generalizable outside a particular scope. They were meant to conceptualize particular historically situated developmental patterns of media systems. Statistical analysis of many cases can certainly be useful in comparative analysis for certain purposes. In our view, though, it can easily lead to superficial or misleading analysis, particularly when the field of scholarship is at an early stage, and where there isn’t much rigorous scholarship on most of the cases you will be including in the analysis. Charles Tilly makes

this case strongly, so allow me to quote him here:

On the whole, comparative studies...yield more intellectual return when investigators examine relatively small numbers of instances. This is not because of the intrinsically greater value of small numbers, but because large numbers give an illusory sense of security. With small numbers, the student of a structure or process has little choice but to pay attention to the historical circumstances and the particular characteristics of the cases at hand and thus to work harder at meeting the commonsense conditions for effective comparison. With large numbers, critical defenses and familiarity with context decline. Little of long-term value to the social sciences has emerged from the hundreds of studies conducted during the last few decades that have run statistical analyses including most of the world's nation states.¹

His conclusion is very strong, and I don't know whether he would have made it in the same way today, thirty years later. But in my view, large-N statistical analysis is most useful in a field that is quite mature, in which there are strong theoretical reasons to expect certain relationships between variables across systems, and where there is a strong reason to think that you know how to measure the variables in question across systems. I don't think that is where we are right now in the comparative study of media systems.

JC: By size and by nature, China is an important case that students of comparative media systems have to consider when typifying media systems. Does China constitute a unique ideal type? Do you think the dimensions and the logic of media systems you have identified in your book can adequately explain the transformation of the Chinese media system?

DH: China certainly should be conceptualized on its own, perhaps in comparison with certain other systems with which it might have some similarities, and some differences (perhaps other "market authoritarian" systems such as Malaysia or Singapore?). The Chinese system is clearly very different from the three we analyze, and has its own logic, as do each of those three systems. Some elements of our analysis may still be useful. In a way, in contrast to our three ideal types, the other part of our conceptual

framework, our four dimensions for comparing media systems are very general, even if the particular conceptualization of them in our analysis are particular to Western Europe and North America. The structure of media markets, the role of the State, the forms of “political parallelism,” and journalistic professionalism, as Katrin Voltmer points out, are basically conceptualizations of the relationship of the media to the economic system, to the State, to the system of political conflict and contestation (this means above all political parties and civil society in the West, but it can take other forms in other systems), and finally the internal structure of journalism. These probably have their equivalents everywhere. The real work of theorizing then involves figuring out what particular forms they take in particular contexts, and why, and how they are interrelated.

JC: **Although the advancement of information technology is often cited to account for the transformation of the media environment, it is not included as a dimension in your analytical framework. What considerations have led you to omit what might be an important factor in the interplay between the media and political systems? Do you think that information technology should form a significant dimension of your analytical framework? If so, how can the interaction patterns between the media and political systems be changed? If not, please explain.**

DH: We talked about technology a little in the chapter of *Comparing Media Systems* on convergence. Technology certainly does matter (though it may not differ as much from system to system as some other kinds of variables), and there is no question that technological changes have played important roles in destabilizing existing media systems, and bringing about change in their structures—for example, by undermining the separateness of national media systems. But technology doesn’t develop independently of social, political, and cultural systems. In part, television developed in the way it did because it was introduced at a time when the States played a central role in economic development and nation-building. The Internet is developing in the way it is in part because it was introduced in the age of neoliberalism when market forces are more dominant. Of course,

it is being developed differently in some ways in systems such as China's, where the State still plays a bigger role, compared with the US, Italy, or Brazil.

JC: Before the turn of the century, comparative studies were often discussed but seldom undertaken. Do you think that comparative studies in communication have come of age? Why or why not? If not, what can be done to boost the study of comparative communication?

DH: I do think comparative studies in communication have come of age, or are in the process of doing so. I think this is true, partly because of the globalization of academe, and because of the development of critical masses of scholars working in a larger range of countries who participate in global academic exchange. But of course, this is still very uneven, and there is a great need to develop academic infrastructure and encourage scholarship in many parts of the world where there is still relatively little.

JC: You are now widely recognized as an authority on the study of comparative communication. How important is the comparative perspective to you as a communication scholar? Can you please trace the developments that have led you to and prepared you for making what may be called a "comparative leap"? Will implicit comparison form an integral part of your analytical perspective even when you return to work on the media of a single system?

DH: I think the days are past when anyone can study a single national media system in isolation, without reference to the scholarship on other systems. In my home discipline of political science, in the United States, there is a strange division between the subfields of American Politics, where scholars feel no need to know anything about other systems, and Comparative Politics. More and more, though, I think this is seen as a naive form of scholarship, and there is a growing awareness that the US political system, like any other, has to be thought of as a particular *case*, not as "politics" in a generic sense. In other parts of the world, I think there has been a tendency to either do essentially descriptive work, without any theoretical framework or without integration of the theoretical and

empirical parts of the scholarship, or to import and uncritically apply theoretical frameworks from Western scholarship to other contexts, without asking, “are they applicable?” And “how might they need to be reformulated?” This is beginning to change.

JC: You were trained as a political scientist in your doctoral program. How do you evaluate the importance of social sciences in general and political science in particular in your communication studies? Do you think it is preferable for young scholars to include one or more social science subjects as a significant part of their doctoral curriculum?

DH: Media scholars need to be in dialogue with scholars of politics, of society, of culture. Media institutions interact with and intertwine with other social and political institutions. This is true even in the West, where their degree of “differentiation” is relatively high in many ways, and no doubt is even more true in most of the rest of the world. Media systems develop in the context of a wider sociopolitical system. This means that media studies scholars need to know the scholarship on the State, on political culture, on social stratification, and so on. Media studies scholarship has historically suffered from its isolation from social science and social theory more generally. Of course, it would also be good if political scientists and other social scientists began to study the scholarship on media—this is also beginning to happen to some extent.

JC: You drew on studies of individual media systems for data for your book. The approach is basically institutional analysis and historical. For students of media systems, do you think the understanding of history and the historical method should have a more prominent place in the curriculum of media studies?

DH: Yes, again, I think this is part of the comparative method, part of what it means to understand how social relationships are shaped by a systemic context. Media systems develop and change over time. They are path-dependent. That is, they are shaped by the historical context in which they develop, and it is impossible to understand their logic, or to give convincing explanations for their structure, without paying attention to history.

JC: Thank you for taking the time to share your views with our readers.

Selected Works by Daniel Hallin

Please refer to the end of the Chinese version of the dialogue for Daniel Hallin's selected works.

Note

- 1 Tilly, C. (1984). *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

