

Jan Zielonka (ed.). (2015). *Media and Politics in New Democracies: Europe in a Comparative Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 322, ISBN 978-0-19-874753-6.

This book is a much needed contribution to the study of media and media change in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). It focuses on the relationship between the media and politics, and seeks to overcome the Anglo-American bias characteristic in both analyses of media-politics in the non-Western world, and in the study of the transformation of media systems in post-communist Europe. The need to de-Westernize media studies in the new European democracies has been repeatedly articulated in the literature ever since the first decade of the post-communist transformations (see e.g., Sparks, 2000; Lauk, 2015). In the 2010s there appeared several valuable collections that contributed significantly to this task (Gross & Jakubowicz, 2012; Downey & Mihelj, 2012; Głowacki et al., 2014; Dobek-Ostrowska & Głowacki, 2015). For several reasons presented below, this volume has a special place on that list.

Media and Politics in New Democracies emerged as a result of the Oxford-based research project Media and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe (MDCEE). An outstanding feature of the project and the book itself is that it is a joint work of scholars from various academic backgrounds. Up to one-third of the chapters of the volume was written by researchers from outside media studies, predominantly from political science. The integration of the efforts of media scholars and political scientists within this project was very beneficial for its results, and here is why. *Media and Politics in New Democracies* was created at a time when the state of press freedom in some CEE countries, along with negative tendencies around media-politics relations, were causing increasing concern among scholars. As Štětka pointedly noted:

After a period of gradual improvement, peaking around the time right before EU accession, media freedom started declining again, with the 2011 average score matching the value from 1998. This clearly represents a setback for the hopes that EU membership would safeguard the protection and further extension of this important component of democracy, and points to the limits of the EU conditionality when it comes to maintaining achieved standards in the post-accession period. (2012)

The case of Hungary, where the victory of the right-wing *Fidesz* Party was marked by a substantial rowing back on democratic reforms (including media reform), as well as the less spectacular, albeit significant negative developments in other countries, stimulated discussions on the risk of backsliding among the newly democratized CEE countries towards authoritarianism (Balčytienė et al., 2015). In these circumstances the engagement of political scientists into the study of media developments in the region was highly reasonable: first, because media and politics are too tightly interconnected in the new European democracies, and therefore the

understanding of media change there is hardly possible without knowledge of the tendencies in their political life. Secondly, different from media studies, whose major theoretical toolkit was imported from democratic media theories rooted in the experience of the mature democracies of the West (McCargo, 2012; Jebril et al., 2013; Lauk, 2015), political science (in particular, comparative politics and regime change studies) has at its disposal rather advanced theoretical and conceptual instruments for the study of the societies under transformation, or even in-between democracy and authoritarianism. Some of these instruments (such as the concepts of state capture, politicization of the state, informal institutions, and informality) were successfully integrated into the research in the framework of the MDCEE project. The “injection” of these conceptual instruments into media and communication studies is, however, not devoid of risks. Scholars in political science acknowledge that some of these terms, which as a matter of fact appeared or were introduced in mainstream studies relatively recently, are used in different ways, which leads to conceptual ambiguity (Köllner, 2012, 2013). They also warn against using these concepts as residual or catch-all categories (Köllner, 2012; Lauth, 2012).

Contributors to *Media and Politics in New Democracies* see the political context in which the media in CEE countries operate as highly volatile and unstable. The volatility of political parties and their weak social roots, according to Paolo Mancini, incite a desire on the part of politicians to control the media, or even “capture” them to ensure themselves access to and mobilization of voters. Political volatility also enhances the risk of state capture by political parties: as Bajomi-Lazar points out, referring to the works by O’Dwyer and Kopecky, the parties seek to secure a grip over the public sector to compensate for their feeble position in society, as access to state resources gives them a chance to trade these resources for political support.

In its turn, state capture by private interests as well as the politicization of the state, or political parties “taking over a supposedly neutral state bureaucracy and public administration, using the state as a source of private rents” (Grzymala-Busse, 2003), is detrimental for the consolidation of media freedom. Mancini draws attention to how the condition when the state is an object of competition between various groups, influences the regulatory framework for media freedom, as well as the professional culture of journalism in CEE societies. He shows that this condition implies the possibility of unstable laws and administrative structures shaping the media. Indeed, as the reports from MDCEE project describe, they undergo frequent and often dramatic changes in many CEE societies. The changes are, however, driven not by a priori policy objectives, but rather ad hoc objectives and the particular interests of various groups seeking to influence state structures and rules to their own favor. As Krygier’s chapter on the law and its impact on media and politics in CEE illustrates, this may result in “bad” laws or/and absence of any coherence in media regulations, which impedes the media’s ability to effectively perform their democratic functions (the most extreme cases of the former could be observed recently in Hungary and Poland). Besides, as Mancini points out, incessant changes

in legal frameworks for media and politics, as well as the volatility of political system are unfavorable for shaping the professional culture of journalism: they produce uncertainty in the field of journalism and its interactions with political figures and thus prevent an establishment of clear professional norms and routines.

The particular value of the book (and the MDCEE project in general) is that besides focusing on the relationship between the media and politics itself, it also provides a nuanced and in-depth analysis of various contexts (such as economic, legal, or cultural) within which the media operate in CEE, and which in some countries happen to make what Jakubowicz and Sukosd once called “a disabling environment” for media freedom. This concerns, for example, the issue of the legal environment for media independence, which previously was often discussed in media studies in terms of “new democratic media laws” contraposed to the inimical “old political culture”. However, as Rantanen and Belyakova reveal, the development of democratic media legislation has often been undermined in the CEE by policymakers’ lack of interest or incompetence in the field, not to mention deliberate attempts by some politicians to adopt laws designed to muzzle independent media or to block the passing of necessary media laws pointed out by Krygier.

The chapters by Balčytienė and Lasas demonstrate that, as in the case of media regulation, a more complex picture than was earlier assumed is presented by today’s political culture in CEE societies, which previously was seen chiefly through the lenses of the “cultural heritage” of communism/pre-communism. Balčytienė proposes a dynamic “historic” approach to the study of the cultures of post-communist societies: according to her, though indeed such inherited cultural features as clientelism and favoritism are still characteristic of these societies, the uncertainties, instability, and challenges faced by them in the transformation period additionally brought other cultural qualities, ones which are no less a threat to democratization, and to the media’s democratic performance in the region. The list includes: extreme individualization, ignorance, self-interest, and the loss of community feeling, with the danger that civil involvement which was characteristic for many CEE countries soon after the Singing Revolutions will be replaced by alienation and “social withdrawal” or/and “admiration of mainstream discourses and visual representations mainly through TV-saturated political scandals, spin, spectacle, and populism”. The findings by Lasas are consonant with Balčytienė’s conclusions: he points out that interest in political affairs in CEE dropped since the 1990s. Lasas, who uses three European Social Values surveys (1990–3, 1998–9, 2008–9) to examine democratic culture in CEE countries, points out that it has remained largely unchanged over the last twenty years of the transitions.

The uncertainty characteristic to the transitions heightens the role of agency. Unsurprisingly, one of the sections of the book is devoted to key actors involved in mediating power in new democracies: political parties, media owners, and journalists. Similar to political parties, which, as Bajomi-Lazar points out, tend to “colonize the media” in CEE, media owners may seek to make them serve their par-

ticularistic political/business interests. The findings by Štětka, who focuses on the shifts in economic and ownership structures in the region, are alarming: he warns that after foreign investors withdrew from media markets in Central and Eastern Europe following the 2008 financial crisis and their assets went into the hands of local “tycoons” or “oligarchs”, there has been a threat that what he calls the oligarchic model of media ownership may outgrow the (Western) commercial model.

Compared to the above-mentioned two types of actors, journalists seem to be the least autonomous and homogeneous group in CEE. Indeed, as Mocek shows in his chapter, the period of transformation has raised multiple barriers between journalists in CEE countries resulting from political, ideological, and ownership divisions — as well as generational shifts. This fragmentation of journalism inhibits its professionalization, and prevents it from weakening the links with external forces — namely, the worlds of politics and business. On the bright side, however, is that CEE journalists, according to Mocek, do not prefer the model of journalism practiced in authoritarian countries like Russia or China. A certain indicator of the vitality of (Western) journalistic standards in Central and Eastern Europe is the emergence of various online news outlets, partly founded by journalists who seek to avoid pressure from above (p. 96).

When displaying the tendencies in the relationship between the media and politics in the region, the contributors to this volume underline that CEE countries are anything but uniform in their post-communist development (see especially Mancini, Balcytiene, Rantanen & Belyakova). An innovative for post-communist media studies approach to analysis of heterogeneity of transformations in the region is proposed by Greskovits. Based on Polanyi’s theory of capitalism, he singles out three types of capitalist democracies which appeared in CEE together with the respective media models: neoliberal (characteristic for the Baltic States), embedded neoliberal (the Czech and Slovak republics, Hungary, and Poland), and neocorporatist (Slovenia).

Another way to deal with the heterogeneity of new European democracies is to refer to the concept of hybridity to signify the difference between the few countries which successfully followed the Western path and many others which, as it is often assumed in political science, have developed hybrid forms of democracy. Voltmer criticizes the political-science notion of hybrid regimes because it confuses, as she assumes, the normatively desirable form of democracy with the actual practices of Western democracies. She points out that what is often seen as divergence from democracy in CEE models of media and politics is in fact a convergence, but not with the ideal model, but today’s realities of Western Europe, such as an erosion of predictable electoral behavior which induces attack campaigning and spin in politics, or expansion and commercialization of media systems leading to “hyper-adversarialism” and sensationalism in journalism practices. Voltmer argues that hybridity of practices and institutions is inevitable because adopted institutions do not operate in a historical and cultural vacuum, and even necessary, because they need to “grow roots and become an accepted part of everyday life” (p. 220). At the

same time she remarks that hybridity is not always conducive for democratization: sometimes domestication of transplanted Western institutions may be “taming the wild” (as with domestication of animals) thereby stripping democracy and media freedom of its emancipatory potential (p. 221).

As indicated by the title of this book, it presents media and politics in new European democracies in a comparative perspective. A separate section of *Media and Politics in New Democracies* sheds light on new democracies outside Europe, with particular focus on experiences in Africa, Latin America, and South East Asia. This broadening of the scope of comparison in CEE media studies is particularly revealing as it helps to identify common patterns in different countries and regions (such as, for example, vulnerability to political populism, party/media polarization, and informal networks of patronage), as well as the particularities of transformations in Central and Eastern Europe. It also makes the whole volume a notable contribution to the study of protracted consolidations around the world.

This book, featuring contributions from a global team of authors, is an extremely valuable collection, which brings in new models, perspectives and conceptual frameworks to the study of media and politics in Central and Eastern Europe and beyond. The ideas, theorization and findings it presents will undoubtedly define the development of the field years to come. At the same time, it opens new avenues for further research: as Rantanen and Belyakova pointedly note in the concluding chapter:

The worst thing that could happen would be for the topic of the media and politics in CEE to be seen as fully covered by this volume and then wait a decade for the next book. (Rantanen & Belyakova, p. 318)

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Gary Graham, Anita Greenhill, Donald Shaw and Chris J. Vargo (eds.). (2015). *Content Is King. New Media Management in the Digital Age*. New York and London: Bloomsbury Publishing Inc., pp. 256, ISBN: 978-1-6235-6545-9.

In everyday life we experience the effects of the rapid changes that we owe to new technologies. The Internet has changed not only our approach to communication, but also the form of enjoying our free time, or even, as argued by Carr, ways of thinking and learning. Adjusting to these changes is not only necessary to feel more "up-to-date", but sometimes a way of survival, especially for the media that can no longer function in the world without the Web. The book *Content Is King. New Media Management in the Digital Age* can be considered a guide to those changes and dealing with them designed for news managers.

The book was written by experts and scholars whose main research field is communication, management, journalism, and media. It is addressed to "those who manage, or hope to manage" newspapers and other news media. While for most people the so-called *Digital Era* means more opportunities and fading importance of geographical boundaries, media enterprises face many problems trying to work

in times of changes that are disruptive for traditional media, the old model of communication and setting the news agenda.

The publication is divided into four parts: 1) Media community, 2) Finding value in a world of disruptive technology, 3) Experimenting with the audience, 4) Ongoing strategies — each one covering different problems, all of them very important for the understanding of the changes that we witness.

In the first part we find, above all, an introduction that explains the main aims of the book, to whom it is addressed, and what problems it covers. The first chapter focuses on the role of newspapers in local communities. The authors argue that newspapers still use the one-way model of communication, not being able to fully take advantage of the new opportunities and not seeing their audience as the main element of their future success. Nowadays media are no longer a link between people forming a community, but very often they tend to actually deepen the dispersion. Greenhill and Serrano think that newspapers are crucial for democracy because they still have social responsibility functions, although bloggers and citizen journalists seem to challenge the traditional control of news production. The second chapter focuses also on news production in relation to the context of Web 2.0 — a concept that can be understood in two ways — as tools and services promoting social interactions, but also as the whole process of evolution in the use of those technologies, “a social and cultural exchange”. The third chapter written by Vargo and Shaw talks about the interaction with the audience. The news manager has to carefully watch his readers, know what other media they use and write not only about the place where he lives, but above all about the economic and social contexts of his audience. The content should be as diverse as the people in the community are. It is also important to remember that although the time and money that we invest in new technologies may not rise income immediately, it is an investment that will pay off in the future. The fourth and last chapter of the first part argues that the changes in technologies and the media are a challenge not only for news production companies, but also for scholars. It focuses on the convergence of politics and entertainment that brings both threats and advantages, allowing for the better understanding of politics for common people.

The second part of the book entitled “Finding value in a world of disruptive technology” describes the strategies for both media owners and journalists. The fifth chapter written by Graham and Hill focuses on the economic perspective and presents strategies for local press enterprises that tend to lose methods in the day-to-day details, although their objective is well known. The same authors show once again in chapter six that media owners have to pay more attention to their audience. Back in the origins of the press the surveys and other research methods were not available, but right now the understanding of the readers’ needs and contact with them is crucial for the success of the media and so are the changes in the value chain and in the postproduction processes. Greenhill and Fletcher analyze the role of traditional news-reporting and its monopoly in defining the notion of the news

and the last chapter concludes this part with the analysis of cross-media synergy that should be considered the central strategic concept nowadays.

The authors of the third part try to analyze the issue of experimenting with the audience. Sihvonen and Simpson examined media systems in Finland (democratic corporatist model) and Great Britain (liberal model) and found out that commercialism has promoted populism and tabloidization not only in papers, but also online. Vargo focused on building effective social networks and showed some strategies, having in mind that consumers are “drowning in content” and Lazarsfeld’s two-step flow theory may no longer be always accurate. The last chapter of this part covers the problem of the lack of cross disciplinary thinkers and the ways of planning the future issues in the present conditions (prototypes and science fiction).

The last part of the book, entitled “Ongoing strategies” once again stresses how important contact with the audience is. The second chapter analyzes free and paid-for content and the final chapter is a summary of all the issues undertaken in the publication.

Traditional media manage to adjust to the new reality of the media landscape much better than one could have thought, yet they still have a long way to go. Online versions are still considered less worthy than paper ones and media owners still think they know what their readers want, even without interacting with them, but the authors agree that newspapers have not had the last word yet.

The book *Content is King* is a very up-to-date publication that can be useful for news managers, media owners and scholars. It focuses on newspapers, mainly local, and in my opinion it could include other media that also have to face the changes of the media landscape such as television and radio, especially considering how important the notion of convergence is, but it is definitely an insightful and accurate publication that should be read by anyone interested in social media and news production.

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Ewa Nowak (2014). *Ustanawianie agendy politycznej przez media. Efekt newsa w Polsce* [Media-Policy Agenda-Setting. The News Effect in Poland]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS, pp. 356, ISBN: 978-83-7784-511-0.

The history of agenda-setting research dates back almost 50 years. During these years, much research has been conducted in this field in different parts of the world. It has proven the strong influence of media upon public opinion. While agenda-setting research and theory were developing, scholars endeavored to identify factors that affect the scope of the media effect. Many of them (among others: Baum-

garnter, Green-Pedersen and Jones) tried to learn how deeply media could influence public policies. Ewa Nowak's book, *Media-Policy Agenda-Setting. The News Effect in Poland* is one of the first Polish attempts to present comprehensively a new research stream: political/policy agenda-setting.

The work consists of six chapters. In the first part of the book, the author described the stages of development of research focused on the effects of mass media. She focused on media's influence over politics and on political media effects and recounted the evolution of the agenda-setting paradigm and its ups and downs. Moreover, she did not forget to include the latest trend in agenda-setting research: the network agenda-setting model, which is also called in the literature the third level of agenda-setting. Additionally, concepts and terms frequently used in the field of agenda research were discussed in the book (among others: *agenda-setting*, *policy agenda-setting*, *policy agenda-building*, *agenda-building* and *information-subsidy*). Also, the author analyzed the relationship between media's agenda, public's agenda and political agenda and pointed to the real world factor and its role in the agenda-setting process.

In the second chapter, the theory of news framing and the concept of priming were described against the background of agenda-setting studies. Readers will find there information about different types of frames, types of effects, and their role in politics. Also in this chapter, the author reviewed the studies on the effects of the global media on political decisions (the so called CNN-effect). According to some of the researchers, global news channels such as CNN or BBC can have an effect on the great powers' decision-making process and its results, especially with regard to widespread international conflicts. It is worth underlining that the author presented the views of both supporters and opponents of this concept. In addition, in this part of the book the concept of the mediatization of politics and mechanisms behind this process were explained.

A key part of the work is the third chapter. It has been devoted entirely to research approaches in the field of political/policy agenda-setting. This area of investigation has emerged quite recently in the United States. Till now, there was very little research conducted in this field. Most of this treated media reports as an independent variable, which more or less determines the content of a given agenda or policy, i.e., a dependent variable (p. 136). The results are still indecisive. Theoretical and empirical discrepancies arise. Many scholars apply their own research models, as did Ewa Nowak in the empirical part of her book.

News media and the Polish political system are the subjects of the fourth chapter of the book. Besides quoting Hallin and Mancini's concept and applying the criteria created by them to Central and Eastern European countries, the author provides comprehensive data on news media in Poland, including readership and audience measurement ratings.

The last two chapters represent the empirical part of the book. The first contains quantitative analysis of the issue of salience transfer from television's agenda to the

political agenda. The second consists of case studies (the analysis of qualitative research). The research was based on television broadcasts, which are constantly the most important source of information about politics in Poland.

The author has applied quantitative and qualitative research methods and has proposed a novel approach to media effects research. However, one can not agree with all the conclusions emerging from the quantitative part of the research. This reflection applies mainly to the interpretation of part of the statistical data. Due to the specific character of the research subject, drawing conclusions from the quantitative data is almost unjustifiable and can lead to a misinterpretation. On the other hand, the qualitative part of the book perfectly complements the author's research and makes the mechanism of the news effect fairly comprehensible.

Ewa Nowak's study provides a compendium of information about agenda-setting research. Besides systematizing knowledge of previous research and theory development, the author introduced new issues and discussed the research trends emerging in recent years. To conclude, news media are essential in the process of political agenda-setting. However, as the author noted, the occasionality and conditionality of their influence should be borne in mind.

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Maciej Miżejewski (2013). *Ochrona pluralizmu w polityce medialnej Włoch* [Protection of Pluralism in Italian Media Policy]. Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, pp. 204, ISBN: 978-83-763-8231-9.

The reviewed book contains an analysis of the institutional arrangements in the field of media pluralism in a European way and their practical use in politics in Italy. The book discusses the main aims of media policy in the European Union, claiming media pluralism as a necessary condition for the effective functioning of democracy. The formal presence of numerous legal standards in Italian legislation, pointed out by the author, paradoxically contributes not to strengthen but weaken the realization of citizens' rights to information. The author explores what is the reason, pointing out the main characteristics of the Italian political system which are: provisionality (*provvisorieta*), temporality (*precarietà*) and the ability to return to a political equilibrium (*capacità di recupero*). These features, in the author's opinion, determine the shape of contemporary media policy in Italy.

The theme undertaken by the author enables understanding of protection of pluralism mechanisms in a democratic political system in relation to the standards

set out in international law and the Strasbourg case. The analyzed case of Italy, determined by conflict of political and economic interests, has been discussed in the context of making legislative initiatives by past governments aimed at strengthening and consolidating the market position of the media empire of Silvio Berlusconi and sanctioning duopoly in the Italian ether.

Therefore, the author formulates the following thesis of the research: “Protecting media pluralism is the guarantor of democracy”. As a result of the author’s analysis of the law of the Italian Constitutional Court (*Corte costituzionale*) and its impact on the legislation in the mass communication field in Italy, it shows that the realization of citizens’ rights to information guaranteed in the Constitution of Italy, faces serious limitations as a result of the Italian political tradition, of which the main feature is the weakness of the state and its organs. The author proves that this media policy, established in order to protect media pluralism, acts only formally, and the main problem is not only the lack of appropriate regulations, but also their ineffectiveness. The aptly observed direct influence of numerous political parties on the public media in Italy, with the limited role of the parliamentary committee (CPIV) as one of the state bodies for media pluralism protection, defines Italian media pluralism as a legal fiction. Although the Italian Parliament plays a leading role in the exercise of political control over the public broadcaster RAI, designating at least 7 out of the 9 members of the board of RAI, according to the formula of political parity is that the statutory delegation had no longer application to private broadcasters, especially against Berlusconi’s Mediaset, who remains its main competitor.

The structure of the work is methodologically structured and well adapted to the purposes set. In reference to the subject and scientific monograph field, the author applied a descriptive, institutional, legal, historical, and comparative method. The first chapter content is theoretical considerations regarding the three main aspects of media pluralism: legal, political, and market conditions. Considerations are accompanied by the author’s reflection on the concept of media pluralism as a guarantor of the democratic order and the assessment standards in the field of media pluralism in the European way, with the author’s reference to the so-called political realities of “Old democracy”, especially in Britain, France, and Germany.

In the second chapter the author presents the legislative solutions in media policy for the European Union for the protection of pluralism, with particular emphasis on the Council of Europe standards in the field of creation and functioning of regulatory bodies in the broadcasting sector. The author insightfully analyzes their position in the political system and competence of the example of the Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, French, and German model. He examines their role not only as public institutions, which uphold media independence, but their effectiveness and real and effective impact on the quality of media pluralism, which gives the author’s discourse, by a strong dimension of political science.

The third chapter takes up the issues of media policy in Italy as a result of the case-law of the Constitutional Court and the effectiveness evaluation of the activities of other state bodies acting as guarantors to protect media pluralism, including in particular the Italian regulatory body (AGCOM — *Autorità per le garanzie nelle comunicazioni*). In this chapter, the author explores the political consequences of interest conflicts, significant for contemporary Italian media policy, which was caused by the fact that the holding of public function derived from political choice is entrusted directly to the economic group, which the former Prime Minister of the Italian government has become the head of. The conflict was intensified by the undertaking by successive governments, created by Silvio Berlusconi, of legislative initiatives aimed at weakening the market position of competitors, especially public television RAI.

The author rightly proves that the political and economic power focused in media magnate Silvio Berlusconi's hands was a real threat to Italian democracy. The political consequences of this conflict are apparently visible. The author points out that the enormous scale of such a concentration of power in the media and politics was easy to predict. The then President of the Italian Republic, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi recalled that the citizens are longing for the idea of political pluralism, which is a consequence of the existence of independent sources of information, at the forum of the Italian parliament in a message addressed to the Italian Parliament, which called for the protection of media pluralism, reminding us of the inseparable connection between information and democracy.

Analyzing the political consequences of the transformation of the Italian media system, the author recognizes that in legislative solutions' view in the audiovisual sector (*Legge Mammi*) this process is still in the so-called transition phase, which is a result of the nature of the Italian political system, despite being an absence of solutions in this field dictated by a lack of political will, and has remained constant for nearly forty years. Furthermore, the Italian media system transformation as a society sector and its role as a tool for the proper functioning of democracy in contemporary Europe is a special case. In the author's opinion, this transformation is carried out from the model of subordinated to the government media.

The political system in Italy, which is characterized by a high level of party activity and bureaucracy, makes state institutions acting as subjects of media policy, because of its many competences, are often mutually exclusive rather than cooperating, and competing together causing a conflict between political factions soliciting for the favor of the media and economic groups trying to consolidate their market position through the media. Furthermore, the specified media model of performing parliamentary control over public broadcaster RAI still triggers constant political pressure over the following ruling coalition, although the possibility of privatization of the public broadcaster recorded in the 2004 Gasparri law (*legge Gasparri*). The author points out the lack of political will in carrying out the privatization of RAI, as evidence of low quality media pluralism in Italy.

At the conclusion of his book, he refers to analyzes of Italian media expert Paolo Mancini, examining the Italian media and politics connection, which emphasizes that both the authors and the major recipients of media messages in Italy are part of a closed palace establishment (*circle of il palazzo*), participating in the individual phases of political negotiations. In this situation it is therefore difficult for Italian journalists to play the role of gatekeepers, creating a forum for public discussion. In the majority they rule over the circulation of information in a strictly closed elite circle. In the case of Italy, we have to deal with the classical model of horizontal communication, where public action in the name of protecting the party interests, under Italian political life grows almost to the reason of state. Bias of the mass media in Italy is also accompanied by a common system of values and interests of political leaders and media moguls. The mutual support of both professional groups, according to Mancini and Italian media experts like Mazzoleni and Grossi, have identified as political parallelism. It is a system of the world of media and politics on the basis of organizational, economic, and thematic interdependence. Supporting the political system by the media is conducted so openly with the full approval of the Italian political elite. The scale of common interests and mutual benefits system makes the media an effective tool for effective governance.

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