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**NORMATIVE MODELS OF MEDIA AND JOURNALISM AND BROADCASTING  
REGULATION IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE**

by

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Media regulatory regimes (see Paraschos, 1998; Voorhoff, 1995; Press Law and Practice, 1993) differ from country to country, depending on the nature of media policy goals and public definitions of the media (McQuail, 1987, 1994).

In totalitarian/authoritarian societies, media regulation usually serve to subordinate the media to the interests of the ruling minority. In democratic societies, regulation with a light touch is usually confined to protection against abuse of media freedom (protection against defamation, protection of privacy, regulation of court coverage, national security and order, obscenity and insult to public morals, blasphemy and racism), with most other things left to market mechanisms. Additional regulation may be introduced to guarantee media freedom (access to information). There may also be interventionist regulation serving to promote the public interest, defined, as the case may be, as enhancement of media pluralism, prevention of undue concentration, facilitation of access to the media, etc.

Public definitions of the media which, of course, encompass many dimensions (relations of media to state and society, social and cultural values, organizational and technological features, conditions of distribution, reception and use, social relationship of sender and receiver) have direct implications for, among other things, their legal regulation. There is, for example, a clear difference in this regard between „public“ and „private“ communication. Also such aspects as the centrality or marginality of a medium vis-a-vis politics powerfully affect the nature and scope of regulation.

One case in point is Article 10 (1) of the European Convention on Human Rights which proclaims freedom of expression, but then says „This article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises“ (emphasis added). When the Convention was being adopted in 1950, the cinema was probably seen (in the light of experience in Nazi Germany and in the Soviet bloc) as central to politics. Today, film is largely perceived as a non-political medium, yet this legacy of the past (which is really dead-letter law <sup>1</sup>) has remained in the Convention.

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\* University of Warsaw. This paper is a revised version of a paper presented during the conference on „The Profession of Journalism in Democratic Society. East-West Perspectives“, Napier University, Edinburgh, Scotland, September 4-5, 1998.

<sup>1</sup> The case-law of the European Commission and Court of Human Rights does not seem to include particular

Public definitions of the media are brought into sharp relief in „press theories“ (defined by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, 1956, as concepts of what „the press should be and do“) and in normative media theory (described by McQuail, 1994: 121, as dealing with ideas of „how media ought to, or are expected to, operate“).

These normative issues are the object of intense interest in Central and Eastern European countries. Media regulation has been undergoing profound change in those countries as public definitions of the media have changed profoundly in consequence of systemic change, and at the same time as the tensions between press theory on the one hand, and press practices and media regulation on the other hand, have intensified.

These tensions stem primarily from:

- the difference between the idealized alternative normative model of media democratization developed by the dissidents in the 1980s and in the first flush of euphoria following the collapse of the Communist system in the early 1990s and the reality which set in afterwards;
- the difference between public expectations of the media and the actual patterns of their performance, resulting from both legal and institutional models (especially as relates to state or public broadcast media) developed on the basis of regulation and media and journalistic performance.

The gap between theory and practice<sup>2</sup> has turned the media into one of the many yet unsolved problems of transition.

This is well expressed by Mondak who - based on his observation of the situation in Romania - remarks that „the capacity of a news medium to contribute to democratization hinges on its independence and professionalism“ and then continues:

*Observers may hope that media provide support for democratic rights, yet we must consider the possibility that media are sometimes irrelevant, or, even worse, that media in some instances act as forces against democratization. Independent, professional journalists generally can be expected to champion democratic freedoms, and certainly to disseminate objective information and sound analysis. However, the crux of the problem in many post-communist states is that media lack independence and professionalism [...] such media must be counted as part of the problem, not part of the solution (Mondak, forthcoming: 2; emphases added).*

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references to the issue of licensing cinema enterprises; see Gomien, Harris, Zwaak, 1996; Case-law concerning Article 10..., 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Nordenstreng (1997) points out that there are in fact two types of „theories of the press“:

- those prescribing openly normative tasks for the media in society, i.e. „subjective“ conceptions held by various actors about the mission of the media (the ideal);
- those describing the real role and impact of the media in society, as determined by a wide variety of social, political, economic and cultural factors (the reality).

If the media are indeed „part of the problem“ in Central and Eastern Europe, this is mainly for two reasons:

- there is no real agreement between the political class, the media and the general public concerning some aspects of media definitions, and as a consequence concerning normative media theory and the media regulatory regime;
- and because of the resulting confusion, the real patterns of media operation fail to satisfy just about everyone.

We propose therefore to review both the development of press theories and normative models of journalism developed in Central and Eastern Europe and some aspects of press practices, and to see how they relate to each other. In so doing, we hope to contribute to the discussion of „post-authoritarian communication“ and provide some insight into the process described by Biernatzki (1996: 3) as „what happens to communication during political liberalization processes“ and „how the mass media adapt to their new-found freedom as governments move away from authoritarian to more liberal forms of rule“.

The most important question here is whether the pattern of media operation in Central and Eastern Europe has already been set in the 9 years since 1989, or whether there is still a chance that either some of the original ideas of the dissidents, or some other concepts of „what the press should be and do“ that are different from the prevailing pattern of Western countries, may still emerge and find realization.

**A. Normative Theories of the Media: A Brief Overview**

One sign of both the influence of the Four Theories of the Press by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (Siebert et al., 1956) and the exasperation many scholars have felt with the straight-jacket they imposed on the world’s media is the many attempts to elaborate on them and develop different typologies. Figure 1 shows how some of them can they be related to the original four concepts.

	Libertarian	social responsibility	Soviet Communist	authoritarian
2	democratic participant theory		Development communication	
3	Western		Development Communist	communication authoritarian
4	Market (Western)		Advancing (Third World) Marxist (Communist)	
5	Commercial		paternalist	authoritarian

5	Democratic				
6	Commercial			Paternal	
7	Libertarian	social-libertarian	social-centralist	Social-authoritarian	authoritarian

1. Press "theories" (Siebert, Peterson, Schramm, 1956).
2. McQuail's (1987) additional theories (his typology also encompasses the other four).
3. Hachten's (1981) "concepts" of the press (it also encompasses a "revolutionary concept of the press", in which the media lead society in a struggle to overthrow the existing system).
4. Altschull's "systems" (cf. McQuail, 1987: 23); in brackets - "systems" distinguished by Martin, Chaudhary, 1983.
5. Williams' (1968) "systems".
6. "Systems" distinguished by Sparks and Splichal, 1988
7. Lowenstein's "philosophies" of press systems (Merrill, Lowenstein, 1979).

**Figure 1. Press Theories and Other Typologies of Media Systems**

Another attempt to develop an alternative to the original four theories, and to match particular perspectives of the media with norms of journalistic performance, was undertaken by James Curran (1991).

	<b>Liberal</b>	<b>Marxist critique of liberal perspective</b>	<b>Communist</b>	<b>Radical democratic</b>
<b>Public sphere</b>	Public space	Clas domination	---	Public arena of contest
<b>Political role of media</b>	Check on government	Agency of class control	Further societal objectives	Representation/counterpoise
<b>Media system</b>	Free market	Capitalist ownership	Public ownership	Controlled market
<b>Journalistic norm</b>	Disinterested	Subaltern	Didactic	Adversarial
<b>Entertainment</b>	Distraction/gratification	Opiate	Enlightenment	Society communing with itself
<b>Reform</b>	Self-regulation	Unreformable	Liberalization	Public intervention

**Figure 2. Alternative Perspectives of the Media** (Source: Curran, 1991)

Curran explains that „radical democratic“ is another term for "social democratic". This perspective has much in common with both the democratic-participant media theory (cf. McQuail, 1987) and Picard's social democratic theory. This latter concept refers to R.G. Picard's distinctive "social democratic" version of press theory (see McQuail, 1992: 64; Nordenstreng, 1997, calls it a „democratic socialist“ theory) which provides legitimation for public intervention into the communication processes, and even for collective ownership, so as to ensure true independence from vested interests, access and diversity of opinion, as well as to promote inclusion and pluralism, which in Picard's view the market mechanisms cannot be trusted to provide.

Given that some of the typologies mentioned above assume the division of the world into the capitalist and communist blocs, their usefulness today is limited. In any case, as Nordenstreng (1997) points out, the question is no longer whether or not the classic (i.e. the four theories) is passé, but what is the best way to get beyond it.

One attempt to do that can be derived from McQuail's (1987: 32-34, 143) attempt to associate Etzioni's typology of organizational goals (coercive, utilitarian and normative) with modes of communication relationships (command, service and associational modes). If we combine this with the typology of roles played by journalists and the audience in the political communication system (Gurevitch and Blumler, 1983), we obtain a matrix which offers a general formulation of the social philosophy of media's operation and places media and journalists in relation to both the State and power structure on the one hand, and the audience on the other.

<b>Role vis-a-vis the audience</b>	<b>Functions, goals of media system</b>	<b>Mode of communication relationship</b>	<b>Regulatory mechanism</b>	<b>Audience roles</b>
<b>Hegemony</b>	Mobilization, political education, manipulation (coercive)	Command	Centralized command system	Resister
<b>Leadership</b>	Fight for common goals (normative)	Associational	Light touch or none <sup>3</sup>	Partisan, Follower
<b>Guardianship/ Stewardship</b>	Teacher, watchdog, champion of causes (mixed)	Command/ Associational	Regulation/ self-regulation promoting social responsibility	Citizen, Monitor, „Pupil“
<b>Service</b>	Neutral reporter of events, provider of content demanded by audience (utilitarian)	Service	Light touch, market mechanism	Monitor, Spectator

<sup>3</sup> Media enjoying widespread social support and performing an accepted leadership role are not usually subject to heavy regulation; in revolutionary conditions, when some media may spearhead popular movements, the regulatory regime may not operate at all.

**Figure 3. Media in Society, Roles, Relationships, Goals** (Adapted from McQuail, 1987: 32-34, 143; Gurevitch and Blumler, 1983)

Later, Denis McQuail formulated another proposal to adopt „basic communication values“ - those of freedom, justice/equality and order/solidarity - as a point of departure for a typology of normative models. These principles, says McQuail, correspond to the core values of modern Western society and lie at the heart of most expectations concerning public communication (McQuail, 1992: 66-67). Of course, the adoption of one of these basic communication values as the foundation of a media order has far-reaching implications for all aspects of media operation - from public policy in this field, through patterns of social communication affected by this policy, to practical forms of media operation (though clearly the communication systems of most societies, except for totalitarian ones, include elements of more than one communication value.

<b>Basic Value</b>	<b>Freedom</b>	<b>Justice/ Equality</b>	<b>Solidarity (bottom-up)</b>	<b>Order (top-down)</b>
<b>Social Context</b>	Free market system	(Social) democratic model proposed by dissidents	Media attached to various sub-groups of society	Totalitarian/ authoritarian system
<b>Goal</b>	Unrestricted freedom of communication	Equal, fair access to media, fair reflection in media of society in all diversity	Increasing commonality and sharing of out-look, voluntary attachment,	Control/ compliance/ conformity
<b>Main regulatory mechanism</b>	Light regulation, market mechanism prevails	Heavy regulation: public interventionism to ensure equality in access to, and use of, means of communication	Heavy regulation: arrangements for access and positive representation of sub-groups in society	Totalitarian regulation: centralized, command system
<b>Underlying Philosophy</b>	Market-driven exclusion, negative freedom	Inclusion, democracy, positive freedom	Sympathetic recognition of alternative perspectives	Political exclusion, hegemony, homogenization
<b>Communicators</b>	Everyone with the means to do	All social groups	All sub-groups	Only "approved" voices

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Figure 4. Communication Values and Corresponding Media Systems (Adapted from Mcquail, 1992)<sup>4</sup>

The media system designed to ensure justice/equality has much in common with Picard's social-democratic press theory. Along the same lines, proposals by Williams (1968) and by Keane (1991, 1993) to use public funds and public institutions to ensure positive freedom to communicate for all groups in society, the media's independence from vested interests, feedback, access, social participation in, and social accountability of, the media - are clearly designed to promote equality in communications.

Also Graham Murdock seeks to classify media tasks oriented towards fulfillment of justice/equality and solidarity values. Earlier, together with Golding, he argued (Murdock and Golding, 1989) that communications and information are central to the exercise of full and effective citizenship, and therefore the media should offer citizens:

- access to the information, advice and analysis that will enable them to know what their rights are in other spheres and allow them to pursue these rights effectively;
- access to the broadest possible range of information, interpretation, and debate on areas that involve political choices, and they must be able to use communications facilities in order to register criticism, mobilize opposition, and propose alternative courses of action;
- an opportunity to recognize themselves and their aspirations in the range of representations offered within the central communications sectors and be able to contribute to developing their representations.

In his later work, Murdock (1996) points out that as the range of civil rights has been progressively extended, the former concept of „simple“ citizenship has evolved into a „complex“ one. Full citizenship is now seen as requiring satisfaction of not only civil, political and social, but also full cultural rights, i.e.:

- Rights to Information;
- Rights to Experience: rights of access to the greatest possible diversity of representations of personal and social experience in fictional media genres (especially television ones), aiding efforts to answer fundamental questions which invariably spring up in people's lives;

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<sup>4</sup> McQuail treats „order/solidarity“ as one value, but accepts that it is open to more divergent definitions and evaluations. He explains that „order“ may be seen as imposed from above, while „solidarity“ may be voluntary and self-chosen. For this reason, and for purposes of analytical distinction, they are presented here as separate values, giving rise - when taken to their logical conclusion - to divergent media systems. Differences between „justice/equality“ and „solidarity“ lie primarily in the social and political orientation of the former value and the cultural and psycho-social orientation of the latter.

- Rights to Knowledge: rights to explanations of patterns, processes and forces shaping the present and of its links with the past, helping translate information and experience into knowledge and develop personal and social strategies;
- Rights to Participation.

For these and other rights to be safeguarded, and for full citizenship to be made possible, public communicative activity must, Murdock maintains, meet the following conditions:

- It must provide a relatively open arena of representation, including barriers against cooperation by the two major centres of discursive power - state and government and the corporate world;
- It must demolish the accepted divisions and develop forms of representation and participation and scheduling that promote encounters and debates between the widest possible range of identities and positions;
- It must balance the promotion of diversity of information and experience against citizens' rights of access to frameworks of knowledge and to the principles that allow them to be evaluated and challenged;
- It must ensure that the full range of its services remains equally available to all.

Observance of these „cultural rights“ and implementation of the goals of public communicative activity could be seen as criteria for evaluating the contribution of the media to the operation of the public sphere and development of civil society.

Murdock did not really set out to formulate another press theory, even though he does lay down certain normative principles of media operation. On the other hand, Denis McQuail, Kaarle Nordenstreng, Clifford Christians and Robert White (see Nordenstreng, 1997) did make a deliberate effort to develop a „replacement for Four Theories“ and to propose a fresh approach to normative theories of the media. This has led them to propose a set of five „paradigms“ built on models of democracy, rather than on models of communication. The authors admit that by limiting themselves to democratic theories they are offering something less than a universally valid typology, but they argue that this approach allows them to focus on people rather than the media themselves. Also, in this way, they can avoid the pigeon-hole approach, since in their view each national media system and individual medium, indeed each individual journalist, shares more than one paradigm. This typology is described as serving „the purpose of analytical distinction, and not of totalizing labels“.

<b>Paradigm</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Liberal-individualist</b>	Pure libertarian theory: minimal role for the state, light regulation, no public right to know, no concept of the public interest, no content criteria for media performance; accountability measured by market forces requiring media to honour individual freedom of choice.
<b>Social res-</b>	The cornerstone of the political order is a social conception of the good and a



<b>possibility</b>	common understanding of the moral subject. Thus news become an agent of community formation, the goal of reporting being active citizenship. Regulation or self-regulation promotes social responsibility.
<b>Critical</b>	Based on the Gramscian notion of hegemony and the Habermasian public sphere. Media are located at the nexus of social structures and social consciousness, with a potential for emancipating the masses (e.g. alternative media and NWICO movement).
<b>Administrative</b>	Based on the notion of objective information, on the assumption of authoritative sources and on the commitment to efficient transmission of information to many. Technocratic excellence, professionalism in the service of political and economic elites (organized, corporatist interests). Insensitive towards people at large. Represented by quality papers and public service broadcasting (in the latter case, regulation ensures its existence and funding, determines its remit).
<b>Cultural negotiation</b>	Denies a universal rationality, objective information and professional-bureaucratic efficiency; dedicated to rights of subcultures with their particularistic values. Promotes intersubjective understanding and a real sense of community. Media serve both communitarianism and cultural negotiation between conflicting values, aiming at mediations through drama rather than news. Regulation ensures pluralism of content and minority access to the media.

Figure 5. Five Paradigms: a „replacement for **Four Theories**“ (Adapted from Nordenstreng, 1997)

The authors have also developed a classification of the roles of the press and other media in society, based on varying degrees of media autonomy and involvement in society.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Cooperative</b>	A role the media play when a nation state is young and insecure, in times of war, emergency, etc.
<b>Surveillance</b>	A role typically designated as adversary, watchdog and agenda-setter, when violations of the moral and social order are exposed; bringing important issues to the attention of the community. Regulation protects media freedom and autonomy.
<b>Facilitative</b>	A role for the media where journalists seek to create and sustain public debate („conversation“ model by Carey); essence of the public or civic journalism movement. Regulation or self-regulation defines goals pursued by media.
<b>Critical/ dialectical</b>	A role for the media when journalists examine in a truly radical way the assumptions and premises of the community; constitutes public debate about, not within, the prevailing political order. Regulation protects the media's freedom to do so.

Figure 6. Media and Journalistic Roles in Society (Adapted from Nordenstreng, 1997)

We might usefully devote some more attention to the „facilitative“ role of media and journalists, as it is one of very few new ideas concerning the theory and practice of journalism. It concerns the concept of „public“, or „civic“ journalism, a movement which has emerged in the United States: „In the classical American tradition of public-spirited reform, this movement is trying to recall journalism to its deepest mission of public service“ (Rosen, 1995: 16; see also Gunaratne, Hasim, 1996).

The rationale behind civic journalism and the „conversation“ model of journalism is explained in Gunaratne’s account of the debate on the subject as follows:

*a community exists not through agreements but through communication [...] by marking and legitimizing the conversational commons, journalism can contribute to communication links among previously disconnected people, groups and places; [...] as journalists become full-fledged participants in the public dialogue, news will become a legitimated and sanctioned topic of conversation among all cultural groups, not just within an informed elite [...] „Without a journalism that both speaks and listens within the civic dialogue, we will abandon democracy to the buffeting of social accidents“ [...] The authors urge the news media to develop citizens, not consumers. They say that an emphasis on community and public life, through the recreation of a journalistic town commons, can achieve this end. They ask the news media to establish lines of communication patiently, through a stepladder approach, starting at the bottom rung of community tolerance, and eventually advancing to acceptance, collaboration and consensus (Gunaratne, 1996: passim)*

Nordenstreng (1995) adds that this trend - which calls on journalists and the media to be „brought back to the people’s agenda and turned into an exciting instrument of political participation instead of perpetuating alienation and disintegration“ - urges a determined move away from „the notion of a self-centred profession - fortress journalism - towards a position whereby the owner of the right to information is the citizen instead of the media [...] For journalists it requires a professional approach which is quite different from the conventional role: a neutral information transmitter is supposed to turn into a moderator of grass-roots politics“ (p. 121).

One reason for this is what Nordenstreng describes as the excessive power of the media in democracy today. In democratic theory, media are supposed to be in the service of the people, as are politicians running the government for the people. In real life, media exercise a strong influence on both people and government, thus occupying a master’s place, rather than that of a servant<sup>5</sup>. The people become a target of influence, instead of a source of influence. This is illustrated in Figure 7.

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<sup>5</sup> For an account of Olof Petersson’s views on the enhanced position of power held by journalists due to their control of information and ability to challenge the establishment due to their ability to reveal abuses of power, see Grundberg, 1997. On the other hand, Hanno Hardt (1996: 37) notes the „downward conversion“ of journalism and its diminished role, indeed „the end of journalism“: „The fourth estate model of the press has never been more outdated than in the current era of political and economic dependencies among major institutions in society, when a technology-driven information and entertainment culture has converted the labour process into a limited and highly controlled activity, leading to the homogenisation and degrada-

## B. Media Transformation Projects in Central and Eastern Europe and Their Results

The reason we have devoted so much attention to normative theories of the media serving the basic value of justice/equality is that dissidents in pre-1989 Central and Eastern Europe, faced with a media system subordinated to the basic value of order (as in McQuail's typology, see Figure 3), naturally sought to develop concepts of a media system displaying directly opposed characteristics. Hence their search for a way to create systems corresponding to the democratic-participant, or social democratic model which would guarantee justice and equality in communication to everyone (see Jakubowicz, 1994). The goal was to empower civil society, though - as Colin Sparks (1998: 116) points out - differing concepts of civil society gave rise to some differences in approach as to who should really be empowered:

- everyone (leading to „media socialization“, i.e. a change of social relations in communication, with the media turned over to the people),
- all civic organizations and associations,
- or just „nice associations“ - those „that were filled with good intentions“.

Pursuit of these different avenues would, naturally, have led to the emergence of different media systems.

Once the Communist system collapsed, two other major concepts appeared. For one thing, some commentators and theorists, discouraged by the State's heavy-handed attempts to control the media (as for example in Belarus) have come to the conclusion that wholesale privatization of the media offers the only possibility of ensuring „with the maximum degree of effectiveness, the solution of the main problem of media autonomisation in post-Communist society: their autonomy from political power, from the state“ (Manaeu, 1996: 40).

The other concept, which Sparks calls the „standard model“ in most post-Communist countries, has meant the empowerment primarily of the new political and business elites and entails a mixture of the paternal and commercial system (see also Becker, 1995).

Accordingly the picture as regards normative theories pursued or applied in Central and Eastern Europe is quite complex. This is reflected in Figure 8, based on Sparks' analysis of the process of transformation.

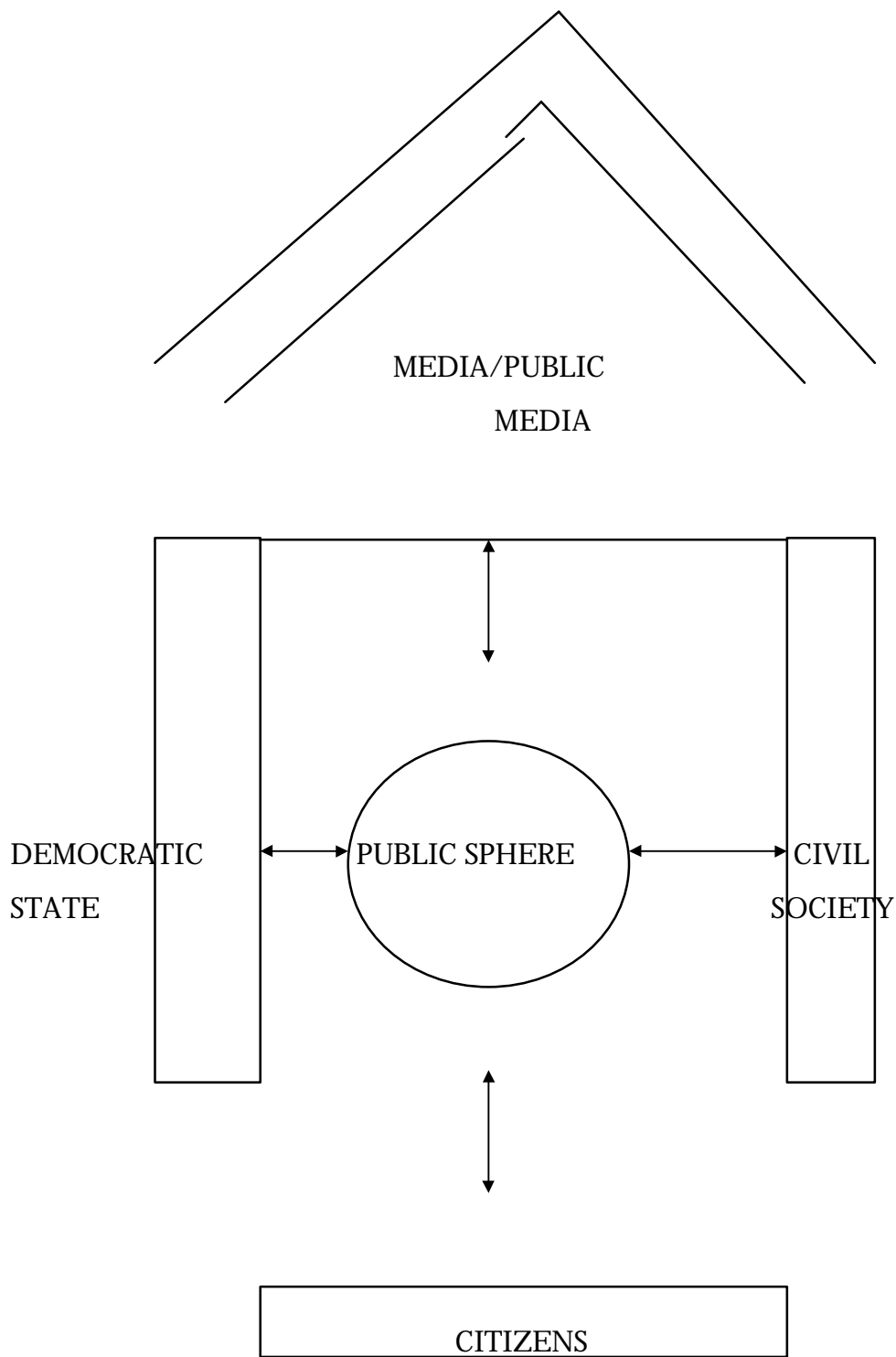
Version	Key elements of civil society	Changes to media	Normative media theory	Likely regulatory regime	General theorist	Media theorist
<b>Radical</b>	State/associations	Direct popular con-	Direct commu- ni-	Interventionist to ensure	(Early Solidarity)	(Early Solidarity)

tion of labour, including media, newswork and journalists respectively“.

		control	libertarian democracy	socialization of media		theory
<b>Materialist</b>	State/civil society/family	Privatize	Libertarian	Market mechanism	(Hegel/Hayek) Kornai, Klaus	Maneuv
<b>Idealist</b>	People/economy/state	Empower associations to own/control media	Democratic/participant	Interventionist to achieve social/media policy goals	Arato, Cohen	Splichal
<b>Poetic</b>	Nice people/power structures	Empower nice associations to own/control media	Democratic/participant/paternal	Interventionist to achieve social/media policy goals	Keane, Di-enstbier	Fedorowicz
<b>„Standard“</b>	Political, rather than civil society	Empower new political elite to control public broadcast media; privatize print media	Paternal/commercial	Different regulatory regimes for broadcast and print media	(New political elites)	(New political elites)

**Figure 7. Different Theories of Civil Society and Media Transformation Projects in Central and Eastern Europe** (Adapted from Sparks, 1998: 117.)

The reasons why the „standard model“ has triumphed so far are the subject of an extensive body of literature. The situation can, however, be portrayed briefly in the following way. Figure 9 shows what might be called the ideal situation as regards the role of the media and the public sphere in democratic society.



← → - COUNTERVAILING FORCES

Figure 8. Public Sphere In A Democracy: The Ideal

It will take much more time for these circumstances to develop in Central and Eastern Europe. For example, one reason why it has proved difficult to empower the civil society is that it has proved weak and relatively passive. For example, in Poland the full development of civil society has been prevented by the fact that a weak society was interacting with a weak state (Kurczewska, Staszynska and Bajor, 1993).

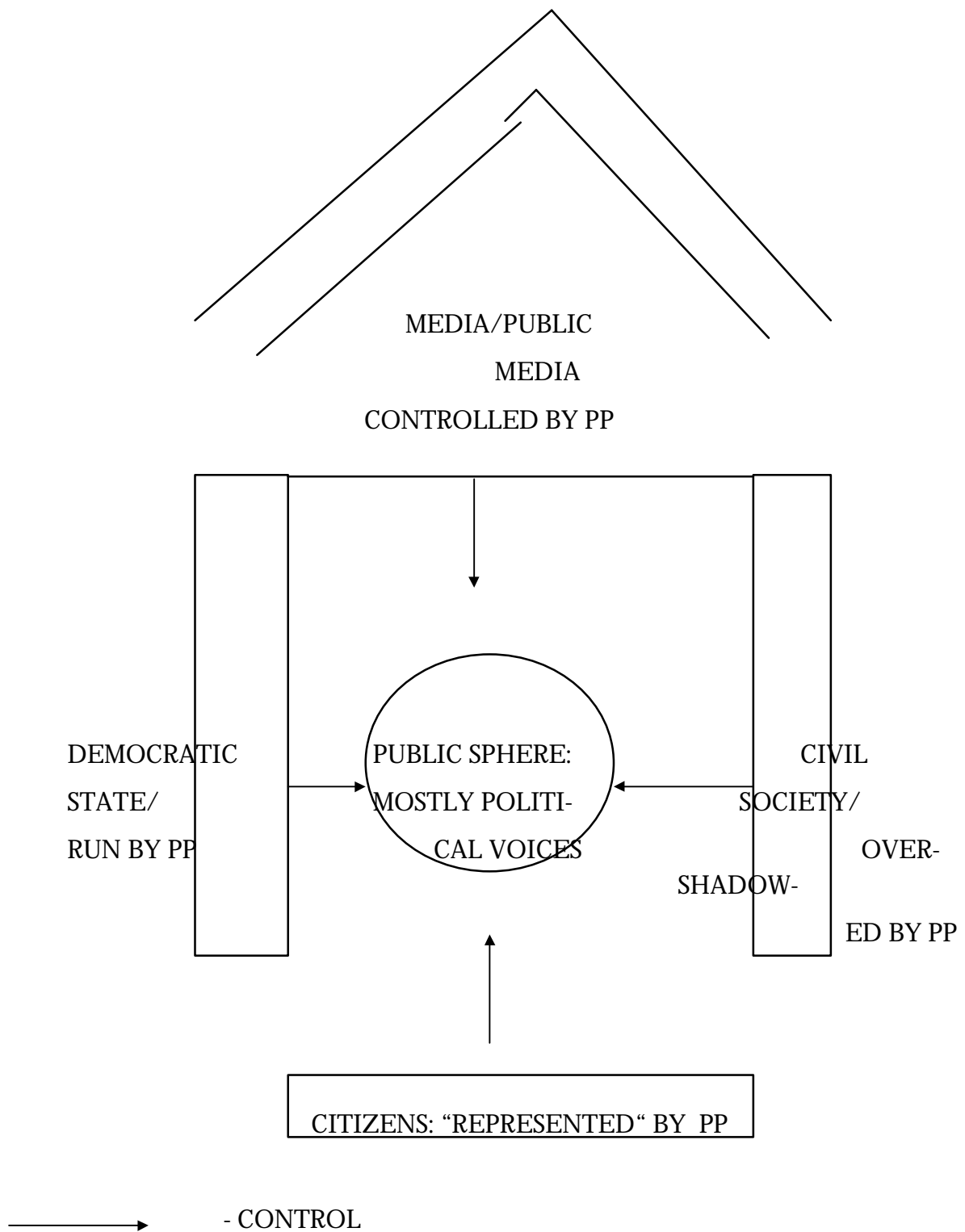
Civil society was weak because:

- the number of new organizations and associations was not adequate to social needs;
- many institutions and organizations were relics of the past;
- the expectation that „the State would provide“, i.e. would satisfy the needs of society, was still very strong.

Accordingly, society did not take full advantage of existing possibilities of activity and development. This point is made by Teresa Sasinska-Klas (1996: 18):

*Society proved sufficiently strong to liberate itself from an authoritarian state and a political party, but not strong enough to take advantage of new possibilities offered by the process of political democratization. Post-communist Polish society still expects politicians to take initiative and introduce regulations, also as regards change in particular segments and subsystems of society. Thus, the political system still continues to play - at least so far as societal expectations are concerned - the role of the main force of modernization. Contrary to expectations, the emergence of post-communist societies does not galvanize other fields of social life to an extent conspicuous at the macro level.*

The resulting situation in many Central and Eastern European countries is shown in Figure 10.



PP - political parties

Figure 9. Post-Communist Countries In Transition (I). Political, Not Civil Society

One example is that of Poland, where one of the main goals of media transformation, i.e. their disentanglement from structures of the state, and political entities, has been achieved only partly. The media have disentangled themselves from structures of the state, though these structures still seek to influence the media to adopt a mixture of the administrative paradigm and cooperative role as defined by Nordenstreng, McQuail, Christians and White. However, the media do still remain strongly attached to political entities. This is true of broadcasting as much as of the print media. Even though many party newspapers properly so called have gone out of business, Polish national newspapers have been described as coming close to the European model of a „pluralistic system of party-oriented newspapers“, with particular newspapers committed to promoting a set of political interests or views (Burnetko, 1995). That helps air diverse views and opinions, but usually of party elites, rather than their rank-and-file members or of groups in society in general.

It must be added that local and foreign-owned newspapers try to maintain a level of impartiality. In the latter case, this is a matter of deliberate policy to stay out of trouble, resulting in avoidance (especially in the case of foreign-owned local newspapers) of coverage of political issues. In part, this means that these newspapers perform their watchdog function inadequately, or not at all (Hejman, 1998: 6). There is a strong tendency towards the tabloidization of much of the press which - if it continues - will produce a similar situation as in other countries: the division of the press into a small number of quality newspapers on the one hand, and a large number of tabloids on the other.

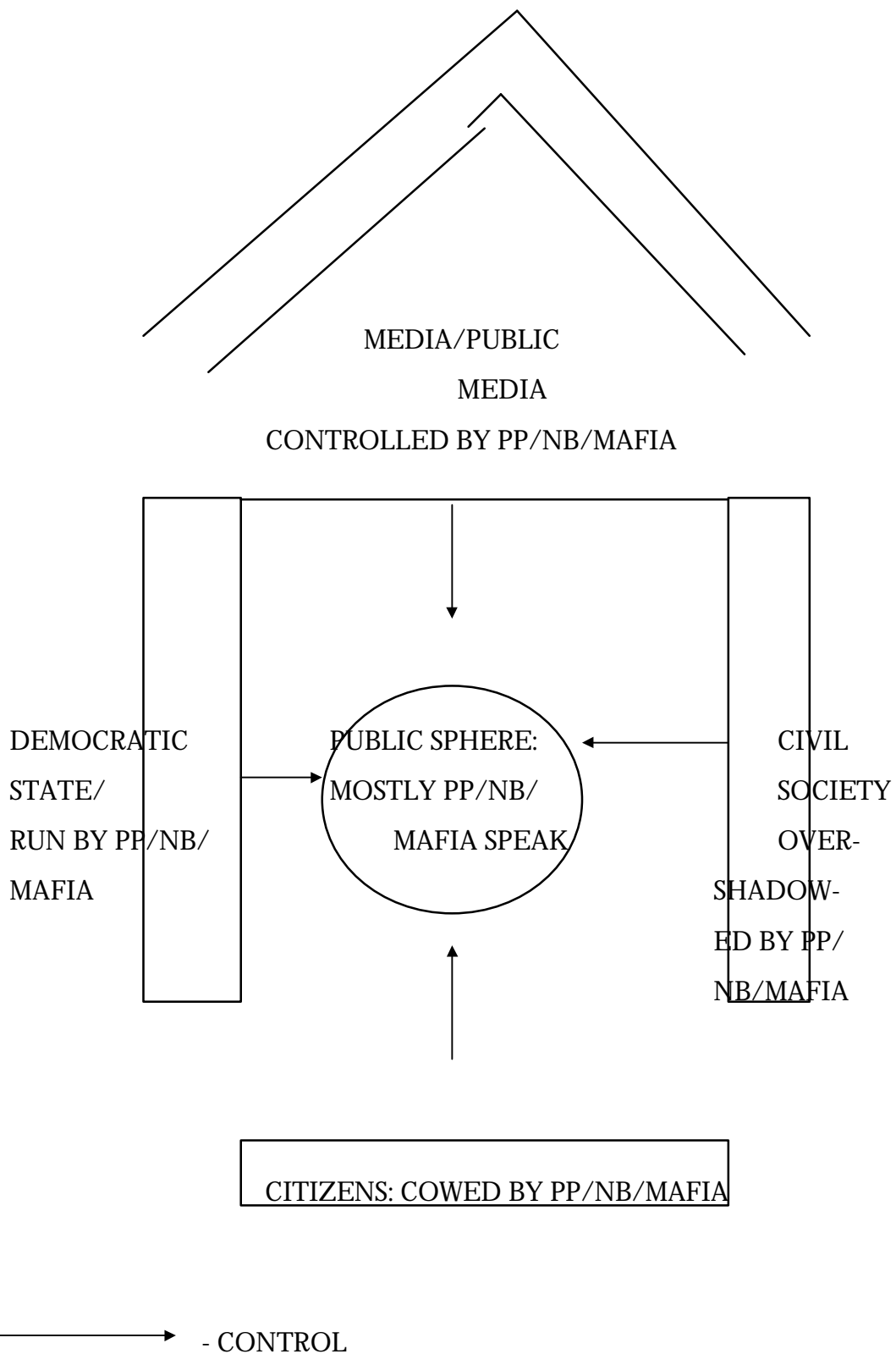
As a result of this state of affairs, Polish media do serve external pluralism, while at the same time many seek dominance in the sense of seeking to impose a point of view and an interpretation of events which serves some political interests. They are autonomous from the state, but subordinated politically, and again - not to the power structure in general, but to particular political forces within that structure. This sometimes creates the unusual situation in which big national media may support, and be tied to, not the ruling forces, but the opposition.

All this well reflects the highly polarized and fragmented political scene in the country and is probably an unavoidable consequence of the present stage of social and political transformation of the country. Incidentally, it also shows that privatization is no guarantee of the media's autonomy from political power, since many privately-owned newspapers and periodicals also display political bias and are tied to particular political forces.

The normative theory of the media applied in practice in Poland today is thus a combination of the libertarian, social-responsibility and authoritarian press theories.

In some other countries, most of them in the CIS, the situation is even more desperate, as shown in Figure 11.





**Figure 10. Post-Communist Countries In Transition (II). Political Parties (PP), Nomenklatura Business (NB) And the Mafia - All Interconnected - Are In Control**

In these cases, the normative theory is probably a combination of the Soviet and authoritarian press theories.

These tendencies lead to the media, and especially broadcast media, being defined as central to political life. The regulatory system reflects this, as can be seen from the composition, manner of appointment and powers of broadcasting regulatory authorities in Central and Eastern European countries. Figure 12 shows where they exist or are planned.

	Exists or is Planned	Oversees state or public broadcasters
1. Bulgaria <sup>6</sup>	n.a.	n.a.
2. Czech Rep.	Yes	Yes
3. Estonia <sup>7</sup>	Yes	Yes (but not private ones)
4. Hungary	Yes	Yes
5. Latvia	Yes	Yes <sup>8</sup>
6. Lithuania	Yes	No
7. Macedonia	Yes	No
8. Poland	Yes	Yes
9. Romania	Yes	No
10. Russia	Yes	No
11. Slovak Rep.	Yes	No
12. Slovenia	Yes	No
13. Ukraine	Yes	No

**Figure 11. Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities in CEE and CIS Countries** (Note: Shaded cells denote provisions in draft laws)

The fact that so many of these authorities are created to oversee only the private sector usually means that there is no public, but only a state sector of broadcasting, with the former

<sup>6</sup> A broadcasting regulatory authority was envisaged in the broadcasting act which was challenged before the Constitutional Court. A new draft is now being prepared which reportedly does not provide for an authority of this kind and vests licensing and oversight powers in a government agency.

<sup>7</sup> The Council of Radio and Television Broadcasting oversees the activity, and to some extent manages public broadcasters alone. It is listed here because it is organizationally separate from public broadcasters. Private stations are licensed and supervised by government agencies.

<sup>8</sup> A representative of the National Broadcasting Council is an ex officio member of the boards of public radio and television with veto power concerning broadcasting operations.

party-controlled national broadcaster now directly subordinated to a branch of government or the parliament. Where the broadcasting regulatory authority also oversees public service broadcasters, that usually reflects a desire to insulate them against direct state or government interference. However, this is true of a minority of cases.

As can be seen in Figure 13, governments are often excluded from the appointment of members of broadcasting authorities or from overseeing their work. The job is often shared between parliament and the President. There are practically no cases when the appointment of broadcasting regulatory authorities has been made apolitical in Central and Eastern Europe.

	Government	Lower Chamber of Parliament	Upper Chamber of Parliament	President	Members can be recalled by:	Chairman is Appointed by:
1.Czech Rep.		9 members			Parliament if annual report is rejected	Elected by members
2.Estonia	Nominates	appoints members	9		if sentenced by a court	Elected by members
3.Hungary		at least 5 members <sup>9</sup>	5		No	Prime Minister and President jointly
4.Latvia		elects members	9		For objective reasons	Elected by members
5.Lithuania		all 16 members <sup>10</sup>				n.a.
6.Macedonia		appoints members	9		Parliament	elected by members
7.Poland		4	2	3	No <sup>11</sup>	elected by members
8.Romania	3	3	3	2	The appointing authority	elected by members

<sup>9</sup> Each parliamentary faction nominates a member. If there is only one faction on the government or opposition side, that faction is entitled to nominate two members.

<sup>10</sup> Ten seats are allotted to the ruling party (coalition); six to the opposition.

<sup>11</sup> The Council presents an annual report to Parliament and the President. If both chambers of parliament and the President reject the report, new members are elected. Otherwise, it is impossible to recall members for political reasons.

10. Russia	2	2	2	2	For objective reasons	elected members	by
11. Slovak Rep.		9 members			Parliament <sup>12</sup>	elected members	by
12. Slovenia	nomi- nates 4	appoints all 9 members				Parliament	
13. Ukraine		4		4	President (by decree <sup>13</sup> )	Elected members	by

**Figure 12. Nomination and Appointment of Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities**

Of crucial importance are, of course, the actual powers and areas of competence of these authorities (see Figure 14). Whatever powers they do not have are most likely to be vested in government departments or parliamentary bodies and exercised in a political manner.

	issue regula- tions	en- force law	licence stations	Allocate frequen- cies	Set licence fee	set fee for frequency use	Appoint heads of PSB orgs.
1. Czech Rep.	No	Yes	Yes	No	n.a.	n.a.	No
2. Estonia	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
3. Hungary	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
4. Latvia	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.	Yes
5. Lithuania	n.a.	No	No	No	No <sup>14</sup>	No	Nominates
6. Macedonia <sup>15</sup>	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

<sup>12</sup> By a simple majority, on a motion of at least 10% of deputies.

<sup>13</sup> The term of office of the Ukrainian National Council for Television and Radio corresponds to that of the Supreme Council and the President, which creates a clear link between the orientation of the top political authorities and the membership of the Council. This is one more mechanism, applied in a number of countries, for making sure of the Council's affinity with the government (in a broad sense) of the day.

<sup>14</sup> The National Broadcasting Council of Poland additionally determines the distribution of licence fee revenue between the 18 public radio companies (one national one and 17 regional ones) and public television, and within public television between the national channels and the regional subsidiaries of Polish Television Ltd.

<sup>15</sup> The Law on Broadcasting Activity vests the Broadcasting Council with mostly advisory functions. Its one competence is to approve the establishment of local „public“ stations by local government authorities.

7.Poland	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
8.Romania	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>16</sup>	No	No	No	No
9.Russia <sup>17</sup>	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
10.Slovak Rep.	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>18</sup>	No	n.a.	n.a.	Nominates Director-General <sup>19</sup>
11.Slovenia	Yes	Yes	recom- mends	No	No	No	No
12.Ukraine	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No

**Figure 13. The Powers of Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities**

It can safely be assumed that broadcasting regulatory authorities which do not (1) issue secondary legislation, (2) award broadcasting licenses, (3) oversee public service broadcasters or (4) appoint their top governing bodies, do not play a role of major importance.

As for the appointment of senior executives of public service organizations, it was only a few cases (Hungary, Slovenia; originally also Latvia) that an effort has been made, by creating large „socially representative“ boards, to involve civil society in policy-making as well as management and oversight of public service broadcasting organizations. Everywhere else (see Figure 15), most of the main decisions are left firmly in the hands of power centres: parliaments and/or presidents have reserved for themselves the major decision-making powers, especially as regards oversight and powers of appointment.

	Government	Parliament	President	Regulatory Auth.	Other
1.Czech Rep.		Yes			
2.Estonia		Yes			

<sup>16</sup> But the technical authorization is issued by the Ministry of Communications.

<sup>17</sup> The draft Federal Law of the Russian Federation on Television and Radio Broadcasting vests the Federal TV and Radio Broadcasting Commission with purely advisory functions.

<sup>18</sup> Licences granted by the Slovak National Broadcasting Council to nationwide broadcasters must be approved by parliament.

<sup>19</sup> The Director General is appointed and recalled by parliament.

3.Hungary		Yes <sup>20</sup>			Yes <sup>21</sup>
4.Latvia					Yes
5.Lithuania		Yes			
6.Macedonia	Yes				
7.Poland	1 member			members	
8.Russia	Yes				Yes
9.Romania		Yes			
10.Slovak Rep.		Yes			
11.Slovenia					Yes <sup>22</sup>
12.Ukraine	Yes	-	-	-	-

**Figure 14. Appointment of Governing/Supervisory Bodies of State/Public Broadcasters**

As can be seen, in most cases Parliament (i.e. the governing party or coalition of the day) has reserved for itself the right to appoint the governing/supervisory body or public (or state)

<sup>20</sup> The Boards of Trustees of the foundations of public broadcasters are composed of Presidential Bodies and other members. The Presidential bodies are composed of 8 members elected by Parliament on the basis of nominations by governing party(ies) and opposition party(ies) (4 members from each side). The President and Vice-President are elected by Parliament on the nomination of governing and opposition party(ies) respectively. The terms of office of the Presidential Bodies are 4 years.

<sup>21</sup> In addition to the Presidential Bodies (see note 14), the Boards of Trustees of public radio and television in Hungary include 21 members each, delegated by a wide cross-section of bodies, institutions and associations: one delegated by local governments, two - by churches, one by a national human rights organization, four - by national professional organizations operating in the fields of the arts, two - by national professional organizations operating in the fields of science and education, one - by trades unions, one - by organizations of employers, one - by journalistic associations, one - by organizations of environmentalists, one by women's organizations, one by organizations of children and youth, one - by organizations of old age pensioners, one - by organizations of the handicapped, one - by sports organizations, one - by organizations of local municipalities, one - by organizations of Hungarian expatriates outside the country. Their terms of office are 1 year.

<sup>22</sup> According to Article 16 of the Law on Radiotelevision Slovenia, the Council of RTV Slovenia consists of 25 members, of whom 5 are appointed by Parliament, and 1 each by the Italian national community, the Hungarian national community, the University of Ljubljana and the University of Maribor, the Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Association of Film Producers, The Association of Musicians and the Association of Composers, the Association of Writers and the Association of Theatre Artists, the Association of Cultural Organizations, the Association of Journalists, the Association of Cultural Organizations, the Organization of Disabled Persons, the Union of Sports Organizations, the Association of Employers, the Cooperative Union and Farmers' Association, the Coordination Committee of Organizations and Parties of Pensioners, representative trade unions, the Youth Council and Union of Friends of the Youth, religious communities.

broadcasters, making this an eminently political process. This is particularly underscored in the case of Hungary where the Boards of Trustees of the foundations of public service broadcasting are themselves overseen by 3-member Supervisory Boards where two members, including the Chairman, are nominated by opposition parties and one by the governing party(ies).

A major criterion for assessing the degree of independence built into the structure of public service broadcasters is the method of appointing their top governing bodies (i.e. the board or council, where it exists, which oversees the management of the organization) of state/public broadcasters. This is summed up in Figure 16.

	Government	Parliament	President	Supervisory Board
1.Bulgaria				Yes
2.Czech Rep.		Appoints		Nominates
3.Estonia				Yes
4.Hungary				Yes
5.Latvia		Yes		
6.Lithuania		Appoints		Nominates
7.Macedonia	Yes			
8.Poland				Yes
9.Russia				Yes
10.Romania		Yes		
11.Slovak Rep.		Appoints		Nominates
12.Slovenia				Yes
13.Ukraine			Yes	

**Figure 15. Appointment of Top Management of Public/State Broadcaster**

Even at the level of the top management of public/state broadcasters, politicians sometimes directly involved in the appointment processes. Where this is done by the governing/supervisory body, if that body is appointed in a political process (as is most often the case), top managers are also likely be political appointees.

### C. Normative Models of Journalism in Central and Eastern Europe

Just as press theories, so too normative concepts of journalistic performance operate at two levels: the ideal and the real, and one may have little in common with the other. These concepts are strongly influenced by the traditions, experience of, and goals pursued by, Central and Eastern European journalists.

In 1990 a poll conducted among journalists found them defining their mission as follows:

	Important, very important, most important (total % of mentions)
Objectively to inform about events	99
Serve as a watchdog of government	92
Inform the authorities about the views of citizens	91
Give the audience full information about the work of central and local government	87

Source: Bajka, 1991

The following features were regarded as typical of good journalists: impartiality and objectivity; enterprise, ingenuity; courage.

This, then, is a combination of the adversarial journalistic norm, a service role vis-a-vis the audience, a social responsibility paradigm and a surveillance role - as defined in the various typologies cited above.

However, as Janos Horvath points out, the traditions of Central and Eastern European journalism also lead media practitioners to seek leadership, guardianship/stewardship and perhaps also hegemony roles:

*Common in Europe is the concept of the active or participant journalist, the journalist who sees himself as someone who wants to influence politics and audiences according to his political beliefs. This sense is even stronger in Eastern Europe, where journalists are closer to artists and writers, and many poets and writers contribute regularly to daily publications. Together with the journalists, they feel a sort of messianic vocation. They want to become a mouthpiece for the people (Janos Horvat, „The East European Journalist“, cited in Gross, 1996: 111; for a similar view see Goban-Klas, 1997)*

Vdovin (1995: 11) uses very similar language to describe the attitude of Russian journalists, especially those with experience of work under the Communist system:



*Being involved for decades in propaganda and agitation, in brain-washing and „forming public opinion on orders from rulers of totalitarian state, they cannot get rid of their Messianism even when free of communist dictate ... Messianic feelings brought on by seventy years of experience of Soviet journalism have today resulted in overstating the significance of the rights of a journalist to present his own judgement at the expense of accurate facts.*

In consequence, says Vdovin, what flourishes in Russia is „propagandistic journalism“ instead of „informational journalism“.

Jacek Zakowski (1996) explains some of the reasons why these traditions continue today in Poland. He points out that under the Communist system many journalists adopted a principle of „individual responsibility“, accepting responsibility only for what they wrote themselves and disclaiming direct, personal responsibility for what the media - or indeed the political system of which they were part - did in general. The introduction of martial law in 1981 jolted them out of their complaisance. Accordingly, many shifted to the concept of „civic responsibility“ on the part of journalists, in which they took responsibility also for the broader context in which their work appeared, what social consequences it had and what purposes it served. That sense of „civic responsibility“ led many to refuse to work for official propaganda media and join the underground, making them social activists dedicating their work to a clearly defined social and political cause.

They continued this also once the Communist system was overthrown. They considered themselves as "guardians" or "leaders" of society, called upon (by virtue of their commitment to the cause, as well as superior access to information and understanding of the situation) to be in the forefront of political developments. Many journalists still think that it is their duty to take sides in the many divisions within Polish society and promote the cause they support. In other words, the view of journalism as politics conducted by other means dies hard.

In consequence, Zakowski points out,

*Journalists - the great majority of whom were committed politically - have been far from objective. The „civic attitude“ inherited from the past [when under the Communist system that one had to take sides in the struggle between communism and democracy - K.J.] [now leads] editors and journalists to do their utmost to promote the cause of their own political camp and its version of reality, rather than to inform objectively and provide a cool and dispassionate analysis of the situation (such an attitude was wholly out of the question). As a result, the Polish press market has become dominated by politically affiliated journalism masquerading as objective. That was particularly obvious during election campaigns (Zakowski, 1996: 205).*

Also in Romania , the profound political involvement of the media has led to the birth of "combative, militant journalism, concentrated on ideological issues and a discursive discussion of opinions which combined news with comment and paid scant regard to objectivity. Consequently, the younger journalists became very much like their older colleagues and dedicated their services to propaganda" (Coman, 1994: 35).

Lithuania is another country where „the mentality of an average journalist is still dominated - with some exceptions - by feelings of sympathy towards a particular political group or ideology“ (Lukošiunas, Bartaševicius, 1993: 261).

Accordingly, real normative concepts of journalism combined a didactic journalistic norm, leadership and guardianship/stewardship roles vis-a-vis the audience, a special form of the social responsibility paradigm, a critical/dialectical role in society, assigning to the audience mostly the roles of „pupils“, citizens, partisans and followers.

This normative approach to the practice of journalism is the reason for general dissatisfaction with the performance of journalists. Politicians find many media to be political enemies, if only because journalists seek to demonstrate courage and independence by attacking and criticising the authorities. Skolkay (n.d.: 6) points out that „particularly in the first stage [Slovak] journalists pitilessly criticized chiefly economic reform“. Another case in point as regards conflicts between politicians and journalists are Hungarian media wars (Hankiss, 1993).

Also the general public has few reasons to be satisfied with journalistic performance.

For reasons explained above, „public“ or „civic“ journalism (with its commitment to adopting the citizen's agenda as its perspective of looking at, and judging, events in political and social life) is practically absent in Central and Eastern Europe. What is more, commercial and political control over the media means that in Poland (and probably also in other countries of the region), *„media do not reflect or articulate the needs, interests and opinions of huge segments of society“* (Jerschina, 1994: 13)

As Korkonossenko (1997) explains with reference to Russia, there is also another reason for this: the discrepancy between the interests and concerns of the journalists and those of the public (Donsbach, 1983, calls it a lack of congruency between the two groups). While the public is interested in „entertainment and utilitarian information“ and is little concerned with political events, journalists focus on precisely those events. This, says the author, leads to their „self-isolation from the community“.

A similar situation in Bulgaria has produced the following situation, described by Raycheva and Petev (n.d.: 16):

*The piling up of contradictory political views, beliefs and convictions greatly damaged the press credibility. [...] A need for a social dialogue was painfully felt. The partisan periodicals however did not provide their readers with a balanced news coverage, presenting both sides of the story. Perhaps the most telling example of the demand for balanced information was the overlapping reading public of Demokratzia (Democracy) and Douma (Word) dailies, the political organs of the Union of Democratic Forces and the Bulgarian Socialist Party, according to a 1992 field survey. It showed that about 40 per cent of the readers of Demokratzia tended to use Douma as a second information source. This tendency reflected the „double mirror“ information effects in a politically deeply frustrated society.*

Raycheva and Petev (n.d.) also cite the results of a sociological survey carried out by the Centre for Investigation of Democracy on the eve of the 1991 parliamentary elections which showed a decline in the media's credibility. In response to the question „Do you trust information, presented in the newspapers?“ the answers were as follows: „Positively yes“ - 20.9 percent; „To a certain extent“ - 45.8 per cent; negative answers - 33.3 percent. Respondents reacted to the statement „Television, radio and newspapers strengthen tensions in this country“ as follows: „Agree“ - 36.9 percent; „Disagree“ - 39.0 percent; „Uncertain“ - 24.1 percent.

While this cannot be generalized and applied in equal measure to all Central and Eastern European countries, it indicates an approach to the media which is widespread in the region.

#### D. Clash of Normative Models of The Media and Journalism in Central And Eastern European Countries

On the basis of the foregoing, we can now proceed to sum up the most prevalent normative models of the media and journalism, as they are seen by political elites, media practitioners themselves and the general public. As has been said, the differences and indeed conflict between those models is what accounts for the confusion surrounding the whole issue. Naturally, the models shown in Figure 17 constitute clusters of different features. As has been said, the difference between normative models as an ideal and as reality can be quite pronounced. In Central and Eastern Europe, lip service is paid to one set of concepts as regards the media and journalism, while quite different ones are applied in practice. Accordingly, these clusters sometimes comprise quite contradictory features. Also, the situation is quite different in different countries. Therefore Figure 17 can at best offer only a general indication of the complexity of the situation in this respect.

	Political Elites	Journalists	General Public
Press theory	Social Responsibility/Authoritarian	Libertarian/Social Responsibility	Social Responsibility/Libertarian
Autonomy/Subordination of media	Subordination	Autonomy + Freedom to support the political group of one's choice	Autonomy/Subordination *
Basic Communication Value	Freedom/Order	Freedom	Freedom/Equality
Media, journalistic roles	Subaltern, cooperative, didactic	Adversarial, Surveillance	Facilitative
Role of media vis-a vis the audience	Hegemony/Leadership	Guardianship/Stewardship	Service
Goals of the media system	Coercive	Normative	Utilitarian, mixed
Mode of communication relationship	Command	Command/Associational	Service
Paradigm	Administrative	Critical	Social Responsibility

\* In some post-Communist countries, the role of the State in supervising and funding the media is widely accepted.

Figure 16. Different normative models of the media and journalism in Central and Eastern Europe

This clash of normative models contributes to conflicts concerning the performance of the media and breeds widespread discontent with them.

Heikkila and Kunelius (1998) suggest three concepts of journalism criticism:

- access: who is qualified to be (re)presented in journalism?
- dialogue: how does dialogue work as a method of representing social realities and to what extent does journalism generate dialogue?
- deliberation: what kind of reflection and action is journalism a catalyst for; does it enhance participation in the processes of problem definition and decision-making?

During and immediately after the collapse of Communism, the media played an immensely important role in all these respects. Since then, for reasons explained in this paper, they have largely failed to provide full representation of the people in media content, to generate dialogue among all groups in society and to enhance popular participation in problem definition and decision-making. It is for these reasons that they are part of the problem in post-Communist societies in transition.

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