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Media Transitions in the Rear-View Mirror: Some Reflections

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Abstract: This essay explores the development of media systems in Central and Eastern Europe in the post-Soviet period, including the influence of social and political factors, outside media assistance, and the drive towards privatization and public service broadcasting, in an effort to understand what the experience teaches about democracy promotion; about the efficacy of various forms of media intervention; and about the utility of various forms of incentives and pressures in setting agendas and effecting political change. Despite differing historical, social and political traditions and different forms of and reactions to media assistance efforts, factors both exogenous ("Americanization" and "strategic communication") and endogenous ("modernization," secularization and commercialization) ultimately contributed to a homogenization of systems, rendering less relevant the particular distinctions among countries.

How can we unravel the threads that link 1989 to the present? My focus, in this essay, is on the evolution of media in the transition societies across this theater of change. What initiatives, what cultural and historical differences, what incentives (if any) led to different media formations in the various countries of Central and Eastern Europe?

I seek to offer reflections on this subject, not as a definitive analysis (given the enormous array of historical, cultural and political factors, it would be difficult to find a neat bouquet of

meaning on these questions), but as a kind of proposal for further study. The industry of democracy promotion goes forward, sometimes stumblingly, in the Middle East, in Africa, in Central Asia, even within the reaches of the borderlands of the Central and Eastern Europe (the "New Europe"). As a subset of democracy promotion and assistance, the media are an especially important focus of attention, given the role they are often assumed to have in creating national identity and contributing to an energized democratic society (Jakubowicz & Sükösd, 2008). As a result, we have a need to know whether there have been lessons learned (this is a standard hope or prayer) or, as is very likely the case, some muddled pointers that are influential though indeterminate.[i]

I start with a memory of the early 1990s. It could have been Prague or Budapest or Kiev, or other similarly situated cities outside the capitals of the former Soviet Union. A darkish room, a group of functional metal tables arranged in a square, and a delegation from the Council of Europe or the United States, preparing to lecture on the merits of a proper transition in the media sphere. At the table sit one or two of the invariably young, charming, talented figures—proud to serve as bridges between the lately oppressed and the newly triumphant, the fresh holders of knowledge about the world into which their country was marching. Next to them are the ever-present representatives from the United States or Western Europe, toeing the line between arrogance and ignorance—individuals designated as carriers of progress, confident that their media systems held the key to "democratizing" media in the region, yet unfamiliar with the politics of the location and—just as likely—the complex meanings of their legal practices at home. The other seats are filled with individuals who are not quite sure why they are there, but with some sort of obligation to those organizing the event.

This was the early world of media assistance—delegations sent mostly from the United States, but also France, the UK, and elsewhere—consisting of journalists, professors, regulators, managers, specialists and entrepreneurs sent to talk to their counterparts. One of the jobs of the young representatives in the field was to round up warm bodies to listen and react, with sufficient attention to provide the illusion that wisdom was being proffered and to some extent imbibed. At times, there was advice fatigue. The task, increasingly more difficult, was to obtain the critical mass of local influentials, individuals who would turn the gruel of advice into the exactness of legislation or business plans or trainings that would justify the time and expense—flights, hotels, dinners—of the experts. Reports had to be written, donors satisfied, that the expenditure of government or private philanthropic dollars was obtaining results.

Organizations that would eventually grow into impressive size—Internews, IREX—were just getting their transition-related footing and government bureaucracies (such as USAID) and foundations (such as OSI) were marking out their distinctive imprint. Some specialized in journalism training, some in fostering independent broadcasters, some in media management, and some in reshaping media law and policy. The success of their efforts depended on locating experienced journalists who could benefit from further training, identifying skilled media managers, and finding media outlets worthy of technical and financial assistance. Work was carried out on the ground, in country offices staffed primarily by internationals, but with token representation for locals; consulting expertise was provided by outside experts who would parachute in to offer assistance; and "study tours," designed to expose star journalists and editors to the media environments in the United States or the UK, were arranged.

Many friendships were fostered during these visits, bonds that have blossomed and endured. Some people at those tables have become parliamentarians, some judges, some

legislative drafters, and others academics who continue to ask many of the same questions that have persisted since the early 1990s. But there still remains a perpetually haunting question: did these efforts make a difference? In the new Europe, is the face of the media, particularly the broadcast media (the focus of much of the attention), any different now from what it might have been absent the media assistance work? What role did the parade of "experts" and advisors to the region have at maintaining or encouraging some drive to change? Of course, many small and medium differences were made; one can point to major newspapers that would not exist, laws that would not have been passed, journalists who have risen in their ranks who received training.

Institutions have a way of developing because of the context in which they find themselves. Reshaping the structure and content of media institutions and, in turn, of civil society, was one of the priorities of the time. It is worthwhile looking at this process in retrospect and, to the extent possible, in comparative perspective. Did parliamentarians, leaders, entrepreneurs, future regulators emerge differently because of this process? Or, during the first decade of this process, did factors other than the elegance of models of free expression have a more substantial effect—including pressures by foreign investors for legal frameworks that would make their entry into the media markets profitable, or the demands that accompanied the European Union accession process? It may be that key decisions taken in the early years in each transition state cast a long shadow and that some of these key decisions turned on local conditions of history, culture and politics, rather than on the impact of outside intervention or assistance. Some combination of the thirst for the commercial, pre-existing political and media history stretching over centuries, notions of national identity—all these were factors that could have had great persistence over the epiphenomena of parachuting experts.

Tropes of Restructuring: Metaphors and Models

So much of what we call "transition" is about the power of words and the idea of capturing political trends in a word or phrase—such as public service broadcasting or the idea of the private, independent media. Impacts on institutions are dressed in a certain vocabulary of desire. Ideas, and the language that captures them, roll around the world, alighting on transition and influencing action. At each moment, there is a repertory of such ideas, which I call tropes of restructuring. The tropes change as they are nourished, redefined, and deployed by governments, civil society, industry, and political parties. These terms reflect ideologies and specific sector-related goals. Included in the repertory are such other terms as: "strengthening national identity," "guaranteeing the right to receive and impart information," "reinforcing and reflecting pluralism," and, more recently, "ensuring national security." The origin, role in influencing government policies, and relationship to particular technologies of each of these ideas could be the foundation for particular national histories.

One characteristic of the transition period was a search for such metaphors for the instantiation of language and, through language, a weighing of competing models. Metaphors allowed for the translation of complicated concepts into potentially practical realities, and models made debate of these concepts more efficient. Of the metaphors, there was, of course, the "marketplace of ideas," but also metaphors of "independence," of "highways of information," and of "television without frontiers."

Models were constructed of elements that purported to have explicit functions, elements that were characterized in ways that often fit with ideologies. Models set forth were shorthand forms for persuasion. Bandied about were concepts like "the BBC model" of public service, the "U.S. model" of private broadcasting, or "mixed models" taking both elements of public service

and rising capitalism.[ii] Some theorists go one step further and suggest that Central and Eastern Europe offer a venue for a "battle of the models" (Jakubowicz & Sükösd, 2008, 29). Countries were investing in the credibility of whole ways of thinking, ways of imagining the future. It was at this moment that the language of change was being negotiated and potential directions were being charted.

I. Comparing Media Systems

A more and more central system to look at the manner in which these ideas work is through the framework developed by Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini in their field-defining book, *Comparing Media Systems*. Hallin and Mancini examine the media systems of Western Europe (the "Old Europe"), the United States and Canada, and ask a question close to the one I am putting forward here: why do national media systems look the way they do? Hallin and Mancini were not so much concerned with the language of the field (and the work that language itself performs) than with the particular histories and political developments that affect media structures (and vice versa). They depart from the work of Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (*Four Theories of the Press*), a study that sees far greater links between the nature of media systems and the roles that ideologies play.

Hallin and Mancini present a polished presentation of three conceptual approaches to fashioning national media systems: what they call the Liberal system (found largely in the UK, Canada and the United States); the Democratic Corporatist system (Germany and the Scandinavian countries); and the Polarized Pluralist system (Spain, Italy and France). The authors seek to tie the development of these particular systems to long-standing social and political factors, including literacy rates, development of newspapers and the extent of political

parallelism. Of course, issues of consensus and division are also inscribed in the question of how plural and how polarized the society is (and, therefore, how likely the media are to have these qualities of sharp division rather than centralized emphases). Other significant influences include the role of the state and the professionalization of journalism.

I raise the Hallin and Mancini text for two functions. The first involves a game that many readers of *Comparing Media Systems* are now playing: can the labeling and categorizing process be extended from the Old to the New Europe? And if one were required to name and assign countries, would Poland or Hungary or the Czech Republic, for example, fall within (roughly to be sure) the Liberal, Democratic Corporatist or Polarized Pluralist camp? This is a question that Hallin and Mancini have spurned because it shifts the focus on categories from an analytic framework used only for the purpose of convenience, to a reifying and measuring technique that is often counterproductive and overly reductive, among other reasons for being unfairly evaluative and not sufficiently explanatory. On the other hand, using the Hallin and Mancini matrix allows us to describe a *now* that we can compare to a *then* and, perhaps, a *now* in a set of countries that we can compare to each other. If the Czech Republic is closer to the Liberal Model than is Hungary or Poland, why is that the case? Which states have greater indicators of polarized pluralism and why? Hallin and Mancini present a chart which, for them, illustrates where countries lie on a triangle marking the three systems (p.70). Could a similar chart be expressed for other post-Soviet societies? Or, given the intensity and rapidity of change in the region, would states migrate rapidly along axes in a way that prevented capturing how they should be accurately represented?

But these questions raise what I would call the second function of the Hallin and Mancini analysis for this essay. Can we use the Hallin and Mancini classifications to describe why

current Central and Eastern European media systems evolved the way they did? Are the factors that Hallin and Mancini identify as having long-term causative influence within Western Europe the same or similar to the causal factors in the pressured post-Soviet decade? Will the factors provide some indication of how these Central and Eastern European media systems may further develop? For Hallin and Mancini, it was important whether the tradition of governance was in the nature of a strong centralism, extending to information and the media practices that exist in education, welfare and regulation of the economy. In the disjuncture from 1989 forward, the overhang of tradition was different, often lessened in a search for the market and for capitalism. In Central and Eastern Europe, the nature of the polity may not influence the media so much as it affects the regulatory agency and the apparatus of governance.

At the end of their book, Hallin and Mancini provide one of their most valuable perceptions, indicating the way previously differentiated media systems are becoming more and more similar. This understanding, which suggests a kind of homogenization of media systems in Old Europe, provides insight into understanding tendencies in Central and Eastern Europe. In this view, modern developments in European society, both exogenous (including "Americanization") and endogenous (including "modernization," secularization and commercialization), render less relevant the particular differences among nations (pp. 254-267). What is significant in terms of media systems in Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic, are these powerful forces. With signals pouring in from all over, with the great tendency towards privatization and advertising, with the decline of public service broadcasting, much of what differentiates or distinguishes becomes less and less salient.

Of course, the "experts" who brought Western models to the post-Soviet discourse in the 1990s did not have the Hallin and Mancini analysis available, but they carried in their knapsacks

models that were their own personal legacies. It would be a kind of archaeology of media assistance to see whether systems that emerged—at least at the outset—bore the marks or influence of those who came bearing expertise or funding. That could be true in styles of journalism, in media law and policy, in the hope for professionalism. But in terms of the actual shaping of the system, the longer impact of the Hallin and Mancini-identified homogenization factors seem unusually influential.

The point is that the "imported" models may not have been so significant causally as the rather considerable economic forces that followed in the next twenty years. The media system of Poland is different from that of Hungary, and each system has characteristics related to the country's own special demographies, politics and historical practices.[iii] Yet, broadcasting especially is massively affected by globalizing trends (Perusko & Popovic, 2008). In this telling, it is less clear that media assistance, or the persuasiveness of delegations, made a difference in the resulting structures.

Another contributor to homogenization could be located in the exercise of European Union accession, which, by requiring transition states to meet certain requirements, could have played a more important role in effecting change than the assistance efforts themselves (Rosenbaum, 2003; Johnson & Školkay, 2005; Sükösd & Bajomi-Lázár, 2003). I have no evidence that the Accession taskmasters—those who examined the candidates to see if their legal systems cohered with the European norm—had a bias towards one of the Hallin and Mancini models, but that is not the point for this essay. Accession had a tendency to legitimate homogenization, even if the bureaucracies of the process argued they were open to a variety of outcomes.

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II. Privatization and Public Service Broadcasting

A hallmark, both rhetorical and real, of the broadcasting transitions has been the effort to shift control over information—including channels of distribution and the programming that streams through those channels—away from governments and toward independent bodies and private entities. To be sure, there are still many societies where media, as a whole, are under the control of the government, but the tendency, fairly constant over regions of the world and even across forms of government, has been toward widely expanding the role of the private sector. In Central and Eastern Europe, the emergence of the idea of the media as "private" or as "serving the public good" dominated the period of transition, perhaps even transcending discussion of the models or systems in which these roles of the media were embedded. In many of the post-Soviet societies of Central and Eastern Europe, the creation of public service broadcasting, the partial or entire privatization of government channels, and the opening of spectrum for private uses was a key marker of democratization.

Perhaps clumsily, I place under an umbrella of "privatization" the collection of potent notions that include establishing public service broadcasters, "enhancing the private sector," "encouraging self-regulation," and "decreasing the hand of government."

i. Public Service Broadcasting

It would be hard to capture all the contradictions of expectation and reality that accompanied the effort to import or create "public service" models in the transition societies. What makes public broadcasting *public*, is, in large part, a matter of ownership or control of the filter through which programming is selected for distribution. In addition, what renders public broadcasting categorically distinct is control of production of the programming itself.

The European Union, Council of Europe and other international organizations exerted considerable pressure on post-communist countries and committed tremendous funds to institute public service broadcasting in the region. One example was the pressure to have autonomous boards for public service broadcasters, to have "independence" instead of state or direct government influence. Yet, "disappointment with PSB performance in post-communist countries is one more reflection of the great, but also to some extent unrealistic expectations created by the process of post-communist transformation" (Jakubowicz, 2008, p. 120).

In 2001, Marc Raboy and I prepared a reader, called *Public Service Broadcasting in Transition*, for the Council of Europe (Price & Raboy, 2003). The volume was designed to provide guidance in the post-1990s transitions based on what had occurred earlier in Central and Eastern Europe. We chose documents that we thought exemplified the ironies and complexities of the transition and, though we did not make it explicit, rendered problematic what future lay ahead as state broadcasters were urged to shift to entities more consonant with the public sphere and less tethered to the state.

In the reader, Raboy and I pointed out that throughout the region, episodes of law-creation were followed, often, by periods of criticism and then trial and error in implementation. In one incident of "media assistance," Croatia was told that for elements of democracy to evolve, the state broadcaster HRT (Hrvatska Radiotelevizija), whose content was classicly directly controlled by the government, had to change, both structurally and in terms of its relationship to government. In the period from 1999 to 2001, the Croatian government, which itself underwent political change during the drafting, organized several drafts on structure and financing. Outside experts from the Council of Europe and from a wide variety of sources expressed their views on

the wisdom of the statutory solutions. At times, these views provoked strong reactions from Croatian government officials.

The modes of delivering and understanding this message is captured in this excerpt from a Council of Europe mission report:

> The consultants welcomed the fact that the Croatian authorities intended to transform HRT into a genuine independent public service broadcasting organisation, in line with the relevant Council of Europe instruments (Resolution on the future of public service broadcasting adopted at the 4th European Ministerial Conference on Mass Media Policy and Recommendation No. R (96) 10 of the Committee of Ministers on the guarantee of the independence of public service broadcasting) and the recommendations made in the course of previous Council of Europe expert missions on the Law on HRT.
>
> This being said, they noted that the draft was not entirely satisfactory on the question of the independence of HRT as a number of provisions could give rise to political interference with its operation. While appreciating that there is no infallible method for securing the independence of public service broadcasters, they recalled that a number of minimum measures should be taken in order to avoid such interference. In this respect, they reiterated their previous recommendation that members of Government and Parliament should not be allowed to become members not only of the HRT Board of Management but also of the HRT Council.
>
> …As regards the management organs of HRT, the consultants expressed concern about the fact that the draft Law included too many structures which would be involved in the operation of HRT (the Director, the Board of Management and the Chief programme managers), as this might give rise to conflicts of competence and diverging views which would run counter to the need for effective management, and in particular rapid action or reaction vis-a-vis competing broadcasters from both within and outside Croatia (Report of the Council of Europe Expert Mission on the Draft Law on HRT, 2000, as cited in Price & Raboy, 2003, pp. 123-124).

The debate over the structure of the broadcaster was of such interest that the Prime Minister, Ivica Račan, responded to these suggestions. Račan's tone, in a 2001 press conference, indicates his opinion of the outside consultants. He also captures the notion of double standards, hypocrisy and creation of fictions that could characterize these debates over autonomy and democracy.

> I can say that I believe that the law that will be adopted will be to a great extent in line with these expectations and standards (existing in Europe and the European Union), so as far as the selection of the Council or the body that selects the management of the television and radio service. In this respect, there will be no shortage of democracy in Croatia. You know that in all these countries these bodies are selected by kings, presidents, parliaments and governments, and sometimes not even parliaments but parliamentary committees and so on. We are nevertheless committed to bringing into these bodies representatives of interest groups in Croatia, especially if we adopt the provision for 16 associations that have to provide representatives to the Council (Prime Minister Račan's Press Conference, 2001, in Price & Raboy, 2003, p. 125).

This is one of an avalanche of such discussions over the fine points of the architecture and financing of public service broadcasting. These debates had influence and impact; but, again, the question remains whether forces of homogenization on the one hand, and local circumstances and context, on the other, were the powerful determinants of the ultimate shape of these entities.

ii. Privatization

Alongside these efforts to shift control over broadcasting out of state hands and into a public service broadcaster, advocates of media change (both within and without the transition countries) encouraged the development of a private, commercial media sector.

Implied in the drama of privatization is a uniformity of transformation. But rendering the media more private in Central and Eastern Europe had many meanings. It was not only the sale or transformation of a formerly government-operated enterprise to a buyer in the private sector. Existing public service broadcasters were restructured in more independent forms. Privatization of a sort takes place when non-commercial channels are redefined as "commercial" or when traditional public service broadcasters spin off entrepreneurial activities or, deploying subsidies, expand programming or other efforts that compete with the private sector. These exercises are far from the wholesale recasting of a national system, but they have important similarities. The

aspect that unites them is that privatization can be said to occur when ownership or control patterns change to remove or substantially diminish state or public dominion of decisions concerning media space.[iv]

The growing acceptance of the "private" as the organizing economic force behind broadcasting, combined with the increased investment, often foreign, that accompanied such privatization, massively reoriented the relative distribution of content in Central and Eastern Europe from the public to the private. The new private entities could profit only if they tied the cornucopia of supply to large-scale distribution mechanisms that yielded large audiences. Their very existence, hovering omnipresence, and accessibility inevitably altered information flow, inducing innovation in structures of delivery. Governments, while espousing the democracy-related goals behind their actions, had deep fiscal motivations to privatize, resulting from external pressures (including EU accession requirements) to reduce government expenditures and debt. Privatization was also linked with a state's ability to qualify for certain international money sources.[v] In their lending agreements, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund included conditions such as the design and implementation of a privatization plan, thus exerting great pressure on transition societies and developing countries to privatize (though such pressure was typically greater for telecommunications than for broadcasting).

Opponents of privatization were concerned that the new levels and sources of investment would result in new program strategies, including, in many areas, increased non-indigenous programming. Advocates argued that privatization would lead to the intensification of the culture of the modern and a cosmopolitan globalization, laudable virtues even if they detracted from the strength of civil society. Others suggested that the move to the private (and the foreign)

would mean an expansion in the outlets of expression, more incentives to production, and an increase in creativity.

Conclusion: The Market for Loyalties

An alternative way to look at these transitions is through what I have called the "market for loyalties"—an analytic heuristic that can assist in understanding regulatory developments and the shape of media and information structures.[vi] In a market for loyalties, large-scale competitors for power, in a shuffle for allegiances, use the regulation of communications to organize a cartel of imagery and identity among themselves. State entities, governments, interest groups, businesses, and other institutions are the "sellers"—entities for whom myths and dreams and history can somehow be converted into power and wealth. The "buyers" are the citizens, subjects, nationals, and consumers—recipients of the packages of information, propaganda, advertisements, drama, and news propounded by the sellers via the media. The consumer "pays" for (or "subscribes" to) one set of identities or another in several ways that, together, we call "loyalty" or "citizenship." Payment, however, is not expressed in the ordinary coin of the realm: it includes not only compliance with tax obligations, but also obedience to laws, readiness to fight in the armed services, or even continued residence within the country. The buyer also pays with his or her own sense of identity. One can look at the transition period as one where buyers shifted allegiances and where "sellers" of allegiances became far more numerous, more plural, more foreign. Some of the cartels that result from this process are stable—having the same members with the same relevant strengths, for years; some are unstable, ever changing, with varying capacities to police participant behavior and the entry

of competitors. New cartels form, made possible and required by new arrangements for the delivery of information and new economic and geopolitical arrangements.

Viewing the post-1989 transitions through this lens, once could ask how the market for loyalties was constructed before 1989, and how it changed in the following two decades. The key point of analysis is first, whether the market was substantially altered, and second, whether the nature of the change was a result of the democracy promotion and media assistance interventions, or of other factors.

In my original formulation, I discussed how this market existed within national boundaries, with government the primary mechanism that restricted entry, allowing the monopoly or small cartel of sellers to exist. Government was part of the cartel itself. But it soon became clear to me, even looking at these transition states, that the energies devoted to this market were hardly ever constrained to national boundaries, and that what we mean by "government," or what levers of power should be included, changes and means different things in different contexts. The market for loyalties within any state is often the product of multiple interests—other states, transnational religious entities, NGOs, and others. Some of these are members of the cartel, whether formally or informally; others seek to break into the market or maintain their independent opportunities. Additionally, it is difficult to determine which players are most effective in the cartel: state agencies, multinational corporations, religious groups, international organizations, governmental and non-governmental entities. Indeed, during the Soviet period, a single government hardly ever made these decisions unilaterally; the play between Moscow and Budapest or Warsaw or Prague was a significant part of the action.

One of the characteristics of the Soviet period was the limited number of "sellers" permitted to use the available media, particularly broadcasting. RFE/RL, the BBC World

Service and others were examples of competitors who were seeking entry in the market and who, barred by the governing state, resorted to alternative measures at the prompting of their own institutional backers. There were other potential (and actual) sellers in the market, including the Catholic Church, and even the forces seeking to shape a consumerist society.

The transition decade can be understood as one of those infrequent but memorable moments in which an old cartel is destroyed and new players flow in to fill the void. The drama persists in observing which competitors are effective at entering and how a subsequent law or regulatory system is developed to favor some players and discriminate against others. Informed by its own cultural and historical traditions, each of the transition states can be diagnosed or examined separately to see how long the transition was open to redefinition, and how political parties and movements maneuvered to ensure that they would be an active and important participant while others were left out.

In almost all contexts, with the push toward privatization and independence, the state broadcaster's role as an active participant in the market for loyalties became marginalized and diffused. In all contexts, increased commercialization meant that sellers of goods renewed or strengthened their market share as "sellers" of allegiances. In other words, the capacity of the media system to further entry into capitalism was an important element of the recalibrating of market shares. Spectacularly, the shift to an advertising-supported media meant that, on the whole, the "buyer" was confronted with a set of messages that sought to shift him or her from citizen to consumer. Attitudes toward foreign ownership and the inclination in a number of countries to welcome German media empires as investors also had potential impact on the market for loyalties. The Church is an example of an entity that, in some states (Poland in particular), became a far more significant and effective user of the media.

The transitions embraced "media wars" in which the political parties struggled for control of regulatory agencies and over the media themselves. Hungary was a significant example of this phenomenon.[vii] Ultimately, the extent to which political control has an impact on general public attitudes through the media has not been fully demonstrated. But intuitively it is a factor in shaping the market for loyalties. These media wars exemplified the struggle for control that ensued after regulatory agencies were constructed or restructured, whether explicitly or implicitly, to serve as independent authorities, gatekeepers to the market for loyalties. Politicized regulators could give the party in power the ability to influence the media system in a favorable manner; at a time of instability, polarization and shifting government coalitions, this kind of control was deemed undesirable.

Musing about models, metaphors, and key debates over language—these are all helpful in trying to understand changes in Central and Eastern European broadcasting institutions, asking whether they look increasingly similar and, if so, why. I want, as a conclusion to this essay, to take another tack: to emphasize a kind of physics of homogenization through "strategic communication." This point expands on the homogenization thesis of Hallin and Mancini: it suggests that similar powerful concerted efforts to change allegiances in these target societies lead to similar outcomes. Here I mean something specific by efforts, primarily where those efforts originate outside a state's boundary. Strategic communication is a series or set of activities undertaken by states, advertisers, or other "sellers" in the market for loyalties which seek to subvert, undermine, overwhelm or replace a preexisting discourse on a subject significant to the strategic communicator. An alternative description, more mechanical, is that strategic communication involves a substantial and effective campaign, initiated from outside a target

society, designed to alter an existing consensus, on an issue important in terms of the future of the population of the target society.

In the decade after 1989, Central and Eastern Europe was a field of attention for a variety of campaigns that sought to create a new set of allegiances: to a Western European and American style of modernity; to the European Union and, sometimes in conflict, an Atlantic Alliance; to a redefinition of identity in a post-Soviet, post-Socialist world. These were common forces differentially applied in the national contexts of Central and Eastern Europe. There were different patterns of resistance to these forces, and differences among the mix of entities within depending on political and demographic aspects. Because each of these countries was the target for a similar group of strategic communications entities—groups that had a common interest in a particular media structure and in the use of it for particular persuasive reasons—these pressures often resulted in similar outcomes.

There is a continued fascination with the post-1989 developments in Central and Eastern Europe, in examining what that experience teaches about democracy promotion; about the efficacy of various forms of intervention; and about the use of various forms of incentives and pressures in setting of agendas for and ultimately effecting political change. Ultimately, the picture of homogeneity is more convincing than the picture of differences.

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[i] During this period I published the Post Soviet Media Law and Policy Newsletter: http://www.vii.org/monroe/.

[ii] Paolo Mancini suggests that the Anglo-American model of journalism has become an "ideology" for professionalization and for interpretation of mass media systems ("Political complexity and alternative models of journalism: The Italian case" in *Dewesternizing Media Studies*, as quoted in Lauk, 2008). Lauk further notes, during the period of transition, "it was quite natural to look for the models to emulate in the more developed Western democracies" (p. 194).

[iii] Epp Lauk points out, "The special features and ways of development of journalism cultures in each country are determined by historical traditions, as well as specific local cultural, social and political conditions" (p. 198).

[iv] The development of media policy during the transitions of the 1990s has been described as a three phase process of (1) de-linking the media from the state; (2) attention to market developments, involving the liberalization of telecommunications and broadcasting markets, and increased foreign investment; and (3) European integration through harmonization of media legislation (Perusko & Popovic, 2008, 169).

[v] "[P]rivatization has increasingly become a component of conditionality requirements attached to institutional lending … seventy percent of structural adjustment loans and forty percent of sectoral adjustment loans made by the World Bank during the 1980s contained a privatization component" (Baker, 1999, pp. 233-234).

[vi] I coined this term, in part, because of my experience with post-Soviet transitions. See Price (2002), Price (1995) and Price (1994).

[vii] For more on Hungary's "media wars," see, for instance, Schwartz (2002).